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TEACHERS SATURATE THEIR CLASSROOMS WITH
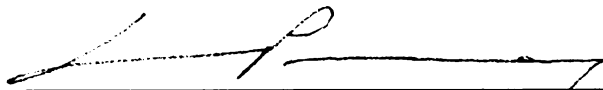MOTIVATING INSTRUCTION?

presented by

Lisa Marcy Raphael

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctoral   degree in   Department of Counseling,
Educational Psychology, and
Special Education

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WHY DO HIGHLY ENGAGING MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS SATURATE THEIR CLASSROOMS WITH MOTIVATING INSTRUCTION?

By

Lisa Marcy Raphael

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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2005

ABSTRACT

WHY DO HIGHLY ENGAGING MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

SATURATE THEIR CLASSROOMS WITH MOTIVATING INSTRUCTION?

By

Lisa Marcy Raphael

Throughout the 2003-2004 academic school year, classroom observations,

extensive interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of classroom artifacts

occurred in two sixth grade classrooms in two middle schools to determine the factors

influencing the motivational decisions of two middle school teachers, identified as highly

engaging in a previous study of middle school teaching (Raphael, Pressley, & Mohan,

under review). Concern for student emotional safety, desire for student mastery and

valuing of academics, and hopes for self-regulated student participation led the teachers

to saturate their classrooms with numerous motivational mechanisms, which ultimately

supported student engagement. Embedded within these themes was the strong awareness

of and responsiveness to individual student needs and the multiplicity of connections.

Future research should consider how other teachers choose motivationally based

instructional practices and the implications of their decisions.

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INTRODUCTION

Student motivation is critical to academic success. Motivation to learn is associated with sustained engagement and enhanced achievement on academic tasks. The instructional decisions of teachers can significantly contribute to the academic engagement and achievement of students. Highly engaging teachers successfully motivate student engagement by saturating their classrooms with numerous positive motivational mechanisms (Pressley, Dolezal, Raphael et al., 2003; Raphael, Pressley, & Mohan, under review). In highly engaging classrooms, at least ninety percent of the students persist at appropriately cognitively demanding and worthwhile tasks ninety percent of the time. Highly engaging teachers may be especially necessary during middle school to offset the substantial declines that occur in student motivation (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). Although much is known about the instructional practices used by highly engaging middle school teachers, little is known about the reasons why these teachers choose to flood their classrooms with motivating instruction.

This study is a descriptive case study of the motivational decision making of two highly engaging middle school teachers, identified by Raphael, Pressley, and Mohan (under review) as very effective in promoting academic engagement. More specifically, I consider the factors which influence the motivational decisions of highly engaging middle school teachers (i.e., how and why they choose to saturate their classroom with positive motivational mechanisms).

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Background Literature

Characteristics of Motivating Teachers

This study emerged from a collection of previous work with colleagues aimed to

understand the characteristics of effective teaching, in particular, how teachers support

student motivation, and ultimately student engagement. In several studies using grounded

theory methods (e.g., Bogner, Raphael, & Pressley, 2002; Pressley, Dolezal, Raphael et

al., 2003; Raphael, Pressley, & Mohan, under review), my colleagues and I discovered

that about 20% of elementary and middle school teachers saturated their classrooms with

close to 50 instructional practices that appear to support student motivation and

engagement. These highly engaging teachers encouraged student motivation as they

fostered curiosity and suspense, made abstract material more concrete, modeled interest

and enthusiasm, scaffolded student learning, provided home-school connections,

displayed appropriate pacing, exhibited positive encouragement, made cross curricular

connections, and demonstrated the appropriate use of strategies. In these studies, we

defined engagement as the proportion of time students spent actively working on tasks

that were appropriately demanding (i.e., required student effort) and worthwhile (i.e.,

important content in the elementary school curriculum). Consistent with Wharton et al.

(1998), we documented student engagement by scanning the classroom every ten

minutes, recording the percentage of students attentive during the activity. The most

striking finding from each of the elementary school studies was that on-task engagement

was highest in the classrooms with the greatest amount of positive motivational

mechanisms. That is, at least ninety percent of the students in the classrooms with the

greatest amount of positive motivational mechanisms were observed engaged in tasks at

least ninety percent of the time. Behavioral problems were also infrequent in these highly engaging classrooms. In comparison, students in the other classrooms, especially in the classrooms with the predominance of negative motivational mechanisms, appeared off task the majority of the time, with behavioral problems interfering with instructional time.

In each of these studies, we used multiple sources of data (i.e., observations, interviews, and analysis of classroom artifacts) and multiple observers to understand the complexities of instruction in elementary and middle school. Consistent with grounded theory methodology (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967), data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously in these studies as the researchers identified emerging categories of instruction and developed models for each classroom.

The results of Pressley et al. (2003) and Raphael et al. (under review) advance an important hypothesis about teaching initially proposed by Brophy (1986); both elementary and middle school teachers can support student motivation and engagement by flooding their classrooms with motivating instruction. That is, by using a variety of different motivational mechanisms, highly engaging teachers advance student engagement and potentially student achievement. Highly engaging teachers may be especially necessary during the transition to middle school.

The Middle School Years

As students progress through school, they become less confident about their academic capabilities. With the advent of the middle school years, students possess increasingly negative attitudes towards school in general and about specific subjects (e.g., math, language arts) (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Eccles, Wigfield, Reuman, Mac Iver, &

Feldlaufer, 1993; Midgley, 1993). The transition to middle school, in particular, threatens students' competence beliefs and valuing of academic tasks (Harter, Whitesell, & Kowalski, 1992; Wigfield, Eccles, Yoon et al., 1997).

Although developmental changes contribute to age-related declines in student motivation, everything the classroom teacher does potentially influences student motivation (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Given the relationship between motivating instruction and student engagement, as mentioned previously, it is important to understand the cognitive processes of highly engaging teachers with respect to motivating student engagement. That is, why do highly engaging teachers choose various motivational practices over others?

Teacher Thinking and Decision-Making

Research on teacher thinking and decision-making has progressed since the advent of the cognitive revolution in the 1970's. Dissatisfaction with behaviorist notions of teaching and learning and contradictory findings in process-product research led researchers to examine how teachers interpret their daily interactions in the classroom and how these interpretations influence everyday decision-making (Calderhead, 1996). Since the 1970's, researchers have examined the intricacies of teacher thinking in a variety of studies (see Calderhead, 1996; Clark and Peterson, 1986 for reviews).

Teacher thinking encompasses both teacher knowledge and teacher beliefs. While teacher knowledge refers to cognitive, or factual propositions held by teachers, teacher beliefs also include ideologies, which are affective and evaluative in nature (Pajares, 1992). Compared to the broad category of teacher thinking, teacher beliefs are more informative and more indicative of teacher decision-making and behavior (Pajares, 1992).

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Research in teacher beliefs can help teachers better understand their daily interactions with students and ultimately lead to improvements in the quality of teacher education and professional development programs (Calderhead, 1996; Clark, 1988; Pajares, 1992).

Teachers' motivational beliefs influence the use of instructional practices. A variety of factors including external constraints (Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque, & Legault, 2002) and perceptions of one's teaching efficacy (Tollefson, 2000) influences the types of motivational practices that teachers choose to implement. In a study with 254 teachers, for example, Pelletier et al. (2004) found that perceptions of high work pressure and low student self-determination threatened teacher self-determination and autonomy supportive practices in the classroom. Few studies exist, however, which examine the types of goals that teachers pursue with respect to motivation.

Teachers' Goals

Teachers' beliefs and hopes for their students, as well as the nature of teaching and learning are related to their goals. Goals reflect the purposes or the intentions of behavior (Ford, 1992). Teachers may possess goals about student learning, student needs, as well as their own teaching (Aguirre and Spencer, 1999; Ames, 1992, Clark & Peterson, 1986: Lemos, 1996).

Expert teachers possess different beliefs, and ultimately different goals than novice teachers. In a study with novice and expert teachers, Westerman (1991), for example, found that expert teachers integrated all three stages of decision-making (i.e., preactive, interactive, postactive). That is, expert teachers taught their lessons based on their reflections and goals made before and after each lesson. Compared to the novice

teacher's focus on objectives and student behavior, the goals of the expert teachers were concerned with the needs of their students.

Teachers are especially concerned about students' needs. In a review of six studies, Clark and Peterson (1986) reported that the interactive thoughts of teachers were primarily focused on the learner, more so than instructional procedures or strategies. Similarly, in case studies of 14 junior high teachers, Munby (1983) found that concern for students (i.e., learning and development goals, involvement, and needs) comprised three of the five most prevalent beliefs and principles possessed by the teachers.

Noddings (1989; 1992; 1997; 2003) has advocated for an educational system that prioritizes caring about students. Exemplary teachers, in fact, truly care about their students. Ruddell and colleagues (1983; 1994; 1995; 1997) have found that teachers across multiple grade levels, perceived by students as highly motivating or "influential" are extremely concerned with student needs and believe that developing supportive bonds with students is essential to their practice. Preservice teachers also regard effective teachers as highly "student centered," who behave in supportive and caring ways towards their students (Minor, Onwuegbuzie, Witcher et al., 2002). In fact, the most effective teachers adjust their plans every day, adjusting and readjusting their methods to fit student needs (Good & Brophy, 2003).

Teachers' goals influence their everyday decision-making in the classroom. In a detailed analysis of two Algebra teachers, Aguirre and Spencer (1999) examined the interaction between teacher's beliefs and goals during the moment-moment interactions of teaching. Beliefs about the nature of mathematics, learning, and teaching directed the teacher's goals during teaching. For example, believing that mathematics was a set of

procedures, formulas, and equations, and that it was the teacher's role to explicitly tell students how to do mathematics problems guided a teacher's decision to correct a student's graph. The collection of the three beliefs, labeled by Aguirre and Speer (1999) as "belief bundles" influenced how the teachers formulated and modified goals in their everyday teaching. The results of Aguirre and Speer (1999) are consistent with Parker and Gehrke's (1986) findings that teacher's interactive decision making was determined not only by the activity itself and the routines of the class but also the goals of that day. Although goals appear to be an important factor in teachers' beliefs and decision-making, little is known regarding the motivational goals and decisions of teachers.

Motivational Nature of Teacher's Goals

Teachers' motivational goals influence the communication and implementation of motivationally based instructional practices (Ames, 1992). Classroom environments are characterized by goal orientations (i.e., mastery vs. performance) based on categories of teaching practices (e.g., task, authority, recognition, grouping, evaluation, and time) (Epstein, 1989). For example, students in a performance-oriented classroom believe that they should learn for the sake of outperforming others. In comparison, students in classrooms with a mastery orientation believe that they should learn for the sake of learning or achieving mastery. Unlike the maladaptive outcomes associated with a performance orientation, students' perceptions of a mastery orientation are associated with positive achievement beliefs and behaviors (Ames & Archer, 1988; Kaplan & Midgley, 1999).

Student perceptions of goal orientation match the type of classroom environment they experience. Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, et al. (2001) found that teachers perceived by

students as low mastery generally exhibited more negative affect and less positive affect, fewer opportunities for positive social interaction, and greater emphasis on grades and relative performance than teachers perceived as high mastery. Although this was the first observational study to examine how actual teaching practices are related to students' perceptions of classroom goal structures, Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, et al. (2001) did not examine the content of the teachers' goals and these goals were connected to their choice of motivational practices.

Teachers and students sometimes adopt similar goals. In a correlational study of high achieving students and their teachers, Ee, Moore, and Atputhasamy (2003) examined the goal orientation of teachers' goals in relation to their students' goals. Consistent with student reports, the teachers reported that they adopted more task goals (i.e., mastery) than ego goals. The teachers also frequently encouraged strategy-based instruction in their classrooms by teaching strategies, discussing the use of strategies, and solving problems with strategies. Although Ee et al. (2003) examined the nature of teachers' goals, they limited their investigation to the traditional categories of mastery and performance goals.

Recognizing that students and teachers pursue multiple goals, Lemos (1996) examined the types of goals pursued by 17 sixth grade students and six teachers from different subject matters. Both groups of participants were interviewed about their goals as they viewed instances of videotaped lessons. During the teacher interviews, as the teachers viewed the lesson, they responded to questions such as, "What are you doing," "What are you trying to accomplish", and "What for." Seven different types of goals emerged for the students and the teachers (i.e., enjoyment, learning, complying, working,

evaluation, interpersonal, and discipline). Compared to the students' emphasis on working and evaluation goals, the teachers reported focusing more on complying and learning goals.

Although Lemos (1996) advanced the study of teacher goals, there is still a need to further understand the content of teacher's goals within a classroom environment, especially with respect to the motivational elements of teacher decision-making. That is-- Why do teachers choose motivational practices over others? How do their choices connect to the everyday practices in the naturalistic classroom setting? Ethnographic case studies are needed to provide well-documented and insightful accounts of teacher thought processes and decision-making (Calderhead, 1996).

Purpose and Rationale of the Current Study

Given the importance of investigating the intricacies of motivation in the middle school years and the need for more research regarding the content of teacher goals, the current study is an ethnographic multiple case study of two highly engaging sixth grade teachers. Using the principles of grounded theory methodology, I examined the multiple motivational goals of the teachers and how these goals influenced their everyday interactions with students in the classroom.

METHODS

Participants. The participants were two female Caucasian sixth grade teachers from two 5th and 6th grade middle schools in the same community. Prior to this school year, the schools consisted of 6th and 7th grades. I chose these two teachers based on a study of middle school motivation conducted the previous year (Raphael, Pressley, & Mohan, under review). In this study of middle school motivation, my colleagues and I found that three out of ten teachers saturated the classroom with instructional practices that appeared to positively support student motivation and achievement. We also found that the majority of the students in these three classrooms appeared engaged in academically worthwhile and cognitively demanding tasks the majority of the time. I began the current study hoping to learn more about the decision-making with respect to motivation of all three of the most motivating teachers identified last year. The third teacher in the study did not participate in this study, however, because she relocated to a half time position in another school for personal reasons.

The first teacher, Ms. Purple, in her mid 40s, taught at Jansen Middle School and had been teaching for eighteen years, with a total of twelve years in sixth grade. Ms. Purple achieved 30 credit hours beyond a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching with a middle school endorsement (i.e., although her bachelor's degree certified her to teach social studies, with the endorsement, she was certified to teach any subject in grades 5-9). Ms. Purple's morning began with home base, a ten minute time period for morning announcements and lunch arrangements, which consisted of 27 students. Following home base, Ms. Purple taught two seventy-five minute Language Arts classes and a fifty-minute Reading class. After lunch, Ms. Purple taught a sixty-minute Social

Studies class and a fifty-minute Social Studies class. The Social Studies class directly

after lunch was ten minutes longer than the seventh hour class to give students extra time

in the busy lunchroom. Each class consisted of 24-28 students, with Ms. Purple

interacting with 56 students.

Table 1:

Ms. Purple's Schedule

Hour of The Day	Class
1st (8:35-8:45)	Homebase
2nd (8:45-10:00)	Language Arts
3rd (10:00-11:15)	Language Arts
4th (11:15-12:05)	Reading
(12:05-12:40)	LUNCH
5th (12:40-1:40)	Social Studies
6th (1:40-2:30)	Planning
7th (2:30-3:20)	Social Studies

The other teacher, Ms. Yellow, in her mid 30's, taught at Brooks Middle School,

and had been teaching for twelve years, with a total of eleven years in sixth grade. Ms.

Yellow possessed a Master's of Arts in Teaching from a local university, in the area of

special education (i.e., emotionally impaired) and K-5 regular education. Ms. Yellow was

a resource teacher with sixteen students on her caseload. Ms. Yellow also team-taught a

Math and Language Arts class in the morning and an inclusive Social Studies class and a

pullout Reading class in the afternoon, contacting 49 different students each day, with 24-25 students per class.

As the year progressed, Ms. Yellow's schedule changed. First, in the beginning of the year for twelve weeks, during fourth hour, Ms. Yellow assisted a fifth grade teacher's class. I did not observe this fifth grade class. Second, for twelve weeks in the beginning of the year, during fifth hour, Ms. Yellow assisted six students in a math class. I observed this class one time. Eventually, another teacher was hired to fill that position so Ms. Yellow began lead teaching the Social Studies class and was able to spend more time with her students in that class. Third, during the middle of the year, the school district extended third hour so Ms. Yellow then taught Language Arts for an extra fifteen minutes every day. Finally, following spring break, Ms. Yellow decided to pull out a small group of students for math homework assistance to replace the reading class at the end of the day, for these students already had extra time in Language Arts. Table 2 represents Ms. Yellow's daily schedule after she began teaching Social Studies.

Table 2:

Ms. Yellow's Schedule

Hour of the Day	Class
1st (8:45-10:00)	Math
2nd (10:00-11:15)	Language Arts
(11:15-11:45)	LUNCH
4th (11:50-12:55)	Social Studies
5th (12:45-1:40)	Math
6th (1:40-2:30)	Planning
7th (2:30-3:20)	Reading

Ms. Yellow team-taught all of her classes with other teachers. While Ms. Yellow was more likely to lead teach the second hour Math class and the Social Studies class everyday; she shared the teaching role with another teacher for the Language Arts and Reading classes.

Sites.

The schools consisted of Jansen Middle School and Brooks Middle School, two public middle schools (grades 5-6) located in the same school district, an urban fringe of a mid-sized Midwestern city. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the community surrounding the schools consisted of 11,315 people (3,553 total student population), with a median household income of $44,382 and an unemployment rate of 2.9%. The racial composition of the community was more homogenous than the rest of the United States,

with 92.9% of the community being Caucasian or Non-Hispanic compared to 75% of the United States.

Jansen Middle School

Jansen Middle School, with a student population of 467 students and 36 staff members, was located within walking distance of the principal shopping district in the community. At Jansen, 19% of the students qualified for free lunch and 8% qualified for reduced lunch. Jansen Middle School, originally built in the 1930's, with additions made to the school in the 1980's, consisted of traditional linear hallways that were spread throughout the school.

The sixth grade student body at Jansen was divided into four teams or units, identified by their grade level and unit number. Each teacher taught two sections of their primary content area daily to fifty-six students in two-person teams. Ms. Purple and Ms. Orange were a team, with Ms. Purple specializing in Language Arts and Social Studies and Ms. Orange responsible for Science and Math. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Orange taught two Reading classes to two groups of students for two marking periods.

Ms. Purple taught in a classroom towards the back entrance of the school, next door to the resource teacher and surrounded by two other classrooms. Ms. Purple's classroom was arranged with thirteen two-person tables in four rows around the room. Ms. Purple's classroom was decorated with a rich variety of posters with messages about student conduct, learning, and reading. The room library was positioned towards the front of the room, with several bookcases filled with books. Upon entering Ms. Purple's room, students entered a "Learning Zone," as highlighted by the poster on the door. Figure 1 provides a map of Jansen Middle School and Figure 2, a map of Ms. Purple's classroom.

Figure 1:

Map of Jansen Middle School

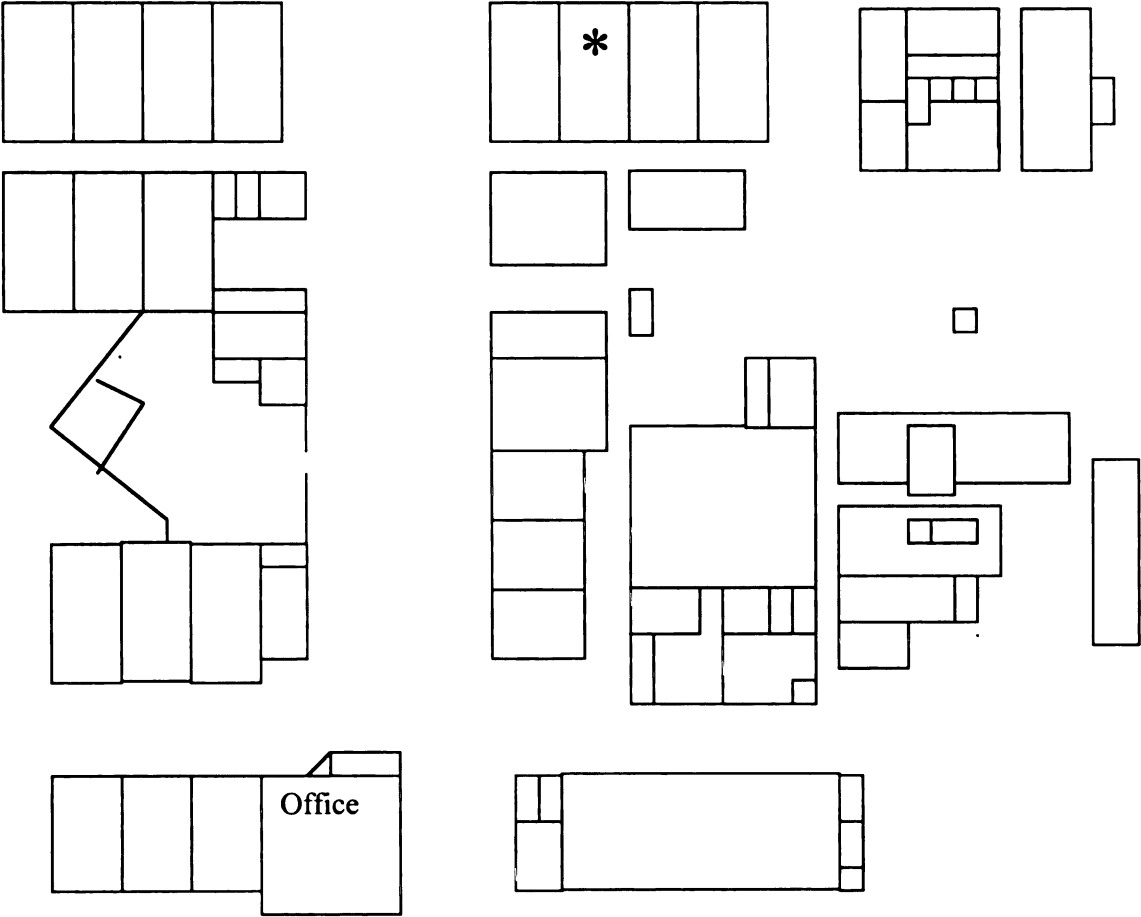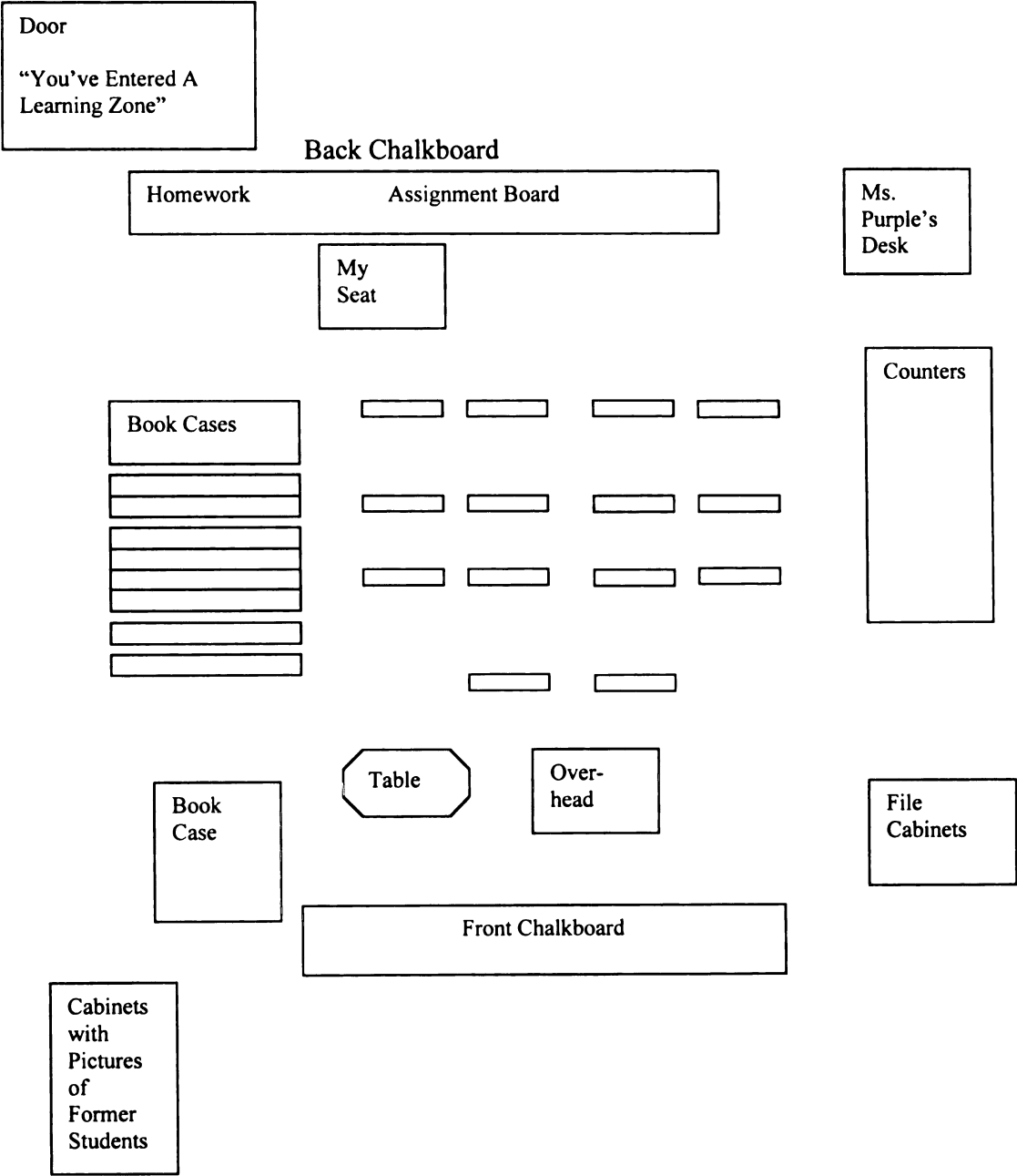*Note- Map Not Drawn to Scale

<u>Key</u>

*= Ms. Purple's Room

Office

Figure 2:

Map of Ms. Purple's Classroom

Door

"You've Entered A Learning Zone"

Back Chalkboard

| Homework | Assignment Board |

My Seat

Ms. Purple's Desk

Book Cases

Counters

Book Case

Table

Over-head

File Cabinets

Front Chalkboard

Cabinets with Pictures of Former Students

Brooks Middle School

Brooks Middle School, which consisted of 417 students and 35 staff members was located about three miles from the principal shopping district in the community, close to an elementary, junior, and high school. At Brooks Middle School, 9% of the students qualified for free lunch and 6% qualified for reduced lunch. Brooks Middle School, built in 1993, was divided into three teams of clusters, with six classrooms per cluster. Three classrooms in the cluster served the 6th grade, with approximately 50-55 students per cluster of sixth grade students. Each cluster was identified by name through signs that overlooked the hallways and the windows. The clusters fed into a carpeted, enclosed hallway situation that could be used for spillover small group interactions, which was necessary because some of the classrooms in this building were small. Figure 3 represents the map of Brooks Middle School.

Figure 3:

Map of Brooks Middle School
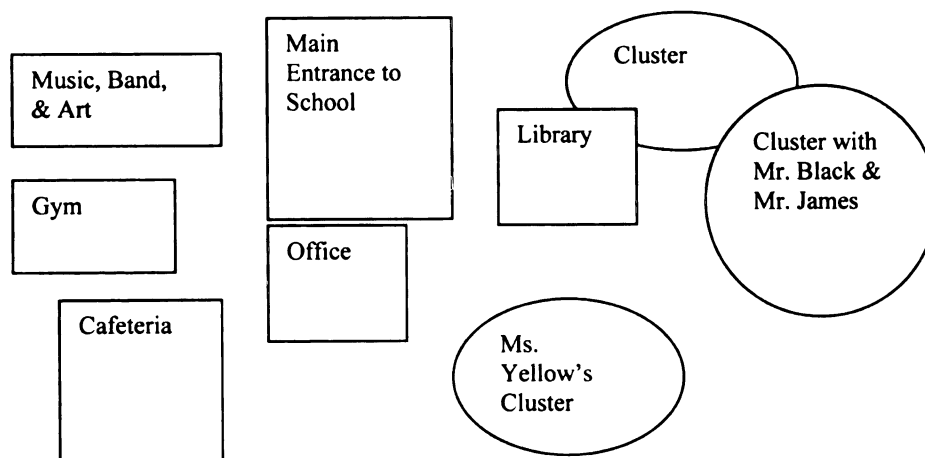
Ms. Yellow shared a classroom with the other resource teacher, which was located in a cluster close to the main office and the school library, next to two fifth grade classrooms. The classroom consisted of three rectangular shaped tables, with seating possible for four-six students. The room was decorated with student work and local University spirit paraphernalia. Figure 4 is a map of Ms. Yellow's classroom.

Figure 4:

Map of Ms. Yellow's Classroom

Note: I typically sat at Ms. Yellow's desk or at the middle table next to the students
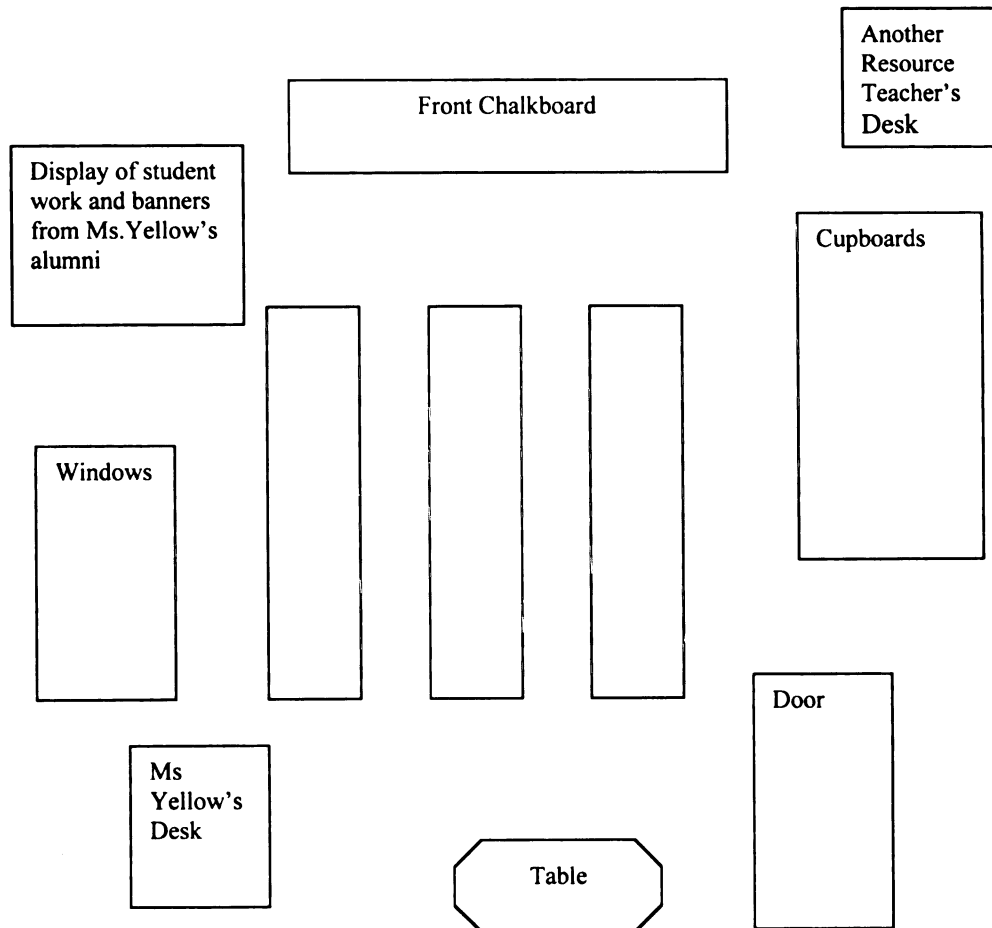
Ms. Yellow used her classroom periodically for small group or pull out classes such as the Reading class at the end of the day. In two other classrooms, in a neighboring cluster, Ms. Yellow team-taught Math and Social Studies in the same classroom with Mr. James and Language Arts with Mr. Black in the classroom next door. Both of these classrooms were decorated with posters, books and various materials. See Figures 5 and 6 for maps of Mr. James and Mr. Black's classrooms respectively.

Figure 5:
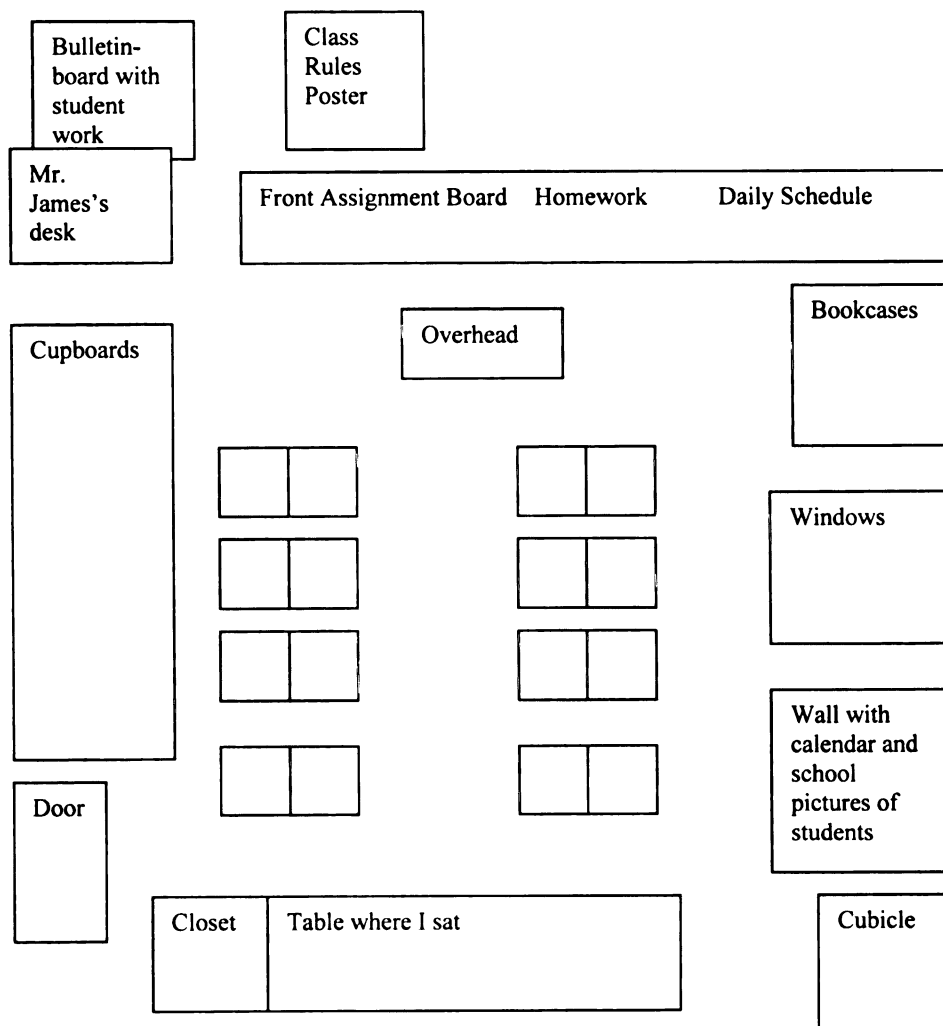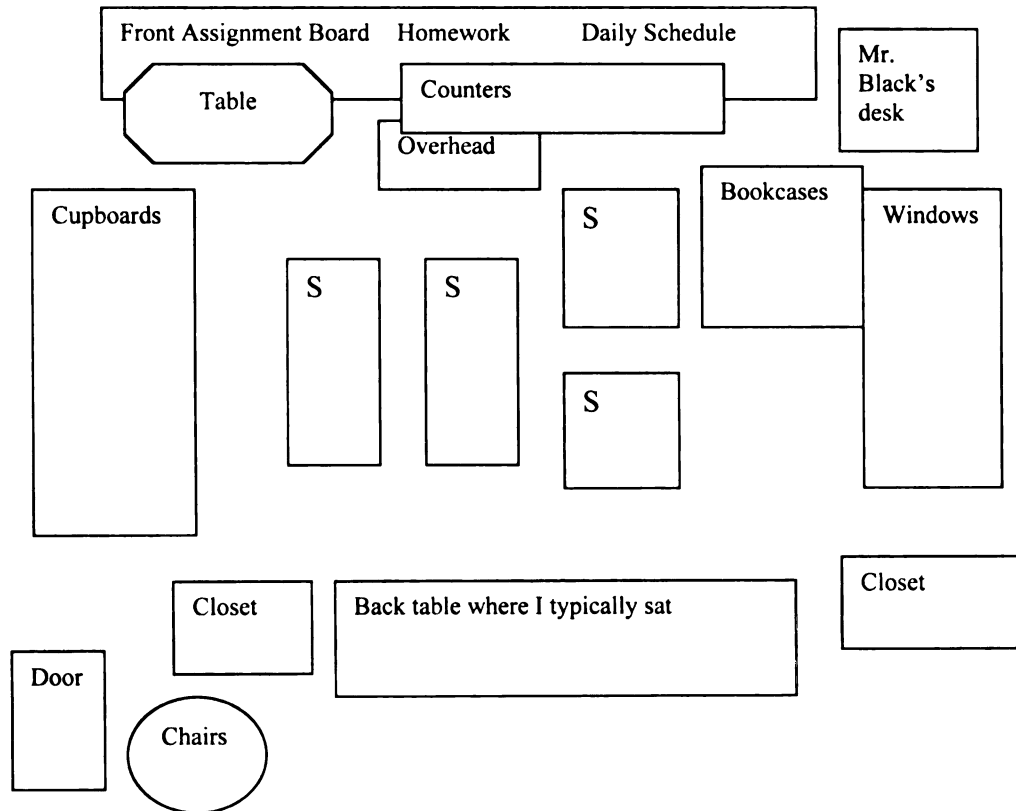
Map of Mr. James's Classroom

Figure 6:

Map of Mr. Black's Classroom

Note: S= Student Seats

Role of the Researcher.

Throughout the entire school year, I maintained a friendly researcher role with

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow. I began eating lunch with both of the teachers early in the

school year after they invited me to do so. Sensitive to LeCompte's (1995) notions of

critical collaborative research, I began the research project talking to both teachers about

collaboration and the importance of us being co-participants in the project. I also shared

emerging conclusions with both teachers, as well as asked them for their opinions

regarding research decisions. As a collaborative project, I represented both of the

teacher's voices throughout the project and in the final write up.

As the year progressed, my role as the "researcher" was less apparent as the

teachers and I became closer. For example, this new role was evident in how I spoke

about the project, as meetings with the teachers became known as "chats" instead of

recall sessions. Throughout the year, the teachers and I engaged in academic and personal

conversations that were not limited to the research project.

Design

Data Collection Procedures

Beginning of the Year Observations

I began the study in the beginning of the school year, knowing that the beginning

of the year is a critical time for teachers to introduce themselves and establish routines

and procedures (Emmer & Evertson, 1982, Bohn, Roehrig, & Pressley, 2004). In the first

three weeks of school, I observed Ms. Purple eleven times during various classes, for a

total of 8.25 hours. I observed Ms. Yellow nine times for a total of 6.83 hours. At the

conclusion of those initial three weeks, I interviewed both teachers in semi-structured

interviews about their perceptions and initial observations (e.g., how they designed the beginning of the year, hopes and expectations for the year, attention to particular students' needs). See Appendix A for the beginning of the year interview questions.

Observations Throughout The Year

Observations continued throughout the year in both of the teacher's classrooms. In the beginning of the year, I quietly sat in the back of the classroom, recording as much of the daily events as verbatim as possible. As the year progressed, especially towards the end of the year, I participated more actively in the two classrooms. That is, I assisted the teachers and the students with several activities, including a Language Arts/Social Studies research project, revising and editing essays, math homework, etc. My observations in both classrooms included a wide variety of content and lessons, as well as special activities (i.e., small group events with other classes, field trips). Beyond the first three weeks, I spent a total of 90 hours in Ms. Purple's classroom, with 110 different observations, not including lunch. Beyond the first three weeks, I observed Ms. Yellow for 72.6 hours, with 76 different observations, not including lunch. I spent less time in Ms. Yellow's classes because of scheduling (i.e., her schedule changed several times throughout the year) and personal events (i.e., Ms. Yellow underwent surgery during the school year, which prevented several weeks of observation).

Chats With The Teachers Throughout The Year

As soon as I began observations, the chats began with both teachers. These chats occurred at all times (i.e., at the beginning of a class, during a class, at the end of the class, during lunchtime, and even via e-mail). Most of the time, the teacher initiated the chats when they reflected on a particular aspect of a class. Some of the time, when I

spoke to the teachers informally or asked the teacher to clarify something, it resulted in a reflection in person and/or via e-mail.

Throughout the school year, to supplement my observations, I videotaped various classes and asked the teachers to reflect on a variety of episodes shortly after the class occurred, which typically ranged from a couple of days to a week, depending on the scheduling for the meeting time. In the beginning of the year, I chose to videotape randomly, selecting episodes for the teachers to reflect upon, hoping to capture a representative sample of content and instructional practices. In these initial chats, the teachers viewed the episode and talked openly about the reasons that had influenced her decision making during that episode and that class. Between September-December, the teachers and I had met three times to view and reflect on a class. Table 3 is the schedule of chats in those months.

Table 3:

Schedule of September-December Chats

Month	Teacher	Class
September	Ms. Purple	Social Studies
October	Ms. Yellow	Math
October	Ms. Purple	Reading
November	Ms. Purple	Language Arts
November	Ms. Yellow	Math
December	Ms. Yellow	Social Studies

After these initial chats, I developed more probing questions for both of the teachers, hoping to obtain more details on the insights that were emerging. In January and early February, I conducted probing interviews with each teacher. All of the probing interviews were semi-structured, guided by the teacher's responses, my observations, and emerging conclusions. See Appendix B for the list of questions for the first probing interview. In April, I conducted another probing interview with each of the teachers. See Appendix C for the list of questions for the second probing interview.

In March-May, two chats with each teacher continued with the videotape but I purposefully selected the lessons based on the emerging conclusions, with the teachers obtaining more of a role in the selection of the episodes. While I selected some of the episodes, for others, I asked the teacher to select episodes. Table 4 is the schedule of chats in those months.

Table 4:

Schedule of March-May Chats

Month	Teacher	Class
March	Ms. Purple	Language Arts
April	Ms. Yellow	Language Arts
May	Ms. Yellow	Math
May	Ms. Purple	Language Arts

Finally, in June, I conducted end of the year interviews with each teacher, to clarify some of the emerging conclusions. See Appendix D for end of the year interview questions.

Student Interviews

Throughout the year, I also interviewed the students in both classes. I conducted a total of five interviews with 17 students in Ms. Yellow's class and five interviews with 25 students in Ms. Purple's class. I initially selected students openly, hoping to obtain a variety of perspectives. In the majority of these interviews, I asked students to share their thoughts on the lesson/activity that day (e.g., what did they think of ____, what they thought the purpose of the lesson/activity was) and what they were thinking/doing when the teacher said _____. As the year progressed, I focused my interviews more on the students identified by their teachers as "engaged" and "disengaged" and spoke to the other students more informally. At the first probing interview with the teachers in January/February, the teachers selected several students that they perceived as "engaged" and several students that they perceived as "disengaged." I conducted one formal interview in the mid February or early March with these students (i.e., two engaged students and two disengaged students in Ms. Purple's class and two engaged students and three disengaged students in Ms. Yellow's class). The majority of the student interviews occurred during lunchtime, with some occurring at the beginning or at the end of class.

Chats With The Students

As the year progressed, primarily after January, I decided to chat with all of the students more informally, hoping that my continued presence in the classroom would make things more comfortable for them. I distinguish between these informal chats and the formal interviews because in the formal interviews, I pulled students out of class or met with them privately during lunchtime. In comparison, with the informal chats, I did not set up any meetings with the student. Instead, I chatted with the students frequently

sometimes right before or after the class started, at the beginning or the end of lunch, on a special class trip, or during class, especially if I sat close by or was assisting them on an assignment/activity.

My participatory role in the classrooms increased as the year progressed, as I became more involved in conversations with the students about their lives and assisted them with various types of assignments. This was easier in Ms. Yellow's classroom because I sat by several students daily in language arts and often chatted with students as we walked to the local kindergarten for a reading-writing partnership. My hopes with the informal chats were for the students to perceive me as a big sister or a friend that they could confide in or enjoyed talking to about their lives. At the conclusion of the school year, I felt like I had achieved friendly relationships with many of the students, especially the students I interacted with a regular basis (e.g., I sat by the same students in several classes, assisted some of the same students). While this paper focuses on the teachers, I include the student responses only if they are pertinent to the conclusions.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data collection and data analysis occurred simultaneously throughout the course of the study. My field notes consisted of my observations in the classroom, and any additional notes, reflections, and/or questions following each observation. I transcribed verbatim all of the teacher and student interviews, adding memos when applicable that directed me to particular comments and/or questions.

Coding

Coding began shortly after the initial observations and continued throughout the study. I began coding by first reading over my multiple sources of information (i.e., the

field notes, chats with the teachers, and interviews with the students) and then categorizing the information according to themes. Since I was primarily interested in the reasons why these two teachers use particular instructional practices to motivate their students, the chats with the teachers were especially important in my data analysis. Throughout the year, I developed categories, with examples of dialogue from multiple sources to represent the emerging conclusions. By the first probing interview in mid January/February, I had developed a set of major categories with minor categories and examples/quotes to represent my first set of major conclusions. As the year progressed, I revised the list to incorporate new conclusions. In the second probing interview in April, I tailored my questions to the revised list of conclusions, revising and editing the list based on the teacher's responses. The process was similar for the end of the year interview. Finally, at the end of the year, I shared my conclusions with both teachers, revising and editing again based on their comments. See Appendix E for the final list of major conclusions.

Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability is achieved when the results are consistent with the data collection and others can replicate the study (Merriam, 1998). Explaining the investigator's position, triangulation, and providing an audit trail ensures the reliability of qualitative research. As mentioned previously, this project consisted of a collaborative partnership between the teachers and me. I considered my emerging relationships with not only the teachers but also the students and adjusted the format of data collection accordingly.

Besides cultivating a partnership between the teachers, me, and to some extent, the students, my ultimate goal was to understand the everyday practices and the meaning of various practices to my participants, with the particular details described earlier in the methods section. Although I began the study with a complete understanding of motivation theory and my participation in the middle school study of the previous year, I remained open to new interpretations and meanings constructed by my participants. Triangulation through multiple methods, multiple forms of data collection, multiple participants, and consultation with other researchers established the credibility of the study. To ensure that other researchers can travel the same path, I have carefully documented how I collected and analyzed the data, as well as made various decisions throughout the course of the study.

Validity

Both internal and external validity are also necessary to qualitative research. Does the data collection and results truthfully represent the participant's perspectives? While it is evident that this final write-up considers the perspectives of the participants, as evidenced by the numerous direct quotes, the collaborative relationship that I developed with the participants is also indicative of the truthfulness of the multiple stages of this project.

Member Checking

Convergence across multiple data sources is essential to the validity of qualitative research. In particular, confirming observations and emerging conclusions with participants is essential to confirming the truthfulness of data collection and analysis.

I conducted formal member checks with Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow in the middle and at the end of the school year. For instance, at the mid January interviews, I presented summaries of the emerging findings to both teachers. At the time of this interview, the emphasis on emotional safety/comfort was the most detailed finding but pieces of the other major themes had begun to emerge in data analysis. Both teachers agreed with the findings and added additional details to further delineate the themes. For example, Ms. Yellow connected her awareness of individual student needs and concern for emotional safety/comfort when she explained her reasons for positioning herself in deliberate ways (e.g., how she approached her students when coaching them). Similarly, Ms. Purple discussed how she encouraged student participation in the context of a safe emotional environment (e.g., questions she asked to inspire participation, accepting different participation structures for individual students).

At the mid January interviews, I also asked both teachers to openly explain the factors influencing their decisions in the classroom, especially their decisions with respect to motivation (i.e., what factors influence how you make decisions in the classroom? In particular, what factors influence how you motivate your students?). Both of the teachers talked about one of their goals, which matched the emerging themes. For example, Ms. Purple discussed her hopes for student participation while Ms. Yellow emphasized the importance of student value.

At the end of the school year, I asked both teachers to share any other thoughts they had on motivation, both on how they motivated their students and the reasons for doing so. Ms. Yellow spoke extensively about emphasizing emotional safety (e.g., making a connection with students and letting them know she supported them on a daily

basis) and communicating academic value to her students (e.g., questioning students about the purpose of lessons). Similarly, Ms. Purple spoke about the intricacies of the culture of her classroom, which included her concern for student emotional safety (e.g., building relationships with students) and her encouragement of student value, especially in reading. After looking at the final methods and the final results sections, both teachers recommended only minor revisions (e.g., grammatical, number of students).

Does the data collection and analysis represent the constructs of interest? As described in detail, I began the study interested in the factors that influence how two highly engaging teachers make decisions that are based on student motivation. I selected the teachers based on the findings of a study conducted the previous year. Both of the teachers were aware of the goals of the study. As mentioned previously, I spoke to my participants in a variety of different ways, using diverse methods. When I selected videotape instances for the teachers and students, I possessed two goals. First, I selected a variety of instances, hoping to obtain a representative sample of naturalistic classroom practices. Second, I chose instances that related to motivation based on my knowledge of the motivation research literature. From time to time, I also consulted with other graduate students and faculty members familiar with theory and research in motivation.

Negative Case Analysis

Throughout the study, I conducted a thorough negative-case analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998), searching for examples of data that might disconfirm the emerging conclusions. By the end of the study, I was confident that a complete negative-case analysis had occurred, with no data inconsistent with the conclusions offered here.

External Validity

After addressing concerns with internal validity, it is necessary to satisfy the requirements of external validity. Are the findings generalizable to other individuals and contexts? In this paper, my detailed description of the participants, classroom contexts, and the data collection and analysis address many of the concerns with external validity in qualitative research.

RESULTS

The Three Major Goals

Throughout the course of the study, three goals constantly emerged about why Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow taught as they did. Across all data sources, I found that both of the teachers consistently and similarly maintained the importance of establishing emotional safety in their classrooms, aspired for student mastery and valuing of academics, and strived for participation, especially self-regulated student participation in the classroom.

Goal #1: Importance of Emotional Safety

The first major goal was the importance Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow placed on student's emotional safety in their classrooms. Although some differences existed, I observed the most similarities between the teachers with respect to this theme. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow emphasized the importance of student emotional safety more than any other practice throughout the school year. This goal emerged in just about every conversation that I had with both teachers. The high emphasis placed on emotional safety, as reported by the teachers, also influenced many of their decisions. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow constantly and consistently communicated the importance of establishing a comfort zone or a safe emotional environment for the students in their classrooms. As Ms. Purple explained, "It's about working with people. Not just about presenting fine lessons. That's a balance... And I hope that they #1, that they feel safe in this classroom emotionally..." Similarly, Ms. Yellow shared, "They just want to know that you care. I think that's the key. If they know that you care, they're going to want to

do better for you." From the beginning to the end of the school year, these teachers were committed to their students.

From The Beginning…I Care About You and I Want You to Be Comfortable

The teachers' concern for emotional safety and establishing a comfort zone presented itself in conversations with me and with the children. This language began early in the school year and continued throughout the school year. Prior and during the first several days of school, students in Ms. Purple's class knew that she would take care of them, to help them navigate the new environment. During the orientation, prior to the first day of school, Ms. Purple told students upon meeting them for the first time, that all they needed to do was show up, she would take care of them once they got to her classroom (e.g., "As long as you know how to get to this room on Tuesday, I will take care of you"). Ms. Purple also assured students they would feel more comfortable once they purchased items on their supply lists and participated in the school tour (e.g., "If you want to go through this tour, I think you'll feel more comfortable"). The teachers cared about how their students felt in the new environment. Beginning in the first week of school and continuing throughout the school year, Ms. Yellow asked her students to self-reflect on the day's events. For example, at the end of math class, Ms. Yellow asked the class, "How do you feel about today? Thumbs up or down?" problem-solving with students as they shared their daily reflections.

Here's What You Need to Know

Part of establishing student comfort in the new environment meant introducing the many new responsibilities and roles. Early on in the school year, Ms. Yellow spoke of the importance of student comfort in the new environment (e.g. "Even that first week but

the first day is basically getting comfortable with the room, routine, where they're going to sit, their locker, just all the stuff that in the normal day that they're going to have to handle…"). During the first week of math class, for example, as Ms. Yellow introduced the new books to her students, she explained a routine (e.g., going through three lessons in every phase of the math book). After introducing, Ms. Yellow constantly reminded her classes of daily routines such as completing the math warm-up at the beginning of class, the proper heading for their papers (i.e., name, date, and hour), and filling out agendas at the beginning of each class. Early in the first week of school, Ms. Yellow introduced her students to the physical environment with a mapping activity of the entire school, as well as to common phrases that she would use throughout the year (e.g., "Voices off"…when we ask to have your attention…. need you to stop and look…").

Both teachers were mindful of the importance of introductions, especially in the initial weeks of school. As Ms. Purple explained, "Well at the beginning, the first week especially, I say it's my goal to introduce the kids thoroughly enough to the building, to the classroom, to one another, to myself so that there's a level of comfort there." Ms. Purple made students explicitly aware of her classroom procedures by providing them with a "how to survive" classroom guide.

Continuing Routines Throughout The Year

The commitment to classroom routines continued throughout the school year. As Ms. Purple discussed the writing process with her students (e.g., beginning with prewriting, composing a rough draft, revising and editing, and ending with a final copy), she remarked, "Where do we need to go next week? We are going to be doing some writing. Who is surprised by that? Reading a couple of stories and then writing. I'm

getting predictable." Ms. Purple later told her students, "I want to be predictable. Do you notice how predictable I am? I don't think that's being boring. I think that's being safe." Ms. Yellow similarly reinforced routines (e.g., "When you're given a paper, show me what you're supposed to do" or "Are you with me?").

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow requested student attention by asking students to "Focus" or "Focus front" or "Eyes and ears up here." Additionally, Ms. Purple typically redirected students by asking them to put their hands in their laps (e.g., "It should come as no surprise when I say, put your hands in your lap. Do it now").

For both teachers, steady routines for the students occurred in the beginning and at the end of every class (e.g., looking at the assignment board or the chalkboard for the day's schedule, setting up properly for class with the right materials, filling out the agenda, and remaining quiet while packing up, waiting for dismissal). For example, at the beginning of class, Ms. Yellow simply asked her students to "show me what the expectation is," praising students who appeared prepared for class (e.g., "B looks excellent today. Got all his materials out"). In both classes, students knew that they needed to raise their hands if they wanted to speak (e.g., Ms. Yellow tells a student, "I would love to answer your question but what do I need from you? Raise your hand"). The classroom routines exemplified the teacher's hopes for a safe, emotional environment.

Ms. Purple: "I value the consistency because I think it's provides safety for them – consistent routines. I hope that I am a consistent adult for them."

Ms. Yellow: "You have to have a routine where the kids are used to, feel comfortable, and that they know what to expect. It doesn't mean that you can't change

within that but the mold of your day needs to stay somewhat concrete so that the kids have something to go on."

Building Relationships Early On

The beginning of the year was a time to build all sorts of positive relationships. The teachers hoped to build caring relationships with their students. For example, during the summer, Ms. Purple sent a letter to her students introducing herself to them and inviting them to write back to her. In addition to playing kickball with her students, Ms. Yellow comforted and advised several students with various types of problems. Both teachers strived to facilitate positive relationships among students in their classes with introductory activities in the first week of school. "All about me," for example, required students to introduce themselves to their classmates and their teacher, which was typically accompanied by pictures or drawings of meaningful parts of their life. Ms. Yellow created an "All about me" paper T-shirt, introducing herself, her likes and dislikes, and information about her family, which hung in the language arts classroom for most of the school year. Similarly, Ms. Purple set aside a special bulletin board in the back of the classroom for "All about me" presentations that took place throughout the school year, beginning with her own in the first week of school.

In both classrooms, students participated in interviewing activities, which provided opportunities to acquaint themselves with their new middle school peers, coming from several different elementary schools. For example, in preparation for the upcoming discussions in reading class, Ms. Purple's students participated in a round circle that required them to introduce themselves to each other while maintaining a rhythmic beat. Ms. Purple later shared that, in addition to acquainting the students with

one another, she hoped that students would know that she was in charge of the class, based on the way she led the rhythmic beat of the round circle. In Ms. Yellow's Language Arts class, students interviewed at least ten other students (and sometimes Ms. Yellow) about their interests, aspirations, and preferences. Finally, by having students create a time capsule, which captured student perceptions and opinions in the beginning of the school year, Ms. Yellow hoped to connect the beginning of the school year with the end of the school year.

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow strived to establish relationships with their students' parents early on in the school year through introductory phone calls and e-mails. Ms. Purple shared that she aimed to share positive messages to parents in these early phone calls: "I wanted them to be the positive phone calls. I see your child doing this wonderful thing and it was once again all about those academic habits-- they come prepared, they pay attention, they're eager to learn, they're trying their best and I see this in your child." For Ms. Yellow, establishing this early relationship with parents' benefited future interactions (e.g., " I like to just touch base with them (so) if you do have a difficulty (then) the student (and) the parent already has a relationship somewhat built with you or some kind of conversation").

Aware of and Responsive to Individual Student Needs

Throughout the school year, both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple were extremely aware of and responsive to the needs of their students, which connected to their goals of emotional safety. Ms. Yellow explained, "You just got to make your room feel like a community … kids are so individually different with different needs so I think just finding that with the student is the key… I mean you just got to figure out how to read the

kid and what they need from you and vice versa..." Similarly, Ms. Purple shared, "But it's knowing them. It's knowing the kids. It's taking all the extra time to meet with their families, to e-mail their families, to call them on the phone. To keep the standard high but give them the rungs on the ladder to get there." The teachers communicated this awareness and responsiveness in their daily interactions with students.

Reading The Signals You Give Me

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow constantly read their student's faces. Ms. Purple, for example, paced her lessons based on the signals she received from her students. For example, in a lesson on good public speaking in Language Arts, she told the class that she constantly looked at her students to make sure that she was not frustrating them by going too fast. When Ms. Purple reflected on this lesson, she explained that she tried really hard to learn her students, keeping in mind that their personal issues sometimes impeded their learning:

> I really try to pay attention to the feedback that they give and they give a lot. Now sometimes it's miscommunicated. That's why I have to learn my children. When I look at (Student), I have to know that he's not bored and not paying, he has defense mechanisms because of his mental health issues of depression. When (Student) is lying all over his table...because I know his family is working with him to balance his medication right now. I know it's not...its simply not paying attention. And so I have to learn the kids and I have to take their feedback...

Similarly, Ms. Yellow frequently scanned the room to check her student's reactions:

Just breaking down the process. I think as a teacher you're always evaluating or
assessing where the kids are at. Even if you don't have them write it down or say
it, you're either making observations or a verbal quick check with them or even
just looking around the room and seeing if you're getting those blank stares or
not…And even when I'm questioning in the class, I always try to look around.
Just to make that simple connection sometimes because you can just read them.
You can read them just by their face.

Learning about her students was essential to Ms. Yellow's vision of good
teaching:

Oh. I guess I take a lot of ownership in that. I mean, even from the bright kid to
the kid that's working three grade levels behind. As a teacher, I think that it's my
responsibility to reach all those students so I think that I take that on myself. I
don't know if part of that is my training, being in Special Ed and being more
aware of that. Or is it just the person that I am? I mean I don't know how to
differentiate that. I don't why teachers are that way.

Ms. Purple believed that her student's parents provided an invaluable source of
information:

I bet probably at every level I would be because I think it's valuable to say to the
parents, "You know your child. Help me know your child. Let's set up some goals
for this year. I LOVED that form of as opposed as waiting until you got a bunch
of garbage to share with them and the parents sit there and say you tell me. You

know, come on, you be the expert. Let's work as a team. So I take what I can

from the kids nonverbally and then I go to...

Purposeful Positioning In The Physical Environment

Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple deliberately positioned their physical movements in

the classroom based on their awareness of student needs and hopes for emotional safety.

During math class, for example, Ms. Yellow would frequently walk around the room,

checking individual student progress on the warm-up, homework, or small group activity.

As Ms. Yellow worked with students, she leaned behind them and looked over their

shoulders with her arms outstretched at their sides, as if she were about to hug them from

behind. Ms. Yellow explained that she approached students purposefully (e.g., "And I

guess whenever I try to approach a kid just to conference or to you know to have

interaction with them, I want to think on that we are kind of on the same level and not

I'm going to scold them or be a negative on them..."). Ms. Yellow adjusted her

positioning to meet the needs of individual students. For example, shortly after a new

student entered the classroom, Ms. Yellow perceived that he seemed intimidated by her

presence, knowing that he was upset about receiving special education support. During

one lesson, Ms. Yellow began to approach this student from the front of his desk but then

decided to talk to other students first and come back to him, leaning from the back, first

praising his strengths in the math lesson and then working on some problems. After

conversing with the student, Ms. Yellow noticed the change in his attitude, "He wrote it

down, had a smile on his face but it was a whole different demeanor than when I came to

the front of that desk."

Videotaping Ms. Purple meant that the camera never remained in one spot. Ms. Purple constantly walked around her classroom during whole group and small group lessons, sometimes stopping to whisper or sit by certain students. Ms. Purple explained that she hoped her frequent physical movements promoted a communal environment: "I don't just want to be on the stage upfront so that they can set and get. I want to interact and...I believe I want to be more personable." Sometimes Ms. Purple sat by certain students because of anticipated behavioral problems but other times, Ms. Purple sat by students in need of a friend: "So maybe I move and place myself strategically because I know a kid cannot behave unless I am really close. But maybe it's because that kid doesn't have anybody that's going to choose to sit by them otherwise so maybe it's the emotional piece."

Physical Gestures That Show How Much I Like You

Both teachers relied on physical gestures to show their students that they liked and approved of them. While both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow hugged or half hugged their students, students in Ms. Purple's classroom also received playful swats (i.e., gentle hand or paper taps) from their teacher. These swats, always playful in nature, were sometimes teacher initiated based on student comments or behaviors but also sometimes requested by students because they desired attention from their teacher. Ms. Purple often told the class, "I only swat you if I love you." She later explained, "It's a way of giving them a hug in a publicly appropriate way." One student agreed, "She swats you and it's fun. Swats are always great. It means she loves you." Ms. Yellow also gave her students high fives for daily successes, telling them "See ya later alligator" as they left the classroom.

How I Talk To You

In addition to deliberate physical movements and gestures, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow spoke to their students in very purposeful ways, communicating at all times that they cared about their students and wanted the very best for them, even when students did not seem on top of things. Ms. Purple sometimes kept students at lunch for missing work but also for misbehavior. During an interaction with several students that were goofing off, Ms. Purple spoke to them with a caring tone:

> I like you so much as human beings. I cut you too much slack. What I know for
>
> sure is that you are very capable young ladies.... Have the potential to do the
>
> work to be successful. I want that for you. I hope that you want that for yourself
>
> too.

Similarly, in an interaction with a student who frequently got in trouble, Ms. Yellow reminded him of his potential, telling him, "Because you are going to be a successful kid if you want to be or you can be the kid that you're trying to be here."

Minimizing Student Anxiety

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also tailored their language to minimize student anxiety. For example, Ms. Purple kept a student after class to discuss her perfectionist tendencies, aiming to build the student's self-confidence after telling her that she was being too hard on herself:

> I need you to stop expecting to get a 4 every time.... Do you expect yourself to be
>
> (perfect)? I don't expect... There're some things you cannot get a 4 on...Were you

being too hard on yourself? Do you understand? Can you look yourself in the mirror and say, "I'm all that?" Do exactly this...Aren't you glad you can fix it?

At the end of this conversation, Ms. Purple told the student that her personal homework was to, "Be nicer to yourself." Ms. Purple explained at a later time that she called this student's parents to tell them that she was worried that the student was being too hard on herself.

Similarly, during a math quiz, I observed an interaction between a student and Ms. Yellow, with the student becoming increasingly frustrated, telling Ms. Yellow repeatedly, "I don't understand":

Student: I don't understand this.

Ms. Yellow: Do you want me to read them to you?

Student responds.

Ms. Yellow: I can understand you're frustrated and confused.

Ms. Yellow reads paper to Student.

Student: But I don't understand.

Ms. Yellow continues to assist this student until he appears to understand the problems.

Ms. Yellow quietly spoke to this student, appearing to relax him. She later explained that she communicated with him in an attempt to validate his feelings while still helping him with the problems and providing him with more of a comfort zone:

You know, ok, I understand you're frustrated. What are you frustrated with kind

of thing? If they can talk through it then usually I can help them work through it

or whatever. And I think I did there with that because I think he focused back on

to the quiz. A lot of times I'll tell them, if they're stuck on one and they're

frustrated with it, lets skip it and go to another section.

Similarly, Ms. Yellow also tried to alleviate the anxiety of a student with

perfectionist characteristics:

I said if you start feeling that pressure here- let me know. You don't have to act

that way or treat me with disrespect. Let me know. If you're feeling

overwhelmed, you go get a drink or whatever.

Common Phrases

The endearments used by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow reinforced the comfortable

and safe environments. While Ms. Purple referred to her students as "Sweetie" or

"Honey," Ms. Yellow, mostly addressed her students as "Bud" or "Buddy," hoping that

would ease her student's comfort:

I want them to feel comfortable you know –"Hey bud. What's up?" You know

that kind of thing and not...Just the authoritative model. I am an authority figure

but I don't want them to feel threatened or not comfortable coming to us so I think

that's kind of how that comes into play.

I Want You To Have Fun

Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple frequently entertained their students with humorous

phrases and stories. After students helped Ms. Purple with a task such as locating

materials or giving information to another teacher, Ms. Purple jokingly told the student

that s/he was her favorite student. She reflected that while her intentions were good, she

had to be careful how individual students interpreted her sense of humor:

> And they want to feel like their teacher likes them. And I use my sense of humor
>
> in that way. And sometimes it's effective and sometimes if the kids aren't
>
> cognitively capable of getting my humor, it doesn't work. The most recent
>
> example – when kids do a favor, "Oh you're my favorite..." Sometimes the
>
> humor I use is in the form of sarcasm and to make sure that type of humor is not
>
> negatively received by children because they are at an age level where they get
>
> those kind of jokes but it's still my job as the adult to make sure it's a positive and
>
> not ever an embarrassment.

Ms. Purple also interjected humor in her lessons, especially in Language Arts. For

example, Ms. Purple's students frequently sang songs about grammar, including nouns

and adjectives, with Ms. Purple even having the class learn through song the different

types of helping verbs. During one observation, in preparation for the upcoming test,

students sang the verbs endings in operatic and Kentucky voices. Ms. Purple intentionally

used these dramatizations to fulfill her ultimate goal of emotional safety:

> When it's so unbelievably hard, they might build up a wall just to protect
>
> themselves and so I have to be in the business of breaking down any wall that gets
>
> in the way of their learning. And yeah I do. I think the music really lends itself to
>
> it.

During a lesson on homonyms, Ms. Purple dramatized that she loved homonyms,

laughing as she provided an example of a student's last name that was a homonym. Ms.

Purple later explained that, "I hope that my enthusiasm will help them see the fun in learning, but the love of the English language is sincere too. I love play on words. I think it's hilarious." One student agreed, "I thought it was kind of fun doing the homonyms and that stuff especially when we did homonyms, synonyms, things...writing them down. Getting to know about homonyms, synonyms, and stuff better. It was fun."

Ms. Purple also included dramatization throughout her lessons. After telling the students they needed to use more details in their writing in early November, Ms. Purple engaged the class in an enthusiastic reiteration of "Detail! Detail, Detail!" which persisted as the "word of the year" throughout the school year. During one observation, Ms. Purple discussed a short story with the class, encouraging them to tell her details about the mushroom in the story:

Did you describe it? I want detail! Word of the year? Three Times. Detail! Detail! Detail!

Ms. Purple later explained that she wanted the students to repeat the word without being boring (e.g., "Say it loud. Say it soft! Kind of make it a game. I'll ask them today-what was the word for yesterday and see if they can tell me. I'll tell them it's the word for today too. It's the word for tomorrow...").

Ms. Yellow also believed in the importance of humor, stating, "I want them to think learning is fun and school is fun." On numerous occasions, I observed instances of Ms. Yellow's humor. For example, following Mr. Black's praise of the students during Language Arts, Ms. Yellow teasingly told him, "We can just sit and eat bon bons." Sometimes when a student waved his/her hands to answer a question, Ms. Yellow playfully asked him/her if s/he was an airplane.

Ms. Yellow also connected her humor to the day's lesson. For example, after the class read an article about teachers that study mummies, Ms. Yellow jokingly told her students that she and Mr. James could be full time mummy hunters on the side, going to Peru next week. During a graphing lesson, Ms. Yellow asked the class to say, "Skewed," telling them that it was fun to say. In Language Arts, while introducing a small group activity, Ms. Yellow teasingly told the class that she and Mr. Black got tired of talking because after a while it sounded like "Blah blah..." Similar to Ms. Purple, Ms. Yellow hoped that humor would facilitate a more comfortable environment: "But you got to keep the humor, the fun into learning otherwise they'll shut off."

Both teachers possessed unique sayings and/or phrases, which appeared to contribute to a positive class environment. For example, Ms. Purple exclaimed "Oh my stars!" when something surprised her and added "aroni" as a suffix to spice up words such as "duh" and "quiz." Ms. Yellow frequently praised her students with cheers of "Woo hoo!" or "You've won the woo hoo award" and told her students, "Jeepers creepers" when something surprised or amazed her.

Students in both Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classes appeared to appreciate the humor of their teachers. For example, one student of Ms. Purple's remarked, "She makes it kind of fun so it's pretty cool..." One student of Ms. Yellow's shared that Ms. Yellow was especially responsive to student's needs:

> And if someone was put down, she (would) try to like brighten up their spirits a
> little more so they would be happier about their days through the school year.

Connecting and Reconnecting With Students

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow developed caring relationships with the majority of their students. Although Ms. Purple believed that she connected with about 95% of her students (e.g., "And I believe that most all of them know how much I care about them and their learning"), she admitted that she "didn't get there" with some of her students. Similarly, at the end of the year, Ms. Yellow contended that she established connections with most but not all of her students.

Beginning of the Day Bonding

Home base was a perfect time for Ms. Purple to begin bonding with students every morning. Besides informing students of daily events, Ms. Purple often asked students in her home base about their lives such as "What can I do for you? Anybody need anything?" Mr. B, how is your head?" or "Do you have any concerns just for home base stuff or life in general?" Because Ms. Yellow did not share a home base with students, she made sure to connect with her students when she entered math class, greeting them with, "Hi, how are you" or "What's going on?" Ms. Yellow believed that these connections were essential to student comfort:

Just in general I think being there and being supportive everyday is key with kids. Greeting them in the morning and give them a chance to interact with you is big.

Personal Stories

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also developed relationships with their students by sharing personal stories about their families. Ms. Purple frequently talked about various family members to illustrate class examples, but also to build connections. For example, during a Language Arts lesson on listening, Ms. Purple talked about her

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fourteen-year-old daughter pretending not to listen to her (i.e., engaging in selective listening) and her husband being a very nice man with a great sense of humor. Subsequent reflections of Ms. Purple exemplify how her family stories deliberately connected to her ultimate goals of emotional safety:

> I see the benefit of starting out lessons by providing examples of the relationships within my own family. Using that technique just makes me more real to the students. When I refer to my family or my colleagues, I'm very intentional about putting those people in positive light. I know our (Student) right now is having to go through counseling because of something with her dad. A lot of these kids don't have positive adults in their lives and so I try to make positive references even if I'm playing jokes, you know, sharing some information that's not maybe the prettiest, I try to do it in a very positive way to make a point. And for me, it's all about connections.

Ms. Yellow also incorporated her family life in lessons. For example, as the class recreated the events of a story they recently read in language arts, Ms. Yellow shared a personal story, which connected to the main character's life:

> I had a pet that died. Her name was Samantha. I still miss her. Why is it a big deal if her brother died?

In a lesson on "book choices," Ms. Yellow shared with the class that she loved reading children's books to her children:

> I still read those books to my children. I like to read those books. If you would come to my house, you would see tons of children's books.

Sometimes Ms. Yellow modeled assignments for students, with examples from her own life. For example, to help students with the survey project, she did a survey of her own based on her family members' preferences for ice cream. To introduce students to the writing process, Ms. Yellow showed her students a paper she wrote for a college course. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow shared stories about outings with their family members and friends, who were often other teachers in their respective buildings. The teachers shared such personal stories, as part of establishing student's emotional safety in the classroom, hoping to shape how their students viewed them via their personal stories:

> Ms. Yellow: "I think it is important getting the kids to think of us as people and not just teachers. Like that we have a life. I have kids. (Mr. Black) and I are friends. We shared that we went on a trip together with our spouses. And I think that they just see you in a different light then. Then it's not artificial or whatever...this is a place that you know you can feel comfortable in, we care about you kind of feeling..."

> Ms. Purple: "I try to be a real human being to them. Telling them when I have my ear infection. Not to whine and fuss but just to be a real person."

I Really Do Care About YOU

The teachers also connected with the students by showing them that they cared about them as individuals. Ms. Purple felt especially zealous about caring for her students: "And every kid best feel like I like them a lot. They deserve that." Ms. Purple did everything possible to connect with individual students, even wearing glasses one day to comfort a student with a new pair:

I think it's the writing them thank you notes when they give you whatever they give you, whether it's Christmas or something. I write them a thank you note because loving human beings treat one another that way. You know, just letting (Student) know, I'm here for you if you need me. It's about building relationships with them as people. When I see them in public and especially now that my daughter is their age –you know, speaking to them and that type of thing. Going out of my way to treat like a human being that I enjoy being around. And it's realizing that (Student) wants me to say goodbye to him everyday even when he is too shy to say it first.

Ms. Yellow believed that letting her students know she cared about them was essential to student success, "If they know that you care, they're going to want to do better for you." When students returned to school after absences, she told them, "Welcome back. I'm glad to see you." When students struggled with tasks, she encouraged them, "Do the best you can. That's all I ask." Ms. Yellow established caring relationships with her students, keeping the needs of individual students in mind at all times. For example, Ms. Yellow established a contingency contract with a student and took her out to lunch several times throughout the year after she fulfilled its requirements.

For Ms. Yellow, caring about students meant being responsive to their individual needs: "So there are different things that you've got to look at for different kids." After observing that a student did not write in his journal during writing workshop, Ms. Yellow tried various tactics to reengage him such as looking at him, ignoring him, mouthing "Please," and standing near him but not talking to him. She later explained that she eventually learned what he needed:

And I learned with him, the more you're on with him… He likes the space but if

he knows your expectation, he'll give you effort and try with most of it.

Ms. Yellow pushed students to do their best at all times. For example, in one

interaction with a student in social studies, Ms. Yellow looks at a student's paper and

tells him, "This is not ___'s best work." After probing the student on several of the

concepts, Ms. Yellow noticed his efforts, "Yeah. Very good. You got it."

Establishing a safe emotional environment and caring relationships with Ms.

Yellow's students facilitated academic connections, especially in language arts:

And I do believe that we've connected with the kids at a different level where

they're comfortable, they want to write for us…And I think just making that

connection with the kids and the fact that they're comfortable, that it's a non-

threatening environment where we're going to encourage them…

Celebrating Student Accomplishments

Caring about their students translated into celebrations of student

accomplishments. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow recognized the successes of their

students with positive phone calls home throughout the school year. Ms. Yellow

sometimes rewarded the whole class for various successes (e.g., completion of

homework, good behavior) with pizza parties, movies, and free time. Ms. Purple

celebrated successes with whole class praise (e.g., in the beginning of one reading class,

for example, she told the class that she "want(ed) to celebrate a little bit," telling them she

was thrilled reading their detailed comments in their recent papers on *Roll of Thunder,*

Hear My Cry.

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also recognized individual student successes. Ms. Purple considered the individual needs of students when celebrating successes:

And so I can't always determine what that will be for different kids but I just try continually when they have done their personal best to #1 be aware of it. Make it public if and only if public is meaningful for that child. Because we all know how that can be embarrassing instead. And then do whatever I can to make it special so it's a memorable moment on their journey...

Ms. Purple recognized individual students in a variety of ways. For example, Ms. Purple frequently chose a student to do special errands for her, aware that this student did not establish any close friends the entire year. Knowing that another student aspired to be an author, Ms. Purple made sure that she was editor of the school magazine, even though that student was not in her home base. Wanting to recognize the efforts of several students who volunteered during lunchtime, Ms Purple gave them first dibs on the new book orders.

Similarly, Ms. Yellow celebrated the successes of individual students, especially when they exerted effort on challenging assignments. In one math class that I observed, Ms. Yellow assisted a small group of students on a central tendency assignment:

Ms. Yellow: I'm not sure where each of your understanding is. Work on some problems to see where you are at.

During this small group time, Ms. Yellow walked around the classroom, advising and praising students as they worked through the problems:

Ms. Yellow: Which one are you doing? What do you have to do first?

Student responds.

Ms. Yellow: How did you come up with this answer? You did a great job! (She

pats student's shoulder).

Towards the end of the hour, Ms. Yellow spent some time working with one

student, asking him questions about his thought processes (e.g., "Is there a number you

see the most?" "How do you find the mean?" "When you find the mean, what do you

do?"). As the student successfully solved the problems and seemed to understand the

concepts, Ms. Yellow cheered him on, "You got it! Woo hoo! I'm excited!" "You didn't

think you'd ever get this. Go boy! Go!" Even after Ms. Yellow dismissed the class, this

student continued working, asking Ms. Yellow, "Do we have to stop?"

Ms. Yellow's excitement about this student's successes was related to her

knowledge about the challenges often experienced by this student:

That's just pride coming out. I'm so happy for him. All the effort he gives…I

mean, some kids, it comes so easily to them and everything he struggles with.

He's just a book with his cover opened up. Right now, he's letting us fill it up. So,

hopefully we can keep this trend going and we don't overwhelm him too much

where it shuts him down. But, he got the right answer and he did it himself and

just saying "Go boy go" just sounded appropriate.

Academic Comfort

Academic comfort was essential to the emotionally safe environments created by

Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple. As both of these teachers aspired for their students to feel

comfortable academically, they made particular decisions to ensure the academic comfort

of their students. Both of the teachers relayed messages to the students that demonstrated

that they cared about academic comfort. After introducing the lesson on fractions, for

example, Ms. Yellow told the class, "You may not know a lot about them now. I guarantee you're going to be much more comfortable." Similarly, in the introduction to homonyms, Ms Purple asked her class to "Say (the words) aloud" because she thought using that strategy would make the lesson easier for the students. Ms. Purple believed that this strategy promoted student's academic comfort:

> I frequently coach them to read their work aloud. Read it aloud. And so I try to get them to feel comfortable with their own voice.

Choosing Particular Students

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow intentionally chose students to answer questions based on their awareness of their learning needs. For example, in the beginning of a social studies class, Ms. Purple intentionally chose a student to answer a question because she knew he could answer this question:

> It started with (student) who isn't a shining star of the classroom, behaviorally or academically, so I used him as an example to reinforce to him- my golly I did something right and tried to make him the shining star for the moment.

Ms. Purple later shared that she wanted all of her students to feel like "stars" but it was sometimes difficult: "The challenge for me is having an environment where every kid can be that star sometime."

Similarly, Ms. Yellow intentionally called on a student to answer a question in the math warm up based on an awareness of the student's insecurities and because she knew she could do it:

I picked that question and picked her to do it for a reason, just for that, because I knew she could do it and it was going to prove to her she could do it. Because she is the type that would sit there quiet and not do any of her math warm-up.

Modifying Expectations Based on Awareness of Student Needs

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow modified their expectations, attuned to the emotional needs of individual students. For example, after noticing that a student was extremely self-conscious about her language arts paper, Ms. Yellow quietly coached the student, reassuring that she could improve her paper:

Student: I want to make sure it's good.

Ms. Yellow: Oh. Ok.

(Ms. Yellow reads the paper quietly).

Ms. Yellow: Who's "her" here?

Student: Matilda

Ms. Yellow: Ok that might make it stronger, to start it out with Matilda instead of her.

Ms. Yellow: Can you give me a specific example about how her family treated her poorly?

Student: They didn't care about her feelings.

Ms. Yellow: Give me an example that they didn't care about her feelings.

Student: Well she wanted to learn how to read and they didn't get her...

Ms. Yellow: That's a great example. Did you see how I mean? We need to get specific. And that gets me all excited about it!

Ms. Yellow also used the signals that she received from this student to determine when she should call on her to answer math problems, knowing that this student felt uncomfortable answering math problems when she doubted her academic capabilities:

She doesn't want to be called on if she's not getting it. I can tell by the look on her face where she's at with it. And I know when not to call her (and) when I can call her.

By comparison, Ms. Yellow recognized the difference between students who were paying attention but needed emotional support from her and students that needed to engage in the lesson:

And other students you know they're not getting it but they're not paying attention so you're going to call them out on it, "Hello?"

Similarly, consistent with Ms. Purple's attention to the "learner as a total human being," she modified her lesson plans and her expectations for participation based on the emotional needs of her students. For example, after learning that two of her students, who experienced many emotional difficulties, would probably participate in class if she worked with her peers, Ms. Purple modified a social studies reading assignment so it could be done in small groups. As I observed the students working in small groups, I noticed that the aforementioned students appeared engaged in the activity. Also, one of the student's peers encouraged the student to be even more engaged by telling her, "Come on. You can read more than that."

Unique Ways to Establish Academic Comfort by Teacher

Ms. Purple: "Stretch but Not Stress."

Although I observed similarities in how the teachers established academic comfort in the classroom, some differences existed. Ms. Purple, for example, maintained the motto, "stretch but not stress." Although she set high academic standards, she believed that she needed to "stretch them, not stress them beyond comprehension."

The language of caring emphasized in the beginning of the year continued throughout the year. For example, during a school-wide power outage, Ms. Purple reassured a student, "You're not to worry about the homework. We've had an interruption and you'll be okay." To illustrate a text-self connection, at the end of a language arts lesson, Ms. Purple told her students just how much she cared about them:

> I'm probably one of the most challenging teachers here. It could be misunderstood as I'm mean and don't care where truthfully I want you to learn and have big opportunities. I care about kids. I love kids more than most. I go at this job in a gang busters way.

Ms. Purple later reflected, "And I give the kids the blanket, if you ever don't know what's going on, come to me, I'll take care of you." When Ms. Purple noticed that several students were in danger of having the same headline in a current events assignment, for example, she reassured them, "It's okay. Whatever you brought, you get to talk about it. No matter what anyone else says, " adding that, "I'm in the business of solving problems. It takes a bigger problem than that to throw me for a loop." Similarly, as students began constructing a number book of Central America in social studies, Ms. Purple assured them that, "The instruction I've given you today will take care of everything you need to know for this project." A couple of minutes later, she told them exactly what she expected, "Some top quality projects with a lot of creativity." Ms.

Purple's communication to the students reflects her ultimate goal of emotional safety balanced with high expectations:

> And what I am seeing and hearing from parents is that kids are worried because I tend to set the standard pretty high and I do tend to go at things in an aggressive manner; the downside is your good, conscientious kid can get stressed out. It's my responsibility to take care of that. I have got to make sure they are ok. So I try to use particular language to help students fix their own problems (e.g., These are all the different ways you may have handled this task). To make it emotionally safe to share…So immediately I wanted to intervene, using that same language, solve a problem, not a problem because we can solve the problem and take care of the emotional safety of the kids in the classroom.

Ms. Purple used the "stretching" language with her students. For example, for the end of the year book club, she told them they had to read a book they did not think they would like, stretching them out of their comfort zone; "I'm stretching you…Expose yourself to a new genre. You can either be a sponge or a rubber band." When Ms. Purple anticipated student stress, however, she comforted her students. For example, after being absent for a couple of days, Ms. Purple acknowledged that her students might be feeling "nervous" about handing in an assignment. Ms. Purple reassured the class, "Whenever I change the rules, it's never going to hurt kids."

Ms. Yellow: Choose What Works for You

Consistent with Ms. Yellow's hopes for establishing an academic comfort zone in the classroom, she advised her students to choose strategies that fit their particular needs, especially in math class. During a graphing lesson, for example, Ms. Yellow informed the

class that they were going to make a histogram, telling them that they could make a frequency graph if they felt more comfortable with that. Ms. Yellow subsequently told the class, "I'm going to go through exactly what you have to do."

In several interactions with her students in math class, I observed that Ms. Yellow told students to pick problems with which they were most comfortable. For example, in the beginning of the year lesson on central tendency, Ms. Yellow encouraged a struggling student to pick the problems that he felt the most comfortable solving. Similarly, later in the year, after a student told her that he could not "do" division, Ms. Yellow told him that he could skip a couple of problems:

Student: I hate division!

Ms. Yellow: What would make it easier?

Student: I can't do it! Even when my parents explain it, I don't understand it.

Ms. Yellow: I'll do you a favor. Skip #2 and #8. I want all the rest done.

Ms. Yellow shared with me that it was important to establish a comfort zone to combat students' frustrations:

So I always tell them, pick the one that you're most comfortable with first because sometimes that will trigger the other ones. I think he's somewhat embarrassed because he didn't do them all… But you know, you did the ones you were comfortable with. That's the key to start with. Get comfortable with some and then we can add a little bit more.

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow Establish Emotional Safety in Different Ways

While both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow emphasized the importance of student emotional safety and seemed to agree on the definition of emotional safety, some differences emerged in how they established emotional safety or a comfort zone in their classes. While both teachers did establish connections with their students, I observed more attempts by Ms. Purple to connect with student's emotional needs and more attempts by Ms. Yellow to balance connections with students' thought processes and personal lives.

Ms. Purple's Emotional Connections

Ms. Purple, for example, explained that she tried to connect with every student every day (i.e., "I really try to either physically or verbally connect with every kid every day every class"). While her connections were deliberate and purposeful, the outside observer was not always aware of them. For example, in an introduction to a language arts lesson on listening, Ms. Purple began the lesson with dramatizations of "Can you hear me now?" and humorous anecdotes (e.g., being a former cheerleader). Ms. Purple ended the introduction with a humorous quip after telling the class that there was no way for absent students to make up the lesson. After telling the class to be glad that they were there today, she pauses and whispers, "Oh I am, Ms. Purple." The class then recited, "Oh I am, Ms. Purple." Ms. Purple jokingly told the class to "Say it like you mean it" and "Oh we love you..."

Ms. Purple later shared that she deliberately spoke to a student during that introduction based on previous conversations with his father:

That was my comment to (Student). You know I had that conversation with your dad, your dad and I are a team, and you know then sometimes the joke is we're ganging up on you but the bottom line is, we're a team. And I want you to be here. I'm SO glad you are here today. You couldn't learn this if you weren't.

Ms. Purple's sensitivity to student's emotional needs was especially present in difficult situations. For example, after learning that a student could not afford materials for a research project, Ms. Purple gave her the materials during lunchtime, telling her, "And honey, you know the word—advocate. It's take care of yourself and whenever you need something, you let me know."

Similarly, upon leaving for a doctor's appointment in the middle of the school day, Ms. Purple made sure to say goodbye and comfort a student who was experiencing many emotional difficulties:

> When (Student) was in detention and I had to leave and she was in the office saying, "I just want to be dead. I just want to be dead." I went to her and I just said, Honey, I wish I was going to be in class today because then you could come with me. I said, but I have to leave but I hope I see you tomorrow.

On numerous occasions, I observed Ms. Purple speaking quietly to a student in the hall after behavioral troubles occurred. For instance, after reprimanding a student for teasing her, Ms. Purple made sure to reconnect with him after school:

> It was quite the teachable moment about how that hurt my feelings and how whenever…I said, I am a human being too and just that. But then I reconnected with him after school. I said, honey, you do feel bad for having said that. I can tell. And I said, don't worry about it. It's ok. I just wanted to let you know that it

did hurt my feelings. But it's ok. So, reconnecting, letting him know but also making the standard in the classroom –we're not teasing anybody because we all deserve better than that.

The language used by Ms. Purple was especially instrumental in how she connected and reconnected with students. After an incoming substitute confessed that she was worried about a student disrupting the class, Ms. Purple asked this student to leave the classroom, telling him in a positive manner, that he needed a quieter place to work:

Substitute: B might be a problem.

Ms. Purple: Let's take care of it now.

Mrs. Purple calls the office: He's not in trouble. He just needs a quiet place to work.

As mentioned previously, although Ms. Purple did not believe that she connected with every student, she did her best to connect with all of her students, purposefully connecting with students who did not think she liked them. For example, Ms. Purple confided to me that when one of her students perceived that her teacher did not like her, Ms. Purple intervened; "So you know I just go out of my way to –oh can you help me, and oh…so now she thinks she's my shining star." Ultimately, Ms. Purple hoped that *all* of her students would see that they were "shining stars" in her classroom because of how much she tried to show them that she genuinely liked and cared about them.

Ms. Purple's strong commitment to student's emotional needs was driven by her beliefs about the role of educators as "bridge builders," asserting that her students were only "eleven years old and they shouldn't be expected to handle it all on their own."

Ms. Yellow's Personal Connections

Ms. Yellow believed that personal connections with her students were essential to the learning process:

> But I think if you're really going to get every student to be able to learn, you have to know how that student learns and how they perform and what's going on in their life just so that you can connect with them and make that distinction in there.

Ms. Yellow frequently connected with students' personal lives to engage them in class material. For example, in social studies class one day, she encouraged the students to discuss their parent's employment in order to understand the concept of labor. Ms. Yellow later explained that once the students connected with the concept, they were engaged in the activity:

> And I think almost all the kids in there wanted to share what their parents did. If those kids didn't even make those connections among themselves... just talks about who works for (company) and what their parents did... once they made that connection, they were totally engaged in that activity.

Ms. Yellow connected with individual students by expressing genuine interest in their personal lives (e.g., "Oh you're on the basketball team. That's great" or "Oh you're playing the flute. How's that going?"). These personal connections facilitated a variety of interactions with her students, including the frequent individual conferences she held with students to discuss math assignments or writing in language arts. In these conferences, Ms. Yellow communicated with her students about their academic challenges, within the context of a supportive environment:

And I think just making that connection with the kids and the fact that they're comfortable, that it's a non-threatening environment where we're going to encourage them and we're not going to candy coat it because we told them that. When we conference with you, I'm not here to say, "Oh this is the best writing." I'm looking at here to critique it to see where we can make it better.

After observing Ms. Yellow consult with several students during a language arts conference session, I walked around the room, conversing with several students immediately following the conference, curious about their reactions to the conference. On my way to speak to a student, another student stopped me and asked me about my own experiences in middle school. After we talked briefly about middle school, this student professed that she thought high school was going to be easy. Interestingly enough, Ms. Yellow had shared with me that initially, this student, who had a learning disability, felt extremely self-conscious about her paper in the conference, but then loosened up as the conference progressed. In another conversation, a student told me that although he was not finished with his paper, he knew what he had to do. Based on previous conversations with Ms. Yellow, I knew that this student (who also had a learning disability) did not frequently engage in class material because it was so difficult for him.

Ultimately, Ms. Yellow's personal connections with students encouraged academic connections. As Ms. Yellow expressed interest in student's personal lives, she remained sensitive to their academic struggles. Consequently, many of the students in Ms. Yellow's class felt comfortable in their learning environment.

Summary of Results: Emotional Safety .

Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple emphasized the importance of establishing student emotional safety in their classrooms. The teachers addressed emotional safety in the beginning of the school through introductions, routines, and the development of early relationships. As the year progressed, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow remained committed to emotional safety by being highly aware of and responsive to their student needs. While some differences emerged in the particular ways the teachers responded to their student's needs (i.e., Ms. Purple's emphasis on emotional connections vs. Ms. Yellow's emphasis on personal connections), both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple implemented practices and communicated in ways that reflected their concern for student's emotional needs in and out of the classroom.

Goal #2: Importance of Student Mastery and Valuing of Academics

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow adamantly hoped that their students would achieve mastery of academic skills and content, as well as value their academic endeavors. Upon walking into Ms. Purple's classroom, students entered a "Learning Zone," as exemplified by the bright poster hanging on the door that greeted them. Early in the school year, Ms. Purple proclaimed, "That's what I want your #1 goal for sixth grade to be-- to learn." Ms. Purple also frequently reminded students to value what they were learning. Ms. Purple's "All about me" stated, for example, "Obviously I value education and love to learn." Similarly, Ms. Yellow constantly asked her students to share what they learned in class work and on homework assignments. Also, during the school year, Ms. Yellow modeled the importance of life-long learning by sharing

personal examples and stories from her own college-level work and life, and hoped to encourage student pride and ownership by posting student papers throughout the cluster.

Achieving Mastery Is Possible In My Classroom

Opportunities to "Fix It"

In both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow's classes, students received endless opportunities to improve upon all of their assignments. As Ms. Yellow relayed, "They could always redo any of their work if they needed to." Ms. Purple's classroom procedures guided stated, "It is my goal that all skills are mastered by every student. That may mean that from time to time an assignment may need to be redone. Always feel free to check with me about this if you are concerned."

Ms. Purple provided "fix it" opportunities for her students, hoping that they would ultimately feel good about their efforts: "If they can fix it, that's where I want them to go, leave school feeling successful, feeling like they've done it and they've done it well." Ms. Purple set up this policy because of her strong desire to balance emotional safety with high quality student work. As students completed a social studies test packet, Ms. Purple confided to me, "The beautiful thing is they can fix it. They don't always remember." She later relayed a similar message to the class, "Oh my sweet children loveable ones. A lot of people didn't do it…Tomorrow I will let you correct anything that's wrong. How many people does that breathe a sigh of relief?" The entire class raised their hands. Ms. Purple further told the class that she wanted them to "prove" to her they knew the information.

Ms. Purple sometimes reminded students of opportunities to improve their work. For example, in a reminder prior to a social studies lesson, she maintained her hopes for student mastery:

> Remember one of the classroom procedures. Sometimes you'll get assignments back and you won't be really happy about it. Don't be so hard on yourselves. You don't have to do perfect in 6th grade. You have to be getting better, right? You have to be learning more and more. You have to be trying your hardest, right? But be okay with yourself. If you mess up, be willing to fix it. And I've had some people say, "Can I do this again? Can I fix my problem?" Sure.

Ms. Purple let her students know that she appreciated their extra efforts to improve upon their work:

> No matter how much work it takes, you're willing to put in the effort it takes to do a good job.

Modifying Lessons To Meet Individual Student Needs

Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple periodically changed their lessons and activities to meet the needs of their students. For example, after observing that the majority of their students struggled with paragraph writing in the beginning of the year, Ms. Yellow and Ms. Black decided to "return back to the basics" in writing and spend three days conducting individual conferences with students in language arts. After discussing the conferences with the students, Ms. Yellow told the class, "I'm going to make sure you get it. My job is for you to understand it." Ms. Yellow believed that she needed to modify her instruction at times to reach more of her students:

To really make that work, you either got to do individual, small group or split the class up because at that point, the whole instruction wasn't reaching everyone so you got to break that up or decide a different learning pattern for them so that maybe you can reach it with them.

Sometimes Ms. Yellow modified lessons based on a small number of students. For example, when Ms. Yellow could not gauge several of her students' understanding of a math concept, she decided that she needed to work with them individually in a small group:

I also know that I don't like to end the lesson (when) I don't feel like the kids got the concept at all either and that drives me nuts all night like in my mind, what are we going to do tomorrow to recapture that? Or you know figure out what they were doing.

Ms. Yellow constantly checked her students' understanding, believing that lesson plans were not set in stone:

When a teacher brings to me their plans from years and years and they follow the same plan book then they are not looking at the individual needs because you can NOT...It's not that easy, it's not that cut and dry, you know I did this on this day last year so these kids will be ready for that...because the kids come in with different backgrounds and what teachings they've had and what teachers they've had and you know experiences... I always evaluate, how did that go? Do I need to re-teach something on that before I move on?

Ms. Yellow was extremely aware of how her students learned, using that knowledge to support students as they confronted academic challenges. For example,

during a small group math activity, Ms. Yellow questioned students based on a strong awareness of their individual learning needs. For example, Ms. Yellow posed questions and used strategies (e.g., drawing squares to represent percentages and folding the paper to focus the students on similarities in the process) that were specifically tailored for the visual learning needs of three students:

> They're all visual learners so they need to do those written examples, concrete examples written on the board. They couldn't even just come up with it on their own so that's why I needed to prep them a lot or question, probe, just to get the info from them without me just telling them. Because it would have been much easier, much quicker if I would have just said, you do this, this, and this and show me how to do it. Then you do it. But then they wouldn't have gotten it.

> Ms. Purple also modified lessons, activities, and assignments based on the needs of her students. Sometimes Ms. Purple used mini lessons to reinforce and re-teach reading strategies. For example, after observing that students did not understand the language arts story prior to a writing assignment, Ms. Purple reminded them of several comprehension strategies and asked the class to reread the story because, "They are going to help you understand the story and (are) almost like prewriting."

> Ms. Purple also modified the class schedule to provide students with additional in class time to work on various projects. Similarly, Ms. Purple modified due dates of assignments after unexpected disruptions occurred (e.g., substitute teachers, snow days). Ms. Purple also modified the timing of novels based on her previous experiences with them. For example, Ms. Purple chose to spend the beginning of the year on *Where The*

Red Fern Grows instead of *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* because it was much easier for the students.

Ms. Purple also modified instruction based on individual student needs. For example, instead of scolding a student with severe emotional difficulties for not doing her work, Ms. Purple tried to make it easy as possible for her to succeed (e.g., asking her probing questions during round circle discussions, providing her with several ideas for the explanatory essay presentation). Similarly, after one student asked if she could read magazines for her at home reading assignment because she enjoyed them, Ms. Purple agreed, telling her that she had "great respect for a student and a mom that wants to be honest." Ms. Purple confided to me that she remained mindful that this student was reading novels in her classes:

> I know she's having to read *Roll of Thunder* for my reading class. I know she's having to read a book for book club in language arts. If she chooses to read magazines for that 20 minutes at home, I want to be okay with that. And so I said, "Yes"...

Explicit Strategy Instruction

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow taught a variety of strategies and constantly insisted that their students used them. Ms. Yellow explained that strategies provided students with "skills that they're going to use throughout their life." Ms. Purple frequently reminded her students of the benefits of strategies (e.g., helping them write better, understand a story better), explaining that they sounded "intelligent" when they used various strategies. Both of the teachers modified their instruction based on the guidance of another research project, which emphasized comprehension strategies. Ms. Purple, for

example, attached cards with all of the strategies (e.g., visualizing, building on knowledge, making predictions) to the ceiling of her classroom, often asking her students to point to the strategies they used.

The teachers questioned their students about the strategies they used across all of their classes (e.g., during a math lesson, Ms. Yellow praised a student for using a particular strategy, "That's an excellent strategy," asking the rest of the class what strategies they used (e.g., "Did anyone do it a different way?"). Likewise, during a reading lesson, Ms. Yellow instructed, "Your job is to write down the sentence when you found it in the book. What strategy can we use to do that? Similarly, in preparation for a language arts essay, Ms. Yellow, for example, asked the class, "What would be some good strategies when writing a rough draft?" Also, when Ms. Yellow introduced a partnership activity in language arts with the nearby Kindergarten class, she informed the students, "You guys are going to be these K buddies role models for reading. What are some strategies you can show them? Finally, in social studies, Ms. Yellow encouraged her students to use the comprehension strategies when they took notes from the textbook.

At the beginning of most reading classes, Ms. Purple read aloud a couple of pages from a novel (e.g., *Bud Not Buddy, Hollis Woods, Because of Winn Dixie*), modeling the use of comprehension strategies to students:

Ms. Purple: Are you visualizing what (character) looks like right now?

Ms. Purple: Do you guys have Christmas ornaments at home?

Several students respond.

Ms. Purple: What did you just do?

Student: Make a connection.

Ms. Purple: What type of text am I reading?

Student responds.

Ms. Purple: Are you kind of glad that I didn't blame...are you kind of getting an idea? Building some knowledge?

To prepare the students for a language arts reading assignment, Ms. Purple questioned them about the comprehension strategies they discussed earlier that week (e.g., "Tell me in your own words, what does it mean to visualize when you're reading?" "What does it mean to be evaluative?" "What does it mean to make connections?" "What does it mean to preview?"). After the students practiced the reading strategies individually, Ms. Purple asked students to share the specific strategies they used while reading the play in their language arts textbooks (e.g., "What's a reading strategy and how did you use it?").

Similarly, in preparation for a social studies reading assignment, Ms. Purple asked her students to tell her what reading strategies they could use while reading from the text.

Ms. Purple: "What's an effective reading strategy for when you have a textbook?"

Student: Skim and look for bold words.

Ms. Purple: Do it now.

Ms. Purple: What's another textbook reading strategy that you should put into place?

Student: Read captions.

Ms. Purple: Look at the captions and study them.

Ms. Purple: What's another strategy?

Student: Reading the questions at the end.

Ms. Purple: Go there. Kind of helps you. Do you know any of the answers?

Both of the teachers communicated to their students that strategies would benefit their learning. Ms. Yellow shared with her students: "I want you to be the best writers you can be. That's why we're working on these strategies." As Ms. Purple instructed students to re-read a story in language arts, she told her students to, "Add more strategies:"

Ms. Purple: You have to have the reading strategies. They are going to help you understand the story. Almost like prewriting.

Student: It was hard to do strategies.

Ms. Purple: Do the best you can. I'm doing this to help you understand the story.

High Quality Work

Connected to their hopes of student mastery, both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple demanded high quality work from their students. After conferencing with a student in language arts, for example, Ms. Yellow asked him, "You tell me if that's your best work. You think about it. Give me more sentences and then tell me if it's your best work." At the end of a revising and editing session in language arts, Ms. Purple asked her students, "Are you going to have a good quality product for me tomorrow? Make sure you tell me you were here today. Apply what you learned." Both of the teachers valued student efforts (e.g., "It's important that you do your best effort;" "Do the best that you can")

Evidence of Mastery

At the end of the school year, both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were reluctant to quantify the learning of their students. Ms. Purple simply said, "But what I do know is I

know my kids." Throughout the school year, Ms. Purple examined how each of her students progressed in a variety of skills. Ms. Purple also questioned the validity of standardized test scores, preferring her knowledge of student growth:

> But I question some of the validity of that. I know they grow in my own analysis on their writing ability as they progressed through the year in their own portfolios that are now in the hands of their parents.

> Similarly, Ms. Yellow preferred the daily accomplishments of her students as evidence of their learning: "I do believe that their daily work to me is more important than what they can always accomplish on a test or an assessment at the end of an unit. Because on a daily basis if they're able to accomplish…because so many kids freeze up on those tests and that but they know so much more than what they can show you sometimes on that given day."

Both teachers monitored the progress of their students throughout the school year: Ms. Purple explained, "The things that I am noting that they are learning and that they are doing well on are part of the written curriculum of (District) public schools. Ms. Yellow remarked, "Progress I mean on individually, it's the same thing when you're monitoring or looking how you're going to pace the whole lesson for the whole group. You have to look at their needs on that basis and try to figure it out.

Stories Of Individual Student Growth

Both of the teachers shared stories about the growth of individual students in their classes. Ms. Purple, for example, reflected on a conversation with student who was extremely hesitant to read in the beginning of the school year:

My mom never has to ask me if I'm going to read anymore. And I'm so proud and my mom's so proud of what a good reader I am. It took her from September to December to get through *The Black Stallion* and now she's devouring books.

Individual students also appreciated being in Ms. Purple's class. For example, late in the school year and even the following school year, individual students informed Ms. Purple that they were reading more than ever before and reading a variety of new genres. During the following school year, former students visited Ms. Purple to chat about novels that they read in her classes. Prior to the next school year, the siblings of former students also requested Ms. Purple as a teacher.

Ms. Yellow also shared a story about successfully building the confidence of a student who would not even attempt most math problems in the beginning of the school year:

All those things that we talked about in math when you're doing problem solving, what's the question so they can focus in on it. So I mean those are the kind of things I can see as a teacher what she's learned. Compared to what she did at the beginning wouldn't even attempt.

Examples of Student Progress

Students in both classes progressed throughout the year on a variety of skills. For example, Ms. Yellow administered a grade-level standardized test to her students at the beginning and at the end of the school year to ascertain her students' growth in math. On six of her students' tests, all six of the students increased at least two grade levels in

computational skills and problem solving, with some students increasing four grade levels in those areas.

Students in Ms. Yellow's class also perceived that they progressed in language arts, as evident by their end of the year portfolio reflections:

Student #1: I have improved most on my spelling and punctuation.

Student #2: My biography because I haven't got any mistakes on my paper.

Student #3: I think I have improved the most on spelling and topic sentences.

Students' parents affirmed the student reflections in Ms. Yellow's class. For example, one student concluded, "I have done very good at progressing in my paragraph form and topic sentence form." The parent of this student similarly believed her child's strengths in writing included, "Creativity and paragraph structure." While another student was especially proud of a book cover that she had created for *Where The Red Fern Grows*, she knew that she needed to still work on her "spelling and grammar." The parent of this student agreed that her child continued to struggle with "punctuation, paragraph structure, etc…"

In Ms. Purple's class, students wrote an end of the year essay, highlighting their successes and challenges. Several students discussed their improvement in reading and writing:

Student #1: I exceeded in becoming a better reader. I was stuck (with) one type of genre, realistic fiction. I am now reading all types of books.

Student #2: With the help of (Ms. Purple) and (Resource Teacher), I have become better at writing. From recognizing verbs and all those good English terms, to

writing essays. Writing is a bit more easier for me now than it was back at the

beginning of the year.

Student #3: But for every book we read we had to write a letter about it. That was

a great success and helped us understand that there is more to reading than

enjoying the book.

Other students shared success stories in social studies:

Student #4: My biggest success this year was my edible Central America map.

(Student), (Student), (Student), and I all got 3's and 4's.

Student #5: Another success is Core Democratic Values. I liked CDV before but

now I love it and this really really helped me express my true feelings about

common good.

In an end of the school year reflection of the language arts portfolio, the parents of

Ms. Purple's students also observed growth in their children in a variety of skills:

Parent #1: Reason and distinguish between words. This "growth" can be

measured on her interest to ask about "why's" and "how's" and how others judge

people.

Parent #2: Describe what she is writing about creatively.

Parent #3: Communicate a particular point.

Parent #4: Be able to express herself on paper.

One parent was especially pleased with how well his daughter could write. He

observed growth in her ability to: "Tell a good story. It was interesting to see her apply

the life lessons of others to her own experiences." After reading her son's portfolio, another parent understood, "Why he didn't like to read before and why he enjoys it now." This parent perceived that her son grew in his ability to "express his feelings more on paper and his ability to write poems."

Connection between Mastery and Value

Consistent with the sixth grade curriculum's emphasis on foundational skills (e.g., in language arts, the students were expected to understand and use the steps of the writing process), the teachers hoped to instill a foundation of knowledge in their students. Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple envisioned the foundation as the building blocks of learning:

Ms. Yellow: "With the deal with learning is building blocks you know. It's just like you know a toddler...building up your building with those building blocks. Get your tower higher and higher in some sense."

Ms. Purple: "I see it as building blocks and I have to find out where they're at and take them on regardless of where they're at."

The connection between instilling a foundation and the value of learning was obvious for both of the teachers. For example, during math class, Ms. Yellow modeled a sample collection report for the students to show them what they needed to include in their own report. Ms. Yellow explained that she hoped to build a foundation for paragraph writing because she did not "feel like these kids have a foundation of what a good essay looks like." Ms. Yellow further reflected:

And so I think that's those building blocks that they need...if we start them in 6th grade and if they build on to them 7th and so on, they'll have that foundation for

whatever career, whatever life plan they're going to, that they can at least write a good paragraph and those things.

Ms. Purple sometimes spoke to her students about "big time learning," telling them, "Truthfully, I want you to learn and have big opportunities." During a prewriting exercise in preparation for a biography writing assignment, for example, Ms. Purple encouraged her students to devise higher-level questions, "I want you to go bigger folks. I think we need to ask some why questions." Building a foundation was consistent with Ms. Purple's desire for student valuing of learning:

> I'm thinking I want to give you the foundation so that you have every opportunity for every choice that you would so desire.

Learn It Forever!

The Value of Learning

Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple believed that they needed to convince their students that what they were learning was worthwhile:

> Ms. Yellow: "That's the challenge. To make it…that they got to value it so they think it's worthwhile doing."

> Ms. Purple: "I want them to realize that what we are doing here in this room for 6th grade applies to other learning that they're going to do, whether it's in other classrooms. That what we do isn't just because I said. I want to attach value to what we're doing."

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow regularly communicated the value of lessons to their students in various ways. Ms. Yellow emphasized the importance of lessons by repeatedly telling her students that they were important (e.g., "I really think ___ is

important" or "This is one of the most important things"). Sometimes, Ms. Yellow conveyed to her students that she hoped they would remember a lesson forever. For example, after questioning students on the five themes of geography, Ms. Yellow concluded, "Hopefully, now and forever, you will be able to tell the five themes."

Ms. Purple emphasized the value of learning to her students. For example, during a word study lesson on synonyms, she informed her class, "These dittos help us learn as a group. The real value is your own writing." Ms. Purple also frequently told her students to "Learn it forever." After a lesson on capitalization, for example, she told her class, "This is not something you learn for this ten minutes. You learn this forever. When you go to seventh grade, I want people to know that you know how to capitalize…" After noticing that a student did not capitalize a proper noun on a map in social studies, Ms. Purple told him to "Fix it and you'll learn it forever."

There is a Purpose

Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple attempted to convince their students of the value of lessons by informing them and/or questioning them regarding the purpose of activities. Both teachers posed questions to their students such as, "Why are we learning this? Why is this important? Why do we need to know this?" "Why in the world do you think I have you do this?" What are you learning in _____ today?" Ms. Purple reflected on her intentions for students understanding the purpose of learning:

> I've been much more intentional making sure children know why in the world
> we're doing this. What I don't want them to simply be are trained circus animals
> that do it because I say so. I want them to understand the purpose for the tasks that
> I'm asking them to do.

Ms. Purple conveyed the value of the activity by reminding students of the purpose of the activity. For example, during a social studies group project, Ms. Purple reminded students of her "learn it forever" motto:

Ms. Purple: What's my goal for you as social studies students?

Student: Learn about Central America.

Student: Geography.

Ms. Purple: State benchmarks….Western Hemisphere. I hope this is enjoyable so you might learn it (pauses) forever. What?

Class: Forever!

Sometimes the teachers questioned students about activities or lessons from previous days to emphasize the value of them. For example, after conversing with the students about a bar graph lesson from the previous day, Ms. Yellow asked the class to recall the purpose of the lesson:

Ms. Yellow: Why did we do that yesterday?

Student: Comparing graphs.

Ms. Yellow: Exactly. Interpretations and conclusions.

The teachers also communicated the purpose of the activities to emphasize the importance of them, hoping to convey to students that the activities would help them learn. For example, when Ms. Purple asked the class why they were studying capitalization in world study, she explained, "Because, in your writing you've done for me, you've shown me that you don't know…" Similarly, after discussing folktales with the students, Ms. Yellow asked the class to share their thoughts regarding the purpose of this discussion:

Ms. Yellow: What's the point of us doing this? Why do we do this activity? Why do we care about folktales?

Student: Learn about different parts of story.

Student: Learning about different genres.

Ms. Yellow: Excellent. What are we going to do next? Don't you have to know the parts of folktale to write our own?

During a vocabulary lesson in social studies, Ms. Purple conversed with several students about the importance of learning vocabulary and keeping lists of vocabulary in their binders:

Ms. Purple: Why in the world do you think I have you do this?

Student: In December we don't remember a word, we can look in binders and it will be there.

Student: Maybe it'll be on the test.

Ms. Purple: Oh.

Student: Later on in the future.

Student: For reference.

Student: Keep it forever.

Ms. Purple: Why do you think I ask you to write key word?

Student: Learn.

Ms. Purple: It helps you learn and understand.

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow Especially Value...

Although Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow both highlighted the value of lessons to their students, they expressed their preferences for particular values. While Ms. Purple

emphasized classroom time for learning and the importance of life-long reading, Ms. Yellow connected lessons to the real world.

Ms. Purple's Emphasis on Classroom Learning Time and "Read Forever!"

Ms. Purple was especially passionate about learning and communicating the value of learning to her students. Ms. Purple, for example, pledged it was "All about the learning" and "Nothing can interfere with the learning." For example, although Ms. Purple allowed her students to use the restroom from time to time, she did not provide her students with a daily break.

Five minute breaks everyday for a 180 school days based on six hours a day makes you waste two and half days of school a year so that everybody can go to the bathroom and get a drink at the same time. I'm not willing to give that time because there's too much learning to be done. I don't have a kid fussing to me about that. I have kids who need to use the restroom from time to time and we make way for that…

Ms. Purple also adamantly desired for her students to enjoy reading and writing. For example, Ms. Purple told her students, "If I do anything for you this year, I want you to fall in love with reading and writing. That's my goal." In the weekly book club, students in Ms. Purple's class conversed about books and wrote letters about the books they read to Ms. Purple and to their peers.

Ms. Purple made it clear that she would not tolerate students who disrupted reading time; "Remember reading time is not a time we can waste time. It's hard to give you reading time when I get requests such as, "Can I go to the bathroom?" No, this is sacred."

Ms. Purple's message of "Read forever" persisted as the school year progressed. In the last week of the school year, for example, Ms. Purple posted "Read forever" on the assignment board for language art's homework. After reading the assignment, several students remarked, "I will read forever." Similarly, Ms. Purple signed all of her student's yearbooks with a simple message, "Read forever." Finally, on the last day of school, Ms. Purple provided her students with a "summer passport to reading," instructing her students to share their summer reading experiences with her.

Parents believed that Ms. Purple's love of reading transferred to their children. One parent commented that her daughter now enjoyed reading for pleasure. This parent noted that her daughter "finally discovered the joy in reading a good book, rather than looking at it as a chore." Similarly, another parent claimed that her daughter regained her "love of reading" again after losing it with a previous teacher.

Ms. Yellow's Connections to the Real World

Ms. Yellow regularly connected lessons/activities to the real world, especially in math class. For example, in the "Fraction Hunt," the students searched the classroom for examples of fractions (e.g., based on the number of teachers in the room, the number of bookshelves, the number of students, etc...). Ms. Yellow highlighted the importance of fractions in the real world:

> You don't realize fractions are around you all the time. Raise your hand if you like to shop? Believe me. These are going to be the most important lessons you need to know. These are life lessons. Ladies and gentleman, you are going to be the experts.

Following the lesson, a student shared with me that she now saw fractions everywhere!

And when I saw stuff around me, there was lots of fractions to fit the board that she gave us, that she gave fractions on the board. And then um, I started looking around out the classroom and I saw five people talking and one person um going at their locker. And I was going to write that but it had to be in the classroom so...

Another student appreciated the utility value of the lesson, as he thought about Ms. Yellow's introduction to the fraction hunt.

Yeah and I think they are because you can use them in a whole bunch of different jobs and stuff so they could kind of help you later on in life.

Ms. Yellow also frequently connected math lessons to student's everyday lives. For example, when the students needed to solve a money problem, she asked them to raise their hands if they babysat, discussing the connections between babysitting money and the problem. Similarly, in the percents lesson, Ms. Yellow talked about sales and how students could find percentages off their favorite clothing and apparel. Students in Ms. Yellow's class also computed percentages from a restaurant menu.

Ms. Yellow's connections to the real world extended to social studies class. For example, after watching an economics video, Ms. Yellow questioned her class about the natural resources used by the school. Ms. Yellow frequently connected class material to the real world, even when she did not originally plan extended discussions about concepts

such as the division of labor as related to the labor of the student's parents, believing that these connections were essential to student engagement and ultimately lifelong learning:

So I mean the kids need to be connected what also engages their learning...
Because content is important but you also need to teach the strategies and make those connections with them because they'll be able to use those strategies throughout school and life hopefully.

Summary of Results: Mastery and Value

Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple frequently communicated the importance of student mastery and valuing of academics to their students by acknowledging the skills that students were learning, as well as the importance and purpose of class material. While many similarities existed in how Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow expressed their hopes for student mastery and valuing of academic tasks, some differences emerged in what the teachers valued. For example, Ms. Purple was especially passionate about her love of reading and transferred this love of reading to many of her students. In comparison, Ms. Yellow regularly made connections between academic material and lessons to the real world, communicating to students that what they were learning was representative of the real world.

Goal #3: Striving for Participation, Especially Self-Regulated Participation

The final result concerned the teachers' desire for their students to participate, or to engage in the classroom. The teachers believed that engagement, or participation was necessary to their students' successes:

Ms. Purple: "What is my ultimate goal- that they're engaged academically and growing from where they're at because where they have to go in the state of ___ is so huge."

Ms. Yellow: "If you have them actively engaged in learning, they can do anything..."

In addition, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow expected their students to become self-regulated participants in their learning. They expected the sixth graders to assume responsibility for their behaviors and for their learning.

It's Worthwhile to Participate

Both of the teachers believed that it was necessary for their students to feel like it was worthwhile to participate in the classroom. Ms. Purple pointed out the benefits of participating to her students, "Everybody needs to participate because when you do participate, you learn more and class is a more fun place to be..." Ms. Yellow communicated to her students that their participation in the lesson would aid their understanding, often asking her students, "Are you with me? I want to make sure everyone understands." Ms. Yellow perceived that student attention was essential to student understanding; "At least I know if I have their attention then they have a half chance of getting what I'm trying to say." Ms. Yellow also believed that her students would engage only if they perceived not only the value of particular lessons or activities but also the challenge of them:

> So the assignment needs to be challenging to them so they see it as worthwhile and it's challenging their brains so they want to engage. Because kids won't engage if they think it's too simple.

Encouraging Self-Regulated Participation

Monitoring and Evaluating Your Efforts

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow expected students to regulate their behaviors. In Ms. Purple's class, students regularly monitored and evaluated their own and their peer's efforts. For example, in language arts, Ms. Purple asked students to evaluate the "picture adjective" assignment using the grading guide before they turned it in:

Now using your rubric, look at your poster. Look at the third column of the rubric. Put a "X" by what you think your poster deserves…next look at column…put a "X" where you evaluated your paper…Switch with a partner. Evaluate your partner's paper. On their rubric, put your initial just like we've done in social studies….

Students in both Ms. Yellow's and Ms. Purple's classes also reflected on their academic progress in their portfolios. For example, following a district writing assessment, Ms. Purple's students reflected on their strengths and possibilities for improvement. Ms. Purple advised her students to, "Learn from the comments. Set your goals for improvement. And you should have one goal be including details."

Similarly, in both language arts and math, Ms. Yellow's students periodically completed portfolios throughout the school year, assessing their strengths, goals for improvement, and attitudes towards their work. Ms. Yellow believed that the portfolios encouraged students to value their work because of the reflective opportunities. According to Ms. Yellow, portfolios were necessary to the student's development as learners: "(They) cannot move on until they know what they've learned." Since students

had to share their reflections with their families, it is possible that students valued the portfolios in and of themselves:

Ms. Yellow: "Because it's got to be a full circle. That these kids got to know that we are doing it for something besides just for themselves. But to show what they know for the parents too."

These portfolios encouraged the students to reflect upon specific assignments as well as their skills. In an end of the year language arts portfolio, one student of Ms. Yellow's reflected, "I am most proud of my biography because I worked very hard on it…I need to work on punctuation and creativeness the most."

Fixing Your Problems

Both teachers expected their students to fix their own problems. Ms. Purple, for example, purposefully used the "fix it" language to encourage student self-regulation:

They can fix it. And I try to use that language – that you can fix it… And often times they can fix it all on their own, whether it's writing themselves a note or seeking adult intervention.

For example, Ms. Purple instructed her students to write a note to remind them as they edited and revised a language arts paper: "If you don't have four paragraphs, write on your rough draft the number of paragraphs that need to be added on. Write yourself a note."

Ms. Yellow also hoped that her students would develop self-regulatory skills now to prepare them for the future. For example, after modeling elements of a math project, Ms. Yellow asked students to share their "plans for the next two days":

Instead of telling them, I'm starting to ask them. You know, what's a good plan? What's going to work for you? And then kids can get ideas about what their plan is for doing their assignment or whatever instead of the teacher telling them.... I mean, they're getting into secondary school now and there's a lot more projects and things that they have to orient themselves. With that you always cannot wait until the last minute to do.

Acting Responsibly

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow believed that students needed to convince them that they were responsible despite challenges. Ms. Yellow encouraged students to take ownership over their learning, when they answered problems in class. For example, when Ms Yellow instructed students on the math homework, she asked them, "Raise your hand when you think you understand and tell me in your own words when you understand how to do..." After explaining directions to the whole class, Ms. Yellow checked if students could tell her the expectations for that day.

Ms. Purple also appreciated responsible students, especially when they handed in late homework assignments:

I'm going to call for late work. I know some of you are trying to be responsible because there was such a wealth of it yesterday.

Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow expected their students to assume responsibility for their own learning even when they confronted parental challenges to the process. Ms. Yellow, for example, discussed how a student's parent wanted her to write everything in the student's agenda everyday because he did not know what was going on in class. In

her conversation with the parent, Ms. Yellow shared that she did not think he would learn responsibility for his learning if she took care of it for him:

I'm doing him a disservice if I do that... he's got to take ownership in his own work...he needs to start taking responsibility for his learning because if he doesn't do it now, who's going to have him do it next year you know...

Ms. Yellow maintained the utility value of assuming responsibility in sixth grade:

So hopefully the work habits we've created will follow them on to high school. You know, filling out your agenda, organizing your folder. When the teacher says to be here and sitting on your seat and being prepared, that they will be ready to take that on to junior high then high school, college or whatever job they are going on.

Similarly, Ms. Purple expected her students to assume responsibility for their own learning despite obstacles. After learning that a student did not have his language arts assignment, for example, Ms. Purple communicated that she expected him and his dad to be responsible:

Ms. Purple: What about a Friday folder for reading?

Student: Don't got one.

Ms. Purple: Do you think your dad would get you one?

Student: Yes.

Ms. Purple: Let's write him a note. Not going to do him any good if he doesn't have assignment.

Student responds.

Ms. Purple: What's in it for me?

Student: I don't know.

Ms. Purple: What do I want?

Student: The paper.

Ms. Purple: So do you think it's worth it for me to give you another one?

Student: Yes.

As the year progressed, however, Ms. Purple's expectations for student engagement changed. Towards the end of the year, in particular, Ms. Purple expected her students to assume more responsibly for their learning. For example, during a language arts note taking lesson, Ms. Purple informed her students, "This is the middle... no, this is the end of sixth grade and you need to be responsible for writing down some of these statements yourself and not have me tell you everything." Ms. Purple also realized that her students desired more responsibility. For example, at the beginning of a daily oral language exercise, Ms. Purple hoped to encourage participation when telling her students, "This is about your only chance to tell me what to do. So I would think lots of hands would be up in the air to tell me what to do." Ms. Purple's hopes for student responsibility motivated her remarks: "I try to encourage. I try to go from their point of view. And what I know is that 11 and 12 year olds are trying to break away from adult control so that was my first comment, "This is your chance to tell me what to do," just perceiving that they would LOVE to tell an adult what to do."

It's What You Choose To Do

Both of the teachers believed that the students could and should solve their academic and behavioral problems. Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple conversed with their

students about the "choices" they possessed based on their observations of student behavior. For example, when students disrupted class, Ms. Yellow reminded them of their choices ("Can you make a good choice please;" "Come on, make a good choice, bud"), believing that the sixth graders were developmentally ready for the language of choices:

> Especially at middle school level because choice is starting to become everything. And they're coming at the age where they get more choices now.

Even when Ms. Yellow reprimanded her students for being disruptive in the hallways, she reminded them of their choices:

> This is the last time I'm going to hear about it...not being responsible like sixth graders like I know you can. I will not hear about it again or there will be a consequence. If you think that's a choice you want to make...

Ms. Yellow believed it was truly up to the student whether or not s/he chose to engage in the classroom. For example, throughout the year, Ms. Yellow struggled to engage one of her students. This student was consistently off task in all of his classes and typically sought the attention of classmates around him. Ms. Yellow tried a number of tactics to engage him (e.g., moving his seat, monitoring him). Ultimately, Ms. Yellow maintained that she could best help him after he chose to engage, "When he wants to be engaged, we can engage him."

Ms. Purple also spoke about student choices in the classroom, sometimes noting if individual students were not making the right choice during a class activity (e.g., "This is

not a choice"). Similarly, when Ms. Purple asked her students to follow along in a read aloud, she told them to "Choose to listen."

Ms. Purple also encouraged students to "fix" their behaviors, "Some of you need to be better listeners now. What can you do to help yourself now?" There's a problem with the chattiness in this classroom that I won't tolerate. It's not my problem. It's your problem. Fix it."

Ms. Purple used the "fix it" language, when speaking to individual students about their off-task behaviors. For example, following a language arts lesson, Ms. Purple informed several students that they needed to fix their inappropriate behaviors:

There are some things that are problems. I want to tell you about them so you can fix them. Am I mad at any of you? No. Do I like every one of you? Yes. There are a couple of you that I am starting to get displeased with. Do you know how to fix the things I'm talking about? What are you going to do about it?

Ms. Purple relied on the "fix it" language to address a variety of student problems. For example, after instructing students to read a novel for the rest of the class time, she reminded them of their responsibility as learners:

I don't have the ability to fix your problem if you don't have (your) book. I'm going to do my work and you're going to do your work.

As the students read quietly, Ms. Purple whispered to a student, "You need to be responsible and bring your materials."

Communicating That You Must Take Ownership

As part of encouraging self-regulated participation, the teachers expected the sixth graders to take ownership over their learning. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow made deliberate decisions to promote student ownership. For example, Ms. Purple shared that in addition to serving an introductory purpose, students presented their "All about me" presentations throughout the year because she wanted them to obtain some ownership in the classroom. Similarly, Ms. Yellow proudly displayed the students' social studies projects in the hall because she knew that, "They just love to see their work on display. It really does make a difference."

Having an audience encouraged student ownership, as it promoted student pride. Ms. Yellow shared that a student did his best work on a social studies project because he wanted to make his parents proud of him:

> Well they are doing a family coat of arms. It's funny (student) I should show you some of his handwriting. You cannot read it half of the time. He doesn't take the time or whatever. You should see his coat of arms. Because we said that we want to make your parents proud, your family proud. His printing on there, if I didn't see him do it, I would have asked him, "You know, who wrote that for you? But just the difference. They take ownership in it.

To encourage ownership, the teachers spoke to their students in particular ways. For example, Ms. Yellow frequently conferenced with individual students in language arts. When Ms. Yellow questioned students about aspects of their paper in these conferences (e.g., "Okay, tell me how occupation was valued in *Roll Of Thunder Hear My Cry*"; "If that would help you the most...Whatever I can do...Whatever you think would help you the most"; Do you want me to start at that paragraph? Where do you

want me..."), she communicated in deliberate ways, hoping that her students would assume ownership over their learning:

> With the individual conferencing with the kids, it's like you're probing. You know. You try to start an idea for them but you want them to finish it so it's their idea, so they remember it and take ownership of it because you know I could (have) easily on that paper scratched off and wrote Logan's and then...

Ms. Yellow knew that simply telling her students what they should write would not advance them as learners:

> Because otherwise if I write it on their paper for them, that's not showing them anything either...

In comparison, as with behavioral problems, Ms. Purple communicated to her students that they could fix their academic problem. For example, as Ms. Purple introduced a revising and editing session in language arts by discussing the "pitiful" test scores of the district, she made it clear that the student could fix their own problems with reading and writing:

> Kids in (district) cannot read and write. I worry for you as my students. That's why we do what we do with reading and writing. You need to read and write better than you do. The good news, this is what we've been asking you to do. Personal responsibility is exactly what you need to do. Have you done that? You have a final paper due tomorrow. What do you think we're going to do first? Step 1, I want you to underline what we call your position statement...

While Ms. Purple hoped that her students would assume some responsibility in their writing, she also reassured them that she would support them:

So I wanted once again to be real serious. I want to be upfront and honest, but then I want to provide the help. And that's what I tried to say there. I was very upfront to how serious it is and my concern for them but it's not hopeless. But I want to let them know they have to put the work in it. It won't happen by accident. And I can do my part but I tried to get them to want to be the learner, to want to grow.

The majority of the students that I spoke to assumed responsibility for their writing after hearing about the district's test scores:

Student 1: "I was thinking that we should…I didn't know we were doing that bad. I never got that _____ before so I try a lot harder and that luckily never mind about that we didn't take the (test) this year. But still we should be trying to do our best. Like um keep full attention and do your hardest on school stuff."

Student 2: "Um, Wonder why like everyone we are all scoring differently. Am like wondering if I'm scoring poorly."

Student 3: "Well, um, I was kind of like shocked because I didn't know that and like I was surprised we were doing so bad and I'm just trying…I'm going to try my best to do the writing how teachers want it and stuff."

One student was especially sensitive to the recent news concerning the district's test scores:

Student 4: "I thought she was thinking of me…I thought she was speaking of me because I had trouble with sometimes so I thought she was speaking of me and probably some kids in this class that has troubles like me so…"

The Culture of Self-Regulated Participation

Self-regulated participation occurred according to the requirements of the classroom context. Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple defined how students needed to participate as they established certain routines and identified appropriate behaviors.

Attention to Classroom Routines is a Prerequisite to Participation

Student participation needed to occur within the context of classroom routines. Hopes for student participation and ultimately, student engagement motivated the everyday phrases and routine activities used by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow. Both of the teachers solicited student attention by regularly asking their students to "Focus" or "Give me your eyes" or "Put your pencils down."

Daily warm-ups in Ms. Purple's language arts class and Ms. Yellow's math and social studies classes communicated to students that they needed to begin class immediately after they entered the room. Ms. Purple was convinced that these daily routines encouraged student participation and engagement by setting up students for success, or the "position of success," telling her students, "You will know what to do if you focus and listen."

Acting Like A Learner

The sixth graders needed to prove that they were learners in the classroom at all times. Ms. Purple, for example, constantly reminded her students to sit up and act like learners or "work harder," especially when she noticed otherwise. For example, when

she noticed that several students were off task during a reading class project, she approached them, "How can I politely say I want you working hard and talking less?" Ms. Yellow similarly instructed her students to act like learners, reminding them of their tasks (e.g., "That is your job right now" or "___, you should be getting started"). Prior to a quiet work session in social studies, Ms. Yellow reminded the class of the expectations:

Ms. Yellow: What type of work environment do we want in here?

Student: I'm going to sit here and be quiet.

Ms. Yellow: That would be a nice goal.

Positive Ways to Encourage Student Participation

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow relied on mostly positive tactics to encourage student participation. Both teachers expected students to raise their hands at all times (e.g., "Raise your hands. I would love to have a conversation;" "Please don't make comments when your hand is up"). Ms. Yellow typically invited her students to participate in the discussion by asking them to "Share their responses." Ms. Yellow also encouraged students to participate in discussions by praising their capabilities. For example, during a language arts lesson on topic sentences, Ms. Yellow asked a student if she could "Say it nice and loud" because she had such a great voice.

Ms. Purple also repeatedly joked with her students to spark their attention in the lesson. For example, after noticing that only several students volunteered during daily oral language (DOL), Ms. Purple remarked, "Oh I got slim pickings today. Anything you all could do about that?" Similarly, after the class chorally read directions in a language arts lesson, Ms. Purple teasingly told them, "You can bore me too" and had the class re-read the directions with more enthusiasm. After noticing that several students were

100

slouched over their desks during a language arts discussion, she told them that they "needed to take their naps somewhere else." Subsequently, the majority of the class raised their hands to volunteer. Ms. Purple believed that humor worked well because the students understood it:

> You know, try to use a little humor there. That makes sense to kids. You can't take a nap in class...

Both teachers reminded the whole class and individual students of appropriate on-task behaviors. For example, when the class seemed especially chatty, Ms. Yellow simply remarked, "I shouldn't hear all these voices please" or "There should be no chit chatting." Ms. Yellow sometimes questioned individual students, "Are you with me? You look like you're distracted" Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow reminded students of behavioral consequences when they talked in class (e.g., " Keep talking and you're going to be at lunch with me. There's no talking"), or when they were not prepared for class (e.g., "Where's your letter? I get it tomorrow or lunch detention").

Ms. Purple also did not tolerate students engaging in distracting conversations during and between lessons and reminded students at times to "Stop blurting out." After observing that the class was especially talkative when transitioning to the next activity, Ms. Purple informed the class, "Hard working sixth grade students do one thing and the next thing without interruption, because I keep going." Ms. Purple often reminded individual students of appropriate on-task behaviors, "J, you may start reading like the rest of the people in the class." Sometimes, Ms. Purple admitted to her students that she communicated in clever but polite ways to encourage their attention (e.g., It's going to be advantageous if you don't be the chatty class today, which is another polite way of saying

"Shut up." I find clever..." or "Don't make it harder on me by not being in your seat, which is a polite way of saying sit down").

Recognizing Student Participation

Both teachers appreciated the participatory efforts of their students, often praising them (e.g., "Great job" or "Thank you") for their on-task behaviors. For example, Ms. Yellow cheered her students with "Woo hoos" when they were prepared; "That whole back table—woo hoo!" Similarly, Ms. Purple remarked, "Oh golly, yes! You are so on the ball" when students turned in an assignment. Also, during a whole class discussion in social studies, hoping to reinforce the class routine of paying attention to her students, Ms. Purple exclaimed, "You are focusing your attention on one another. That's wonderful!" Sometimes, Ms. Yellow's students received rewards for participation. In reading class, for example, during "Tootsie roll talk," students received a tootsie roll when they participated in the discussion; "If you're participating in here, you get a tootsie roll. Really simple, really easy to do."

Awareness and Responsiveness of Individual Student Needs

Although Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow agreed that on-task behaviors were indicative of student engagement, they maintained that the requirements of self-regulated participation in the classroom depended upon the individual needs of their students. The teachers constantly monitored individual students and modified their expectations based on the needs of their students.

Monitoring Individual Students

Both of the teachers monitored student engagement by walking around the room checking on student progress. Ms. Yellow, for example, believed that this constant monitoring was essential to good teaching:

I think you just got to be aware as a teacher, and if you're going to be a teacher that's going to make a difference, you cannot sit at your desk especially when they're working. You need to be monitoring. Even if they're sitting there (and) it looks like they're working. If you're not peeking over their shoulder every a little bit then you know you're concerned.

Similarly, Ms. Purple constantly walked around the classroom to connect with individual students but also to make sure they were engaged in the task:

So, I want them all to feel liked, but I also believe the proximity and their level of expectation not just for behavior but for staying engaged for being on task, I just want them to never know where I might show up next. And it's definitely not sitting behind my desk.

The teachers also carefully observed their students' reactions to tasks, as indicators of engagement. Ms. Purple, for example, tried really hard to read her student's non-verbals for emotional reactions: "I think their posture, their eyes, their faces communicate so much and so if they're doing, "Oh this is so stupid" kind of thing, attention from the teacher is warranted." Similarly, Ms. Yellow regularly scanned the room to check student understanding:

Even if you don't have them write it down or say it, you're either making observations or a verbal quick check with them or even just looking around the

room and seeing if you're getting those blank stares or not. Or, are they engaged

with you?

Lack Of Engagement Is Strongly Related To Lack Of Student Understanding

Both of the teachers recognized that a lack of understanding sometimes prevented

students from engaging in lessons:

Ms. Purple: "I do know that some of the reason for lack of participation was

because they really didn't get it…"

Ms. Yellow: "It's sad but it's the ones that are most academically challenged that

you know I don't know if they get frustrated sometimes so they're off task. We

see lots and lots of that."

Both teachers reflected that the students they identified as "disengaged" were

often off-task and struggled with academics the majority of the time. Consistent with

their commitment to individual student needs, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow frequently

conversed with "disengaged" students about their lack of engagement, hoping to refocus

them and assist them with their struggles. Although the teachers hoped that their tactics

would encourage self-regulated participation for all of their students, some of their

students remained consistently off-task throughout the school year.

Tailoring Questions to Individual Student Needs

Knowing that students achieved different levels of understanding, both of the

teachers relied on different types of questions to encourage student engagement. Ms.

Purple believed that it was necessary for her to ask many different kinds of questions, to

encourage student participation:

And I really believe the effective educator can ask a variety of levels of questions to enable every kid to participate. And I think that's my burden. To make sure that I structure my class so that every kid has a chance to raise their hand and offer a winning answer... If I want every child to participate, I have to level my questions and that type of thing so that every child has the ability to provide an answer.

Ms. Purple, for example, deliberately chose particular students to answer certain questions during the language arts daily oral language (DOL) because she knew that they could answer them:

> The beginning questions of DOL, for example, everybody knows. You need end punctuation. And everybody knows the first letter needs to be capitalized. And so when a bizillon hands are going up right at the beginning of the DOL exercise, I pick on kids that probably can only answer that piece.

In a similar sense, Ms. Yellow, recognized that she needed to ask higher-level questions to sustain the engagement of some of her students:

> And sometimes that might be more intellectual with him with the conversation that I have. Maybe not on the subject that we are doing but ask him...he'll be talking about something, "My mom was buying airline tickets on there and it said it was 45% off. The ticket was $269..."so he was talking about how much would that be. So we talked more about it at that level but we are still talking about the

concepts...but it's going to be at a totally different level than with (Student). I just think engage them and I think it's true with all kids.

Making Connections is Necessary to Student Engagement

Both teachers agreed that the connections they established with their students facilitated student engagement. Ms. Yellow knew that her students needed to feel "valued" as human beings:

> They think they're important if they're spoken to or whatever. And even when I'm questioning in the class, I always try to look around. Not even the one that's off task but the one's that kind of sitting back, you know coasting that day. "Hey haven't heard from you today you know what's going on?" Just to make that simple connection sometimes because you can just read them. You can read them just by their face.

Similarly, in an introduction to a language arts lesson, Ms. Purple teased her students as she shared personal stories about her family and popular culture:

> Ms. Purple: Anybody watch much TV?
>
> (A couple of students raise their hands).
>
> Ms. Purple (laughs): Yeah liars. That's not very nice to say. I bet you do.
>
> Student: I watch...
>
> Ms. Purple: Have you seen this commercial? (Pauses and walks up to several students) Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now?
>
> Several Students: Yeah. Yes.
>
> Ms. Purple: Do you know that one?
>
> Ms. Purple: Well, could it be a better lead in for this next unit of study?

Later in the lesson.

Ms. Purple: My husband. He's a very nice man. Some of you know him. Some of you in fifth hour social studies met him because he came in as a dad. And that joke I did, he does those kind of jokes all the time. And you know what, I laugh every single time. I love that.

Ms. Purple: Kids I could whisper (whispers), I would like to give you a hundred dollars to do some sort of shopping. (In normal voice) And I'm telling you I've got a 14 year old almost 15 year old that would hear me if I whispered that downstairs and she was upstairs in her bedroom with the music blaring. She would hear that. And by golly she would definitely choose to listen (in unison) to it. Now I could be up in the hallway outside her bedroom door and say, "L, it's time to go. Come on! Come on! We're running late!" And she might not hear me. (Class laughs). Do you get it? And if you're honest, you play those same games. Ok here we go. Too bad for you. I know all the tricks. (Class: Aw). Ha! Ha! The famous evil laugh of the teacher.

Ultimately, Ms. Purple hoped to establish connections with her students:

So the whole thing about listening is connecting. This isn't just for at school. This is for home too. And so just building those bridges so that they can make connections so their learning is more meaningful to them.

Differences in Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's Beliefs about Participation

Although both of the teachers similarly recognized the importance of student participation and ultimately, self-regulated participation, they possessed unique beliefs

about how students should participate in the classroom and the tactics they needed to use to encourage such participation. For example, Ms. Purple did not allow passivity in her classroom and used dramatizations to facilitate whole-class participation. In comparison, Ms. Yellow relied upon her knowledge of student understanding to determine the guidelines for classroom participation.

Ms. Purple's "No Passivity Allowed in My Classroom"

Ms. Purple did not allow her students to sit back and be passive in the classroom:

But when I present it to the whole group, there was too much passivity and I needed to inspire that right out of them...I can't tolerate passivity in the classroom...I also know that too many kids in the whole educational system are allowed to be passive learners. And when they are passive learners, they are not as effective as...I'm passionate about that. They're not as effective. They don't learn as much when they're allowed to be cute and quiet in the classrooms in this district perhaps or across America...

For example, after realizing that her students could not hear each other when they spoke, early in the school year, Ms. Purple decided to have her students stand when they responded to questions. Ms. Purple desired for her students to perceive that, "The accepted environment of the classroom is to participate. And it is the "cool" thing to do." Ms. Purple also frequently used choral responses to spark student engagement because: "The unpredictability of that piece keeps them on their edge a little bit because if everybody else is saying something, by golly, you ought to say it."

Ms. Purple made it explicitly clear that students needed to participate in the lesson. During a language arts lesson, for example, Ms. Purple told her students that she

could not have parents calling her, telling her that she did not like their kids because she did not call on them in class; "I can't be having that, so I'm going to call on everyone no matter if hand is raised or not." After asking the class to share their connections to a reader response activity, Ms. Purple told them that she was looking around to see who has not spoken yet because she did not want anyone to go home and tell their parents that she never called on them. Throughout the school year, Ms. Purple made it clear that she expected her students to participate in class discussions, noting when students were not participating in the activity (e.g., "I love those raised hands. Beware if you don't raise your hand, I'm going to call on you anyway so it's in your best interest to participate"). Ms. Purple also monitored the participation of individual students and let them know when they needed to participate. For example, during a social studies discussion, Ms. Purple remarked, "I'm worried some of you are getting overworked. Some of you I'm looking for an answer."

When students did not participate in class discussions, Ms. Purple adjusted her expectations. For example, after noticing that several students never received an opportunity to participate in round circle discussions during reading class, Ms. Purple reminded students of the expectations while restructuring some of the requirements for participation:

> Everyone needs to participate. You can't…don't just call on the same person. I guess I was trouble shooting what I know what kids tend to do. Some kids would tend to not participate. Some kids would tend to call on the same loud mouth over and over and over. And that's not our idea. I tried to set the parameters and give ideas of what they might talk about.

Ms. Purple's orchestrated whole class participation, hoping to encourage student participation when it may not have otherwise happened. For example, Ms. Purple purposefully used dramatizations to "Make it exciting for the kids," hoping to combat the challenges to student learning: "When it's so unbelievably hard, they might build up a wall just to protect themselves and so I have to be in the business of breaking down any wall that gets in the way of their learning." Ultimately, Ms. Purple hoped to unify students in her classroom as they strived for the same goals: "But the big idea that we're all unified, we're in this together, we're doing something together for a common goal, for a common purpose, I think can still happen."

Ms. Purple's hopes for unification were connected to her previous experiences as a music teacher. Ms. Purple viewed the class as a choir that she worked really hard to unite:

> I see performance. I do. Because really though that's what I want. When you
>
> think of a choir, you need everybody doing their piece together under the
>
> conductor's direction. And what do I want in a classroom? I don't want these little
>
> islands...and I got hawk eyes making sure everybody is responding and then I
>
> take my voice out of it from time to time so that the kids are feeling more
>
> responsible to actually read those directions aloud.

Consistent with her vision of the class as a choir, Ms. Purple purposefully varied her voice, tempo, and movement during lessons to spark student engagement:

> I noticed that I use so much voice variation. As far as keeping them engaged
>
> because there's not very much monotone. I do a LOT. My dynamics there. That

whispering and the leaning forward and it's like ___ and I mean it does I believe

lead to capturing their attention just to see what in the world is she doing.

Similar to an orchestra, Ms. Purple's students served different roles, with respect

to promoting engagement among members of the class:

And I also know perhaps the relationship to the orchestra. (Student) would be my

section leader because of the naughty boys, he's the brightest. And if I can get

(Student) participating, which he was, he was right there He's the one that had the

right answer. You've got a great sense of humor and a step dad that has built a

good relationship to work with me. But if I can get him, I'm more likely to get

(Student). And if I can get him, I'm more likely to get (Student). And he likes

(Student) so I'm more likely. So he is probably my section leader not for the

saxophones but for the naughty kids. (Laughs). And if I can get him, I might be

able to get them.

Ms. Yellow's Attention to Student Understanding

An awareness of student understanding dictated Ms. Yellow's pedagogical

choices, and ultimately her beliefs about self-regulated student participation:

You really got to gauge it where your kids are at and depending on the activity

and where they're at with that. Are they you know at the modeling stage or the

introductory stage? Or are they at the mastery stage where they should be able to

do it independently?

Ms. Yellow observed her students carefully to identify their level of

understanding, believing that their individual needs dictated how they participated in the

lesson. For example, during a fractions lesson, Ms. Yellow knew how a student would participate based on his choices throughout the lesson:

> But there's so much you can find out from that. First off, the type of problem they pick. So, for example, (Student) picked 7/8- 1/8, real basic, simple, already had the common denominator. You can see where his comfort level is and where his independent level is for that math lesson, which is fine, that's where he is.

During whole class lessons, Ms. Yellow monitored student understanding based on how students participated in the lesson. Ms. Yellow's awareness of individual students determined her expectations for participation and ultimately, future instruction.

> Their homework was to come with a problem and do that… I can see where these kids (are) at, where their comfort zone is and how deep their understanding is because they had to do greater then statements, less then statements and closest to…. but in that class, I was sure that I had everyone come up there (and) do their problem…. I could see where these kids were…so the next day, instead of going on with the whole group with the lesson, the kids that I knew from their understanding stayed in the room w/ Mr. (James) and I took 8-12 of them.

Sometimes Ms. Yellow restructured activities to encourage more self-regulated student participation, based on her awareness of student understanding. For example, in addition to modeling concepts, restructuring participation structures was especially necessary when students learned new, unfamiliar concepts:

> If you're bringing in a new concept and you know that all of the kids are not going to be familiar with it, usually breaking it down where they are going to have

a group, small group or an activity where they're going to be able to work with another is very important.

For example, Ms. Yellow decided to allow her students to write their answers on the overhead to the daily social warm-up, hoping that they would become more engaged with the difficult concepts:

> A lot of students are weak sometimes and so I try to get the student participation when they're up coming and doing that. That really gets them more involved and they're more willing to try some of them that might be more challenging for them to do

Ms. Yellow also modified her expectations for participation based on her awareness of student understanding. For example, Ms. Yellow's expectations of the number of problems students should complete in a math assignment depended upon her perceptions of the student's background knowledge:

> You want to have all the same expectations but kids don't come in with the same background knowledge. You know, (Student) is going to have no idea on some problems where (Student) is going to master them. So I'm...I expect (Student) to have that filled in you know all five of them all day or you know every day or whatever. With (Student), I want one and I might go around personally and say I want 1, 3, and 4. I want you to attempt those or whatever you know.

Summary of Results: Participation and Ultimately, Self-Regulated Participation

Both Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple hoped for student participation and encouraged self-regulated student participation in their classrooms. The teachers communicated to their students that it was worthwhile to participate in the classroom. Ms. Yellow and Ms.

Purple solicited student participation in positive ways, recognizing the efforts of their students. Consistent with the teachers' awareness of individual student needs, the teachers modified their expectations for participation, tailored their questions to individual students, and were sensitive to the various needs of their students. Both teachers also encouraged their students to achieve self-regulated participation through a variety of tactics (e.g., monitoring and evaluating their progress, fixing their problems, and acting responsibly). Ultimately, the teachers also expected the sixth grade students to take ownership over their learning, especially when they confronted obstacles to the process. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also recognized that the personal connections they established with their students facilitated student self-regulated participation. While Ms. Purple was committed to eliminating passivity in the larger classroom and took great care in orchestrating whole-class participation, Ms. Yellow was primarily concerned with her students' understanding of lessons.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is twofold. First, I will summarize the findings (i.e., the three major goals), including some discussion of the development of the goals and connections between the goals. Second, I will connect the findings to research literatures in education and psychology. I will begin by framing the findings as bridging the gaps between motivation and engagement. Other relevant research literatures connected to the study include beginning of the school year, relatedness, caring pedagogy, instructional scaffolding, multiple goals, and influential teachers. The discussion will close with the limitations and implications of the study, both theoretical and practical.

Summary of The Findings

The Goals Possessed By Two Highly Engaging Middle School Teachers

Teacher beliefs are important determinants of teacher decision-making. In particular, teachers use their goals to make important decisions in the context of everyday decision-making in the classroom (Aguirre & Speer, 1999). Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow kept three goals (i.e., emotional safety, academic mastery and value, and self-regulated student participation) in mind when they motivated their students. These goals emerged in the teachers' beliefs about motivation, their reflections about particular lessons, and in observations of everyday instructional practices. While some differences emerged in the particulars of how the teachers articulated goals, both of the teachers were ultimately committed to supporting student motivation with these goals in mind.

Development of The Goals

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow saturated their classrooms with instructional practices that supported student motivation based on the three goals they pursued. How did the

teachers develop these goals? In particular, how did the teachers' conceptions of children and motivation influence the adoption of the particular goals? Both of these teachers were highly aware of the developmental needs of middle school students, consistent with Eccles and colleagues assertion that instruction in the middle school years needs to fit students' developmental needs (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield et al, 1993; Eccles, Wigfield, Midgley, et al., 1993; Midgley, 1993; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000). In particular, Ms. Purple maintained that ensuring emotional safety in the classroom was especially important because many of her eleven year old students confronted difficulties in their personal (e.g., ADHD) and family lives (e.g., divorce, homelessness, financial hardships). Ms. Purple structured her classroom management around the principles of Jim Fay's Love and Logic classroom (Fay & Funk, 1998) while keeping in mind Maslow's hierarchy of needs ---knowing student emotional safety facilitated academic learning (Maslow, 1962). Ms. Purple realized that motivation was "bigger than that immediate moment," with students "happy and smiley" all of the time. Rather, Ms. Purple believed that she needed to show her students the value of learning (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), which often required persistence and struggle.

In comparison, Ms. Yellow's commitment to individual student needs, especially student comfort in the classroom was essential because many of her students were identified with disabilities and did not achieve at grade level. Ms. Yellow aimed to support each individual student by recognizing their progress on "baby steps," (i.e., providing mastery on challenging tasks) (Deci & Ryan, 1992) and by providing accommodations as needed such as hurdle helps, believing that it was essential to "break down" concepts with challenging but attainable goals (Bandura, 1988; Locke & Latham,

2002; Schunk, 1989a) to facilitate student engagement. Ms. Yellow's conception of motivation matched her commitment to individual student needs and often scaffolded students within their zone of proximal development (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Ms. Yellow believed that students exerted effort in the classroom when they felt supported by their teachers (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Ms. Yellow established multiple connections (e.g., personal, cross-curricular, peer) with students (McIntyre, 1989), hoping that these connections would spark student motivation, and ultimately, student engagement in the classroom.

Connections Between The Goals

The three goals possessed by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were inextricably linked. For example, Ms. Purple supported student self-regulated participation within the context of a safe emotional environment. Ms. Purple believed that her students would participate only if they felt emotionally safe (e.g., "The overall thing is that it's safe in the environment. It is safe. No one will be laughed at."). For example, following a reproductive health lesson, Ms. Purple knew that student comfort in the classroom was essential to successful class participation:

> But the safe environment. Reproductive health yesterday. That was hard for those
>
> girls to say the vocabulary of the male reproductive system. They feel safe. They trust
>
> me. They trust that they won't be made fun of in this room. Otherwise, it wouldn't
>
> have been that way.

Ms. Purple also recognized and responded to the emotional needs of her students. For example, after observing that several students had not participated yet in a language arts lesson, Ms. Purple remarked, "A reader please. Have I left anybody out? (Student), did I

leave you out?" Ms. Purple's zealous concerns for student emotional safety motivated how she communicated her hopes for student participation:

I try to turn the perspective of participation from "You didn't speak yet" to "Oh my goodness. It's my fault. I have left you out. I would never do that for you." And it's really just a point of view. And then the children think, "Oh" and then they also think so it's that message of it's not your fault for not raising your hand. I haven't called on you yet so I'll take the blame, responsibility for that. It's when I ask questions, I try really hard not to say, "Who has a question?" I'll say, "What haven't I made clear?" You know, it's my problem not your problem. I'll take the responsibility for that. So they don't have to feel embarrassed. The other thing is just that language, I believe lets kids know I don't want anybody left out. We are all together. We're all going to be good to each other.

Similarly, Ms. Yellow recognized that students would achieve self-regulated participation only if they felt emotionally safe and comfortable. After helping a student organize his math binder, Ms. Yellow, for example, conversed with the student about strategies that he could use to help him better understand fractions:

You do whatever is easy for you. We want you to look at that fraction and say how could you visualize it in your heads.

With such a large emphasis on strategy instruction, it is not surprising that Ms. Yellow's goals for self-regulated participation became connected to her goals of student mastery of strategies. Ms. Yellow required that her students take responsibility for their learning of strategies (Schunk, 1985). For example, during a fractions assignment, Ms. Yellow informed a student, "You got to do it. I can't tell you. Find your strategy,"

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maintaining that students needed to, "Think of other strategies to use when a teacher is not around to ask or even look if you don't know." Students needed to explain why they solved problems in particular ways. For example, as Ms. Yellow consulted with a student during math class, she asked him, "What strategy did you use? Tell me in writing. How did you figure it out? You tell me in writing. How did you figure it out? You tell me, if you don't know, where's a place you could look if the teacher wasn't here?"

Through the above comments and others, both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow encouraged their students to adopt an incremental view of intelligence (Dweck, 1999), communicating that the strategies would provide students with tools to succeed academically. Consistent with efficacy training programs (Schunk, 1985), the teachers modeled the appropriate strategies, provided explicit instruction in the strategies, encouraged their students to set challengeable but attainable goals, and self-reflect on their learning efforts (Schunk, 1996). The connections between the three goals illustrate the importance of examining the qualitative dimensions of the multiple goals of teachers, instead of just single goals.

Both of these teachers aimed to establish learning communities in their classrooms (Baker, Terry, Bridger, & Winsor, 1997). Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow consistently emphasized learning within a collaborative environment. According to sociocultural views of teaching and learning, learning occurs through apprenticeship—knowledgable others teach novices the discourse and tools of the community (Wells, 1999). Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow communicated in deliberate ways, which shaped how students understood the norms of the classroom and the appropriate use of tools (e.g., books, strategies).

Connections to Research Literature

Engagement vs. Motivation

The results of this study contribute to research and theory in psychology and education. Student motivation *and* engagement are the top concerns of most educators (Guthrie & Alvermann, 1999) yet most studies of educational motivation are based upon student perceptions rather than actual observations of the classroom environment. Furthermore, although motivation is distinct from engagement, researchers tend to broadly conceptualize engagement (i.e., the joint functioning of motivational beliefs, conceptual knowledge, strategies, and social interactions) (e.g., Guthrie & Alvermann, 1999; Guthrie & Wigfield, 1997), confusing the types of outcomes it produces because it does not consider the unique contribution of motivation, strategies, and knowledge (Baker et al., 2000). Although educational researchers have started to examine teachers' use of instructional practices that support student motivation and engagement (e.g., Pressley et al., 2002; Blumenfeld, Puro, & Mergendoller, 1989; Meece, 1991; Meece, Blumenfeld, & Puro, 1988; Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin, & Midgley, 2001;Turner, Meyer, Cox, Logan, DeCintio), there is still a need to investigate the ways that teachers uniquely support student motivation vs. engagement (Shuell, 1996).

While motivation provides students with reasons to persist academically (i.e., "the why's"), engagement refers to how students actually approach academic tasks (i.e., "the how's"). The development of metacognitive knowledge is preceded by the development of attributional beliefs, motivation, and affective states (Borkowski, Carr, Rellinger, & Pressley, 1990; Pressley, Borkowski, & Schneider, 1989). That is, students who feel good about their academic capabilities and are excited about learning are more likely to believe

in strategic behavior and potentially engage in strategic activities. Motivation to use strategies, however, can be separated from actual strategy use. Students use strategies only if they are equipped with knowledge about when, where, how, and why to use strategies. That is, student motivation to use strategies may mobilize them to use strategies, resulting in heightened engagement, but motivation by itself may not be sufficient for students to use strategies. Furthermore, students may appear to be highly effortful, or cognitively engaged in worthwhile tasks, but it is possible that they are not utilizing effective strategies.

Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's instructional beliefs and practices match Blumenfeld's (1992) analysis of fifth and sixth grade teachers who connected their students to lessons *and* connected lessons to their students, ultimately achieving high perceptions of student cognitive engagement (i.e., cognitive and metacognitive strategies). Teachers who accomplished both goals provided numerous opportunities to learn (e.g., developed concepts, required students to use strategies), pressed for thinking (e.g., encouraged student explanations, monitored students), supported student learning through scaffolding, and emphasized learning and understanding in their evaluations. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow cared deeply about student thoughtfulness and implemented instructional practices that supported student engagement.

In addition to the practices mentioned, both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were highly concerned about the development of student self-regulated behaviors (Zimmerman, 1989) and structured their activities, as well as their participation structures in particular ways to promote student self-regulation. What are the long-term effects of being in a cognitively engaging and motivating classroom? Future studies should

examine longitudinally the particulars of student learning and motivation as students

negotiates differentially engaging learning environments.

The results of the current study contribute to the discussion of motivation vs.

engagement initially proposed by Borkowski and colleagues. Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow

articulated and implemented goals in their daily classroom practices, which considered

student motivation (e.g., emotional safety) and student engagement (e.g., mastery, value,

and self-regulated participation). Without these affective and cognitive goals, it is

possible that students may have lacked the desire to use the strategies or the knowledge

of the strategies despite the desire. Future studies should investigate how students

perceive the goals adopted in the classroom and the implications of the goals on student

motivation and/or engagement.

Beginning of The School Year

The beginning of the school year is a critical time for teachers to establish

routines and procedures (Bohn, Roehrig, & Pressley, 2004; Emmer, Evertson, &

Anderson, 1980; Evertson & Emmer, 1982; Kronowitz, 1999; Wong & Wong, 1998).

Excellent classroom management in the beginning of the year is associated with

increased student achievement and student self-regulation later in the school year (Bohn

et al., 2004; Evertson & Emmer, 1982). Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were highly

aware of the importance of the beginning of the school year and taught their students

particular routines in the beginning of the school year.

The categories found in Bohn et al. (2004) analysis of effective elementary school

teachers are consistent with how the teachers in this study began the school year. That is,

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow introduced expectations and procedures in the first several

days of school, provided specific praise to students following directions, encouraged student choices and self-regulation (e.g., taking ownership and responsibility), and modeled many behaviors. Similar to the junior high teachers in Evertson & Emmer (1982), Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also monitored the progress of individual students and provided corrective feedback (e.g., reminding and refocusing students) when students did not follow the routines (e.g., preparing for class, passing back papers, participating in class).

Bohn and colleagues noted that compared to the other teachers, the more effective elementary school teachers created positive and caring classrooms for their students early in the school year. The students genuinely seemed excited to learn, as evidenced by the high percentage of student engagement documented in these classrooms. These results are consistent with Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classrooms in the beginning and throughout the school year. Both teachers created an engaging but also an emotionally safe and comfortable environment for their students caring immensely about individual student needs. In particular, in the beginning of the school year, both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were committed to holistic student development (Dewey, 1916)---supporting students as they negotiated the new classroom and school, establishing connections with their families, encouraging the development of new peer relationships, and introducing students to the new curriculum. Future research should consider how teachers develop plans for the beginning of the school year and how teachers adjust their plans based on student needs.

Student Perceptions of Relatedness

Relatedness is essential to student engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). In particular, middle school students' perceptions of teacher support (e.g., believing that the teacher values and establishes supportive relationships with them) are positively associated with motivation and engagement, as well as achievement (Anderman, 1999; Goodenow, 1993; Osterman, 2000; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Solomon, Battistich, Kim, & Watson, 1997). Compared to their peers, students who perceive a high sense of relatedness exhibit higher amounts of personal control, which ultimately leads to increased effort and participation in the classroom (Connell, 1990; Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Perceptions of teacher caring and support may mitigate the declines in motivation that typically occur in the middle school years (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Midgley, 1993; Wentzel, 1998).

How did students in Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow's classes perceive their teachers? Throughout the school year and at the end of the school year, I obtained multiple indicators of how students perceived their experiences with Ms. Yellow and Ms. Purple. These various sources included whispered student comments to others, student interviews, student writing samples, and conversational chats. At the end of the school year, students in both Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classes possessed a variety of opinions about their teachers. In an end of the year essay entitled, "The best school year ever," Ms. Yellow's students mostly talked positively about their teachers, and to some extent, their learning experiences:

Student #1: In L.A. we did a bunch of fun activities. We made a poster that was an advertisement for *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. We also did this thing that would help you do better on tests. That was really fun...

Student #2: This year was the best year ever because we had the best teachers ever...

Student #3: This is the best school year because there were really nice teachers like (Mr. Black), (Resource Teacher), (Ms. Yellow), and (Mr. James).

Student #4: This year was the best year ever because I have the four best teachers...(Ms. Yellow) is nice and fun.

Although the end of the year essays were somewhat general, many of Ms. Yellow's students, however, signed her yearbook and wrote personal letters to her at the end of the school year, appreciating both her personal characteristics and the support she provided:

Student #1: You are the best teacher there ever was to me. I would like to thank you for all the help you had given me to support my education.

Student #2: I want you to know that this year was fun for me...You made it clear to see that I could do these things like math, L.A. and other things through out my days as I sit here now I think about the times that you helped out of trouble...

Student #3: Your such a cool teacher. I usually find math boring but you made me enjoy it. I love how your always so happy.

Student #4: I had a great year thanks to you! You are a funny, nice and smart teacher!

Many of Ms. Purple's students also appreciated their time with Ms. Purple. For example, towards the end of the school year, a student shared with me that Ms. Purple taught him a LOT over the school year. Similarly, another student appreciated how much Ms. Purple encouraged student learning:

Throughout sixth grade, (Ms. Purple) never took it easy on my class. She always had us on our toes. Good thing I was able to keep up with her. She told the class," We were only failures if we stopped trying..."Over the year I have had no failures just many challenges.

One student proclaimed that she enjoyed having Ms. Purple as a teacher because, "She's enthusiastic and makes everything fun." This student really enjoyed how Ms. Purple emphasized "DETAIL" in the students' writing.

Twenty-nine of Ms. Purple's students contributed to the end of the year school literary magazine. Several of these students wrote about their experiences in Ms. Purple's classroom. For example, in "Getting prepared for class," a student discusses the routines of Ms. Purple's class, as well as the content learned:

(Ms. Purple) is a fabulous language arts teacher but you must know how to get prepared for class. If you don't know how to get prepared for (Ms. Purple's) class at (Jansen Middle School), I will show you how. To start with, just have six items out: class folder, notes book, agenda, and two sharpened pencils. As you enter Room (number), the first thing to do is to check the white board for activities you are going to do in class. Another step is if you are absent for many reasons, go to the makeup file. A paper will have your name on it. You will have to be responsible for all your makeup work.

Now you are ready to learn in (Ms. Purple's) exciting language arts class. You will learn formal writing, daily oral language, descriptive writing, explanatory writing, and many more things. I hope you will have fun and learn.

Another student reminisced about the "Sounds," "Smells," and "Quotes" in Ms. Purple's class in her poem:

I know Room (Number):

SOUNDS

like the swish swish of an eraser, click click of mechanical pencils, noise of the mall, and rumbling of fresh clean paper.

I know Room (Number):

SMELLS

like ocean mist candles, refreshing brewed coffee, quickly made Progresso soup, and crisp book pages.

I know Room (Number):

QUOTES

"Details!", "I'll swat you!", "I don't want to do this assignment!", IS AM ARE WAS WERE BE BEING BEEN......., " and "My stars."

I know Room (Number):

On the last day of school, most of Ms. Purple's students wanted Ms. Purple to know how much they enjoyed her classroom. For example, when Ms. Purple walked back into the classroom, a small group of students waiting for the final dismissal cheered, "We love you." After receiving a summer "passport to reading" assignment, one of Ms. Purple's students asked, "Can we write you a letter?" referring to the numerous book

response letters they wrote in language arts. After instructing students to "read forever" in their yearbook, one student told Ms. Purple that she did not even need to sign that part of the yearbook because he knew who would write that. Ms. Purple agreed, "They know that I want them to read forever."

While some of the students perceived Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow as too strict or too demanding, the majority of the students appreciated their teachers and established positive relationships with them throughout the school year, consistent with the qualities of caring yet demanding teachers in the Classroom Strategy Study who were rated as outstanding in their attempts to teach students with chronic achievement problems (Brophy, 1996). As the year progressed, most of Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's students regarded the teachers positively, as evidenced by their hugs, whispered comments, and frequent volunteering to help the teachers in the classroom. Several students even confided in Ms. Purple that they wished that she could be their teacher again.

Caring Pedagogy

Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's commitment to student emotional safety is consistent with Noddings' (1992; 2003) vision of education as emphasizing student caring and developing caring relationships. Caring teachers constantly model caring behavior, engage students in mutual dialogues, and expect students to do the best that they can. Students regard caring teachers as democratic in their interactions with students and respectful to the needs of individual students (e.g., attuned to the needs of the learner) (Wentzel, 1997).

The results of this study contribute to Noddings' (1992; 2003) conception of a caring curriculum by describing in great detail the variety of mechanisms used by Ms.

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Purple and Ms. Yellow to pursue their goals of emotional safety, or a caring educational environment. Consistent with Noddings' (2003) assertion that education satisfy needs and wants, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow believed that student engagement in the classroom depended upon the fulfillment of individual student needs. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow remained attuned to the needs of individual students as they facilitated supportive but academically challenging classroom climates-- consistent with the dimensions of effective parenting (e.g., high teacher expectations and fairness) (Wentzel, 1997; 2002). Similar to authoritative parents, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow possessed high expectations within the context of a supportive environment (Baumrind, 1991). While caring and supportive relationships may be especially necessary to facilitate during the middle school years, a curriculum of caring is essential for all children at every stage of development. Future research efforts should investigate the different types of bonds that teachers form with their students and how these relational bonds can support student and teacher development.

Noddings' vision of a caring education prioritizes student happiness. Caring teachers establish meaningful learning environments, providing many opportunities to cultivate student value, creativity and autonomy. Both Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classrooms were generally supportive but also academically worthwhile environments (Brophy, 1992a; 1999). Although there were some exceptions, the majority of the students appeared engaged the majority of the time, excited to learn. The teachers constantly communicated about the benefits associated with learning *and* created creative and/or authentic academic activities that required higher-order thinking (e.g., integrative language arts and social studies research projects, book clubs, survey projects in math,

edible maps in social studies, fraction hunts in math, and picture books in social studies). If high student engagement is of interest to educational research and practice, it is worthwhile to investigate further how teachers enact the curriculum to create engaging lessons for their students. In particular, how do teachers sort through the abundance of curriculum materials to create highly engaging environments for their students?

What are the goals of contemporary education? If psychological well-being or self-realization is truly the aim of education (Ryan & Deci, 2001), educational researchers and practitioners need to consider seriously how much attention is being paid to the holistic development of children in classrooms across America. Educational researchers need to examine the multiple implications of student and teacher well-being, as well as the constraints to well-being. If satisfying relationships are the key to student development, how can teachers foster long-term meaningful relationships with their students while in the context of a meaningful academic learning environment? Also, how do individual student needs afford different types of well-being in the classroom? It is possible that psychological well-being within a caring educational context requires multiple paths and endpoints, based on individual needs.

Instructional Scaffolding

The results of this study also provide new directions for current research and theory in instructional scaffolding (Hogan & Pressley, 1997). By being highly responsive and aware of student individual learning and personal needs, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow intensely scaffolded their students. Current notions of instructional scaffolding are primarily limited to academic scaffolding (i.e., using techniques such as modeling, explaining, monitoring, to provide students with assistance on challenging tasks after

determining the amount of support needed). Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow provided their students with appropriate academic supports within the context of a supportive, emotional learning environment. That is, both teachers were highly aware of individual student learning needs and scaffolded their students accordingly. The concept of instructional scaffolding, however, needs to include motivational components (Brophy, 1999)—that learning is facilitated within the context of a supportive and caring emotional environment

Similar to instructional scaffolding, teachers can scaffold student motivation for learning. Brophy (1999) proposed that scaffolding student appreciation occurs within the motivational zone of proximal development. Teachers can encourage student value by teaching content that is academically worthwhile (e.g., relevant and applicable to student lives) and fostering student appreciation for learning. Scaffolded appreciation occurs as teachers model reasons why content is worth learning, coach through goal reminders and cues, and provide detailed feedback on student development. Both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow scaffolded student appreciation by communicating about and providing relevant activities (e.g., solving problems in math class vs. the real world; reading books to children using strategies learned in class), establishing goals that aided the development of student appreciation (e.g., reading books in different genres), and recognizing student accomplishments. Future studies should examine the specific mechanisms used by teachers to scaffold student appreciation.

Tappan (1998) discussed the connection between Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective and Noddings' (1992) caring pedagogy. Tappan (1998) concludes that the sociocultural perspective inherently incorporates the mechanisms

essential to the care perspective (i.e., modeling, engaging students in dialogue, providing opportunities for students to practice, and confirming student's developmental potential). That is, during the processing of scaffolding, teachers naturally establish trusting and mutually supportive relationships with their students and assist their students in the development of notions of care. This study documents how Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow scaffolded their students' learning within a caring pedagogy. Guided participation (e.g., Rogoff, 1990) occurred as the teachers co-constructed their relationships with individual students based on their zone of proximal development. For example, Ms. Purple *modeled* caring to her students by wearing glasses based on her knowledge of a student's discomfort and anticipation of the class's reaction. After being mocked by a student for wearing the glasses, Ms. Purple engaged in *dialogue* with the student, telling him how much the comment hurt her but also *confirming* that she knew that he did not intend to hurt her feelings. Future educational research should examine the mechanisms, including the particular forms of discourse (see Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group, 1992b) co-constructed by teachers, parents, and students during scaffolded learning within the context of caring pedagogy.

Multiple Goals and The Content of Teachers' Goals

The motivation research literature is dominated by investigations of mastery vs. performance goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Pintrich, 2000). The results of this study support the notion that motivating instruction occurs within the context of mastery goals (see Ee, Moore, & Atputhasamy, 2003; Patrick et al., 2001). That is, both Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow strongly desired for their students to obtain mastery or higher-level skills rather than compete for the best outcomes. In fact, both of the teachers were highly aware

of individual student needs and adjusted instructional practices to benefit individual students. In addition to mastery goals, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow articulated and implemented several other important goals.

The results of this study contribute to the small but growing literature on multiple goals and the content of teachers' goals (Ford, 1992; Lemos, 1996; Wentzel, 1998). In addition to mastery goals, the teachers in this study pursued goals of emotional safety, student valuing of academic content, and student self-regulated participation. These results are somewhat consistent with Lemos (1996), where teachers and students in that study articulated seven different types of goals (i.e., enjoyment, learning, complying, working, evaluation, interpersonal, and discipline) but the teachers' emphasized two goals (i.e., learning and complying).

It is likely that the participants selected for the study (i.e., two highly engaging teachers) and the rich detailed permitted in this ethnographic investigation provided more insight into the complexities of the goals and with goals especially important to motivating instruction. The three goals prioritized by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow are in line with Ford's (1992) contention that individuals pursue multiple goals and construct hierarchies, ranking goals of particular importance. More research is needed to understand the nature of multiple goals, especially teachers' goals. For example, how do features of the context influence how teachers construct and prioritize their goals? How do teachers and students co-construct their goals throughout the course of the school year? Which goals are particularly important in the processes of learning and development?

It is possible that less engaging teachers possess similar goals as highly engaging teachers but choose to implement them differently. Although highly engaging teachers may be especially necessary to offset declines in student motivation during the middle school years (Anderman & Maehr, 1994), it is necessary that future research efforts consider the types of goals possessed by less engaging teachers and how these goals become represented in the context of everyday classroom decision-making.

Beliefs of Influential Teachers and The Results of This Study

The goals that Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow adopted and implemented in their classrooms are very consistent with the shared beliefs possessed by influential teachers analyzed by Ruddell and colleagues (1983; 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997). In these studies of influential teachers, through primarily questionnaires and interviews, students reminisced about their experiences with influential teachers-- teachers that positively and significantly influenced their academic and/or personal development. Influential teachers conceived of teaching as incorporating certain personal characteristics (e.g., passion, a caring personality), understanding of learning potential (e.g., sensitivity to individual needs), enthusiasm towards their subject matter, concern for student personal development, and emphasis on high quality instruction.

Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow adopted goals that reflected the beliefs of influential teachers and translated these beliefs into classroom practices that supported student motivation. The use of ethnographic multiple case analyses in this study, however, permitted detailed descriptions of how particular instructional practices reflected the complexities of goals articulated by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow. Also, although the goals adopted and pursued by Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow were similar to the beliefs of

influential teachers, Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow also pursued additional goals (e.g., self-regulated student participation), which were unique to their experiences.

Advancing Studies of Motivation

The results of the current study support contemporary principles of educational motivation (Brophy, 2004). Motivation in education requires attention to both the expectancy and the value dimensions of motivation. Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow simultaneously supported student confidence as learners and cultivated student appreciation for learning as they kept the three goals in mind.

The current study is the latest installment in the grounded theory studies of motivating instruction, both at the individual classroom level (Bogner et al., 2002; Pressley et al., 2003) and at the whole school level (Pressley, Gaskins, Solic, & Collins, under review; Pressley, Raphael, Gallagher, & DiBella, 2004). In each of those studies, my colleagues and I used ethnographic research methods to document the practices used by teachers and schools to motivate their students. Highly engaging teachers saturate their classrooms with instructional practices that support student motivation and engagement. According to the findings of this study, highly engaging middle school teachers flood their classrooms with motivating instruction as they maintain goals of student emotional safety, mastery and valuing of academics, and self-regulated participation.

The current study advances the work done by Pressley and colleagues by merging the observational life of classrooms with analysis of teacher cognitions. By uncovering the motivational goals pursued by highly engaging teachers through rich, detailed

descriptions, the story of grounded theories of motivating instruction continues with a new chapter and many new possibilities for future research.

Limitations of The Current Study

This was a study of two teachers with somewhat different roles in the classroom (i.e., Ms. Purple, a general education teacher and Ms. Yellow, a special education teacher). It is possible that the roles of the teachers created different types of opportunities and constraints for the teachers to articulate and implement their goals. For example, Ms. Yellow, who was constantly concerned with individual student thinking, was probably afforded that role as a special education teacher. In comparison, Ms. Purple's concern for the entire class as a whole was afforded by her role as a general education teacher. Future studies should consider the opportunities and constraints as teachers and staff members enact various roles in the classroom.

This was also a study of two female sixth grade teachers. Do the results of this study generalize to other teachers from different contexts and different grade levels? Also, this study represented the experiences of just highly engaging teachers. Do less engaging teachers possess the same goals as the teachers investigated in this study? It is possible that less engaging teachers possess the same goals as the teachers in this study but choose to implement practices that undermine support motivation for various reasons.

The students in both Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classes progressed in the various subject areas. Although I obtained multiple indicators of student mastery, it is worthwhile, in this current era of accountability, to investigate the complexities of achievement from multiple perspectives. Ms. Purple and Ms. Yellow both relied on portfolios to show student growth. Several questions remain of interest: First, how did the

portfolios reflect student learning? Second, what did the portfolios inform the students about the nature of the learning.

This was primarily a study of the motivational goals adopted by two highly engaging teachers. If motivation is truly socially situated (Turner & Paris, 1994), there is a need to look carefully at the social nature of motivation. How do highly engaging teachers orchestrate the complexities of moment-moment instruction as they consider curriculum and instruction, their daily and long-term goals, as well as the needs of their students? How do personality factors influence the formulation and implementation of classroom goals?

Finally, although I incorporated student perceptions throughout the study, I did not examine student perceptions of goals used by their teachers and the implications of the goals. How did the students in Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's classes respond to the goals? Although it was clear based on informal comments that some of the students recognized the goals pursued by their teachers, did the entire class recognize and appreciate the three goals? How did the three goals relate to student learning and motivation? It is possible that the goals differentially impacted the students --future studies should investigate the differential outcomes of students produced in highly engaging classrooms. For example, although Ms. Purple's and Ms. Yellow's students appeared behaviorally, cognitively, and emotionally engaged, consistent with the multidimensional nature of engagement (Frederiks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004), future research efforts are needed to assess the possibility of differential forms of engagement in the classroom.

Implications of the Findings

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Theoretical Implications

The results of the study contribute to the research literature in education and psychology. It is possible that the three goals represent a theoretical model for conceptualizing the motivational goals of highly engaging teachers. Additional studies of teachers' motivational goals are needed to verify the results found in this study. Quantitative analyses of the goals with larger samples of teachers can further validate the usefulness of the three goals as a theoretical model. Educational researchers should continue to examine teachers' beliefs and decision-making within the context of a classroom environment. Understanding how teachers formulate their beliefs and implement their beliefs through the adoption of goals can critically inform teacher development.

Practical Implications

The results of the study can contribute to teacher preparation and professional development programs by informing teachers of the goals adopted by highly engaging teachers. The detailed descriptions of the instructional beliefs and practices found in this study can aid teachers in responding to the needs of their students. If goals of student emotional safety, academic mastery and value are necessary to high student engagement, teacher preparation programs should focus on the development of such goals.

Conclusions

Prior to this study, the cognitions of motivating and engaging teachers remained somewhat of a mystery. The findings of this study uncover the complexities of how highly engaging teachers think about everyday classroom life, with respect to motivation. This is an important new direction for the fields of psychology, educational psychology,

and teacher education. If we know more about how highly engaging teachers think about their instruction and how their thoughts relate to their everyday classroom instruction, new possibilities emerge for theory, research, and practice in teacher training and development, as well as in teacher motivation.

APPENDIX A:

Beginning of The Year Interview Questions

Ms. Purple

So you're now in the 3rd week of school and I guess I have a whole bunch of questions that relate to the first couple of weeks: how do you design the beginning of the year? What do you hope to accomplish in the first couple of weeks? More specifically, what do you hope students and parents know after the first couple of weeks of school?

What values, messages, and different types of roles do you try to instill in your classroom in these first couple of weeks? You said that the focus is on learning to be a student.

I guess I'm wondering about the beginning of the year stuff and the type of things that you've accomplished and tried to accomplish. How well do you think you've done with everything? Have there been any changes that you've decided after certain things didn't work, as you reflected on things?

So how do you think your students perceive your classroom after the first couple of weeks?

One thing I want to know more about is your definition of success. I see success as a major thing in your classroom. You talk about success and habits a lot.

So speaking of kids, what certain things have you've noticed about particular students in these past initial weeks? Are you noticing any differences between the classes?

Ms. Yellow

Now you're in the third week of school, I'm wondering about how you design the beginning of the year such as what do you hope to accomplish in the first couple of weeks of school? What do you hope students' parents know after the first couple of weeks? What types of messages, values, roles have you tried to instill? How do you decide what things to emphasize in the beginning of the year?

How well do you think you've done with all of this as you reflect?

Have you've changed anything based on the first couple of weeks?

Are there certain things that you've begun to notice about particular students or the classroom as a whole? What are you noticing?

Are there things that you didn't anticipate? Anything that you didn't anticipate about students?

You talked about some things you've noticed about students. In particular, some red flags have come up and how you're dealing with them. Are there any other ways you're thinking about how you're going to monitor student progress throughout the year?

So, how do you think students perceive you after these first couple of weeks?

How well do you think your students are doing so far?

How are you defining success at this point?

What are your hopes and expectations for the year?

APPENDIX B:

First Probing Interview Questions

Ms. Purple

As you know, I am interested in your decision-making. What factors that influence how you make decisions in the classroom? In particular, what factors influence how you motivate your students?

As far as the information that you receive in the beginning of the year, how do you take that information into account but also as you said not let it...how do you balance that?

I guess I am wondering more about this balance between the needs of the class vs. the needs of individual students. How you go about – you said you modified social studies...how do you balance that? When do you decide to modify? What are some implications of doing so?

You mentioned in your example with the round circle that you positioned yourself in a certain way. Can you talk about how you position yourself in the classroom?

So, you mentioned a couple of reasons why you place yourself in certain parts of the classroom- can you describe a specific example...

What about when a student doesn't understand something? In a lesson, on a homework, on a test – how do you respond?

I guess I'm wondering. You mention that you coach students as times and you provide them opportunities to be shining stars. Describe more of how you do that – an particular instance of when you did that. How you communicated...

So you try to give everyone a question so they can participate everyday. What about – I remember you said in one of our chats, you mentioned that you deliberately pick someone to answer questions and then you coach that student through...Tell me more about that.

I wanted to ask you about student progress. You've talked a little bit about it. I wanted to know more about how you define student progress and how you keep track of it.

Lets move on to a different topic. This whole idea of caring and making kids feel emotionally safe in your classroom. It seems to be a big thing. And you've talked about this in past conversations but also today. I guess you know, first of all, what does it really mean for kids to be emotionally safe in your room? How do you encourage that? And what do you do when you sense kids are not emotionally safe?

Just to ask you 1 more thing about this...You mentioned before that you want to stretch but not stress them beyond comprehension. How does that play out in your mind?

Ms. Yellow

As you know, I am interested in your decision-making. What factors that influence how you make decisions in the classroom? In particular, what factors influence how you motivate your students?

I have noticed that you are very aware of and very responsive towards the needs of individual students. Tell me more about this.

How do you deal with the needs of the whole class vs. individual students?
I was going to ask you about modifying instruction based on student needs and I've noticed for example in LA, where the students experienced some problems with writing paragraphs, you stopped and for a couple of days and you conferenced... And then similarly in math, students had some problems with the mean, median, and mode and then you pulled them out and worked with them. So I was wondering, you know, how do you make those decisions? When do you make those decisions?

Let's talk about this a little bit more. When a student doesn't understand something. You know, I noticed several things when you work with students. You tend to stand behind the student and lean over him or her. You tend to...You pick students sometimes to answer questions so you know that they can be successful. Tell me I guess about a recent interaction with a student when s/he didn't understand something. Maybe you were conferencing. You know, how do you position yourself physically? How did you communicate? And why?

You mentioned that you always got to keep the humor, the fun into learning or they will shut off. What do you do to do this? Are there limitations, unexpected challenges, or vice versa unexpected benefits?

I wanted to just ask you about student progress. You mentioned it with these interactions with individual students. How do you define that?

One big theme that I have been seeing is this whole idea of making students feel like they have a comfort zone in the classroom, showing that you care, building connections. Let me just read some things to you that you've said (I read from list). And then I've noticed that you often refer to kids as "Bud or buddy." And so I think this all ties together in some way. Or maybe it's not but you know I just wanted you to maybe talk about it.

You mentioned that you do a lot to build a community. How do you what do you do?
You mentioned that you read that you have to read individual kids to determine how you approach them and what you say and what you do type of thing. Tell me more about that. And what do you do when you sense that kids do not feel comfortable.

I've noticed in both yours and Ms. Purple's classroom, especially recently, talking about getting the students ready for 7th grade. How are you getting the students ready? I know we talked in our last conversation about we talked a lot about students taking more ownership over their work.

APPENDIX C:

Second Probing Interview Questions

Ms. Purple

I have a whole bunch (of questions) about learning. And it's very good that last chat you said, you ended with learning. I don't know if you remember but the last thing you said was, "nothing can interfere with their learning." And you said…That sounds like something I might say. You know that the students know that. And so I wanted to ask you a bunch of different questions related to learning for this first part. First is, how do you balance learning that is "long term foundation rather than the moment of life?" and then you mentioned, I've seen it here, "learn it forever." What does that really mean? What exactly do you want students to learn forever? So why don't we start with those.

You mentioned to your students, "Truthfully I want you to learn and have big opportunities" and you've talked about "big time learning." You've said I think in our last conversation about (student), "Hopefully I'm giving her great things." First, what do you mean by "big opportunities," "big time learning?" and then second, how do you advance a student like (student) compared to a student like (student)?

So when you talked about learning, you mentioned foundation, what exactly were you thinking?

You talked about this year, you've had a lot of challenges because there have been a lot more students with lower economic status. How have you kind of worked through those challenges this year?

Going back to this big theme of learning. Because that's what it's all about. I wanted to refer back to what you had said one time "Because there are many ways to present the material but I'm finding I can present it in a more casual manner now because they know the rules of my game. They know…because I try very hard to be consistent even within the flexibility but consistent of my expectation and they know it's always about learning. It's always about learning." And so I'm wondering, how do you balance being flexible but still communicating that it's always about learning and being consistent?

Ms. Yellow

We talked about learning as a foundation a little bit last time. You have mentioned that you want students to build a foundation. Um that they are not really going to remember what they learned in 6th grade but rather this foundation. And you've talked about academic habits such as filling out the agenda, organization, as well as developing a work ethic. I guess I wanted to know what other foundational skills do you attempt to develop in students? And how do you know if students are developing this foundation? And how do you distinguish between say if we contrast between (students) you know with this foundation.

So when you said with Language Arts-- the writing process and then with Math-- explaining the reasoning, having a deeper understanding, is that pretty consistent with the standards and the benchmarks?

How do you see the relationship between building a foundation and making different activities seem worthwhile to the kids?

Connections. And this is something I've heard you talk about quite a bit. You've talked about "They will do their best work if they feel like there's a connection to it."). You've talked about ways that you connect with the students, in trying to build a classroom community and the relationship between those academics and connections with students. You've even mentioned last week how parents connect with students. I feel like we've talked a lot about how you connect with students in terms of the way you sit, the way that you talk to them, positioning, and building a classroom community. What other connections do you establish? I think you even mentioned last week something about (student) getting an allowance and comparing it to gaining money in his LA paper. What type of connection were you hoping for there?

Let's talk about student participation. You have discussed the importance of student participation. I'm wondering, what are your goals for student participation? What are ways that students can participate inside and outside? How do you encourage students to participate? Like what language do you use to encourage student participation? I have a whole bunch of questions. Why don't we start there?

So as far as participation, what I'm hearing, is that it depends on the type of participation like in terms of being organized. What other different types? What are your expectations for participation when you're modeling vs. during math warm-up?

You talked about student's individual needs in terms of what problems they might be able to solve vs. others in math class. What role do student needs play in your expectations for participation?

You mentioned that students can sit cute as pie and not be engaged. Tell me about that.

APPENDIX D:

End of the Year Interview Questions.

Ms. Purple

Throughout the year, you mentioned that students receive opportunities to "fix" assignments. How often do students receive these opportunities?

Several times throughout the year, I noticed that students publicly assessed themselves based on their class preparation. How often did students do that?

Throughout the year, it was clear and you mentioned that you possess very high expectations for students. If you could provide some examples of those expectations. Also, how do you communicate high expectations to students? What language did you use to tell them?

You mentioned that you celebrate student learning. Provide some examples how you do this.

In the beginning of the year, you talked about the importance of balancing everything that you do in a gangbuster way (e.g., encouraging student excitement about learning, showing them they are approved of, teaching them responsibility and respect, as well as the content). Now that it's the end of the year, how well do you think you did with all that?

In the beginning of the year, you talked about your hope to bring students up at least 1 level. How well do you think you did?

The beginning of the year was filled with a variety of challenges, especially the lack of intern and resource support. How would you assess your progress as you worked through these challenges (and others) as the year progressed?

After the first couple of weeks of school, I asked you how you thought your students perceived you and your class. Now that it's the end of the year, how do you think your students perceive you and your classroom?

This might be a little repetitive but…At this point, now that it's the end of the year, just about the last day of school, what do you hope that your students leave 6th grade with?

In the beginning of the year, you mentioned that you began to notice things early on about students. As the year progressed, how did these early observations change or remain the same?

As you know in this project, I've tried to understand how you, the reasons why you motivate students, the reasons why you make decisions to motivate students. I guess this

is a 2-part question. One, as the year has progressed, have been there many changes do you think in the way that you did to motivate students. And also we've talked throughout the year about why you do the things you do. If you could maybe provide a little summary.

Ms. Yellow

You mentioned difficulties with students turning in homework throughout the year. How have you addressed this problem? What are the consequences for students? I overheard you telling Student that he wasn't going to be able to participate in the pizza party if he didn't hand in his homework.

This year was full of many changes. Some of these changes included your role in 5th grade to your new role as lead teacher of SS and transforming that class, your role in (teacher's) class. Also the Reading class seemed to go through many changes this year. Big emphasis on reading and writing with lots of additions to LA such as that Guided Reading. And also your new team-teaching arrangement. So, tell me about these changes and how you made some decisions throughout the year. And overall your satisfaction with how things turned out?

You mentioned in the beginning of the year that you end the year with students revisiting their time capsule that they made in the first week of school. How else do you end the school year? For example, are there particular writing assignments that students do to capture the end of the year?

So now it's the end, what do you hope students have left 6th grade with?

You mentioned in the beginning of the year, you began to notice things early on about students. For example, you brought up the example with the paragraph writing. As the year progressed, how did those beginning of the year observations change or remain the same or evolve?

Now that it's the end of the year, lets talk about student learning across the year. What type of evidence could you share and maybe that's going to include actual paper evidence of student learning throughout the year?

I asked you in the beginning of the year. Now it's the end of the year. How do you think students perceive you?

In the beginning of the year, you said your 2 words for the year were "positive and a balance." How would you assess your progress with those 2 things?

So as you know, this has been about motivation and I was wondering first, have there been any changes throughout the year in the ways you motivate students? And then also I'm trying to figure out why you do what you do in terms of motivating students. Any other comments on that? If you could maybe provide a little summary.

APPENDIX E:

Summary of Major Conclusions

<u>Major Conclusion #1: Importance of Emotional Safety</u>

Beginning of The Year

        Introductions

        Routines

        Relationship Building

Aware of and Responsive to Student Needs

        High Awareness of Students

                Reading Student Signals

                Physical Positioning

                Gestures

                Communication Through Language

                        Caring and Approval

                        Minimizing Anxiety

                        Common Phrases

                        Humor

        Connections With Students

                Beginning of the School Day

                Personal Stories

                Caring About Students

                Celebrating Student Accomplishments

Academic Comfort

Choosing Particular Students

Modifying Expectations

Unique to the Teachers

Stretch but Not Stress

Choosing Problems That Work for You

Differences Between The Teachers

Ms. Purple's Emotional Connections

Ms. Yellow's Personal Connections

Major Conclusion #2: Mastery and Value

Achieving Mastery Is Possible

Opportunities to Fix It

Modifying Lessons

Explicit Strategy Instruction

High Quality Work

Evidence of Mastery

Connection between Mastery and Value

Learn It Forever

Value of Learning

Purpose of Learning

Differences Between The Teachers

Ms. Purple's Emphasis on Classroom Learning Time and "Read Forever"

Ms. Yellow's Connections to the Real World

Major Conclusion #3: Striving for Self-Regulated Participation

It's Worthwhile to Participate

Encouraging Self-Regulated Participation

Monitoring and Evaluating Your Efforts

Fixing Your Problems

Acting Responsibly

It's What You Choose To Do

Communicating That You Must Take Ownership

The Culture of Self-Regulated Participation

Attention to Classroom Routines is a Prerequisite to Participation

Acting Like A Learner

Positive Ways to Encourage Student Participation

Recognizing Student Participation

Awareness and Responsiveness of Individual Student Needs

Monitoring Individual Students

Engagement Is Strongly Related To Lack Of Student Understanding

Tailoring Questions to Individual Student Needs

Making Connections is Necessary to Student Engagement

Differences Between Teachers

Ms. Purple's "No Passivity Allowed in My Classroom"

Ms. Yellow's Attention to Student Understanding

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