MENTOR TEACHERS AS TEACHER EDUCATORS:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF EDUCATIVE MENTORING

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A DISSERTATION

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

Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education- Doctor of Philosophy

2017

ABSTRACT

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There is increasing pressure on Education Preparation Providers to provide clinically rich opportunities for interns that are connected with and embedded in local schools. Providing these clinically rich opportunities has become the primary responsibility of the mentor teachers that oversee the development of the interns placed in their schools. If mentor teachers are to become teacher educators, they need greater support to develop educative mentoring practices.

The purpose of this study was to learn more about the experiences of mentor teachers as they applied educative mentoring strategies and to discover how their professional learning could be supported by Education Preparation Providers. This qualitative study, based on the experiences of six secondary level mentor teachers that mentored interns in year-long placements, interviewed them about their personal histories and values, captured specific mentoring moments with their interns, and conducted reflective interviews about their current mentoring practices. The central research question was: How do mentors use their knowledge and/or vision of teaching to provide learning opportunities for their interns? Four additional supportive questions were asked to provide a more robust picture of the mentor teachers' practices:

- How do mentors determine the professional development needs of their interns?
- How do mentor teachers explicitly or implicitly use their knowledge and values about teaching in their mentoring of interns?

- What strategies do mentor teachers use to promote reflection on the part of interns?
- How can experienced mentors continue to learn about mentoring?

The results of this study showed that mentor teachers utilized a variety of mentoring strategies to develop the interns' vision of teaching. These methods allowed them to move beyond the transmission model of mentoring to a more transformative stance grounded in the values of educative mentoring

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would never have happened without the willingness of six wonderful mentors who were willing to share their experiences. I continue to be grateful for their generosity, honesty, and openness throughout the process.

My dissertation work was supported by many people, many of whom shared my journey throughout the program. My deep appreciation to all of them will always have a place in my heart.

I would like to especially thank the members of my dissertation committee, Kyle Greenwalt, Melissa McDaniels, Corey Drake, and Randi Stanulis. The encouragement that you provided throughout this process was overwhelming, the completion of this dissertation is due to your support and the confidence that you showed in my abilities. It should be singularly noted that my committee chair, Kyle Greenwalt, was a constant touchstone in the Department since I began the program in 2009. Kyle always supported my vision and challenged me to rethink approaches to research, teaching, and mentoring and helped shape the teacher educator I am today.

I would also like to thank my wonderful friends that I made throughout the program. The 2136 Holly Way crew: Mark Helmsing, Jeff Synder, Lynne Watanabe-Kganesto, David Davenport and Elizabeth Kenyon, you made our journey through the program intellectually rich and fun at the same time. Thank you for the lively discussions and support given throughout the years.

Last but certainly not least, a special and extensive thank you to my parents, Gale and David Yates. I could have never made it through the program without your love, support, and unfailing confidence in my abilities.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

As I began graduate school to begin a PhD program in the College of Education at Michigan State University my first assistantships were to be a field instructor for five interns and to co-teach a Social Studies methods course for interns during their year-long placement. Since I had just completed eight years of teaching high school social studies, and acting as a department chair the final two, I felt extremely prepared for these assistantships. My mastery of social studies content and recent classroom experience gave me a great sense of confidence that I could be an asset to the program and the student teachers. The anticipation of sharing my experiences with the student teachers and contributing to the future of the teaching profession was very exciting.

As I began to envision my role as a field instructor, I was reminded of my own experiences with learning to teach—which were not very positive—and how my field instructor had provided me with the strong support I needed as my mentor teacher relationship was crumbling. My thoughts focused on emulating her actions to support my interns by fighting for them when necessary. Other than that, though, I did not have a strategy for establishing relationships with either the interns or the mentor teachers. In fact, I had not given much thought to the mentor teachers at all—aside from their presence during debriefing sessions.

As a department chair, I had done my share of observations. This experience provided me with tested approaches related to debriefing and planning for future growth or actions. I had already learned to conquer any impulse to jump into a lesson—to keep a low profile to prevent the students from focusing on my actions instead of the classroom

teacher. I had even experienced having difficult conversations centered on things that needed to change in a teacher's practice. What I had not thought about in any detail was the influence of the mentor teacher, what their strengths and challenges in mentoring might be, and how much that was going to impact my work with the interns.

During my initial round of visits to my student teacher's classrooms, I met a variety of mentors in the five different schools. There was the absentee coach, a very committed and thoughtful mentor, two very nice and welcoming mentors, and a mentor who saw no value in my presence. As I entered this latter mentor's classroom, there was already a palpable tension between the intern and mentor teacher. The mentor teacher had clear command over everything that occurred in that room.

When we sat down for a conversation, she interrupted my explanation about my process and began to loudly declare that as long as the intern did what she said, to her expectations, that there was no need for me to bring my ivory tower thinking into her classroom. I was immediately taken aback, as I had only been out of the classroom for the summer and had not even begun to develop my academic notions of teaching. I steadied myself and tried to circle around to some questions about the room and her expectations in order to understand them better.

At that point she cut me off again and told me that she did not have time to explain all that to me, got up, and walked away from the conversation. After she left, I looked over to the intern and asked how she was doing. She began to cry.

I knew at that point, very clearly, that I needed to develop some skills quickly to work with this mentor teacher and reassure the intern of my resolve to help her. Luckily, we transferred that intern to a supportive mentor teacher for the rest of her placement.

Over time I developed a deeper connection with both the mentor and interns as we worked together. I gained a greater respect for the mentor teachers and the incredible work they did, even when they did not see it themselves. I sat with mentor teachers as they cried when placements did not work out, had long strategy-filled phone conversations late into the evening with mentor teachers who were just looking for a way to solve the problems they were faced with, and worked to show that my commitment to them was as strong as it was for their interns. My field experience taught me about their dedication, their difficulties with tough decisions, and their strong commitment to building relationships with their interns.

It became clear to me that mentors wanted and needed support in the same manner that their interns did. They were sometimes just as uncertain about whether they were doing the right thing and were interested in learning more about how to support and develop their interns. That realization forever changed my perspective of mentor teachers and is the root of the idea for this study.

Accepting the role of mentor teacher in today's educational climate involves certain risks, although the clinical experience of interning is highly valued. Students frequently and accurately dream of their internships as the time to finally put all the ideas they have collected about education into action.

Yet on the mentor and school side, when colleges of education ask to place interns into their schools, there are many administrative considerations to deliberate. There is a tremendous time commitment on the mentor teacher's part to develop and oversee a student teacher. As teacher evaluations and accountability measures have become increasingly high-stakes, and as test scores have become a factor to raises in

limited budgets, accepting a student teacher could represent a great risk to a mentor teacher's own standing and financial situations. There are questions raised about how much of the curriculum the students will learn under an intern's guidance and how many interns should students encounter in their schedules. In districts that have been designated as at-risk, should they take on an intern who might be unable to achieve the same results as their mentor teachers? As districts have faced decreasing budgets, they have asked their teachers to either take pay cuts or give up their planning periods. In these schools, if there are no planning periods, can mentor teachers effectively find time to mentor? Yet, despite these challenges, there are still school districts that place an intern in their classrooms. Such willingness illustrates the value placed on the practice of student teaching by the districts and its importance to the long-term success of the profession.

Research Questions

This qualitative study seeks to build upon the literature of educative mentoring in order to gain a deeper understanding of how mentors develop and enact their practice of mentoring. Through the use of capturing mentor moments (Schwille, 2008), this study will examine the following research questions.

Overarching Question

How do mentors use their knowledge and or vision of teaching to provide learning opportunities for their interns?

Supporting Questions

- How do mentors determine the professional development need of their interns?
- How do mentor teachers explicitly or implicitly use their knowledge and values about teaching in their mentoring of interns?
- What strategies do mentor teachers use to promote reflection on the part of interns?
- How can experienced mentors continue to learn about mentoring?

Method: An Overview

Given that each placement and each relationship between the mentor and interns is unique, I began to wonder about the observed differences between the mentors and the ways they chose to work with their interns. While designing the study, I kept returning to this overarching question: How do mentor teachers use their knowledge and vision of teaching to provide learning opportunities for their interns?

In order to gain some understanding I would need to identify how mentor teachers determined the needs of their student teachers, how they utilized their knowledge and or values explicitly or implicitly with their interns, what strategies they used to encourage reflection, and how the mentors continued to learn about mentoring. As my analysis began to coalesce, a narrative about mentoring was created which forms the bulk of this dissertation.

This qualitative study was designed to capture the mentoring practices and reflections of mentor teachers during spring semester of 2015. There are six mentors and mentees in the study. The mentor teachers and their practices are the main focus. As such, I interviewed the mentor teachers to gain a sense of their personal background, expectations, and mentoring philosophies. The mentor teachers were asked to record a collection of six mentoring moments of their choosing. After reviewing the mentoring moments, I prepared a specific reflective interview protocol for each mentor.

Through the data collected, it became evident that the mentors in the study are engaged in the use of educative mentoring practices with their interns. Educative mentoring will be defined as actions that focus on creating opportunities for extending experiences, coupled with a deep reflection of those experiences, during the process of developing classroom skills (Feiman-Nemser, 2012) This type of mentoring signals a

departure from mentoring relationships that primarily focus on issues of support and basic knowledge of skill acquisition throughout the student teaching process. Instead, educative mentoring is characterized as being collaborative, inquiry-based, and reflection-driven as means to transform the learning in schools instead of reifying traditional practices and norms (Langdon & Ward, 2015)

The findings of this study illustrate how mentor teachers utilize their own experiences and values as a jumping off point for their mentoring practices. They do not stop there, however; for when they have the knowledge and ability to do so, they are able to mix the methods of modeling, co-teaching, inquiry and reflection to push the development of their interns. They also demonstrated a strong desire to learn more about mentoring as illustrated in the value they place on mentor meetings and other types of professional development opportunities presented to them. Mentors would highly value valid feedback on their practices as a more personalized form of development.

The experiences that they chose to highlight throughout the mentoring moments and interviews underscore their engagement in educative mentoring practices to best of their abilities and values. There is no one correct way to mentor an intern, which is why I hope you will enjoy learning more about the methods of the mentor teachers in this study as they enact their practice.

Definitions of Terms

Mentor

Student teaching is a milestone in the professional development journey of most teachers. Whether they recall their time of student teaching with fondness or with the memory of how stressful their experience was, it is an initiation into the realities of the profession in a deep way. Most interns have a formal support system of people around

them meant to aid in their induction: their mentor teacher, field instructors, course instructors and assorted school personnel. The closest of these relationships is the one developed by the intern and the mentor. They work side by side every day, share students and parents, share administrative demands and priorities, and try to design curriculum that engages their students in the content. Increasing policy regulations and demands have added new tension to these relationships. As value-added models of teacher evaluation sweep into the classroom, there is greater pressure to ensure that the intern can uphold the same level of student growth as the mentor teacher. Agreeing to accept a intern has become a high-stakes decision since a mentor’s job, and possibly a school itself, may be threatened, yet schools and mentor teachers continue to open their doors to interns. One would imagine that such willingness demonstrates a commitment to train the next generation of teachers, and the value educators place on the student teaching experience.

Education has a long history of recognizing the potential of apprenticeship models. The importance placed upon field work, and the recognition that classroom teachers are necessary to the learning process, “embody assumptions that teacher-education programs will be improved if practitioner skills and dispositions are somehow made a part of teacher education knowledge and discourse” (Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994). University and school partnerships are also based on the idea that the exchange will benefit each institution in terms of knowledge, skills, and a practice-based teacher education program. Clinical faculty and mentor teachers become the knowledge brokers between the two institutions.

According to Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994), there are three factors that explain why the idea of the cooperating teacher became so central to the learning process. The first is connected to the move of teacher training programs from the normal schools to the university setting. In this transition, university faculty distanced themselves from normal schools to gain academic status and prestige as a discipline. The second factor is that deep budget cuts during the 1960s and 1970s caused many of the lab schools to be closed, thereby limiting the access student teachers had to placements. Thirdly, as the baby boomer generation began attending schools, the demand for teachers was greatly increased—and by extension, the need for student teaching placements to meet the growing labor needs of the profession. These three factors brought a realization to university faculties that they would need to work with classroom teachers in a more cooperative way. This did not mean that university faculty saw classroom teacher's knowledge to be on the same level as their own, which is why they expected classroom teachers to follow their lead in terms of teacher education (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2013; Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994; Houston, 2008).

In the mid 1980's, with external policy pressures from *A Nation at Risk* coupled with the rise of Professional Development Schools, the role of the cooperative teacher gained greater prestige as faculties began to seek stronger relevance within k-12 schools. With these changes came a growth in clinical positions, with "cooperating teachers" becoming "mentor teachers" or "associate teachers," and an increase between university faculty and classroom teacher co-teaching experiences at both institutions. However, many cooperating teachers still understood their role as providing "a place for the pre-service teacher to practice teaching" (Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008 p. 343). If

the belief that cooperating teachers only provide a space for pre-service teachers, then the notion of equal collaboration or cooperation is limited in its definition and scope. The university-mentor teacher-student teacher relationship should be a dynamic space with all parties learning from each other as they navigate the varied aspects of learning to teach.

Due to this history, I have chosen to use the term "mentor teacher" in my study instead of "cooperating teacher." The concept and development of a mentoring style is individual to the classroom teachers that engage in this task. While portions of a mentor teacher relationship may entail their "cooperation" with the university, that is only one aspect of their mentoring philosophy, and is not the lens through which this study will be framed.

Intern

Throughout this study I will also utilize the term "intern" for the teacher candidates. This term was selected because it is the embedded in the language of the program at Michigan State University, as the designation for teacher candidates. The year-long internship for the teacher candidates is grounded in the idea that interns enter their internship as learners first and continue to develop their practice through the work of their mentor teachers and university based teacher educators. In the *Secondary Teacher Preparation Team 2015-2016 Internship Guide* the explanation of the intern's responsibilities states that:

> In contrast to traditional student teaching programs, interns are not expected to begin the year ready to teach on their own. Instead, they are expected to engage in observation, co-planning and co-teaching with their

mentor teachers and to build their capacity toward assuming responsibility for extended lead teaching during the second semester.

The term intern illustrates the learning stance that is a key part of the design of the teacher education program.

Summary of Chapter One

In this chapter, I introduced the study rational, method, research questions, and key definitions that will be used to frame the study. In Chapter Two, I will situate this study within the literature of educative mentoring.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will review the literature that has framed and informed my study within the context of educative mentoring. First, I will provide a context for the secondary school mentor's work with interns as well as provide a definition of educative mentoring. Second, I will discuss the literature on personal perspectives, values and assumptions that mentor teachers use to inform their mentoring practice. Thirdly, I will discuss how professional learning theory could inform the ways mentor teachers are supported in their mentoring practice.

Challenges Facing Education Preparation Programs

The clinical elements of learning to teach receive a great amount of interest from reformers and teacher candidates (Goodwin, Roegman, & Reagan, 2016). There is a strong desire for Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) to provide "clinically rich" opportunities for interns that are connected to and embedded in local schools (Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning, 2010; Resources & Usdoe, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). This intense degree of interest in the clinical aspects of the intern's experience in the field, prompts researchers to analyze the role of mentor teachers. If mentor teachers are to accept greater responsibilities in their role as teacher educator with their interns, it becomes vital to understand how they define effective mentoring and enact effective teaching strategies.

As Goodwin et al (2016) explained, the desire for these clinically rich experiences shifts the focus of responsibility of teacher preparation from primarily being the responsibility of a university professor to becoming more the responsibility of the mentor teacher. This shift in the responsibility of teacher education from university to field assumes that mentor teachers will be able to teach what they already know and "teach beyond what they know in ways that push the field in new directions that will actually move and reinvent current practice" (Goodwin et al., 2016). This shift demands that mentoring move beyond the notion of technical expertise and support to one of educative mentoring.

Educative Mentoring

Educative mentoring, as defined by Sharon Feiman-Nemser (2012), is based on Dewey's notion of educative experiences. Educative experiences may be thought of as building blocks in the sense that each connected experience may be used as a base for stronger future experiences throughout the learning process. Within this context, the mentor's responsibility is to create a relationship that goes beyond "situational adjustment, technical advice, and emotional support" to one that is based "on an explicit vision of good teaching and understanding of teacher learning" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012, p. 254).

The goal of educative mentoring is to initiate the intern into the discipline of internalizing inquiry about their practice. This discipline requires self-critiques that include assessments of success/failure, noting strengths and challenges, and understanding situational experiences to specifically address their teaching practice. To accomplish this, the mentor teacher must balance the immediate needs of an intern with

the long- term objective of their professional development. The immediate needs may be addressed in collaborative feedback sessions grounded in inquiry practice to build the skills and habits necessary to create positive, connected experiences. As the intern works through this process, the mentor provides a series of learning opportunities for the intern creating an experiential base for their long-term professional development.

To initiate the practice of inquiry, mentor teachers use their knowledge and expertise to engage their interns in detailed conversations about their teaching practice, which allows the pair to identify any problems within the practice. The mentor guides and pushes the intern to articulate the exact conditions, concerns, and observations about what they experienced to have an analytic conversation. Discussing problems of practice in this manner frames and focuses the conversation on joint problem solving and investigation of the constructed problem. This process allows interns the space necessary to articulate and reflect on the issues of their experiences, and learn how to communicate these problems effectively to receive the feedback or assistance necessary for their continuous learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

This dialogic process of educative mentoring is connected to the mentor's experience and vision of teaching. Beyond framing problems that arise from practice, mentors use their experiences and knowledge about context to assess the intern's needs in terms of support, as well as the areas for growth to be extended and built upon. These assessments require the mentor to utilize their judgment, be open minded in terms of possible solutions or outcomes that benefit growth, and possess a wide range of strategies to facilitate the learning process (Feiman-Nemser, 1998).

Sharon Schwille (2008) built upon this notion of educative mentoring to argue that mentoring "is a professional practice with a repertoire of skill sets that must be learned over time" (Schwille, 2008, p. 139). Her study analyzed the methods mentor teachers utilized to construct opportunities for intern learning when practicing educative mentoring.

An array of strategies may be used by mentor teachers to guide their interns through the process of learning to teach. Each strategy is designed to engage the intern in the learning process. Sharon Schwille (2008) identified several scenarios of mentor teachers structuring the learning process, reflecting different moments in the learning process.

- *Coaching and Stepping In:* Occurs when a mentor teacher is present in the room, while the student teacher is teaching and provides real time support, clarifications, or helping to guide to direction of the lesson.
- *Teaching Together:* When the mentor teacher and the student teacher co-teach a lesson either in whole or in part. Both are actively involved in the lesson.
- *Demonstration Teaching:* This is when the mentor teacher models a lesson or strategy. The student teacher is responsible for observing. This could happen either in front of students or during planning or debriefing conversations.
- *Mentoring on the Move:* These are the brief mentoring conversations that happen between classes, emails, texts, phone calls, etc.

- *Mentoring Session/Debriefing Sessions:* These sessions are usually planned conversations to discuss planning, debrief lessons, or discussing teaching.
- *Co-planning:* Actively working together to design learning activities that either person could use to teach.
- *Videotape Analysis:* Using recorded images to discuss the teaching practices captured.
- *Writing:* The use of journal writing or other forms of written reflection that are shared between the mentor and student teacher.

Schwille (2008) referenced these types of mentoring moments to understand how mentors differentiate their work with interns as they assessed their knowledge and developmental needs. She argued that mentors do not simply select a strategy from a list to employ, but that they must learn how to improvise and create an appropriate learning activity to suit the specific context and learning situation. In this way, mentoring can be thought of as an education intervention which is deliberate yet flexible enough to reach the mentor teacher's goals.

This study will extend this idea of mentoring moments to examine how mentors select moments to create opportunities for educative mentoring. One of the challenges to applying this concept is that it requires mentor teachers to move beyond their own experience and tacit knowledge to develop a reflective space for both participants to become collaborators in rethinking the process of learning to teach.

Experience

The foundation of educative mentoring is the mentor teacher's experience. The idea that experience is crucial to the process of learning to teach is not new. Experiences, according to John Dewey, are personal and social. What we experience as life is a product of who we are, our personal beliefs and how our societies inform us about the experience. Dewey stresses the importance of the continuity and the interaction of each experience. Experiences grow out of previous experiences and shape our future experiences. Interaction is the intersection between personal beliefs and understandings and the new experience. As a person interacts with the new, their previous experiences inform their responses and the value that they may take away from this interaction will hopefully lead to growth. Dewey cautions that experience and education do not always go hand in hand. If an experience leads someone to slow down or to stop the growth of further experiences it can become miseducative. Experiences can also be so disconnected that even positive ones can be stunted by a lack of continuity. It is not only the fact that someone has an experience—that experience must be connected to and help provide an impetus to seek future experiences that push the learner towards growth (Dewey, 1938).

Sharon Feiman-Nemser helped to clarify how classroom experiences need to be facilitated for them to become educative experiences for an intern learning how to teach. In her article, "Pitfalls of Experience in Teacher Preparation," she discussed three common "pitfalls" that occur when interns are placed into K-12 schools as part of their teacher preparation programs (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). The first pitfall is familiarity. This occurs when an intern encounters a classroom that is like their own learning experience. They may react to the teacher and the classroom routines through their own memories

and through following the routines that are set in place by the mentor teacher. This may create a false sense of confidence in their abilities—given that they have not had to set up classroom norms and routines themselves. Since they missed the experience of a blank canvas they failed to see the decision-making that informed those routines. Familiarity can cause the intern reluctance to ask questions or become critical of what they have observed, and they may have difficulty identifying the layers that comprise the learning experience, leading to a shallow understanding of the teaching process.

The second pitfall is the two-world pitfall. This references the divide between university course expectations and the practical demands of a classroom. The experiential problem is that university course work may require interns to focus on a small skill or portion of a teacher's work and then ask them to reflect on that in an assignment. —whereas the classroom teacher is enacting and using several moves at once because the demands of the classroom require a rapid synthesis of activities. While the intern did observe the smaller piece of what the classroom teacher did, and can explain how it relates to the university course material—it remains to be seen whether the intern could implement that action along with all the other teacher moves that were performed.

The third pitfall, cross purposes, addresses the purposes behind the intern classroom experience. Feiman-Nemser declared that classrooms were not meant to be laboratories and interns can be disruptive to the classroom environment. The top priority of the mentor teacher is to focus on her students and their learning. He or she would ideally like to keep similar structures in place once the intern leaves. This may create some tension, because the intern may prefer structures conforming to their teaching identity and style, but in many cases, must conform to the structures of the school and/or

classroom that they are assigned, which places boundaries around the experience. It is important for the intern to have space to reflect and question the structures around them for their long-term growth, but the ability of the intern to reflect and question will be governed by the classroom teacher's openness to the intern's learning process and ability to help the intern make sense of the various contexts at work in the classroom.

Each of these pitfalls illustrate the notions of experience that John Dewey put forth. If the intern's experience is beset by any of these pitfalls, it is important that a teacher educator provides the space and information necessary to allow them to understand the classroom and work that they are experiencing from differing viewpoints to provide connections amongst their experiences. By doing so, the teacher educator permits the intern to gain the transferable skills necessary to continue and develop their teaching practices over the course of their career.

These notions of continuity and interaction are particularly important when thinking about the process of learning to teach. It is not enough to provide interns with a field placement or time in classrooms. There needs to be room for interns to analyze and reflect on their experiences through the context of their school, community, and coursework.

Mentoring is a Multifaceted Task

The word "mentor" conjures up a myriad of actions and expectations. The research on mentoring is multifaceted, since there are a variety of ways to understand the work involved in helping a novice learn how to teach. Researchers have looked at mentoring in terms of roles and responsibilities, personal perspectives, values, and

assumptions, and on the dynamics of mentoring relationships (Hawkey, 1997). In the following sections, a review of the literature of these groupings will be discussed to understand the assumptions and values that undergird mentoring practices.

Roles and Responsibilities

Researchers who investigate and analyze the roles and the responsibilities of mentors and interns have tried to define the relationship role identities throughout the intern experience. While some have described the roles between mentor teacher, intern, and university supervisor as frequently shifting and sometimes unclear (Bullough & Draper, 2004), other lines of research perceive the roles and responsibilities as more clearly understood and developed.

In a survey study with forty-five secondary mathematics mentor teachers, Leatham and Peterson (2010) queried the primary purposes of the intern experience and the mentor's role in achieving success in the accomplishment of those purposes. Mentors responded that their roles were "providing the space for experience, modeling, facilitating reflection, and sharing knowledge" (Leatham & Peterson, 2010, p. 99). These notions encapsulate the approach used by the mentor teacher to incorporate the intern into the classroom, building, and profession. By granting access to their classroom, mentors provide a space for interns to plan and present lessons, observe modeling, and reflect on their practice. Mentors model behaviors and share their knowledge of pedagogy and professional experience with their interns. These methods are used to scaffold the layering of intern responsibilities until they can accept full responsibility for the classroom.

Hall, Draper, Smith, and Bullough (2008) conducted a survey of 264 mentor teachers to determine their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities as compared to the normative view of mentoring. The participants responded that their roles included "(1) emotional and professional support; (2) university assignment to supervise; (3) critical evaluation and reflection; (4) team/teaching collaboration" (p. 335). Professional supports were defined as the actions mentors took to help interns enact their professional responsibilities. While mentors acknowledged the need for emotional support, they struggled to articulate the ways they provided it for their interns. The role of university supervisor referred to the activities that the mentor engaged in while complying with the university requirements of the placement itself. Critical evaluation and reflection referenced the methods used to identify an intern's weaknesses, provide feedback, and develop the skills/knowledge of the intern. Team/teaching collaboration encompassed the jointly planned and implementation of the curriculum. Although collaboration was included as a role, very few participants identified with it, which indicated that the mentors did not place a high value on this activity. The responses to this survey showed that while there was evidence of the educative mentoring process, growth areas for the mentor teachers remained.

Koster, Korthagen and Wubbels (1998) created a list of roles that teacher educators play in the development of interns. Teacher educators were either mentor teachers, or university professors. Koster, Korthagen and Wubbels listed five specific functions that mentor teachers performed, "orientation, personal support, instruction and guidance, providing feedback, and liaison with teacher education colleges" (Koster, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 1998, p.80). Orientation referred to the roles that mentor

teachers' play to acquaint the intern with the classroom, building culture, and the profession. Personal support referred to the idea of emotional support such as providing hope and encouragement to the intern. Instruction and guidance referenced the mentor's role in providing insight into classroom curriculum design and implementation through the usage of practical tips and best practices. Providing feedback was an essential piece to the learning process of the intern (feedback was not a negative term, but merely a dialogue around the observed behaviors and offering possible solutions). The interactions with the university were determined to include any mentor teacher participation in offered courses, course design, or training.

Instead of simply documenting the roles of mentor teachers, one may think about how they participate in those roles. Brodie, Cowling and Nissen wrote a literature review based on this notion (Brodie, Cowling, & Nissen, 2009). Their review articulated eleven different active roles of mentor teachers: providers of feedback, gatekeepers of the profession, modelers of practice, supportive of reflection, gleaners of knowledge, purveyors of context, conveners of relation, agents of socialization, advocates of the practical, and abiders of change. Each role revealed some facet of the mentor teacher's contribution to teacher education on either a personal or programmatic level.

Each of these facets display the various means used by mentor teachers to intersect with the learning process of their interns, but how they choose to juggle or engage each one determines their mentoring style. Their decisions may be rooted in an apprenticeship model from their own experiences, or spring from their innate strengths or confidence that mentors bring to their job. It would be incredibly difficult to master a high degree of expertise for each of these facets, and each intern will differ in their

developmental needs While these categories of participation provide a framework to outline the engagement of cooperating teachers in teacher education, they do not address the reasons why or how cooperating teachers structure their mentoring practice. To gain insight to the motivations of the cooperating teachers, and how mentoring practices develop, it is necessary that we to go to the source—mentor teachers themselves—to realize a fuller sense of their beliefs and actions related to mentoring.

Personal Perspectives, Values, and Assumptions

It is no secret that mentors and interns enter their relationship with their own expectations and values. The mentoring research performed to examine these expectations seeks to understand how these perspectives, values, and assumptions influence the mentoring process. Mentors frequently use their own internship experience as a starting point for enacting their mentoring practice (Koerner, 1992; Randi Nevins Stanulis, 1994, 1995; Young, Bullough Jr., Draper, Smith, & Erickson, 2005). Mentors also expect the university programs they are associated with to provide guidance in their role (Koerner, 1992). Even though there are programmatic and structural influences affecting how a mentor may perform their role, their personal values have an overarching determination on the mentoring process. To execute the programmatic goals of internship, the mentor teacher must effectively communicate.

Traditionally, teachers are isolated from each other in terms of creating and implementing their teaching style. The internship experience is a departure from that isolation and can provide a platform for collaboration (Stanulis, 1995), yet in this collaboration, the mentor's tacit knowledge (Schön,1987; Stanulis, 1994) may be difficult to express which can limit the effectiveness of communication. Clear communication

about how mentors approach the task of teaching, as well as how expectations and feedback are established for the intern, can go a long way toward building a collaborative relationship where trust is present (Stanulis & Russell, 2000). If there are expectations from the mentor teacher that an intern should enter their placement as a peer (Koerner, 1992) in terms of sources of knowledge, which is rarely the case, it is left to the mentor teacher to determine the best strategies to work with and educate their intern.

Not surprisingly, mentor teachers depend on their own classroom experiences and accumulated wisdom over their teaching career to implement these strategies. Their perspectives, and the values they incorporate into the mentoring process are the result of these life experiences. Consequentially, their emphasis tends to be placed on practical knowledge that can be implemented directly into the classroom, which drives the feedback and knowledge that interns gain from their mentors (Stanulis, 1995).

Stanulis (1994) illustrated how a mentor based her mentoring practice around two key values: life-long learning and questioning. These values shaped the way that the mentor teacher, Ms. Lee, interacted with her student teacher. "Ms. Lee said that she wanted to use her experience in teaching to help ask Shelly questions about her own conceptual understanding of subject matter, knowledge of how first graders learn, and philosophies of building a community of learners" (Stanulis, 1994, p. 34). Using inquiry, Ms. Lee educated her intern on the work they were doing. This allowed her to infuse her values while simultaneously establishing a comfort level for her intern to reflect on and openly discuss her educational decisions in the classroom. The intern's ability to develop that level of reflection mirrored the definition of reflection that Ms. Lee established, a discipline that she modeled as well to inform her practice.

Mentor values, as demonstrated by Ms. Lee, can be a powerful basis to use in building a strong relationship, but if the mentor is unable to establish trust or effectively communicate the reason their values matter, they may unable to use them in a pedagogic manner. Co-teaching moments between the mentor and student teacher may illustrate this point. Stanulis and Russell (2000) used the term "jumping in" to describe the shift between the phases of modeling and observing to a moment of active participation (p.71). For a mentor or student teacher to fluidly jump in and out of lessons, planning, or content creation, there should be a large degree of trust between them. Otherwise, jumping in could be a negative action that indicates a lack of knowledge or expertise on the other's part. When there is a lack of communication or trust in the relationship, it can seem controlling and appear as if the mentor teacher is not open to the intern's ideas or views. This can sour the growth of a collaborative relationship and limit the learning that can occur. The knowledge of these consequences underscores the importance of providing spaces for both to engage in mutual mentoring, scaffolding and sharing the reasons for jumping in.

While mentor beliefs and values provide one starting point for mentors to think about and enact their roles, another is their sense of professional identity. Robert V. Bullough Jr (2004) focused on conditions that facilitate a mentor identity. Bullough (2004) argued that identity formation is important because it is "the way one is with and for other; it is the basis of an individual's claim both to dignity and to authenticity; it is a framework for action and the personal grounding of practice" (Bullough & Draper, 2004 p. 144). When mentor teachers possess a sense of their identity, it can increase their professional ability and connection to the professional community.

Identity formation is a dynamic process. Gee (2000) identifies four ways to conceive of identity: nature, institution, discourse, and affinity. Nature identity describes the natural person. Institutional identity focuses on the positions we occupy in society. Discourse identity refers to our accomplishments as seen through other people's perspectives. Affinity identity refers to our experiences within a specific affinity group. The importance of these identities is related to the construction of the mentor role via a social dialogue with external sources (such as universities, connections with other mentors, their colleagues, etc.). The intersection between personal values and how aligned those values may be with external perceptions, could either support certain habits and behaviors or create barriers around identity formation. Bullough (2004) pointed out that, in the absence of a clear identity, mentor teachers will rely on their own experiences and on remembrances of how their mentor teachers indoctrinated them during their internship.

In another study, building on the importance of mentor identity, Sarah Fletcher (2006) looked at the motivation of mentor teachers and what they considered a state of self- actualization. Fletcher stated that when interpersonal and professional relationships were successful, a mentor could attain a self-actualized moment.

Self-actualization contains several factors including: time in career, previous experience of mentor and intern, ages of mentor and intern, personalities of mentor and intern, and genders of mentor and intern (Fletcher, 1998, p.133). An important facet to reaching a successful point was a planned and coordinated pairing of mentor and intern that increased the likelihood of developing a professional relationship. Another characteristic of self- actualized mentors was that teaching had become a core part of

their being. To be truly self-actualized, mentoring needed to be an intrinsically motivating activity.

Fletcher's (1998) research referenced the importance that Bullough placed upon mentor identity formation. An emphasis on a heightened sense of self-actualization is tied to an institutional and collegial status that re-enforced and validated their mentoring process. While these mentor beliefs, values, and perspectives are important to mentoring research, they may be somewhat idealistic to mentors that may not have the knowledge or skills to tailor them to their practice. Each mentor-intern relationship is impacted by their respective values and identities, outside of one's knowledge or skills, and creates its own dynamic.

Dynamics in Mentoring Relationships

As mentioned previously, mentoring is a complex task with seemingly no set, one-size-fits-all approach. The ways mentoring relationships are developed and the purposes they serve can be multifaceted and produce a variety of outcomes. The importance of building trust, establishing effective communication, and providing support have been established, but what are the specific dynamics within these relationships that make them successful?

Daloz (1999) offered a paradigm of a tension between supporting and challenging interns. It is the role of the mentor to both challenge and support their interns. He defined support as providing a safe place for the student to learn—one that has a foundation of trust that confirms an intern's sense of worth and provides clarity about their ability to keep moving forward in the process (Daloz, 1999, p. 209). His notion of challenge was based on the idea of creating cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) which challenged

interns to close the gap between their perceptions and the mentor's expectations. It was the mentor's job to create enough distance in the relationship, to allow the intern to stretch themselves enough to create true learning opportunities.

If there was an imbalance towards low challenge and low support, the intern was unable to grow from their experience. Only a high degree of support and challenge allowed an intern to grow from the learning experience. If the challenge was too high and the support too low, an intern may have retreated from the experience entirely. Likewise, if the support was too high and the challenge was low, the intern may have been too comfortable and may not have reached beyond their comfort zones. The proper level of challenge must be maintained, and the space to experiment and engage be made available, until personal knowledge is created. This process depended on the intern's willingness and the mentor teacher's judgement, as dynamic learning experiences were incorporated into their larger relationship.

An important obstacle to overcome is to identify and understand the perceptions and expectations in the mentor-intern relationship. In a traditional master-apprenticeship model, it is assumed that the mentor is the one authority, largely because of their accumulated wisdom (which is assumed) and their professional knowledge of the school and community. In this model, the intern would have to change and conform to the mentor's expectations, and the mentor was expected to transfer their knowledge to the intern. This type of mentoring usually was episodic and focused on the function and content of the experience (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996).

Yet, interns have their own expectations about their placements and the types of relationships they would like with their mentor teachers. The gap between these

expectations can be large and can upset the establishment of a relationship, especially when the placement is arbitrary (Awaya et al., 2003). Researchers who have studied the dynamics of mentoring relationships understand the complexity of the relationship comprised of two people and two sets of values. There is a high value placed on the collaborative nature of the relationship, a sense that mentors continue to develop and grow their own skills, and that there is no set way to mentor (Awaya et al., 2003; Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000; Helman, 2006).

In a larger sense, when looking at the dynamics of the relationship, one is looking at the "knowledge of practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) in which "teachers generate local knowledge of practice by working within the context of inquiry communities to theorize and construct their work and to connect it to larger, social, cultural, and political issues" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 250). It is through the joint work between the mentor teacher and the intern that the dyad can begin to construct knowledge within their own setting that is applied directly to the mentoring and learning practices between them. When mentors are able to support and scaffold their intern's experiences and see them not as deficient but as someone that has knowledge to contribute to the relationship, the focus shifts to a collaborative atmosphere that is based on mutuality (Nevins Stanulis & Russell, 2000). In a relationship like this, interns should be given the space—and by extension, the trust—to experiment, problem solve, and to reflect on what they are learning in the process. The mentor is freed under these conditions to reframe the challenges and offer new insights—rather than solutions—to the challenges that they may face (Awaya et al., 2003). This process maintains the challenge level, and provides support.

Working in this collaborative space is challenging and how mentors incorporate this into their mentoring practices can prove insightful. Some of the tension between support and challenge is the conflict created in balancing the mentor's knowledge from experience to pass on versus the ways one might best provide the intern with the space for autonomy, creativity, and self- reflection (Helman, 2006). One way that mentors seek to bridge this gap is through the art of negotiation and the dialogic process of talking through and examining the goals and expectations of each party (Fairbanks et al., 2000). Another method is to use mentoring theories such as strength-based mentoring, which focuses on the strengths each partner has demonstrated during previous positive experiences, encouragement about the goals to be obtained in the future, and being satisfied with the present. This approach allows each partner to work from a place of strength, while as a pair, they continue to learn and develop (He, 2009). Lastly, mentors rely on their experience to direct conversation, offer specific strategies, and offer advice from their experiences (Fairbanks et al., 2000; Helman, 2006). The result of any mentor-intern dynamic is to train an effective, professional educator. How is effectiveness determined? Through the process of reflection.

Reflection

Just as gaining the experience of teaching is crucial to the development of new teachers, the process of reflecting upon their actions in a classroom is necessary to develop a deeper understanding of their practice. It is through reflection that practitioners analyze their experiences to gain a greater understanding of improving the implementation of their practical knowledge.

Donald Schön (1983, 1987) defined two types of knowledge: technical practice and reflective practice. Technical practice relies on the assumption that there is a scientific basis for the knowledge of a profession. A practitioner learns this technical knowledge to apply it to a specific context to meet the needs of the situation and people involved. Technical practice can make the problem of implementing knowledge appear to be a fixed and clear process with its focus on problem solving.

Reflective practice begins with the premise that everyday knowledge is tacit and implicit in our everyday routines. We only stop to reflect on these routines when something disruptive or puzzling occurs and the need to makes sense of these actions arises. Practitioners use their everyday knowledge to create examples and understandings about the common issues that confront them that are then used to establish their understandings of where the problem originated. Once these notions are disrupted, reflective practitioners will experiment with changing conditions or techniques in order to effect change.

These two types of practice are not mutually exclusive. Technical knowledge adds depth to habits of reflection. Classifying these two types of practices makes it is easier to see the spaces in-between them. These spaces were called indeterminate zones of practice (Schön, 1987). Indeterminate zones of practice exist in the space where technical knowledge ends—the practitioner is faced with a situation that is unique, uncertain, or contains a value conflict, and because this is new territory, technical expertise may not exist to address the issue. In that moment, a practitioner needs to draw from both technical sources and well as branch out to experiential sources. As they engage in this indeterminate zone of practice through the process of reflection, they remake aspects of

their practice. In this remaking, practitioners frequently discover and make explicit their tacit understandings and sense-making that underlie their practice in order to generate or realize new possibilities.

Schön (1987) argued that the focus should be on how practitioners navigate these zones of indeterminate practice instead of how to make better use of scientific research. Through careful examination of this practice, one can glimpse into the aspects of knowing in action—which the practitioner may have difficulty making explicit to others. As Dewey and Feiman-Nemser argued in terms of experience, Schön valued the roles of coaches or mentors to help novices begin to learn and understand the combination of theory and practice.

When the mentor and intern work together in a practicum setting, they create a world of their own—complete with its own norms, languages and rituals that are firmly rooted within their specific context. This culture that exists between the two of them is an important component to the construction and sharing of their individual knowing in action. Both the coach and the intern need to question and inquire into the learning process they are engaged in, which is necessary for having a viable reciprocal reflection-in-action. There are several elements to having a learning space that employs reflection in action, as detailed in the table below.

Table 2-1: Elements of Reciprocal Reflection in Action

Elements of Reciprocal Reflection in Action
Focus on the present interaction as the object of reflection.
Identifying and being able to describe one's own tacit knowledge.
Reflection about how the other person understands the material that is being taught as well as what the student wants to learn.
Testing to see what one understands about the other's knowledge and framing of the interaction. Then testing to see what sense the other person made from your communication.
Reflection on the interpersonal theories that were in use throughout this reflection process.

Source: Schön, 1987 p. 138

Through the selection of specific moments to reflect upon together, the coach and the intern can focus on an instance—instead of allowing generalities to drive the process. This allows the intern to ask more directed questions of their coach, making it easier to identify what types of tacit knowledge were applied to the situation or task. Reflecting in this manner also allows for check-ins from both sides to gain a greater understanding of the knowledge being employed, the justifications for its use, and of the sense being made by both partners.

Within the reflection process, while the coach is preparing for the debrief, he or she has two main objectives: the need to discuss any substantive problems that are apparent in the task, and the need to communicate and tailor their knowledge to the intern's is current developmental knowledge. The feedback given should provide the intern with the knowledge to improve their practice, and to reflect on and articulate their knowledge in the future.

The process of reflecting in action allows both the coach and the intern to become joint inquirers in a moment that can allow for anything about the moment to become discussable. This process can become muddied by many variables, including difficulty in communicating with one another, lack of respect of each other's' knowledge, or a coach has the "expert" answer and shares it too early in the process. The idea of guided joint inquiry is crucial to reflection in action because both parties need to express how they arrived at their decisions. Without the ability to be explicit, there may be layers of tacit knowledge left unsaid, causing misunderstandings between the partners.

As Schön (1987) has argued, the ability of the coach or mentor teacher's ability to lead their intern to a comprehension of the various forms of knowing and reflecting in action, can encourage and support educative experiences in the field.

Professional Learning Theory

One of the ongoing dilemmas in moving mentor teachers to a model of educative mentoring, is supporting them during the development of the practices needed to shift from a technical vision to one that is more pedagogic. This task is particularly challenging given the lack of initial training that most mentor teachers receive (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2014; S. Feiman-Nemser & Carver, 2012; Roegman, Reagan, Goodwin, & Yu, 2016). Therefore, it is important to identify ways that Education Preparation Providers can support mentor teachers in their professional learning as teacher educators.

The focus in this study will be on professional learning and not on professional development. Professional development is typically focused on delivering content to

teachers in order to influence their practice, whereas professional learning, "implies an internal process in which individuals create professional knowledge through interaction with this information in a way that challenges previous assumptions and creates new meaning" (Timperley, 2011, p. 5). Attending to the notion of challenging previous assumptions of teaching allows for access to more systematic and transformative practices, rather than focusing on additive changes to one's teaching or mentoring practice. Timperly (2011) further described professional learning as:

> fundamental shifts in thinking about professional learning involve moving from professional development to professional learning, focusing on students, attending to requisite knowledge and skills, engaging in systemic inquiry into the effectiveness of practice, being explicit about underpinning theories of professionalism and engaging everyone in the system in learning. (p. 4)

These shifts are particularly relevant to thinking about the support of mentor teachers in their professional learning. By focusing the learning on the mentors, it is easier to highlight problems of practice and use these challenges to frame the knowledge and skills necessary to address them. Once these problems of practice are connected to a systemic inquiry, space opens that allows thinking about an array of solutions and/or perspectives to engage and construct new knowledge based on information and perspectives derived from the process. Instead of information being transmitted to teachers or mentors, the point of inquiry begins with the teachers/mentors themselves, generating a space where they are integral to constructing new knowledge that is directly applicable to their process. By its very nature this type of learning needs to be ongoing and collaborative,

reflecting the type of thinking and process of learning that educative mentoring seeks to instill.

Professional learning acknowledges that mentor teachers are not always equipped with the knowledge of effective strategies to use as a teacher educators. Achinstein and Athanases refer to this as “mentors in the making, which refers to the idea that mentors are not inherently effective, but develop mentoring skills through reflective and purposeful learning and practice” (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006, p. 39). For mentors to effectively utilize the framework of educative mentoring, it is important for them to identify and articulate their own routines and how they deviate from them when necessary. This requires the mentor to develop adaptive expertise. Timperley (2011) described adaptive experts as teachers who continued to develop their expertise by focusing on learning the depth and breadth of their profession and could identify situations where their knowledge is inadequate. “Teachers with adaptive expertise, therefore, have the capability to identify when known opportunities do not work and to seek new information about different approaches when needed” (p.12). The ability to develop adaptive expertise is most important in helping mentor teachers to explore their mentoring practices and to give them the strategies for noticing and developing their expertise over time.

Adaptive expertise is not something that can be developed in isolation or in one workshop. It is connected to the complex systems within which all teachers operate including the individual teacher, the school, the district and the university connections. For expertise to be developed the mentor teacher would need to engage in an “iterative interaction of three key components: (1) an assessment of learning; (2) the identification

of needs as learners; (3) how the context nests their learning" (Langdon, 2017). For mentor teachers this means being able to identify areas of strength and challenges they may have in their practice, being able to identify the questions or problems of practice they want to engage with their interns, assessing their mentoring practices, and thinking about how to tailor these needs to their local contexts.

When thinking about how to best support this process helping mentor teachers to engage in adaptive learning practices, Timperley (2011) highlighted an iterative five-step process that will lead to the development of adaptive expertise: student's needs, teachers' inquiry, knowledge skills, student opportunities, and checking outcomes. Foregrounding student's needs emphasizes student learning as the focus of professional learning. The process of inquiry introduces the process to investigate the intersection of theory and practice in the classroom. The knowledge skills step encourages teachers to become self-regulated learners, instead of relying on external experts to transmit information to them. It places the learning process in the teacher's hands, which does not negate seeking expert help to reframe or provide support, but it is to add information to what they are learning about to create new knowledge and experiences. The next step addresses the implementation of their knowledge in an iterative manner to assess their learning in the context of their classrooms. The final step in the iterative cycle is to assess the student learning that occurred because of this process.

Engaging mentor teachers in this cycle of professional learning could be a powerful way to impact and encourage the type of transformative pedagogic practices that are part of the educative mentoring framework. Support of this nature would allow mentor teachers to engage in a reflective practice about their own routines and

experiences, enabling them to articulate their tacit knowledge to their interns as they collaborate.

Research Questions

This qualitative study seeks to build upon the literature of educative mentoring in order to gain a deeper understanding of how mentors enact their practice of mentoring. Through the use of capturing mentor moments (Schwille, 2008), this study will look at the following research questions.

Overarching Question

How do mentors use their knowledge and or vision of teaching to provide learning opportunities for their interns?

Supporting Questions

- How do mentors determine the professional development needs of their interns?
- How do mentor teachers explicitly or implicitly use their knowledge and values about teaching in their mentoring of interns?
- What strategies do mentor teachers use to promote reflection on the part of interns?
- How can experienced mentors continue to learn about mentoring?

This study contains three aspects that will be discussed in the methods chapter. The first is a background interview with mentor teachers that seeks to understand

their vision of mentoring, the background experience of their own process of learning to teach, and their current mentoring processes. Following the interview, the mentor teachers were asked to capture moments of their mentoring utilizing the mentoring structures as articulated by Schwille (2008). Lastly, mentors were re-interviewed to reflect on the mentoring moments they captured and were given a chance to reflect on their practice.

Summary of Chapter Two

The literature on mentoring documents the complexity of creating learning opportunities in a school setting. The school setting is more than the mentor's classroom. Working with interns in professional and school contexts requires an understanding of the entire intern experience, including the university expectations they face as part of the challenge of building a nurturing growth relationship. This is not an easy task, nor one that can be easily compartmentalized into a set category or typology. It is clear that there is a wide variation of mentoring practices that exist (Hawkey, 1997), which may be a necessary and desirable part of the mentoring process. However, there is a desire to understand the guiding principles that mentors enact to build successful relationships with student teachers, while shepherding them through meaningful learning experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

The purpose of this qualitative study of secondary mentor teachers is to gain a greater understanding of the work associated and contained within intern mentoring. Mentor teachers are tasked with instructing student teachers in all aspects of teaching, i.e., classroom management, course content, interpersonal skills, etc., yet they receive little to no training to support these responsibilities. This study will seek to identify and understand the beliefs and goals that motivate mentor teachers, as well as the structures that help or hinder them through the process of intern development without any formal mentor training.

The data collection for this study was designed to illustrate how mentors made sense of and enacted their practice of working with interns. Therefore, the data collection emphasized interviews and a record of mentor- selected moments as a way observe a range of mentoring practices. In this chapter I will present the research design, context, and participant information for this study.

Qualitative Study

This study utilized qualitative research methods of data collection. In order to gain a deeper understanding of how mentor teachers viewed and enacted their mentoring practices, it was essential to collect their stories of mentoring. The collection of stories, as represented through the collection of mentoring moments, allowed me to identify patterns of common and uncommon mentoring practices among the mentor teachers (Creswell, 2013) I fully recognize that this type of data collection is not generalizable as it is grounded in these individualized contexts of experience, but I hoped to identify some

transferable ideas or practices from my data collection.

The mentor teacher's experiences were placed within the framework of educative mentoring to provide a context about the process of mentoring. In order to appreciate the stories of the participants, it was important to ground the accounts in the "three-dimensional inquiry space." As defined by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), there are three aspects of an experience that shape the change and flux of our lives. The first aspect is the idea of temporal flow. It acknowledges that our present concerns are molded by our past experiences and future goals. The second aspect is a spatial dynamic that focuses on the tension between our inner emotional selves and values and the social and political situations we find ourselves in. Lastly, the notion of emplacement assumes that place is central to the stories we tell. Each individual's story shares information about the place in which it occurred.

Through the utilization of the three-dimensional inquiry space, it was my goal to situate the experiences of mentors in a way so as to promote multiple meanings instead of casting static realities. There is not a singular way to mentor, and as researchers continue to try to aid mentors in the development of their educative mentoring process, the use of qualitative research allows insight into the multiple ways these practices are being enacted. In turn this may give greater understanding of the ways that mentor teachers can continue to learn and develop their educative mentoring practice.

Participants and Context

Participants

The participants of this study are all secondary mentor teachers with student teachers enrolled in a year-long internship program. The mentor teachers were

approached at a secondary level mentor meeting that is held monthly for mentors in the Michigan State University Teacher Preparation Program. All attendance at the mentor meetings is voluntary. I presented my project to the group and made a sign up sheet available for those willing to participate in my study, and eighteen people indicated their interest.

I selected six mentor teachers based on the range of experiences that can be found in the program. I did not consider any intern information, since mentor teachers were the focus of this study. Participants were selected to render a representative sample of the mentor teachers that indicated an interest in the study. The use of a representative sample of participants allowed for a variety of school contexts to be explored, as compared to focusing on one specific district. The years of mentoring experience were also considered to query how mentoring experience is developed. The table below provides a snapshot of the participants in the study.

Table 3-1: Study Participants

Mentor Name	Intern Name	School Level	School Context	Discipline	Years of Mentoring Experience	Years of Teaching Experience
Juliet	Richard	High School	Suburban	Social Studies	4	15
Susan	Roger	High School	Urban	Social Studies	10	21
Janet	David	High School	Urban	Social Studies	6	19
Sally	Ken	High School	Suburban	Math	1	12
Maria	Sam	Middle School	Rural	Science	1	11
Bonnie	Karen	Middle School	Rural	Social Studies	3	7

Participant Biographies

In the section above, I provided a snapshot of the participants that were involved in the study. Below are short biographical summaries of the mentor teachers in this study.

The information for these biographies was derived from their personal beliefs interview and focuses on providing information about their current positions, reflection on their own process of learning to teach, and how they frame their current mentoring practices. When designing the interview questions I utilized the idea of relational methodology. The mentor teachers in this study are in the midst of their lives, have experience being both mentored and in mentoring, and relate to their schools in particular experience- based ways of knowing. These relational ways of knowing were important

for me to understand as a researcher, interacting with the mentors in the midst of their relationships with their intern (Clandinin, 2013). Of particular interest, was how mentors told the story of their mentoring process. To gain a unique insight, I asked each mentor teacher to create a slogan that best described their mentoring practice. This engagement allowed me to gain a sense of how they saw themselves and what story they wanted to tell about their practice.

Juliet. Juliet taught Social Studies at a large suburban high school. She has taught there for fifteen years, and student taught there as well. She has mentored interns four times. Juliet graduated from a five-year university-based teacher education program. During Juliet's first interview, she described her student teaching experience as something that just seemed "meant to be."

She was placed in a school that was close to her hometown, and by chance, her mentor teacher was the father of a close family friend. Not only that, her field instructor was the middle school teacher who inspired her to become a teacher. To this day her mentor teacher stands out as a positive influence in her professional career. When her mentor teacher discovered that she was assigned to him, he telephoned and asked her to really think about whether or not this placement would be a good idea.

> He was a mentor frequently and he said this is really intense and I would really be heartsick if anything that happened this year would ruin anything with our families…I knew him very well… I did not start my internship with any hesitancy about being honest about what I needed or what I wanted to do.

This provided the basis for a strong relationship, which allowed for a highly supportive environment as she learned to teach.

When asked about what she remembered the most about the process of learning to teach, Juliet remembered thinking that she had to "be creative all of the time." The struggle to find a balance between content and keeping the students engaged took some time to establish. Learning to judge when she had enough content knowledge to teach a lesson and not get overwhelmed by the endless research one could do in the quest for the perfect lesson plan was a milestone in her development.

When asked if there was anything particularly challenging during her student teaching placement, she did not recall anything that was specific to teaching itself.

> I don't remember ever feeling like I don't know how to help myself, or find materials. I can't think of a good way to do this. I don't think I ever felt that way. If anything, it was just "wow this takes really long because I have to make sure that I have looked up everything that I could before I made this decision. That was the challenge, it was the balance.

Juliet took the lessons of her own student teaching experience and applied them to her mentoring practice. When asked for her mentoring slogan, after she reflected for a while, she decided on "Anything Goes!" When asked what this phrase meant to her, she provided the following explanation.

> You have to be willing to be very honest. You have to be willing to be open to criticism and questioning yourself. You have to allow your student teacher to really experience anything. If you take on the role of the

> mentor, I don't think they are being served very well if there are things that you say, "don't think… you shouldn't' be doing this right now or I don't want to let you try this." …Just allowing them to be able to do what they feel is necessary to meet their expectations of what they think that the program should be.

This slogan was also reflected in her self assessment of her mentoring practice.

In speaking about her practice, she described herself as casual to a fault, to the importance of doing what feels right at the time, establishing an "ours" and not "mine" culture, building mutual trust, and a frank reality. The goals she sets for her interns are that they "leave with a feeling of being grateful to have spent time in my classroom and to continue the relationship, collaboration, networking, and that they become part of her life."

These goals are echoed by her own experience with her student teaching mentor. After her student teaching experience, she was hired in the school and continued to work with her mentor teacher and they became professional colleagues. It is understandable that she would value the nurturing of a mentoring relationship in a similar manner, supporting and encouraging her interns, hoping they too will value nurturing relationships.

Susan. Susan teaches Social Studies at a large urban school. She has worked in the same district for twenty -one years, and student taught there as well. Susan has worked with ten interns during her career. She loved her subject's content and the vision of sharing that passion with students drove her decision to become an educator. She graduated from a five-year university-based teacher education program, and recalled

having a good mentor teacher who always asked, “Why did you do this? Her mentor teacher’s primary didactic approach was one of questioning without always giving the answers. Susan felt that her mentor teacher was very patient and provided a safe learning environment. Her field instructor was very supportive as a daily presence in the building acting as an immediate consultive resource. She remembered reaching out for help when she needed it. Susan learned to overcome a sense of “stage fright” in the classroom by creating a signal to her mentor teacher and field instructor. She always wore a blazer, and whenever she felt overwhelmed or was about to flounder, she would touch a button as a signal that she needed help.

In addition to the “stage fright,” Susan recalls struggling with two issues as a student teacher: classroom management and admitting that she did not have all of the answers to [student] questions. When these problems or other events occurred, she also sought help from her student teaching peers, or her parents, who were also educators.

Susan’s mentoring slogan was “Lioness of the Pride.” She felt that was an apt description because of her protective instincts toward her charges, her playful nature, and leadership qualities. Susan was also eager to share her real life experiences and resources with others. These themes aligned with her descriptions of her mentoring practices as well. Susan described herself as an easy-going mentor. She perceived her interns as co-teachers and believed that a successful co-teaching relationship is built around a support system comprised of open communication, constructive criticism, and space to grow. Susan is not seeking a “mini-me” relationship—student teachers should try things that they are passionate about in the classroom. There is no way to “screw this up,” it can always be fixed later. The mentor’s responsibility is to “provide freedom—

experimentation, [to experience] highs and lows in a safe environment without dire consequences." Susan was someone who established strong relationships with her students and sought to build those same types of relationships with her interns so that they could be proud of their work at the end of the year and learn from whatever mistakes they had encountered.

Janet. Janet has taught Social Studies in the same large urban high school for nineteen years and has mentored six student teachers. Janet attended a university-based education program and also holds a master's degree in Educational Technology. Janet's path to her student teaching was a drawn out affair. She started her education program at one university and was training to become a history teacher with a social studies minor. During her second year in the program, she was advised to change her emphasis from social studies to either mathematics or science to enhance her chances of future employment. When her scholarship ran out, she transferred to another program and finished with a science and social studies degree. Janet's student teaching assignment was in a high school science classroom.

Janet's mentor teacher was an older gentleman, and she was his first student teacher. Janet recalled how nervous she was to meet him for the first time and that he seemed to be very gruff. The department was comprised entirely of men, which caused her concerns about ever being taken seriously by any of them. Janet described his mentoring style "…never having mentored before, he really didn't explain to me a whole hell of lot of what he was doing, so I just kind of figured that out." Adding to this insecurity, Janet was unsure of her content knowledge: in particular, how to design curriculum that would flow and be organized in a meaningful way to students. "I just

knew that I was an incredibly hard worker and that no matter what, I'd be able to figure it out and push myself through it, but I don't feel that I was exceptionally well supported by the university."

Janet's mentor teacher did not provide her with a lot of feedback except for a memorable moment a few weeks after Janet began teaching.

> He pulled me out and he said, "Listen to me." I said, "What?" He says, "You are way too easy right now. These kids are taking advantage of you. You're letting them take advantage of you and they're manipulating you. You need to toughen up. You need to be hard on them in the start and then you can always loosen up because you can't do the reverse. Once you've let it be loosey goosey, you're not going to be able to reign them back in…I want you to set firm rules, set guidelines, and then hold onto it."…I remember [him] telling me that and then not much else, so not really any tools on how to do that. Then I went back in the room and started working out what was going to be me.

This was a revelation to her, and challenged the advice of a previous teacher who had counseled her to love the kids and everything else would work out. As she thought through her mentor's advice, Janet realized that by incorporating it she could provide clear structures and expectations that would allow her to support and inspire her students to love science. Although her mentor teacher did not always provide explanations about how he taught, he provided Janet with resources and she continued to read and experiment with ideas in the classroom throughout the semester. Janet also recalled that her field instructor did not provide detailed feedback either. She related that she had

recently found her portfolio where her field instructor wrote, “I have nothing that I can possibly say to you, you’re fantastic,” on her final evaluation. Janet recalled thinking, “Really? I’m twenty-three, teaching stuff I have never taught before. I don’t even fully understand everything I’m doing, and [you] don’t know what else to say . . . I don’t know how that helps a new teacher.” While Janet's relationship with her mentor may not have been as robust as others in this study, she paid attention to modeling and reacted to the feedback she was given as she developed her teaching skills.

Janet’s mentoring slogan was “Love and Logic.” She felt this was a perfect reflection of her practices, which included her love and support of people and the logic of her scientific self. Her ideal mentoring environment was one where the experience was real, open, and dialogic. A place to think about philosophy intersecting with reality. She described herself as a realist that wanted to continue to grow her mentoring abilities. Her mentoring practice reflected her student teaching experience. Janet consciously weighed her decisions on whether to provide answers, and when to share her experience or allow the intern to experiment. She wanted to create a story arc of her intern’s development to figure out how to build their experiences in a manner that would then allow her to show them her thought process in a more structured way. This appears to be a backward reference to her frustration when her mentor teacher was unable to articulate his pedagogic choices to her—something in her mind that is an important skill to develop as a mentor.

Sally. Sally taught Mathematics at a large suburban high school for twelve years and experienced mentoring for the first time this year. Sally graduated from a four-year

university-based teacher education program. Student teaching was not an ideal experience for her:

> My mentor teacher never left the room once. She would sit at the front of the room even while I was teaching and interrupt and did not want the kids to come to me for anything. She wanted them to come to her. It was not a pleasant experience and I really did not know if I wanted to teach after that.

The field instructor did try to intercede for her but the placement came to an end with no real improvement.

What Sally learned from that experience, however, was that she enjoyed working with students, so she was determined to continue to interview for teaching positions. The ill effects of her intern experience followed her into her first year as she struggled and claimed to have crashed and burned more than anyone she knew. Her experiences made her a strong advocate for new teachers in the building, ensuring that they received the encouragement and support needed. When I asked her what she would have wanted her mentor teacher to give her, she said, "some space and support and some feedback that wasn't all negative…We went back through all the old written things and it's just all really negative. Allowed me to try things. Given me space to make a big mistake so that I could clean it up." This experience and lack of support cemented Sally's beliefs about supporting teachers and reassuring them that mistakes can be rectified easily the next day.

Sally's mentoring slogan was "Try It! We'll Clean It Up Later if We Need To." This fit in well with both her own student experience and her mentoring practice. While describing herself as a mentor, she stated that she was a novice, supportive, does not

coddle, provided direct feedback, and was as honest as possible without being overwhelming. In terms of creating a successful intern, she would want them to exude confidence, have solid content and pedagogic knowledge, but most importantly enjoy themselves when working with students.

Maria. Maria taught eighth grade science in a rural middle school. She has taught there for eleven years and this was her first year with an intern. Maria graduated from a four-year university-based teacher education program.

Maria looked back on her student teaching experience with fondness. She was given a lot of responsibility early on in her placement, and allowed free rein to try new ideas. Even though she took on a lot of responsibility early on, she felt that it was a very safe place to try new things. One of the reasons for that was that Maria and her mentor shared a common value of building strong student relationships. This value is one that Maria has carried forward into her teaching career and one that she sees as vitally important to becoming a successful teacher. Working with teams has helped Maria to learn to see student learning needs in “a different light” and has developed her knowledge about special education needs in particular, which drives the way that she designs the curriculum for her classes. To Maria, the ability to match curriculum to your students’ needs helps to build a better relationship with your students.

Maria’s mentoring slogan was, “Can You Hear Me Now?” This slogan derived from her concerns and frustrations regarding the communication problems with her intern. Maria recognized that communication had been a constant struggle throughout the year and due to a lack of feedback from the intern, she was unsure of what impact her mentoring had. One of the roadblocks had been her growing concern about whether her

intern had the ability to build relationships with students. She was surprised by his total lack of formal experience working with students before he started the internship, and furthermore, did not seem to relate to her middle school students either socially or academically. Maria had not seen much growth from him over the course of the year and wondered about whether he should continue in the profession since he struggled to build student relationships. Given the struggles that Maria had in her work with her intern, as her first mentoring experience, her ability to enact and reflect on her mentoring philosophy was limited.

Bonnie. Bonnie taught sixth grade Global Studies in a rural district for seven years. Bonnie has mentored three interns. Bonnie obtained an undergraduate degree in Art History, worked in the business field for four to five years. and then decided to pursue a post-bachelor degree to obtain her teaching certificate. She has also earned her master's degree in Instructional Technology.

Bonnie had a successful and supportive student teaching experience. In particular she enjoyed working in the district where she was placed and wanted to work there after she graduated. Her mentor teacher allowed her to teach from the second day of her placement. She recalled that, "She was just very open to just letting me teach the curriculum from day one. I really taught all day, every day, with the exception of the days that I had to go do something job-fair-wise or things like that." Bonnie embraced being able to jump into her classroom responsibilities because that is what she wanted to do and it fit her driven, hard-working personality. Pacing content was the main challenge that she faced as a student teacher due to her love of project-based learning.

Bonnie's mentoring slogan was "Work Hard, Have Fun." This slogan mirrored her very strong beliefs about the importance of a strong work ethic—while at the same time understanding and appreciating that interns needed to build relationships and connections with their students. Bonnie is a strong example of this slogan as she is highly involved in the school community, both in and outside of the classroom. This idea of community is a core value of hers. To be a successful student teacher in Bonnie's classroom you must be a "self starter…hard worker… able to work at a fairly quick pace" and be an independent problem-solver. Although she described herself as intense and one that is not "super warm and fuzzy," she supported her interns when they came to her with an idea that they wanted to pursue. These values are tied to her own experiences where she often had to take the initiative to pursue her own goals.

When asked about a mentor in her life, she responded:

> I hate that question. The most influential mentor in my life? I think that my work ethic and passion does not necessarily come from a mentor…It was not necessarily the presence of a mentor, it was in some areas the lack of that made me feel like I needed to be able to take care of myself.

These notions of independence of thought, a strong work ethic, and building a strong connection to both the school and local community run deep throughout the relationships and training that she imparted to her interns.

Context

All the study's participants work within the context of a year-long internship. Each intern completed their education and subject-major coursework for their bachelor's

degree before enrolling for a fifth year of education-related coursework and internship. Interns are placed in districts statewide and are expected to teach a focus class for the entire school year. As the year progresses, they were assigned more class sections to teach, culminating with their lead teach period during the spring when they are expected to be teaching all classes minus two preparation periods. The manner and timing of additional class responsibilities assigned over the course of the year is highly dependent upon the mentor teacher and field instructor expectations.

In conjunction with their teaching, the interns are also enrolled in two graduate level courses that meet on select Fridays throughout the year. One course focuses on school-based topics such as classroom management, understanding and building community connections, and professionalism in teaching. The second course is a content-based methods course, based on the discipline that they are teaching and seeking certification in. Each of these courses are grounded in, and further develop themes and background information from their previous undergraduate education coursework.

Mentor teachers within this program agree to hosting a student teacher in their classrooms from the end of August until the end of April. The process of mentor selection usually takes place in their home districts and with Michigan State University before their information is forwarded to the placement coordinators. Mentor teachers have the opportunity to meet with their potential student teachers once in the spring to interview them, before agreeing to work with them during the upcoming school year. There are no set levels of expectation of communication between the student teachers and mentor teachers over the summer.

In August, mentor teachers are invited to attend a voluntary Opening Day Institute.

The Opening Day Institute allows for the university support staff to share their expectations of the student teaching year by reviewing the Internship Handbook, and there are a series of sessions that mentor teachers may attend, with their student teachers, addressing a variety of professional topics. Many of theses sessions are directed by experienced mentor teachers and field instructors to ready everyone for the upcoming year. Opening Day Institute also provides an opportunity for the mentor and student teachers to meet their field and course instructors.

Throughout the year, mentor teachers may attend the discipline-specific mentor meetings, read the monthly department newsletter via email, and gain information through discipline focused wikis. Their main point of contact with the university is the field instructor, whose task is to observe the student teacher. The field instructor is also often asked to explain the systems related to the semester midterm and final evaluations as well as to communicate any crucial information between the classroom and the university.

The entirety of this year-long experience opens an opportunity for the mentor and intern relationship to grow a long-term working relationship and time to develop and reflect on the process of learning how to teach.

University Support

As depicted in the chart below, there are several people that the mentor and student teacher may connect with at the university, but the primary point of contact is the field instructor. As described in the *Secondary Teacher Preparation Team 2015-2016 Internship Guide*, (2015, p. 8), here is a more complete description of the university infrastructure.

Table 3-2: Roles Within the Internship Program at Michigan State University

Role	Role Definition
Mentor Teachers	Provide guidance, insight, and opportunities for supported practice.
Field Instructors	Supply program information, offer an additional perspective on classroom events, and support the interns in meeting the program standards. They observe the student teacher five times a semester and hold five student and mentor teacher meetings throughout the year.
Coordinators	Work with school administrators to determine school placements for interns, mediate in difficult situations, and oversee student teachers' progress in schools with respect to program requirements.
Subject Area Leaders	Faculty who organize the work of course instructors and field instructors in each subject area. They provide supervision and guidance for field instructors. They may also organize mentor teacher meetings.
Course Instructors	Faculty who teach the courses that student teachers are enrolled in during their placement. One course is centered on school-based content such as classroom management and enrollment is based on school placement. The second course is a subject matter based methods course.

Each of these roles were designed to help support both the mentor and student teacher throughout the internship year. Faculty were encouraged to build connections both in terms of content and support to the classroom placements. Subject Area Leaders held meetings to support field instructors in their role as teacher educators, share relevant research and strategies, and provide a space to brainstorm strategies to employ with student teachers who may be struggling. Some subject area leaders also hold monthly mentor meetings as a way to provide support and to build community among the mentors in their discipline. Coordinators are an extremely important link in the communication

between school placements and the university. They are responsible for building relationships with local schools, determining placements, and provide crucial support when questions or problems arise throughout the placement. Coordinators, subject area leaders, and field instructors work closely with mentor and student teachers when problems or tensions arise in a placement and work to create workable solutions amongst the parties.

Data Sources and Data Collection

In my work with mentor teachers as a field instructor, it was important to me to understand and collect examples of the multiple ways that mentoring was enacted. In my work with interns, I noticed that some mentor teachers seemed more successful in building relationships with their interns than others. As I worked more closely with the mentors and paid attention to the questions they were asking me, I began to notice that mentor teachers did not always know how to address a problem with their student teachers or how to explain their thought process to their interns. The mentor teachers that were able to be clear about their expectations and thought processes, appeared to be able to model and collaborate more with their interns, which influenced the way that the intern was able to learn throughout the year. This realization made me curious about how mentor teachers continue to learn how to mentor their interns. My data collection strove to keep the focus on the mentor teachers' experiences as a way to capture their work as least intrusively as possible. The data for this study was collected in three rounds: a personal history and beliefs interview, mentor collected moments of mentoring, and a final reflective interview.

Personal History and Belief Interviews

The purpose of this round of interviews was to gain a sense of each mentor teacher's own journey of learning how to teach. This semi-structured interview allowed mentor teachers to reflect on their own pasts, to share stories about other mentors that have influenced their development, and to state their own beliefs and goals that they had for their own mentoring. All of the interviews were transcribed for analysis.

Mentoring Moments

At the start of the project, mentors were instructed that a key part of this study included them selecting and capturing mentoring moments. Mentor teachers use a variety of strategies to help their student teachers learn how to teach. Each type of strategy utilized helps to engage the student teacher in the learning process. Sharon Schwille (2008) identified several examples of how mentor teachers structure the learning process. Each of these examples reflect different moments in the learning process, as discussed in the Literature Review.

> *Coaching and Stepping In:* Occurs when a mentor teacher is present in the room, while the student teacher is teaching and provides real time support, clarifications, or helping to guide to direction of the lesson.
>
> *Teaching Together:* When the mentor teacher and the student teacher co-teach a lesson either in whole or in part. Both are actively involved in the lesson.
>
> *Demonstration Teaching:* This is when the mentor teacher models a lesson or strategy. The student teacher is responsible for observing. This could happen either in front of students or during planning or debriefing

conversations.

Mentoring on the Move: These are the brief mentoring conversations that happen between classes, emails, texts, phone calls, etc.

Mentoring Session/Debriefing Sessions: These sessions are usually planned conversations to discuss planning, debrief lessons, or discussing teaching.

Co-planning: Actively working together to design learning activities that either person could use to teach.

Videotape Analysis: Using recorded images to discuss the teaching practices captured.

Writing: The use of journal writing or other forms of written reflection that are shared between the mentor and student teacher.

It was not expected that any one participant would utilize all of these types of structures within the month of data collection. These strategies were provided as examples to help illustrate the variety of moments that could be collected through this process. Mentor teachers were reminded that capturing these moments should not be any additional work for them because they should capture the type of conversations they were already having with their student teacher. I asked each mentoring pair to capture six moments over the course of a month to observe the development of certain ideas or to capture the multiple types of mentoring topics that would typically arise while lead teaching.

In order to capture these mentoring moments, mentor teachers were provided with an iPad with video and audio recording abilities. Mentor teachers were also instructed that they could include any examples of their mentoring practice as an example of a

mentoring moment. Other examples of mentoring moments that I told mentors could be included in the study were text message conversations, Google sharing documents, email exchanges, and ongoing writing journals. The goal of capturing the moments was to understand the variety of ways that mentors support their student teachers—ways that may not always be visible in a classroom. This method also allowed me to see the types of mentoring that were taking place and the preferences of different mentoring pairs in how they chose to communicate with one another.

Reflection Interviews

Once I had collected all the mentoring moments from the mentor teachers, I transcribed and analyzed them according to the type of moments that Schwille identified above. These moments, coupled with the stated beliefs and personal history interviews, allowed me to begin to identify patterns of actions and to ascertain how closely aligned the mentoring moments were to the stated beliefs of the mentor. At that point, I drafted specific questions for each mentor based on the previous data that they had given me. During each interview, participants were also given a detailed outline of one of their moments that they submitted and were asked to look it over and reflect on what they saw reflected in that moment, the decisions that were made, or to just revisit it again considering their stated beliefs. These interviews provided a space to reflect and revisit key themes from their first interviews and their moments, as well as to revisit the ideas of how their own mentoring practices could be best supported in the future.

In narrative inquiry studies, the data collection entails an ongoing analysis of the field texts that continue to build upon one another in an iterative fashion to identify key stories and epiphanies from the participants experiences to illuminate the key themes

being built upon throughout the study (Creswell, 2013). The iterative nature of the process is seen in the chart below as each of the research questions are integral to each stage of the data collection process.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the interviews and the mentoring moments rely on gaining a strong sense of the story of each individual mentor teacher first, and then looking across the mentors to identify common stories, epiphanies, and the tensions between experiences. All of the field texts have been transcribed, coded, and reviewed several times to seek each nuance offered by the texts.

In the Personal History and Beliefs Interviews, I sought to create a participant profile that allowed me to focus in on key questions within the semi-structured interview. The creation of this profile targeted their mentoring beliefs, goals, a slogan, the skills that they would like their student teacher to have by the end of the experience, district support or limitations, and any relevant training or thoughts about how they would like to learn more about mentoring. By using this profile I could quickly reference the key ideas that would be necessary to revisit several times. Also, by creating these profiles I was then able to analyze common features and disconnections between my participants as well.

The Mentoring Moments were analyzed in in terms of structure and format. After transcribing the moments, each moment was labeled with the codes derived from the Schwille's (2008) framework (co-teaching & stepping in, teaching together, demonstration teaching, mentoring on the move, mentoring/debriefing session, co-planning, videotape analysis, writing). Then, once the moments were labeled with these

overall codes, they were then analyzed and coded according to the specific mentor's stated beliefs, goals, and the skills that they would like to have their student gain by the end of the mentoring process. By coding through both lenses, it allowed me to identify alignment of beliefs and actions as well as a way to look at the patterns of interaction between the pair with context. Once these moments were coded, I created the questions for the reflective interviews based on the above data. The figures below detail the types of mentoring moment data collected and how they aligned to the mentoring moment types identified. (Schwille, 2008)

Table 3-3: Mentoring Moment Data

	Juliet	**Susan**	**Janet**	**Sally**	**Maria**	**Bonnie**
Total # of Moments	6	14	14	7	4	21
Video	0	7	0	1	0	0
Audio	6	3	7	0	2	0
Written Artifact	0	0	7	1	2	2
Email	0	4	0	0	0	19
Text	0	0	0	5	0	0

Table 3-4: Mentoring Moment Coding

	Juliet	Susan	Janet	Sally	Maria	Bonnie
Coaching/Stepping In	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Teaching	0	0	0	0	0	0
Modeling/Demonstration Teaching	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mentoring on the Move	0	2	1	1	2	0
Mentoring Session/ Debriefing Session	2	4	3	1	0	2
Co-Planning	3	7	5	4	0	9
Video Analysis	0	0	1	0	0	0
Writing	0	0	7	1	2	2

Data from the Reflective Interviews was used to extend and create thicker descriptions around both the Personal History and Belief Interviews and the Mentoring Moments. The questions from the interview asked participants to clarify previous statements, reflect on specific decisions or actions, revisit beliefs that might not have shown up in the moments, and to reflect in general about the process. This information was used to help illuminate the restorying of the narratives and to ensure clarity about the context.

Analyzing each mentor as an individual first allowed the data to remain focused on an individual level to ensure the capture of each narrative. The layered structures allowed me to compare experiences to identify common patterns or the tensions between the

experiences for a more nuanced look at this complex process. The design of this study relied heavily on utilizing the framework of educative mentoring as a lens to think about mentor practice. Once the data was coded to the specific mentoring moments, it became clear what was important was not that the moments happened but how the moments illuminated how mentor teachers leveraged these moments to achieve concrete goals that were informed by their own experiences and practice. Thus mentor experience became the focus of the findings of this study as a way to explore how they utilized their experiences to influence and shape their mentoring practice, both in their work with interns as well as their own professional learning.

Summary of Chapter Three

In this chapter, I outlined the research design of this qualitative study that is framed by educative mentoring. For each mentor teacher in the study there was an emphasis on their personal stories of mentoring, and using those experiences to inform their practice. The next two chapters will focus on the findings of this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS, PART ONE

Each mentor teacher approaches their mentoring practice based on several factors: their past experiences of learning how to teach, the school context, their beliefs about foundations to the discipline, the relationship with their intern, and their personal beliefs and values. This chapter will discuss and illustrate how a set of classroom teachers approached the mentoring of their interns. I will consider the expectations that mentor teachers have of their interns as they enter their placement, the specific strategies that mentor teachers use to assess the intern's teaching skills, and how mentor teachers either explicitly or implicitly use their knowledge and values about teaching in their mentoring of interns.

Mentoring an intern is a journey undertaken every year with some uncertainty because the complex relationship of mentor-intern must be reconstructed. Mentor teachers have a tremendous influence on their interns from the beginning as the gatekeepers to the profession. It is easy to overlook the fact that the mentor teachers are shaped by their experiences and relationships with interns as well. A successful relationship can validate a mentor's sense of teaching self that their mentoring practice has contributed to the next generation of teachers. A struggling relationship can erode a mentor's confidence in their ability to effectively mentor their intern.

The experiences of the participating mentor teachers of this study had during their own processes of learning to teach, coupled with their professional and personal outlooks, influenced their concepts of, and approaches to their mentoring practices. Their values were important factors as they prioritized certain skills and abilities that their interns needed to develop, and may also have biased their perceptions about the skills interns

should bring to their placements from day one. The role of educative mentoring however, demands that mentor teachers move beyond their personal experience to reexamine their practice towards a more transformational stance of learning (Langdon & Ward, 2015). The next section will explore the mentor-intern relationship and the strategies mentor teachers devised to chart the course of their interns through their practice.

Mentor Teacher Expectations

All the interns in this study were assigned to their mentor teachers for a year-long placement. Interns were paired with a mentor teacher in the spring before their fall placement began. As a function of the university program, the intern and the mentor teacher will often meet in an interview format. This meeting is usually brief and normally signed off by both parties to formalize the placement. Prior to this, the interns have been enrolled in a year-long content-based methods course with a field component of observing and participating in classrooms throughout the region on a regular basis (twice a week for a total of four hours). The placement groupings and teaching expectations are defined by each content group and are usually tied to their coursework. Senior-year mentors provide feedback about their classroom performances to the program and this input is considered when pairing student and mentor teachers for the following year. During their introductory meeting, some mentors use the opportunity to discuss what they will be teaching the next year, share basic materials, or discuss some basic logistics. In many cases this is the final communication before the intern arrives for the agreed upon start day.

Educative mentoring is a dialogic process between the mentor and intern that emphasizes the intern's long-term development Therefore, it is important to untangle the mentor teacher's assumptions about their intern's preparation and to understand the mentor teacher's expectations as they relate to their vision of effective teaching. According to the mentors interviewed for this study, at the heart of either positive or negative assumptions and expectations, is a question about whether one can learn everything needed to be a successful teacher or whether some of the qualities are innate. The mentor teacher's thoughts on this question shape their outlook on the expectations they will set for their student teachers.

Each mentor's perspective of their role and their determination of the starting point of their intern's learning was based on the interaction between their expectations and assumptions. Base assumptions were revealed during the interviews regarding the mentor teacher's assumptions about the university's curricula pertaining to their interns' preparation. The mentor teachers indicated that their interns seemed to have basic foundational curriculum and content knowledge, which they attributed to the preparation that interns received.

> I think with every intern I've ever had, the nuts and bolts has been the missing piece. Every single intern I've had, Suzy being the third one, is a capable lesson planner, is creative with units, is conscientious of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, all of the stuff that we want from an education standpoint, they are spot on. They can take licks, they can write units. They do know how to do that successfully. What they definitely don't know how to do is to put that into the time and space of a classroom.

This was a common assessment among the participants. Susan also indicated that she "assumes the university teaches about state standards."

While the mentor teachers acknowledged that the interns arrived with some curriculum planning abilities, learning how to apply these skills to classroom students became a component of their mentoring role.

> On some level I don't want to start off the year having to talk to you about how do you construct a lesson plan, take me through some steps. Of course, it is part of it because we all have different ways and different ways to tweak it. Certainly, we talk tons about anticipation… which there is always the reflection piece with a lesson plan, but we've been through that…There are certain things they start with. I'm not your methods teacher. I'm not your history teacher. I'm here to help you take the basics that you know and grow.

This idea of building upon the basics that interns entered their placements with was an important part of the mentoring process. The mentor teachers were not as interested in augmenting their intern's content knowledge as they were on classroom pedagogy.

> Maybe … I did that subconsciously, not thinking just assuming he already knows his content. It is less about content. Really, I am expecting him to brush up on his content on his own time, not mine. I don't know if that is wrong or right. When I first started mentoring, I was thinking, "I really

> need someone that is going to know their content, so I don't have to teach content and management."

From a mentor teacher's perspective, content development was only discussed as it related to the implementation of a lesson or unit plan—it was rare to hear them discuss baseline content information as an initial concern.

These findings are consistent with assessments given by the senior-year social studies team. In collaboration with mentor teachers, the team identified four focal areas for the senior-year assessment that reflected the following values: content knowledge, classroom management skills, professionalism, and the willingness to take the stance of a learner (Greenwalt, Aponte, & Wang, 2015). These focal areas comprised the core of what this team felt that the interns needed to become successful in their internship. Although the mentor teachers in this study articulated the need for interns to arrive with a functional understanding of content, state standards, and ideas of how to engage students, they also placed importance on an intern's professionalism and their willingness to take a learner's stance throughout the placement.

In summation, the baseline expectations of the mentors are that interns possess a functional knowledge of content and pedagogy. The mentor teacher will use this foundation to build more nuanced ways of teaching through the processes of inquiry and reflection.

Mentor Strategies for Intern Assessment

Since imparting content knowledge to their interns was not a primary concern, how did they perceive their role responsibilities? Overall, the mentor teachers described their roles as requiring the need to build a strong relationship that focused on the intern's well-being, and teaching them to blend their content knowledge with an interactive pedagogy that effectively connects with students.

Building a strong relationship with their intern was something the mentor teachers focused on from the beginning of the placement. A common anxiety of mentor teachers in the early stages of the mentoring process was the prospect of having a "bad" intern in their classroom. This manifested itself in questions about what specific teaching qualities can be taught and which are innate, others were more concerned about the inability to build a working relationship with their intern. Juliet described what she imagined working with a "bad" student teacher would be like, "I mean it is like asking someone to move in and share your bedroom that you can't stand for a year or date somebody that just grosses you out." The explicit concern was that the intern would not be professional or could not fully embrace a learner's stance in the placement.

This response from Juliet could be due to the emphasis she placed on building relationships with her interns, "I think you have to create that safe relationship. I am just telling you how it is and it is not to tell you, "you are awful." It is just to help you understand the challenges of what this is all about and the quicker we can get to it the better." This quote highlights both the need for safe relationships that contain elements of honesty, and trust, and the care for each other in equal parts.

Juliet continued to explain how she used observations of her intern to gauge his learning throughout the placement.

> I feel like it is my responsibility to make sure that I take care of him while he is going through this very difficult, humbling, and challenging experience…I just try to be very aware of his energy and moods because to me that is a reflection on how I am doing that day and making sure that he is having a good day. And he is learning but feels ok about how it is going.

Janet highlighted the importance of honesty in the relationship with her intern.

> You get a real sense about someone on how critical they are of you, how comfortable they are with dishing out criticism. That is always an interesting tell. How quickly are they going to be honest with you? How quickly are they going to properly assess something? You get a lot from that first time when they turn their lens on you. We have lots of conversations when they'll ask questions or they'll ask things about where these decisions come from. Why did I do what I did? Why did I act like this? Why did I say this? Why did I do this? Their reactions can tell me a little bit about who they are.

An open, safe relationship is something that should be a two-way street. The mentor teachers wanted the interns to be honest with them as they questioned the practices they observed, and be receptive to honest critical feedback—if only in the right amounts—to maintain a functional level of productivity. This was not about lowering expectations for

the intern, it was a part of the process in building the collegial relationship necessary to address the issues of the day and encourage professional growth. The strength on the mentor-intern relationship was a determining factor in the type and amount of feedback the mentor might provide, which would impact the intern's practice.

The mentor teachers in this study universally identified developmental needs for their interns in the areas of curriculum design to fit a specific student audience, methods to increase student engagement, classroom management, and the ability to make relevant connections between the content and their students. Growth in these areas were crucial to the development of their teaching knowledge, and as such, the mentor teachers spent a significant amount of time utilizing strategies like co-planning, modeling, and providing feedback in these areas. It was during the stages of the planning, implementation, and reflection that mentor teachers seemed to provide the most detailed feedback to their interns. Their interactions with the interns at these specific moments sharpened their focus, and grew their understanding of how to develop the skills that their interns needed to enhance the most. A more detailed account of mentor teacher feedback strategies will be explained in Chapter Five.

Although most of the mentor teachers I interviewed could not articulate how they assessed them, it became evident through their moments of mentoring that they used conversations with their interns to impart their knowledge of teaching. The moment at hand provided feedback opportunities in the form of questions, guiding principles, and a sharing of their own experiences to help the intern realize more about the practice of teaching than had happened at that moment. The objective of this feedback strategy was to bring interns away from the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 2002) where

interns only see the finished product of a teachers performance, towards a broader understanding of the goals, habits, processes and reflections that are essential components in the teaching practice.

For example, Juliet emphasized the idea of anticipation when developing curriculum. She stressed the importance of anticipation with her intern, and directed him to imagine the multiple directions his lesson could take at any given moment. She believed that planned anticipation of the potential challenges or successes would better prepare him to handle classroom situations during the lesson. The notion of anticipation was something that occurred throughout their conversations while co-planning and during their reflection of the lesson.

During a planning conversation, Juliet said that she liked to use a series of inquiry-based questions to guide her intern as they framed a lesson, and while debriefing, she preferred to use inquiry coupled with modeling to ensure that they were on the same page.

> I suppose it's a case by case . . . in other cases maybe there is something that I noticed, that maybe I will ask a couple of questions. It just comes up. Usually I am pretty straight forward . . . in most cases [where] I notice something, he has too. I usually don't have to push or press . . . we're usually on the same page.

Juliet could use this method successfully because she and her intern co-planned regularly. Due to their relationship, she could ask direct and straight-forward questions and provide honest observations. This, coupled with a clear sense of direction that she communicated to her intern, allowed them to share a common language about what they saw in the

classroom. Her intern remarked that in their debriefing conversations, he knew the questions would include: "The question is: how do I fix it? The question is: how do I add to it? [My mentor] always made a big point of that."

By the spring of his student teaching experience, it was clear to Juliette's intern what her expectations and values were and what his role was in the lesson planning and implementation process. This structure allowed him to begin to articulate how to connect each lesson to another one, which was the result of their relationship. Juliette said:

> …I hope that in those moments it comes out where I was never… I never wanted him to feel offended in any way or that he had done something wrong, and I think that is sometimes where the inquiry approach can be actually kind of helpful instead of annoying. If a mentor is concerned that you can at least give it a shot to see if they will pick up on it or if they have picked up on it versus just coming at them.

Mentor teachers were mindful of the objective of providing straight-forward feedback in a manner that was not harmful to the intern, but instead encouraged an awareness of situations for the intern to notice and cue into the result of their actions.

Weaker mentor-intern relationships presented challenges to the feedback loop. In Maria's case, her intern did not appear to appreciate feedback or know how to process the feedback when it was provided to him. When Maria was interviewed at the end of the spring semester, she looked for ways to understand what had gone wrong with their communication. Maria shared that she had tried different approaches to provide him feedback, held conversations with his field instructor, his methods course instructor, the Director of Teacher Preparation, and other mentor teachers to find ways to communicate

in a more productive manner. She stated that her intern experienced difficulties in connecting with her middle school students and, despite his content knowledge, was unable to explain it appropriately to a middle school audience. When she provided feedback he seemed to ignore it or only implement it in the immediate future—he did not seem capable of retaining the feedback necessary for his development.

Maria had this to say:

> When you are not getting a lot of feedback [from your intern], it is hard to diagnose where the miscommunication is . . . You never can get to the root of what his metacognitive process is. I found my biggest challenge would be how to deal with it.

This breakdown of communication not only made it difficult for Maria to provide detailed feedback to address his developmental needs, it also shaped her opinion of the intern's ability to perform professionally. Maria commented that he needed, "a lot of direction. I was hoping to get away from that…I don't know if that is helpful for him in the long run."

This assessment difficulty and the inability to measure his long-term growth in the placement led Maria to question his motives to be in a classroom and wonder what he was gaining from this placement. Maria concluded:

> It is hard to mentor someone if they don't have the same reasons for doing this job that you do. You're probably never going to look at things from the same perspectives, or at least for me. For me personally, I find if you don't want to be here in the long haul, I'm not sure what help I can be to you, because I look at the profession differently, if that makes sense.

Without communication, it became a formidable task to properly address the challenges and successes that may have been occurring in the classroom in a meaningful way, let alone build a relationship. Perhaps, as Maria noted, it was due to different perspectives of education or just the fact that they did not "click," as so many mentors have feared.

Explicit and Implicit Mentor Knowledge

Educative mentoring requires that mentor teachers are able to build a relationship with their interns that goes beyond, "situational adjustment, technical advice, and emotional support," to a relationship that is based "on an explicit vision of good teaching and understanding of teacher learning" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). As previously stated, mentor teachers have a vision of what good teaching entails and are strategic in their communications with their interns to provide enough feedback for growth, without overwhelming them.

Relationship growth was a crucial element to each of the participating mentors, even when it was sometimes challenging to build or maintain throughout the course of the year. Each of these mentor teachers placed a high value on measuring the success of an intern based on their willingness to recommend them as a new hire. There was a wide gap in meeting this goal at the beginning of the relationship and that end point, so how did that gap get closed? How was the necessary learning attained?

Each mentor and intern had to achieve levels of balance regarding the teaching space in which interns could develop their teaching ability. For the mentor teacher, this took the form of deciding how and when to help steer an intern away from impending

failures, or letting them experience failure in all of its glory, as well as teaching them the skills needed to pick up the pieces of a failed lesson and restart the next day. This balance could be difficult to achieve because it required the mentor teacher to give teaching space to the intern, which meant that the mentor teacher has to be comfortable giving the control of the classroom to the intern, a novice. Yet, without giving the space to the intern, the mentor and intern would never truly know whether the intern could implement effective teaching strategies.

Failure is an inherent part of the learning process. It really does not matter what one is trying to learn: from riding a bike to learning how to teach. Mentor teachers expected that their intern would have some struggles and that some of their lessons might fail. The issue that each mentor teacher had to resolve for their practice was the role failure and struggle would play for their interns. In my study, there was a clear division between the mentor teachers on this issue. Below is a sample of quotes from the mentor teachers as they address the issue of failure and struggle for their interns:

> And right or wrong I don't believe that they should ever be put in a position where you know it is not going to work, but that they need to learn that live in front of students. I think that is just, those are the worst days, and why [would] any mentor or teacher would want an intern to learn that way? I don't know, I choke up, it is kind of mortifying actually. That is just me.

> That's always been a challenge for me, how much do I let them go without revealing too much and still letting them have an authentic experience?

Part of your learning has to be where you make these mistakes and you go, "Oh, God that was awful. Why did I do that? Oh, I don't know why I said that!" I don't either as a matter of fact. I think that's what I've always tried to work at, not trying to fix every problem that's presented to me, because that is my natural tendency.

There were a couple of times when I did let him do things that I knew weren't going to work. It wasn't a "I gotcha." It was a, "I know if I tell you it's not going to work it won't help. You have got to see why it doesn't work and I can't explain it…"

I guess our biggest thing has been [when] he says, "Well, I want to do this," and it is, "great do it!" Stop talking about it, just do it, try it out. You might totally fail at that and that is okay. Try it out—if you fail the first day, you have to keep trying that strategy. It's not going to work every day and it is not going to work with every group of students. That is part of having that failure, is figuring out, okay, that does not work with student A but it does work with these three so I can use it again.

If she is, "I want to do this, this and this," and if I don't think it is going to go great, I'll kind of say, "I don't think that's going to go really great but I am totally supportive of you trying that." I'll just be honest with her about what I think and then I have been wrong. That's cool for her to be able to

> feel I just took a risk and my mentor teacher doesn't think I should do it and it was good. I think that is confidence building

> …[Struggle] makes you better. It makes you think more about what is plausible. You are not out in that "everyone can learn land," because not everyone wants to learn. They are capable, they just don't want to. . .

A common thread throughout these responses is how frequently they were prompted by an intern's idea for a lesson, or employing a specific strategy.

In the first quote, Juliet, reaffirmed her focus on anticipation. She found it troubling to purposely allow an intern to fail "live" in front of students. She would do everything possible to help her intern plan ahead to avoid an upcoming failure. This is quite a different perspective from the viewpoints of Bonnie, Susan, Janet, and Sally, all of whom extolled the role of failure—which, for them, was clearly part of the learning process. They believed that allowing interns to experience failure would allow them to process and problem-solve failure in the future, when they may not have the support of a mentor.

Failure itself is part of the educative process—since it will continue to be a part of their professional lives. Maria expressed her thoughts on failure in terms of learning how to evaluate actions through the process of multiple attempts, that there is merit in understanding how, why, and for whom a strategy works in your classroom. She continued, "some things you decide to implement may never work for everyone in a class—but that it is important to keep trying it, and to think of ways to increase its success amongst a wide variety of students." Regardless of the differences of opinion,

there was a level of agreement that failure is a part of teaching and that it is important for interns to develop the reflection skills to analyze and recover from failure.

Because this issue of failure and the ability to problem-solve is an important piece of the educative mentoring process, there was typically a lot of conversation about embracing failure in conversations about innovation. Interns were frequently asked to be creative and display an ability to combine content and pedagogic knowledge while they were still learning how to share this knowledge with a student audience. In addition, as the quotes above illustrate, they were responsible for presenting their ideas to their mentor teachers who may help them develop their idea or who may question their ability to enact it through inquiry strategies. An important aspect of the mentor teacher practice is to guide interns through the complex creative process to develop learning experiences for their students.

Using Explicit and Implicit Knowledge to Collaborate

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, mentor teachers worked to employ specific strategies to facilitate an intern's understanding of how to design curriculum that would fit within the time and space necessary for their classrooms. To accomplish this, they utilized strategies such as inquiry, modeling and debriefing to help interns critically reflect on what they were experiencing in the classroom. The manner with which a mentor teacher navigated this process was based on their own vision of what good teaching is as well as being able to unpack that mental process for their interns. It was in this process that the possibility for innovative teaching could be connected to educative mentoring. In order to reach this place of having a transformative learning stance (Gless, 2006) the mentor teacher and intern relationship has to welcome reciprocal "problematizing, reflection, and questioning" (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004) as the norms

of the collaborative relationship. In this section, I will discuss how mentor teachers used their implicit and explicit views of good teaching to shape the opportunity for transformative and innovative teaching.

Curriculum design was a creative process for both the mentor and intern and each party had a set of expectations for the outcome of that process. The notion that interns would always have to address the issue of failure in their classrooms was an indicator of a creative process. In fact, creativity and failure are so closely related in so many research and business frameworks these days that the relationship deserves to be further unpacked.

For example, Tom and David Kelly (2013) argued in their book, *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential within Us All*, that "if you want more success, you have to be prepared to shrug off more failure (p. 41)." Kelley and Kelley argued that for innovation to occur, it is necessary for innovators to be creatively confident. One of the largest stumbling blocks to the creative process can be is this fear of failure—which means that to be creative, you must be able to get comfortable with the notion of failing, and that this can only be accomplished by the very act itself. The more creative confidence one has, the more they are able to act in creative ways that continue to bolster their confidence. This concept is important, for if mentor teachers and interns are going to be comfortable pushing at traditional teaching practices and routines to work towards a more explicit vision of transforming practice instead of reifying routines.

Two concepts that Kelley and Kelley mention as part of building creative confidence are the ideas of *urgent optimism* (McGonigal, 2011)and *informed intuition* (Rodriguez, 2009)**.** McGonigal's definition of urgent optimism originated in the gaming world. After noting that gamers happily engage in failure after failure while trying to

obtain a goal, he reasoned that they were willing to engage in this behavior because of urgent optimism: “the desire to act immediately to tackle an obstacle, motivated by the belief that you have a reasonable hope of success” (Kelly & Kelley, 2013, p. 47)**.** An intern may see the planning of their first unit plan as a huge obstacle. But if they feel supported, or believe their plan will meet with a certain level of success, they will be able to create one, even if everything in the unit is not one hundred percent approved and needs revision.

The creation of this unit would also be mediated by the notion of informed intuition for both the mentor teacher and the intern. Rodriguez defined this term as the ability “to identify a great insight, a key need, or a core feature. In other words, relentless practice creates a database of experience that you can draw upon to make more enlightened choices” (Kelley & Kelley, 2013, p. 48). The intern uses their experience and knowledge to design a unit and the mentor teacher reviews it through their experience and knowledge to offer feedback into the process. As these supportive planning cycles become more practiced, they generate more creative confidence between the mentor and intern. Being creative, in and of itself, can be an intimidating process, but when it is coupled with the fear of failure, it can become even more difficult. To mitigate this fear, it is important for mentor teachers to be open about the role of failure in their practices to minimize its effect on the creative process.

Since each of the mentor teachers in the study mentioned failure as a lesson to be learned from, or to be prevented, there are opportunities to devise practices for interns and mentor teachers that teach them how to process failure as part of the creative process. “To learn from failure, however, you have to ‘own’ it. You have to figure out what went

wrong and what to do better next time. If you don't, you're liable to repeat your errors in the future" (Kelley & Kelley, 2013, p. 51).

To create, and by extension, transform practice, it is important for both mentor teachers and interns to learn strategies to keep them engaged in the creative process. Yet, the creative thought process is difficult for many people to explain in a way that makes sense to others. The concepts of urgent optimism and informed intuition are not necessarily new to education as thought processes, but I have incorporated them to show in common language how these concepts could help explain some of the implicit thinking around the topic of building creative confidence into the mentor and the intern practices.

Co- Planning

When recalling her student teaching experience Juliet recalled, "As a student teacher, I remember thinking that I had to be creative all of the time." Methods classes tend to focus on instructing interns to develop their content and pedagogic knowledge that can be transferred into their future classrooms. An undercurrent that is often valued, but not taught explicitly, is that creativity is used for knowledge generation which means that pedagogy is inherently an act of creation. While analyzing the interview data and mentoring moments in this study, it became apparent that the mentor teachers valued creativity in their interns, even though none of them stated this explicitly. However, creativity factored into, and influenced their perceptions of their interns in terms of both expectations and whether the student teacher was considered successful. They tended to highlight the moments that interns expressed their creativity in successful lesson plans.

The ability to express their content knowledge in creative ways seemed to indicate to mentor teachers that their interns had mastery of their content and were able to use it to engage students pedagogically. It is interesting to note that this happened almost

unconsciously, with little attention paid to helping interns unpack their own creative processes they may have used to replicate these successes.

The first mentoring moment that Juliet collected was a debriefing session of a recently completed creative lesson plan with her intern. Richard and Juliet had been planning to create an effective hook that would crystalize their students understanding of the concept of indulgences as used by Catholic Church during the Middle Ages. To introduce this concept they asked the principal to come in to announce a new grading policy in the high school—one where you could pay to get good grades. Juliet and Richard spent significant time planning exactly how to set the stage for this lesson, with a strong focus on anticipating how the students would respond and react to this policy. In discussing student reaction to the lesson during the debrief, Juliet stated, "I think what you saw today is that a lot of times with teaching, it's part art or part craft, … So for us to be able to play it off and for us to be actors, or for the principal to come in and be an actor, there was an art to what we did this morning." After she unpacked the student response to the lesson, Juliet pushed Richard to reflect on the impact that all their pre-planning had on the success of the lesson. Richard shared that he thought having a chart prepared with possible student responses and how they connected to the indulgence policies of the Church helped him organize his thoughts, but also provided a checklist to use throughout the debriefing conversation with students which then allowed him to make clear connections between the emotional experience that the students just experienced and the content knowledge of the indulgences. "They still would have had an emotional connection to the lesson but they would not have had the contextualized

connection in their head. They would not be able to make the clear analogies between indulgences and paying for their grades."

In response to Richard's observation, Juliet responded with:

> This was a fantastic class period! It is one of the days the kids will remember, but you will remember it too. And it is a standard that you set for yourself. And it just goes to show you that when you do put a lot of these pieces together, really thinking through the lesson, anticipating what the students might say, and so that you are prepared for that, anticipating the connections that you want them to make to what they are going to say, having the visual, having the principal, having the acting, so many cool things came together … It took us time to plan it and get it ready, but I think that it is definitely evidence that there is a lot of bang for the buck when you put that kind of thought and time into it.

Throughout the debrief, Juliet continuously referred to the notions of art and craft as well as the value of the strong emotional impact, all of which this lesson tapped into by connecting the content material to a real life example for their students. Both the idea and the implementation are highly praised here—so much so that this type of a lesson becomes "a standard that you set for yourself." Yet, despite the strength of this lesson, they spent the end of the debrief discussing the infeasibility of this lesson if there were more than one class period of the course, and would probably have to let several years' lapse before they could repeat it because the emotional impact on students would decrease as word spread about the activity.

Viewing this lesson through the lens of building creative confidence, it was a success. Richard was able to take a creative idea, coupled with a lot of pre-planning and a focus on anticipation, and was able to successfully implement the lesson. This lesson re-affirmed his urgent optimism to competently enact a creative lesson that involved risk, and confirmed and reinforced his informed intuition about the steps necessary to implement the lesson. In terms of making this lesson meaningful to Richard, Juliet used her own informed intuition to guide him through the creation of a lesson that contained emotional and pedagogic components. To reinforce the positives of this experience, she focused the debrief on making sure that Richard saw the value behind the pre-planning and how it created a unified debriefing conversation with his students. She allowed him to reflect on the aspects of the lesson that he was nervous about, validated his concern and had him connect to the worth of the lesson. She worked throughout this process to build his creative confidence as well as instill some planning processes. There was no feedback or reference to the ideation stage of the process, so there is no record of how the idea was generated and might be replicated for future successes. What is important in this example is that Richard was learning a process of creative planning as well as how to reflect on his teaching, which are strategies that he can transfer into his own classroom.

In another Social Studies classroom, Susan and Roger decided to engage in a Declaration of Independence simulation activity. This also involved a hook, with Roger "finding" a note on the floor and reading it aloud. This note would detail all the reasons why a couple should break up and then it would be revealed that this related directly to England and the American colonies. Roger became aware of this activity from looking through Susan's notebooks, and thought he would try to enact it. Roger and Susan did not

discuss the details of this activity directly or devise a particular strategy to use to debrief it. Susan said,

> That morning I think it was, he told me, "I'm just going to go ahead." I'm like, "good for you." That takes guts, it takes courage to do that. I knew I was going to be gone that day he was going to do it, so I wouldn't be there. I think he wouldn't have reached out to me if I was going to be there because he knew I would be there to help him through it … but because I wasn't going to be there he reached out and said, "Hey I don't get this."

After hearing this I commented, "That's interesting, if you are not available, he has the skills to be creative and do what he needs to do." Then Susan responded; "right, he doesn't realize that about himself yet." This was a validation of approval from her to the intern to try a creative hook that would employ emotion to allow students to connect to the content. Roger took on the idea and the implementation himself—there was little follow up in terms of debriefing this strategy. Susan approved of this curriculum choice and the "guts" that it took to step out of a traditional presentation mode into an acting one and recognized that her intern had the ability to be creative, even though he may not have realized it yet. Susan clearly valued this type of activity, and displayed an openness to allowing her intern to engage in creative tasks.

However, the conversation around this activity did not record any reflection regarding the development of Roger's creative confidence. Susan cited his experience in theater as a reason for his comfort in employing strategies like this, but there was no evidence of how she would have encouraged him to continue to develop his creative confidence, or how it might be replicated or transferred into his future. Roger's decision

to go forward led to a very favorable view of his teaching practice. While his creativity was highly valued, the lack of a follow up was a missed opportunity to further cement any positive thoughts or techniques that could possibly be replicated, or transferable in the future.

The last example illustrates how the absence of creativity on the student teacher's part may become a frustrating aspect for the mentor teacher. Maria had an expectation of creativity and original thought from her student teacher. She had explained the communication problems between the two, and that he did not seem willing or able to produce the type of lessons that Maria desired. "He is still looking for the idea lesson on the internet, that will pop out at me. 'I'm a full lesson, teach me! You don't need to edit me.'" Part of this frustration stemmed from his attitudes differing so wildly from her own in learning how to student teach. "I guess the difference, when I was a student teacher, I was always like, 'Hey can we try this, can we try this?' I've never heard a 'can we try this?' I don't know if it is a fear of trying it." These quotes were couched in a conversation about co-planning, that had brought up a lot of emotion behind his desire to just mimic or do the exact same thing as his mentor teacher. Maria judged the intern's lack of desire to be creative and independent in his lesson planning as something wanting in his development as a teacher.

As we continued the conversation, Maria gave a specific example of how concerned she was for him to become an adept planner in the future.

> …If I don't tell him what to do on prep, I don't know what he does on his computer. I've never seen anybody on a computer so much in my life. I have to point blank say, "Did you make the copies for tomorrow? Do you

> have the labs set up?" Things that I shouldn't have to point blank ask at this point. It should be like, "Oh, we have a lab tomorrow, where are all the supplies?" Every time he goes to get something, "Wait where is this again, where's that again?" Same cupboard they've been in all year. It's marked Ziploc bags, it's right there. Needs a lot of direction. I was hoping to get away from that in terms of, I don't know if that is helpful for him in the long run.

As a new mentor, Maria was frustrated that even though she had worked to communicate her expectations of planning and her desire for him to create things independently, there was no tangible growth. She genuinely questioned his ability to take his strong content knowledge and combine it with the pedagogic and creative abilities required to connect with the middle school students.

On the other hand, as a new mentor teacher, Maria may not have had the depth of strategies to develop her intern's creative confidence that a more seasoned mentor might have. In this instance, if both Maria and her intern were taught more about the creative process they might have gained some traction in meeting challenges. Maria was open to her intern trying new things, but may not have been sure about how to guide him through the process. Perhaps his reluctance was fear of trying something new or stepping out of his comfort zone in terms of content, but as Maria mentioned, she was concerned about how he would perform in his future classroom without the support of a mentor teacher and field instructor to direct him. The intern's lack of creativity led Maria to seriously question his ability to become an independent, innovative practitioner.

The expectations of mentor teachers and the actual abilities of interns to display creativity to blend their content and pedagogic knowledge seems to be a significant factor in determining how mentor teachers apply their developmental instruction strategies and predict the future success of their interns. In terms of curriculum development, creativity acts as a form of synthesis in the context of learning how to structure and frame the content and pedagogic knowledge in ways that engage their students. This knowledge was expressed in both the thoughts and the actions of the mentor teachers in this study. Mentor teachers use their experiences and values to frame their informed intuition to develop the creative confidence of their interns. Teaching them to anticipate student responses or avoid common instructional pitfalls develops the intern's confidence in the classroom.

Summary of Chapter Four

Chapter Four presented the findings for how the mentor teachers in my study began to build relationships with their interns and assess the intern's practice using strategies such as inquiry, modeling, and debriefing. A discussion of how mentor teachers can use co-planning strategies to facilitate transformative learning practices with their interns followed. In Chapter Five I will present the findings on the strategies that mentor teachers employed to facilitate intern reflection as well as discuss how experienced mentor teachers continue to develop their mentoring practice.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, PART TWO

In this chapter, I detail the practice of reflection and how it is utilized by interns and mentor teachers alike to develop their practice, and the findings from my research questions that addressed the strategies that mentor teachers used to engage their interns in reflection during feedback and debriefing sessions. In the latter parts of the chapter, I will explain how the mentor teachers in this study continued to develop their mentoring practice through their attendance at mentor meetings, and propose additional types of professional learning opportunities of interest to them.

Feedback and Reflection

In addition to the work of unpacking their knowledge to instruct and model the mechanics of teaching, mentor teachers strive to provide a setting for the intern to cultivate, articulate and implement their teaching philosophies. Educative mentoring calls for the development of a relationship that is based "on an explicit vision of good teaching and understanding of teacher learning" (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). In order to achieve this goal, the ability to reflect on practice for both parties is an integral part of the learning process.

Reflection, however, has may nuances and can be difficult to define. Carol Rodgers (2002) outlines four main problems with the term reflection:

> First, it is unclear how systematic reflection is different from other types of thought. Second, it is difficult to assess a skill that is vaguely defined. Third, without a clear picture of what reflection

> looks like, it has lost its ability to be seen and therefore has begun to lose its value. And finally, without a clear definition, it is difficult to research the effects of reflective teacher education and professional development on teachers' practice and students' learning. (p. 843)

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As Rodgers pointed out, there are so many definitions and types of reflection that it becomes difficult for practitioners to talk about it in a systematic way—where reflection is always defined and enacted in the same way. Despite its murkiness, the practice of reflection for new and mentor teachers is an invaluable step in their continued development of practice in the classroom.

In *How We Think* (1933), John Dewey claimed:

> Reflective thinking, in distinction from other operations to which we apply the name of thought, involves (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity. (p. 12)

Dewey's definition explained that the act of reflection may encompass many origins, but always seeks resolution. He asserted the notion that a problem is not something negative, but is more a cause of wondering or curiosity about an event. The act of reflection about an event could lead to action, which may help to clarify or to provide more information, which could lead to a resolution of the problem. From this perspective, a problem may become an inspiration prompting curiosity and attention to stimulate professional growth.

The mentor teachers in this study were not given a definition of reflection or reflective practice from which to work. The findings in this section will discuss why mentors believe reflection is important, the strategies that they use with their interns to build a reflective process, examples of how they utilized feedback as a means of framing the reflective inquiry, and reflection about the takeaways mentor teachers have when engaging in the reflective practice with their interns.

Reflection

The practice of reflection is one that all of the mentor teachers in this study used. However, each mentor's unique perspective of reflection determined how they explicitly used it with their interns.

> …I feel it is my role to make sure that, by the time that they leave, they are reflective, and that that just becomes automatic almost. I would put it right up there at the top, because I think that is the first step to all of the other things. Because I think that when you are reflective, you are identifying help that you need, whether it is reminding yourself that this did not go well, but this sure did, and boy that's worth it. Just having that own personal pep talk with yourself, and then on a third level, it just, it encourages you to just continue to grow yourself and to not have a filing cabinet that you go to every year.

Juliet's quote above captured the spirit of reflection that appeared most frequently throughout the mentoring moments. There was an acknowledgment that reflection is a thought process—one that can become ingrained in some sense, and that one should reflect on the positive and negative to create a balanced sense of teaching ability.

Reflection was also thought of as an indicator of long-term growth in the profession, demonstrating a willingness to grow and keep learning. Juliet added onto the definition the notion that it enabled the identification of developmental needs, and the ability to articulate those needs to receive support.

While there was general agreement on the importance of developing reflective interns among the mentor teachers in this study, there were a variety of tools and strategies that the mentor teachers used to encourage their interns to engage in reflection. One of the challenges in trying to document reflection is that the work of reflection is not always made visible. Juliet expanded upon this thought:

> I think a lot of that is just you do it yourself. Some of it might take place in the context of a more formal setting, like a PLC perhaps… I mean a lot of it just is those conversations you have with yourself on your way home, on your way to school, before you go to sleep, those types of things. Very hard to measure, obviously, because it is not something that you have a lot of visible evidence of, but, I guess I don't know how you would ever know if he in fact is being that way.

Other mentors echoed a similar sentiment of how they reflect on their own teaching and mentoring processes. Susan mentioned her need to discuss things with her colleagues and the help of mentor meeting conversations. Janet also mentioned that her reflection frequently occurred verbally with colleagues and internally while she was driving. If the mentor teachers are reflecting in these outside spaces, apart from their interns, it would be difficult to see the modeling of this practice in the manner of more explicit teaching practices. This uncertainty about how and whether their interns were reflecting led to the

use of several tools and strategies to gain some insight into their interns' thought processes and advance the notion of practiced reflection.

Mentoring Tools and Strategies

Stephen Brookfield (2010) defined reflection as "focusing on uncovering assumptions, the conceptual glue that holds our perspectives, meaning schemes, and habits of mind in place" (p. 216). The task of uncovering the interns' assumptions requires mentor teachers to utilize an array of strategies to engage their interns in critical inquiry and reflection about their practices. The tools and strategies employed by the mentor teachers in the study aimed to develop their interns' abilities to uncover and articulate their thoughts during the process of learning to teach.

Modeling

Modeling and co-teaching were commonly used by the mentor teachers while working with their interns. During the reflective interviews, the mentor teachers expressed that the use of modeling language, in particular, was not always planned, it could be entirely spontaneous, and there were not necessarily clear moments where they employed this strategy.

> I don't think I plan it out. I think that, just the way that I feel like, not just with him, but also my students too. There are two schools of thought: there's that inquiry-based—pull it out of the person, so they truly get it. [And then] there is, "here are a few things that really just work, based on all of this experience that I have…Try one of these out." I think that the inquiry approach has its moments. I think… giving them sentence stems for a variety of different situations is useful.

> I don't know if I have conscious effort in that. Where I try to take them [through the] "what you should be kind of thinking by your own self." Talk as you go through this and go through that lesson…

Both quotes illustrate that the use of modeling language is experience based and that the aim is to give the intern a starting point, or direction, to resolve a situation identified during a discussion or debriefing session.

For example, in a mentoring moment between Juliet and Richard, they were in the process of debriefing an AP US History lesson where they were discussing the order of events and whether students could connect the information. Juliet began with open and broad questions, but to help Richard think specifically about how to address his concerns at the start of the lesson, Juliet offered him modeling language suggestions:

> . . . hey you've heard me say a lot before we get started today [that] I just want to clarify something that we talked about yesterday before we can move forward…I think tomorrow maybe you could even come back to something that is here and just say, "ok, so based on what we talked about yesterday, looking at how this traditional view of how the West was settled, what did you pick up on yesterday that kind of begins to refute this?"

These modeling suggestions showed Richard how to reframe a lesson and be able to bridge the connections from the previous day's lesson. Of additional importance, this concern was brought up during the debriefing session, bringing notice to the fact that the

students might not have been able to take everything out of the lesson that he had hoped, and that perhaps it was the framing or connection between events that was the problem.

Modeling was also used to alert the interns when a key part of the lesson was missed, that they failed to notice a student response, or other miscues. In mentoring moment two, with Maria and Sam, Maria used modeling of her own thinking to describe how she noticed teachable moments. The class had just completed an experiment with racing hot wheel cars down a ramp and collecting the data from three different attempts. They compared these results with similar trials, studying the rate of deceleration using a golf ball and a marble. The students averaged the results and posted them on the board. The data results weren't what was expected, but Sam did not acknowledge that. In response to Sam's actions in the classroom, Maria declared what she thought the issue was:

> Okay, if you are writing data and you're actually not looking at what you are writing, when you're collecting from them, you miss those teachable moments that you might not have anticipated. You didn't know what the data was going to be when you planned the lesson. You could hope it goes one way, but sometimes you do a lab and you're like, 'Wow, yeah, we didn't get the right results. Why didn't we?"

The ability to read the data as well as the students, and respond to unplanned results, presented a situational problem for her intern, so Maria continued to brainstorm questions that her intern might have asked throughout the moment. In pointing out the missed opportunity, and posing model questions, she tried to provide insights into methods that extend the student's learning. In this moment, however, the understanding of the problem

did not come the intern; rather, it came from Maria's own sense of the lesson and her experience with identifying teachable moments.

Modeling in another instance was blurred with the notion of co-teaching. Bonnie explained that when working with her intern, within the constraints of not having a planning period,[1] that she has had to rely a lot of modeling and co-teaching. "We did a ton of modeling, probably more than I ever did modeling. She's good at that. She's good at picking up on modeling. She's good at watching me teach something and then doing it. We do a fair amount of co-teaching." In this context, modeling was used to describe observing a lesson and then being able to teach it later in the day. This version of modeling is different from the previous two because it is not really used as a reflective space to improve or grow the intern's knowledge or assumptions. The goal of this type of modeling was the replication of the task, and its success is based on faithfully emulating the lesson.

These moments illustrate that modeling in and of itself might not generate reflection in an intern's practice. The intent of where the process begins (i.e. whether it comes from the intern's reflection or the mentor teacher's), the clarity that modeling may provide, and the modeling contexts are indicators of whether modeling is being utilized as a tool of reflection. Another factor to consider is that modeling is based on the mentor teacher's experience and how they decide to share it with their interns. Their ability to diagnose a situation and relate it to their teaching expectations shapes the modeling offered to their interns.

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[1] Due to a variety of budget concerns throughout the state, several districts have required teachers to give up their planning periods as part of their contract negotiations.

Inquiry and Feedback

Inquiry was commonly used by the mentor teachers in this study as a reflective strategy. Inquiry was demonstrated throughout the mentoring moment examples as a form of reflective inquiry, defined as "focusing on a particular situation as a means for further understanding and action" (Downey & Clandinin, 2010, p. 388). Inquiry and debriefing with feedback were very intertwined throughout the mentoring moments.

Questions provided an entry point to frame a debriefing session and allowed the intern to contextually discuss successes or challenges experienced in the lesson. This appeared to be a means for mentor teachers to allow their student teachers a voice and a way for them to increasingly take more responsibility for reflection. At the start of the placement, interns may have great difficulty in reflecting on their practice strictly through self-reflection. Part of helping to set up this expectation of the practice of reflection through the debrief is how the mentors take the information the intern responds with, to then facilitate a pedagogic conversation.

> I love to ask them, "what did you think?" That is probably my favorite. "What did you think? How do you think that went? What were you looking for?" I love for them to just take a moment to just self reflect and I love to ask them, "what do you think you need of me? Where are you feeling the shortcomings?" Most of the time it's all over the place, but if there's one that really jumps out, I think that helps them focus the conversation from there.

This quote is representative of the string of responses the mentor teachers documented in their mentoring moments and how they articulated this part of their role. While the

questions were fairly common in the process of reflection, the manner a mentor teacher facilitated the conversation referencing the intern's practice varied.

This preference for questions played an important role in the amount of verbal feedback given by the mentor teachers in this study. For example. when asked about feedback for her student teacher, Sally stated that "a lot of it is just verbal. I try to do it as questions". The ample use of verbal feedback often led to inquiry that was useful to lead the interns in a certain direction, and provided a glimpse into their emotional state as well. The next section will further illustrate how the use of inquiry may set the stage for the debriefing conversation, as the format of the feedback and the type of debriefing conversation have significant impact of how the conversations develop from this point of inquiry.

Structured Debriefing and Feedback

In this study, mentor teachers spent significant time reflecting on how to provide a detailed level of feedback that would allow their interns to analyze their own practice and continue to develop their own practice. Choosing to debrief specific lessons, with specific types of feedback, provided them "opportunities for deep and rich reflection on practice with the participation of a mentor who helps to shape and instill this intellectual habit" (Schwille, 2008, p. 141). These decisions related to feedback and the best way to debrief a lesson changes from day to day and from mentor to mentor based on the school context.

The framework of a debriefing session was based on the type of data or feedback to be used as part of the reflection process. Each mentor used a variety of tools and feedback to have their intern reflect on their practice. All the mentors used a combination of written and verbal feedback with their interns. Janet described the differences between using written and verbal feedback with her student teachers:

> The written portion, when I would sit and kind of write down my reflections . . . felt much more methodical and purposeful as I went through it. As I had to really contemplate what word choice I was going to put, what I was going for… Recording allowed for a much more fluid kind of interaction. I could steer the conversation when I felt like I needed to steer it towards what I was driving at. I could let the conversation or the feedback kind of flow to where they needed it…I notice that the written gets very static, because you get more control and then the conversational piece allows for more flow. That's where I think you have to know your mentor. I am more comfortable in the flow.

As can be seen in Janet's quote, there is thought given to how and when to use written or verbal feedback to frame a debrief. Written feedback seemed to be too formal or have the need for further explanation when the mentor discussed its use. For instance, Bonnie also cited that she preferred difficult conversations in person, rather than sending critiques over email. Conversations of a sensitive nature seemed to exclusively reside in the domain of verbal feedback.

However, the mentor teachers in the study also valued the role of written feedback—because it was more methodical, it left a history of patterns and growth, and allowed the intern to process the feedback in a more reflective manner. In fact, there was a significant amount of creativity and tinkering around the best way to provide written feedback amongst the mentors in this study. Examples of written feedback provided by Janet, Sally, and Bonnie demonstrated the variety of tools they created to provide the best feedback to their interns.

During our interview discussing feedback, Janet admitted that she was more comfortable on the verbal side of feedback than the written. However, while working with her intern, who had a strong English background, she realized that he was better able to process feedback in the written form. As a result, Janet decided to try a variety of forms of written feedback for her him.

Janet first started by creating a written feedback form based from the Reading Apprenticeship program used in her high school. To see the complete feedback forms and intern response please see Appendix A and B. The first version of written feedback and intern response was clearly very time consuming for both the mentor and the student teacher. Still, in the search of a better format, Janet continued to reflect and iterate on the second feedback form.

There are several differences between these forms. In the first form, it is easy to see all the possible information that Janet thought about in terms of the lesson and her intern's teaching, the focus on the form, that contains a lot of data and the questions are shaped by Janet's thoughts, which the intern responded to through the written reflection questions that she posed. In the second form, there was less emphasis on Janet's thoughts, and the use of inquiry changed the debriefing session format. Notice that the intern, in this second form responded with more targeted explanations to the data and her questions. This demonstrates that more targeted feedback coupled with inquiry can aid in making the tacit knowledge between the two a point of reflection about specific practices.

How did the changes in these forms come about? Janet explained the evolution of these forms in her reflective interview. She began with a familiar form from the Reading Apprenticeship program. The form was designed for completing an observation "where

you will be getting a bunch of evidence presented [back] to you." This evidence, once collected, then allowed the person to reflect on the process. Janet explained that she did not think that this form drove the reflection to the proper destination.

Janet attended the monthly MSU mentor meeting and participated in an activity involving feedback. She began talking to another mentor who shared an idea on the use of warm and cool feedback.

> One of the women there talked about how she did this kind of warm-cool feedback, so then I'm like, maybe I can do a combination evidence-interpretation, what I noticed, what I wondered. Then the warm-cool, like driving at things that I think were successful, things I think were successful, or things we needed to worry about or think about. It didn't hit our goals today, the challenging piece that [there] was also feedback from another person there… I kind of put that in there, I don't know if I ever really changed it or did much else with that, challenge yourself piece… Then I added the general observations, here's kind of what I saw as a flow of your lesson plan…and then of those things that I kind of saw, I put them in categories, this is where I would put that. This is kind of the more of my skillset, as I moved along. Like a rudimentary starting point, and then more tailored to hopefully give feedback that made sense to someone and then kind of played on what were my strengths in what I did, when my brain naturally does as I'm kind of in a room. I think in the end, it may have been better of a feedback form for myself. Just for me to capture what I was thinking and then be able to share that with him.

Janet went on to describe how she felt these reflections got even better when she could incorporate other forms of data into the form, such as video and pictures, which she felt added validity to her perceptions of the lesson.

Providing written feedback to this depth is a time consuming process. Janet estimated that she spent about half an hour or forty-five minutes after the observation to compile the data. With such an additional time commitment, this is not a process that one would use for every lesson. She discussed why she believed this process was worth it;

> I don't know how you balance it between the verbal quick conversations here, there, everywhere kind of deal, with the substantial evidence-based, fully documented feedback. That is a big question to me. I tend to feel that probably the majority of us bounced towards the quick simple easy feedback because that is what it is. Quick, easy, simple, right there, but it's reliant on verbal and auditory skills [so] that lots can be missed, because their bands are jammed with the bunch of other things that they're trying to sort through.

How much feedback is enough to provide a platform for interns to engage in reflective thought? This is an important question that Janet brought to the table. To provide her intern with feedback, it was important to help him notice things that were difficult for him to realize in the moment of teaching, but was there also a point of too much feedback: so much so that it became paralyzing and prohibited him from being able to reflect enough to act in changing or addressing the issues at hand? Perhaps those that

favor verbal feedback, because of its ease of use, may fail to notice how much feedback the interns are unable to process in a cohesive fashion.

Sally had a slightly different take on reflection and the written feedback forms that she used. Sally was the person at the mentor meeting that Janet was paired with: the one who shared the idea of using warm, cool, and challenging feedback. Sally learned this strategy from a presentation at Opening Day for mentor and student teachers in a session that addressed this format. Here is how she described the form:

> Warm is something that is going awesome and challenging is something that could be pushed further or thought provoking or something like that. Then I do notice, what I notice, [is that] I'm wondering [about something] and [what] his response [will be]. He fills in the last column. …This is my limit to myself. I can only put one thing in I notice for the day. I let him pick the class.

This form was meant to be used as a daily form to provide quick written feedback for the intern to interact with in terms of reflection. See Appendix C for an example of this form.

When discussing the form and the role of reflection for her student teacher, Sally frequently talked about providing targeted feedback in the same way that she has learned to improve her golf swing: one piece at a time. It was impossible to list or describe everything wrong or right on a daily basis. Instead, Sally reasoned, if you kept working at the skills one at a time, the intern could focus on that piece and continue to build their practice.

I asked Sally the purpose of her questions asked during a debriefing session. She replied:

> To provoke thought and to guide the thought to where I thought he needed to be thinking, so that it would last. The what did we take away from this kind of thing. And to own it. If I'm saying it, he likes me and respects me, but it's not his.

Sally used ordinary observations to develop questions that further pushed or challenged her intern to think about either the other elements of the lesson or about how his practice could continue to be developed. His responses seemed to cultivate a form of ideation in terms of trying to find multiple ways to think about answers. This in turn opened several avenues for action to take place the next time he encountered an issue or helped him anticipate situations when planning future lessons.

Another form of written feedback noted in the mentoring moments was a journal that Bonnie and her intern used as a form of bilateral communication. There were no scheduled planning periods at her school and Bonnie realized that their communication was becoming more difficult. This inspired the journal, a way to leave each other questions and answers for quick questions. Figure Y is an excerpt from two pages of the journal. Italics are used to indicate intern voice. Specific student names and place locators have been altered

The purpose behind this written feedback was more organizational in its intent and function. It helped to bridge the basic communication gaps that could occur when there was limited time for conversation throughout the day. Even though this is quite functional, on a nuts and bolts level, it still allowed Bonnie to provide feedback that moved them forward in terms of planning and resources. This type of feedback, unless it

built upon, does not precipitate either long-term reflection of practice or development of skill.

The mentor teachers in the study were all able to provide this type of systematic feedback that was pedagogic in nature, whether it was in written or verbal formats, the use of inquiry coupled with reflection in this structure was illustrated across the board. However, the mentor teacher's ability to remain in an inquiry stance was sometimes challenged by their own abilities in being able to question practice and classroom routines. The mentor teachers that could engage their interns at a high level of reflection, were able to do so because they consistently using inquiry through every aspect of their mentoring practice and were more comfortable in their ability to facilitate reflective conversations. The mentor teachers who were less sure, struggled more in getting to the pedagogic conversation and would then use experience to support their point of view in the debriefing conversation. Supporting mentor teachers in gaining the experience needed to facilitate debriefing conversations through the use of inquiry strategies could be a fruitful place for professional learning.

Reflection in Action

The mentor-intern pairs, regardless of their success together, consistently reported that reflection was an important common value. The use of inquiry, whether in conversation or embedded in a form, caused the interns to engage in the functional mechanics of teaching and challenged them to think further and deeper about the larger challenges of the profession. The use of modeling and experience sharing allowed interns to understand and try several ways to engage an issue, but these practices alone limit their scope to the mentor teacher's experience. Mentor teachers realize this and have used their

own reflective processes to continue to develop reflective tools for their interns to produce evidence-based feedback to refine their professional growth.

Mentor Learning

For mentor teachers to understand and implement educative mentoring strategies, it is important to think about how to develop their capacity to work with their interns towards a more transformational process. Mentor learning is important and desired if we want to move away from the idea that mentors develop their knowledge in isolation and are driven by local school context (Langdon & Ward, 2015). Each of the mentors in this study have articulated a vision and have a clear set of habits in mind when they think about what a successful year of mentoring an intern entailed, while at the same time explaining that they have not received initial training to be a mentor teacher for pre-service teachers. [2] Without development, mentor teachers need to rely on their own experiences and memories of learning to teach, while trying to support the interns placed in their care. Mentor teachers face increasing demands on their time and resources, which creates challenges in thinking about ways to support mentor teachers in their development as teacher educators in collaborative relationships with universities.

In discussion of professional learning, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, 2009) articulated three types of teacher learning: knowledge for practice, knowledge in practice, and knowledge of practice. Knowledge for practice focuses largely on what is known through research and best practices about teaching, learning, and teacher education.

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[2] Michigan State University provides a variety of mentoring resources including the Internship Guide Handbook, newsletters, and an Opening Institute at the start of the internship process. Ongoing support is also offered through field instructors and mentor meetings. . ..

Knowledge in practice, however, is based in teacher experience through their work in the classroom. The third type of learning, knowledge of practice, focuses more on the idea that theory emerges from practice, or is a type of practice. Knowledge is created collectively, based on critiques of theoretical and practical knowledge, and the knowledge constructed can be used so that mentors and teachers can become agents of change (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). The move towards a vision of educative mentoring is this transition from knowledge for practice towards a vision of knowledge of practice—one that incorporates collaborative inquiry, co-construction of knowledge and one where mentor and interns can learn from one another equally (F. Langdon & Ward, 2015). This transition is not an easy one to facilitate and can be difficult to implement. Therefore, it is important to gain a better sense of how mentor teachers are currently developing their knowledge, as well as heeding their suggestions about possible opportunities to further their professional learning.

Professional Learning and University Support

The mentor teachers in this study stated unanimously that they have not received any prior mentoring development in how they should work with their student teachers. Michigan State University provides both initial and ongoing support to the mentor teachers that work with our programs. Initial resources include the Internship Handbook, newsletters, websites, and an Opening Institute to start the year off. In terms of ongoing support mentor can attend mentor meetings and utilize the support of field instructors and subject area leaders. Even though all of the mentor teachers in this study attended the mentor meetings, they reported that they did not receive initial support for their mentoring practice.

Three of the mentors in my study have been involved in mentoring new teachers with mixed results of support at the district level in terms of professional development. For two of these mentors, the support has largely been in terms of handouts and checklists to review with their mentees that essentially show new teachers how to navigate the events and procedures of the school district. The third mentor has gone through the Pathwise Series of Professional Development, provided by ETS, and is based on Charlotte Danielson's book, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. In reflecting on how this professional development impacted or tied to her work with her interns, Bonnie replied "…phrases come from my work with Pathwise and talking about how to give feedback, how to come from a place of assuming that things are going well, and asking questions instead of assumptions. I do actively seek that out." Aside from Bonnie, however, it does seem the mentor teachers have developed their mentoring practices and ideas from their own experiences and understandings of what an intern would need in terms of support.

Paradoxically, throughout the study, the mentor teachers repeatedly referenced the monthly mentor meetings held by the university. As mentioned previously, one of these meetings produced the participants for this study. As a reminder, the mentor meetings originated as a gathering that the Social Studies subject area held to support, and open dialogue with, the mentor teachers and university faculty on the clinical side of the program. Kyle Greenwalt, the social studies subject area leader, started these meetings in collaboration with a local middle school teacher who worked extensively with our students in the field. The meetings were jointly run, optional, and were held in a local school district office. In 2015, they were broadened to include any mentor from any

discipline. The structure is open and usually divided into large group and small group discussions about the process and experience of mentoring. Within the context of these meetings mentors have created their own meeting guidelines, a checklist of topics to discuss with their interns, and have extended the purpose of some of the Opening Day meetings into hosting, facilitating and attending specific sessions related to topics about the mentoring process.

Here is what Juliet and Susan have to say about this space:

> I do consider that to be a support because I do feel like that is a very safe place where you can go and say how you would handle situations or on the flip side help someone else who might feel like "oh, my gosh, I am failing or I made a mistake." And you can just help to ease their mind as well. So I think that definitely helps. I think that I draw on just a lot of what good teaching means to me in terms of what I feel like my preparation for a mentor [has been]. I think there [are] definite parallels there.

> [I] feel supported, a place to talk, and get help with individual mentors, speaking to the person in the trenches with you, it is a two-way street.

These two experienced mentors, both of whom went through the university program themselves and have had a long history of working with the program, found value in this space and in being able to fully share their experiences of mentoring (both the positive and negative) as way of helping them to develop their mentoring practices. It is noteworthy that they point out that it is a two-way street, a space to share problems or tensions you may be experiencing, as well as share solutions and strategies that you may

have developed over your tenure of mentoring interns. This peer-to-peer learning, as an exchange of information, is what is valued from these meetings. This is especially true for some of the newer mentors.

Sally, a new mentor, had a lot to say about the role the mentor meetings had on her development as a mentor over her first year.

> I've been to all of them because, like I said, I don't feel like I'm doing the best. I'm not the best possible person he could have had because I have not done it before. I don't know how to explain that. I couldn't do my best, because I had no idea what that looked like, [and] that bothered me. I wanted to know as much as I could because it's just the person I am. I've learned a ton. Like I said, the first meeting I was there, I watched Daria go off about her problem and how she needs to deal with things—and how she was in my small group the first day, and I said, "I'm having problems with this." She's like, "You've got to tell him." She was like, "you've got to do this," and that was it. It was so clear to her. In my mind, it was like, how was that not clear to me? It was the, "I can do better than this." Here's all these people doing better than me. Not better than me, but having a clearer picture of what I need to do… It was just that she was very encouraging that day too, but everyone that I met and felt, like, every time I've been, I've taken away three or four things that I felt I could immediately implement for the better for both of us.

This quote speaks to the isolation that can develop when one works apart from others. To this new mentor, these meetings helped her to gain a sense of perspective about some of

the challenges that she was facing—some of which derived from her own experiences of learning to teach. There is also the clear desire to be an effective mentor, in terms of how she sees the role. It is difficult to gain perspective on your own—without the back-and-forth or critical reflection from others.

This statement is also driven by the idea that it is okay to share these problems or issues with colleagues, as compared to other people, such as field instructors, school colleagues, or the intern themself. In discussing the mentor meetings further, Sally also reflected that they provided,

> . . . a perspective of the bigger picture, because you're there everyday looking at the little things, and it allows you to take a step back physically and say, "well, what is the overall?" Also hearing stories of other people with their student teachers makes you realize you're doing okay. It's okay. It doesn't have to be the perfect picture of what you would make a perfect beginning teacher look like. Seeing the growth and seeing I'm not alone, either, is really powerful.

The conversations and shared experiences at the mentor meetings helped to provide a space to critically reflect on her practice as a mentor and gave her ideas of strategies to use with her intern, and helped her gain confidence in her mentoring ability.

Beyond the emotional support that these mentor meeting provided (in terms of mentors having a space to discuss their ideas of mentoring), the meetings also provided an idea exchange forum with the university to gain a sense of their expectations of interns. Incorporating the university's expectations into their classroom expectations often led to lively debates and the sharing of knowledge, which allowed the mentor

teachers opportunities to choose any solution that made the most sense to them and their local contexts.

An example of this was referenced previously in the discussion of feedback forms. During a mentor meeting Sally and Janet discussed the variety of ways that they provided feedback to their interns, and Sally shared what she had learned at the Opening Day presentation about warm, cool, and challenging feedback. Janet decided to take that and incorporate it into her feedback forms as something else to try, outside of the Reading Apprenticeship-based observation forms she had used with her intern. Such exchanges, or moments of sharing knowledge, had an impact on each mentoring practice. Janet found a feedback format that she felt provided the type of information she wished to convey—one she kept refining over the course of the semester. Sally felt positive about being able to share this information and realizing that other mentors were interested in what she had been able to effectively use with her intern. Although they wound up using the forms differently, this shared knowledge provided re-enforcement of a practice and provided Janet the launch pad she needed. It was not just a simple replication of an idea.

A frequent topic of conversation at the mentor meetings is the work load of the interns. In the year-long internship, there were moments where interns took on more responsibilities and times built in to allow for reflection and preparation. These university expectations were mapped out in the internship guide that every mentor received. Although these expectations were laid out, the conversation about teaching expectations remained something that was a highly negotiated area between mentor teachers, interns, and their field instructors. Two of the mentor teachers in this study brought up this

conflict during their interviews. While each of the mentors pointed to the conversation at the mentor meetings, the results and thought provoking moments did not end during the meeting themselves.

As a new mentor teacher, Sally found the conversation surrounding the work expectations over winter break problematic.

> I remember at the mentor meeting that we had with the mentors, right before break, there was a huge discussion of what they should be doing over break. I may have told you this before, the general consensus was, "Let them have a break. This is a stressful year." And I said, "that 's great but you all don't teach AP." I said, "I've got to know, for my own self, that he [will] do this well, or I can't give him these classes. I can't do it."

This quote comes from her conversation about how hard working her student teacher was in his preparation to teach the AP Statistics course during his lead teaching period. In this case, Sally discussed that winter break gave him some time to really work through the content knowledge—for understanding the concepts and thinking about how to teach them. Although the other mentor teachers at the meeting recommended that the student teachers could take some down time over the winter break, that did not seem feasible to Sally or her intern given their context.

For Susan, a similar moment arrived during the conversations about the expectations for interns during the last month of their internship. Historically, the interns begin to pull out of their teaching responsibilities, a bit at a time, until their mentor teachers resume their full courses. During this conversation at the mentor meeting, the discussion turned to the use of the word "rigor" in terms of ensuring that the interns were

working until the end of their student teaching experience. Susan had a strong reaction to the word "rigor" in this conversation when she brought it up in her reflective interview.

As she began to explain why she did not like the usage of "rigor," it became apparent that this was tied to her work with her previous intern as well as her current intern, it terms of how far to push them and in terms of the optimal level of struggle or expectation. I asked Susan if she felt that "pushing" (her word) student teachers always has to be negative. She replied:

> I've always seen it as negative. I've never had it put to me in positive terms. "Rigor" has always been a swear word. That came out of the State. The way that it was presented to us is you're not good enough. You're not good at what you do, because you don't have [it]. It's always negative to me. It always is. I know, logically, I can turn it around and make it something that it's not, that it's not negative, but I haven't put the time and thought into it to be honest.

When asked about whether a change in word choice to "high expectations" helped her to think about this issue, she replied, "High expectations means that they're reachable. Rigor is not reachable. I know it's probably some mental block". Although the word choices between "rigor" and "high expectations" was a point of concern in the framing of the issue, Susan continued to think about how she was going ensure that her intern was going to maximize his development for the remaining time.

Based on this conversation from the mentor meeting, she made a difficult decision to have her intern keep a Current Events course until the end of the semester, even though

she knew that was not what he wanted to do. In her own words, she crafted a "hard email to write" where she brought up this decision.

> I was thinking that we should have you stick with current events as your focus class. Today in the mentor meeting it was presented that we need to keep challenging you. Many [student teachers] think that this is a time to wind down. But think about it, we still have two months of school left. If you, as a [intern], think it is winding down, our students do too, even though they have two months of school left. Current events could be that one class that challenges you. I think you have had a pretty easy time as a [student teacher] in American Government. This should be the class that you should focus on for the rest of your time here. It is the most challenging and it is the one that will prepare you for planning a class with no curriculum. I am really wondering if I have done you a disservice by not challenging you more. Please tell me what you think. Please be frank.

Her student teacher responded to this email.

> I really don't feel as though you've not been challenging me. Between teaching here, doing university stuff, preparing to find a job, and balancing a home life on top of all of that, I feel like I barely have a chance to come up for air most of the time. That's not to say you haven't been supportive, either … I don't want my learning to stop theirs (students). However, we can burn that bridge when get to it (IF we get to it), and I am willing to hang on to Current Events until the end, as long as we can make it work for the students.

There are several things that are interesting about this exchange and the larger topic at hand.

The mentor meeting helped to identify and frame the workload expectations in terms of the need for challenging interns in their placement until the very end. Susan used this moment to think through her perception of what challenging meant, and used that to overturn her initial decision to allow Roger to stop teaching the Current Events course. This led her to take a risk in writing a "hard email" about her concern about whether he had been challenged in the placement and would be willing to keep teaching the course. Susan perceived this move as risky. but was convinced to try it. given her knowledge from the mentor meeting of what other people were requiring of their interns in addition to being able to reflect on her current expectations.

In each of these examples from Sally and Susan, the mentor meetings provided a space to bring up the topic of intern workload and university expectations. The topic acted as a springboard for shared conversations of the ways mentors interpreted and implemented these practices, which presented both Sally and Susan with information from a variety of peers and the opportunity to reflect on their own context and mentoring relationships, and supplied them the knowledge needed to make their respective decisions. In terms of helping to support mentor teachers' development in their practice, this appears to be example of the mentor meetings acting as a space for mentors to participate in a learning community.

The Role of Feedback

Mentors in this study reported that they do not receive feedback on their mentoring, but that they would be open to feedback from the right people, but there was

no clear notion of whose feedback they would value the most. Four of the six mentor teachers stated that they would most value feedback from their interns, although they also acknowledged the problem of realistic feedback, given the power dynamic. Two mentors mentioned that they would welcome feedback from the field instructors and the university. One person mentioned getting feedback from colleagues and their principal.

The question of the most appropriate people to provide the most valid feedback lies at the heart of most of the responses to this question. It is always difficult to provide insights into a relationship if you are an outsider to that relationship, which is why mentors valued the student teacher's feedback the most highly. Janet summed this feeling up best:

> I would love for the student teachers to feel comfortable enough to do that. I mean that is who you want your feedback from. What do you need from me? What do you want? What did I do well? How did I support you? What do you think I could do better in the future? That would be a top priority because those are the people you're directly interacting with, day in and day out, and your voice is in their head whether they like it or not over the whole time together.

Clearly the feedback relationship might be strongest between the mentor and intern—for better or worse. But because it is so close, it is difficult to know how the power dynamic is influencing the validity of the feedback.

The question then becomes who, from an outside perspective, could provide the level of feedback that would be considered valid. Bonnie and Sally explained this issue in more detail.

Bonnie: I think I would value it, for sure. I'm just trying to think in what capacity would that happen. Somebody that sees you enough or understands enough? I think I would struggle getting it from a field supervisor … I think I could absolutely take it from. . . somebody, like, "Look, I've done this research thing and this is what I have discovered. Based on this data we're noticing that these are successful or create excellent teachers." I think it's very interesting. I love research. I love data, I love numbers. I would be excited to hear somebody that had spent time educating themselves on it. I think I would respect feedback from that. Somebody like a clinical supervisor or somebody that's been working with tons of, he's seen everything good bad and good. I would be able to hear that well from him.

Sally: I think university people have a better, less bias. These people [in my building] know me. They know me very well. I'm involved in a lot of things. I'm the department chair, I work closely with our admin. They think I'm a great teacher… Does that really mean I'm a great mentor? Not necessarily, but they've already decided that before they came in. To me, actually this sounds horrible, but the people that I work most closely with and that I trust with other things, I don't really trust to be unbiased about me.

What this shows is that there is no definitive across-the-board person that would be ideal to provide feedback to mentors. From these quotes, it appears that the ideal provider of feedback would be someone without bias, who has extensive knowledge about research-based teacher education practices, and who has a wide variety of experience in working with student teachers. This is a tall order, especially when one considers the scale of many teacher education programs and the diversity of mentoring relationships, all of which are highly contextualized.

The other challenge represented by this list of requirements is that we know reflection is a key step in being able to transform practices. In that sense, any feedback that would be given would need to be seen as valid and unbiased, in order for it to taken seriously by the mentor. If it is difficult to find the perfect type of person to engage in this process of feedback, what are the other outlets that could be used to help to support and develop mentor teachers?

Mentor Suggestions for Professional Learning

As the mentor teachers discussed their own development and interest in mentoring, some offered professional learning ideas they would like to participate in. Each of these go beyond the typical workshop or opening-day institute sessions held by the university, but could offer some fruitful ideas to think about moving forward.

Juliet had some specific ideas related to the way that the university program is currently configured. In its current format, there are field instructors responsible for completing field observations and building a connection between the university and the local schools. There are internship course instructors responsible for teaching the discipline-specific method courses and location-based educational topics course that

interns take throughout their student teaching placement year. Juliet places a high value on the internship course instructors and would like for there to be a more developed connection between the mentor teachers and these course instructors.

> I know, as a mentor teacher, I would really like to have more collaboration with who they see on Friday. Not necessarily with their field instructors, but I think to me it would be awesome to be part of the process where we are engaged in their decision making about their teaching or we could come in and be part of those sessions also. That is kind of the family in the triad, not this person who pops up once in a while. But I don't know. I think that would be really cool. … I really like that idea. The [internship-year course] instructors come every once in a while to those meetings but that is more of a support group. Not like I would envision a structured content discussion where you get a sense of, you build trust with the instructors, they get a better sense of how their student teachers are doing, instead of it coming from the student teachers.

This suggestion is intriguing and echoes the questions of validity. Juliet saw field instructors as people external to the work she is doing as a mentor. For her, the course was where the expertise resided and that she would like to connect and plan with. That is the "family" of teacher educators that are working with the interns This suggestion also aimed at closing the communication gaps that may occur between the course instructors and mentor teachers. This suggestion could require an extensive time commitment for the mentor teachers, if they started to attend, participate, and co-plan with the internship-year

course instructors—although bringing mentor voices into the courses themselves might create an interesting dynamic.

Susan's suggestion kept the mentor teacher's development as the primary focus. She suggested the creation of a mentor-teacher-based Critical Friends Group. She felt that the creation of a Critical Friends Group would increase the knowledge of the variety of ways to provide "constructive feedback" and in the sharing of other strategies that could be employed. The usage of this vehicle could augment a mentor's understanding of their role. Through the structured use of the Critical Friends Group protocol, these mentor groups could form their own PLC's to investigate and reflect on their practice. Susan mentioned that, as part of this, it would be interesting to observe and talk with other mentoring pairs as well. This process would be based more on critical inquiry and reflection, which may help some of the mentors learn and apply their experiences from the mentor meetings more effectively, and provide additional support in their peer-to-peer learning.

Both professional learning suggestions for mentor teachers came from a desire to gain more feedback on their mentoring practice. While Juliet's was based more on sharing her content and pedagogic knowledge, the opening of communication between course instructors and other mentors could lead to spaces for reflection and inquiry into her work as mentor. Susan's suggestion, on the other hand, placed mentoring development squarely in a critical inquiry and reflective space that was geared towards developing mentor teacher's ability to implement an educative mentoring practice. Throughout all of this, it is important to keep considering the notion of creditability—in terms of who mentors wanted to learn from. This issue of feedback is highly contextual

and impacted by the mentor's lens as they think about their individual developmental needs.

Reflection about Participating in this Study

"It was clear that the things that I thought in [the] beginning weren't real." As part of this research study, I asked mentors to collect six mentoring moments. During the reflective interview, I asked them the final question as to whether they had learned anything about themselves and their mentoring practices through their participation. I asked them to be as honest as possible, since I realized that they may not be willing to critique the process too much with me. Some of their reflections were about their personal takeaways of what these moments showed, others were more direct regarding becoming more intentional about their practice and reflection, and for others it provided a forward momentum into thinking about the type of support that could be possible in the future.

For Sally, in particular, the study prompted her to think about her own growth and where she began this year. "Yeah, certainly made me think more about the beginning of the year, when I was uncomfortable and I was struggling with what to do or what I should be doing. I remember asking everyone I could talk to, 'What am I supposed to be doing?'" This quote illustrates the state of a new mentor. Sally had clear notions of the type of mentor that she did not want to be. She did not want to be like her mentor, who was overbearing, would not leave her alone with the students, and was very critical of everything that she did.

The fear of becoming "that type of mentor" drove her mentoring choices at the start, but over the course of the year, as she gained confidence in her mentoring and built a solid relationship with her intern, she could see where she could push and where she

needed to provide more support. Upon looking at all of the text messages she sent to me, she reflected that, "I was encouraging. I did a couple of things right, which we're all critical of ourselves, and so it was nice to see a bit of that." This realization gave her the assurance that she was not replicating her mentor's behaviors and that she had created a different type of space for her intern to learn how to teach in. She left her mentoring experience wanting to be more involved in mentoring both pre-service teachers and new teachers at her school. She also asked a great question in terms of being able to continue her growth. In her district, the practice is to only have one student teacher every three years. With this two-year lull, she was concerned about what it would be like to pick it up again after being out of the loop for so long. Sally is eager to keep learning and investigating how to be a better mentor for her next intern, but now must wait.

For Janet, this process appealed to the scientific part of her brain. She described setting a goal for herself to "be a better mentor," then she recorded the process, examining whether she became that better mentor. This is not an easy process to undergo, let alone because it is difficult to step back and be able to see your own growth.

> That's kind of what I discovered as I tried to record this . . . That's extremely difficult too. To try and give yourself kudos, when you think maybe you've done something well, and then to really look and say, "how do I get better at this," and figuring out how you get better at it."

It is sometimes difficult to gauge the benchmarks or definition of what being a better mentor means. The mentors in this study frequently discussed this notion of being "better" without a clear definition of what it means to mentor. This seems to stem from their practice of always critically reflecting on how things went in their classroom and

what still needs to be tweaked, modified or addressed on an ongoing basis. This is the iterative spirit they bring to their mentoring process, which is a strong sign of their commitment to learning and growing into this role. The lack of clarity about what "better" means, though, can sometimes make it more difficult to assess how affective their mentoring practices actually were.

Juliet was able to articulate that uncertainty in her reflection on the process and then used that to envision another type of support that could be offered to mentor teachers.

> As a mentor, even if I were to go back and look at all of these [practices you studied], I would still have a problem thinking: where do I think it went really well and what were my strengths, where are my weaknesses? I feel like you almost need that third party to really kind of challenge your thinking, because if I were just to see it again, I mean I might have moments where I think, "well, together this resulted in success for the student teacher, but maybe that wasn't necessarily because of, maybe it wasn't directly connected to mentoring specifically." The ideal situation would be to have someone like you looking at it and saying this is what I noticed and that kind of feedback really helps . . .What I've learned is that, just like there's a field instructor that puts their two cents in every once in a while for the student teachers, that maybe it would be neat if there was a you, that is, really a part of the university program…There is a you who says, "send us three conversations." There is some feedback for the mentors as well as the student teachers because maybe there might be a

> situation, goodness gracious, where the mentor is struggling because the student teacher is struggling, because the mentor really isn't that effective, or isn't really pushing or challenging the student teacher. If anything, I guess that's what I've taken away most, is that it's cool to have your feedback on what you noticed because it kind of helps me to gauge, "okay, am I on the right track or could I be stronger in this area? Do I need to be more explicit here? Do I need to pull back in this area?"

This explanation illustrates how valuable feedback is to mentor teacher growth in terms of their own reflections and motivations. The key word that Juliet kept repeating was "noticing." Just like it is important for mentor teachers to help the student teacher notice issues, strengths and weaknesses in their teaching, perhaps the use of specific and individual feedback would be a highly valued piece of professional development that could be offered. In that process, the person providing the feedback would also be monitoring how to not only provide feedback, but why constructive and critical feedback is so important to creating that knowledge of practice.

One of the impacts of this study, was that my presence and requests for data helped to develop a space for reflecting on the impact of their intentions throughout the mentoring process. Through our interview conversations and data collection I created a space for mentor teachers to clearly see their value, provided support in helping them to articulate their experiences and accompanied them on their professional journeys. I personally found this space to discuss their own observations and reflection about their practice to be extremely generative in terms of identifying areas where they were interested in professional growth, the ability to ask questions and to seek reassurance

about their practice. Although the mentor teachers in this study sometimes struggled to talk about how they reflected on their mentoring practice individually, they fully engaged in this opportunity to reflect about their practice. This leads me to believe in the importance of providing spaces for mentor teachers to have these conversations and receive feedback.

Summary of Chapter Five

The mentors in this study demonstrated how their values and expectations about mentoring guide the work that they do with their interns. It appears that these mentors strove to exceed the nuts-and-bolts support of mentoring verified by their genuine concern and interest in building strong collegial relationships with their interns. They guided the interns' abilities to master content and implement pedagogy creatively, and to then notice and reflect on the development of their practice using the strategies of inquiry and feedback. While not all the mentors in this study were able to implement these strategies to the same degree, there were elements of a co-constructivist model—where learning was reciprocal between the mentor and interns that were evident in many of their self-critiques of failure and verbalized in the slogans that allowed the interns to resolve problems as they arose.

The importance of credible feedback for the mentor teachers to their professional development was an important finding of this study. The mentors in the study were eager to take this opportunity to open their practices because they thought it provided an opportunity to gain feedback and insight through reflection. For mentor teachers to successfully enact educative mentoring practices to create transformative learning

experiences for their interns a symbiotic support system between the university and the schools is required for their professional development.

CHAPTER SIX:
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A greater understanding of educative mentoring brings a realization that the work of mentoring goes beyond the realm of offering functional tips for classroom management and curriculum development. Although those components are present, educative mentoring prioritizes a robust relationship with the intern, one based on co-constructing knowledge of teaching, within the classroom through the use of inquiry and reflection. This study has revealed some of the ways that mentor teachers defined and directed their mentoring practices to achieve their goals.

This chapter will address a review of the findings and their connection to the literature surrounding educative mentoring, the limitations of the study, and the practical applications of this research.

Review of Results

This study examined the techniques that mentor teachers use to impart their knowledge and vision of teaching to provide learning opportunities for their interns within the context of educative mentoring.

Underlying this query were a set of four assumptions related to mentor teacher practice: (1) mentor teachers need to assess the learning needs of their interns; (2) mentor teachers will utilize their own knowledge, values and experiences to inform their mentoring; (3) mentor teachers encourage reflection on the part of their interns to promote learning; and (4) mentor teachers seek continued support to further develop their mentoring practices.

The findings of this study indicate that mentor teachers base their mentoring practices on their own experiences in learning to teach (both the good and the bad) and the core values they believe professionals should reflect in the classroom. It was also discovered that the mentor teachers in this study actively pursue continuous improvement in themselves as they adapt and reflect on their practice.

The participants represented a variety of schools and a wide range of mentoring experiences. During the interviews, each mentor was given an exercise to create a slogan that best described their mentoring practice. Each slogan provided a glimmer of insight into what they valued and how they worked with their interns. Juliet's "Anything Goes!" and Sally's "Try it! We can always clean it up later" echoed their willingness, as well as their hopes, for their interns to try new ideas or strategies in their practice, while providing them with the feedback and support necessary for their development. Susan's slogan, "Lioness of the Pride" showed the importance she placed on protecting and supporting her intern through the learning process. Janet's "Love and Logic" was a bright combination of emotion and science that highlighted her goal to provide modeling for her intern that, along with evidence and data, would illuminate her thought process explicitly. The use of modeling and evidence instructed her intern, and measured his growth over the placement. Bonnie's "Work Hard and Have Fun" slogan mirrored her beliefs in a strong, independent work ethic combined with the joy of student interaction, that she hoped to share with her intern. Maria's question, "Can You Hear Me Now?" defined her concerns for her intern as they experienced communication difficulties throughout the year. Each slogan describes some part of each mentor's philosophy or

approach to their mentoring practice, some insight into their expectations, and some hint of their mentor-intern relationship.

Overall, the mentors in this study agreed that the interns entering their placements had sufficient content and pedagogical knowledge to begin the year. An overarching challenge was to guide their interns to become adept at blending their content knowledge with an interactive pedagogy that connected to their student audience. Such guidance depends upon effective communication between the mentor and intern. A first-time mentor in this study discovered that a breakdown in effective communication created frustration for her and some doubt about the intern's future in teaching. The essential communication between the mentor and intern is further complicated by issues such as building the intern's confidence, providing targeted feedback, and maintaining a level of challenge in the mentor's expectations. Mixed into those notions are care for the intern's life balance throughout the experience, and the importance of some down time for them to reflect on their teaching practice and regroup periodically.

There was little evidence in terms of the skills or techniques they used to explicitly gain a sense of their interns' abilities at the beginning of the internship. However, one common approach was that they established their student teachers position in the classroom as a colleague through co-teaching parts of each lesson very early in the placement. This co-teaching model also allowed for an early assessment of the strengths and struggles of an intern. Co-teaching relies on a co-planning process, which provided insights for the mentor teacher and practice for the intern.

Like parenting, there are no specific guidelines for allowing someone to struggle or fail. The notion of failure and struggle was a prominent theme during the mentoring

moments interviews, and their decision making was based explicitly or implicitly on their knowledge of and values about teaching. It was a given that failure is something that occurs in the teaching profession. So there were questions about the amount of failure or struggle the intern should experience throughout their placement. The responses to this notion ranged from "why would I ever let them fail" to "of course I let them fail." These differences are linked to beliefs about mentoring and to concerns about the intern's long-term professional abilities.

For example, a mentor like Juliet, who emphasized anticipation of student responses and possible outcomes, would never intentionally let her intern fail if she saw the possibility of failure ahead of time. Instead, she would use inquiry into the planning of the activity to shine a light on a possible pitfall. While that might not eliminate failure, she would never let him intentionally fail. Other mentors saw failure as something that was going to happen to their interns throughout their professional careers—so, for them, it was more important that the intern notice their failure, learn to diagnose it, and create a plan to fix it moving forward. Some mentor teachers believed that their interns might not really understand why something would not work until they experienced it, which is another way to learn about the teaching process.

Within this conversation about failure, and within the mentoring moments themselves, it became clear there were areas where the mentors may have themselves struggled. They were more articulate discussing the learning to teach process and how to understand and problem-solve instructional issues than in more tacit areas that required developmental strategies. For example, when Janet was discussing the notion of co-planning, she described all the ways that she and her colleague planned together. The

shorthand they used, the way that they framed content and created essential questions, and what kind of assessments would work best were all done almost intuitively. Once they began mentoring, she realized how much more they should have broken down their thought process for their interns —who really struggled with connecting the day-to-day content with a larger narrative for their units. Janet labored to provide specific strategies that could be employed beyond modeling the process. Even though co-planning process is one of her strengths as a teacher, unpacking that tacit knowledge of curriculum design was difficult

Another finding was the importance of intern creativity to the mentor teachers. Each mentor highlighted lessons they felt were very successful and those lessons contained simulations, acting, new ways to present information, passion for the subject, and even creative classroom management solutions. This wish for interns to use their creativity to engage students in material strongly influenced the confidence they had in the intern's ability to connect to students through content. A high degree of creativity elicited very positive evaluations. If they struggled in this area, like Maria's student teacher, it could signal content knowledge problems, or a lack of innate teaching skills.

It is noteworthy that while creativity was highly valued, there was little done in terms of mentoring practice to develop the intern's capacity for creativity. Some mentor teachers put significant effort into helping interns think through and develop a plan, while others focused on debriefing the lesson, but there was little evidence of actual instruction in the practice of creativity. If the university could lead mentor teachers into adopting that as an expectation, help them develop their own abilities to articulate their creative

process, and tie that to ideas of curriculum design, interns could possibly possess a powerful pedagogic tool.

This study also examined the strategies of mentor teachers to promote their interns' reflections. They place great importance on reflection because reflection enables them to identify their potential growth opportunities and areas that need improvement. The mentors were very conscious of the reality that once interns left their placement and took their first jobs, the level of support would differ from their placement, so it was important for them to internalize the reflective process into their practice.

While they valued reflection, mentor teachers were not always able to articulate specific strategies that they used with their interns, because their own reflections were not always visible. They assumed that their interns performed some of the same reflective strategies that their mentors engaged in— ones that were not necessarily documented. However, while discussing their mentoring moments, three strategies that the mentor and intern employed for reflection were: modeling, inquiry, and the use of feedback in debriefing conversations.

Modeling frequently appeared in debriefing conversations with interns. During the reflection on a lesson, an issue may have been brought up and the mentor teacher then provided some modeling language for how to address the issue with students the next day, or specific content solutions, or conversations to have with students. This use of modeling language was based on the mentor teacher's experience and was usually shared when the problem was easily fixed or framed. Modeling was also sometimes used to highlight a thought process that the mentor teacher would like to reinforce with an intern. For example, Maria modeled how she notices teachable moments and how to incorporate

that into a lesson to show her intern how to capitalize on those moments. This application of modeling (as reflective, after-the-fact mentoring) was less frequently seen in the mentoring moments than the use of modeling specific language for students (as on-the-fly mentoring).

The use of inquiry was documented in varying degrees throughout most of the captured mentoring moments. Inquiry was often seen in the context of debriefing conversations. The mentor teachers frequently asked their interns how they thought the lesson went and would guide the conversation based on the intern's reflections. This method placed a value on the interns' voices and perspectives, allowing them an opportunity to evaluate their practice and to articulate their strengths and challenges.

Additionally, the mentor teachers used the inquiry process during the debriefing session to lead the intern towards noticing and reflecting on something that the mentor teacher wanted them to think about. The mentor's ability to craft and ask questions as compared to sharing their experiences or providing the modeling language did not come naturally to all mentor teachers. At one point in the reflective interview, Susan stated that she had difficulty stopping to think of questions while she was caught up in a debriefing or planning session. She explained that it was easier to provide stories and examples of what she was thinking instead of stopping and generating questions for her intern. As Susan noted, the inquiry process does not come easily to everyone, which became evident analyzing the mentoring moments. However, debriefing sessions with successful inquiries demonstrated a level of comfort between the mentor and interns, and meaningful dialogs took place. When this strategy was most effective it showed the collaborative, reflective spirit of the mentor and student teacher relationship.

In concert with the use of inquiry, written reflection was often used for the more formalized reflection, as observed throughout the mentoring moments. There was recognition amongst the mentor teachers that providing interns with written, and sometimes video-based feedback, was helpful in terms of highlighting specific strengths and challenges. As some mentor teachers noted, there were significant challenges to consider when providing richly detailed feedback of a lesson: time commitments, decisions on how much data was too much or too little in a debriefing session, and what the differences were across different preferences for feedback.

There was about a 50/50 divide amongst the mentor teachers in this study between those that primarily gave verbal and those that gave written feedback to their interns. Mentors that favored verbal feedback provided robust conversations and could engage their interns in reflection as effectively as those who provided more written feedback. The additional benefits for those who utilized more written feedback seemed to be in terms of being able to document growth over time and to establish behavior patterns that could be addressed more readily. None of the mentors in this study only used one type of feedback—all used both written and verbal feedback depending on the lesson and purpose of the feedback.

The fourth research question, examined ways that experienced mentors could possibly continue to expand and develop their mentoring skills and techniques. Professional development opportunities for mentor teachers is very important since they influence the next wave of classroom teachers. None of the mentor teachers in this study reported having formal training before they were assigned an intern. Without training, mentor teachers were initially left to conceive of their role based on their own

experiences, mostly in isolation. This training becomes particularly important if mentor teachers are expected to provide mentoring directed towards the improvement of practice. Ongoing professional development was sought by the mentor teachers in this study, evidenced by their participation in the mentor meetings and the desire for feedback on their mentoring practice.

The mentors stated they would value feedback from their interns, but recognized that there was a power dynamic that may limit its validity. The mentor teachers respected credible feedback about their practice—where credibility was defined as an observation from an outside, unbiased source, with experience and knowledge of mentoring that is unique to the mentors' practices.

The mentor meetings are an example of continuous support for the mentor teachers. These meetings provided a space for them to discuss their mentoring practices, successes, and concerns—while being able to learn from their peers approaches to the same or similar problems. These meetings allowed the mentor teachers to co-construct mentoring knowledge, share resources, and achieve an understanding of expectations for their interns across disciplines and districts.

In conclusion, the mentor teachers in this study showed that they refer to their experiences as an ideation to envision what a mentoring practice should be, but they do not stop there. Each of the mentors in this study demonstrated the ways that educative mentoring is evident in today's classrooms. They each acknowledged their intern as a colleague with whom they collaborate on a regular basis, and used inquiry and reflection processes to further the pedagogic nature of this relationship. They are motivated to

participate in continuous learning and reflect on ways to improve their mentoring practices and their professional development.

Results in the Context of the Literature

The educative mentoring process provides a departure from the previous ways that the practice of mentoring has been conceived. Instead of a mentoring relationship that focuses on the acquisition of discreet and basic knowledge and skills (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), a staged experience-based approach (Timperly, 2011) has emerged, one that works towards a vision of mentoring that is based on adaptive expertise (Timplerly, 2011), and that seeks to create a “climate where problematizing, reflecting, and questioning are the norm” (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004). This qualitative change of thought redefines the role of a mentor as one that engages in transformational processes, through the mastery of specific skills and knowledge, in ways that recast mentoring into a more robust task.

Sharon Feiman-Nemser (2012) described educative mentoring as a “role, a relationship and a process (p. 241). By this, she meant that mentors engaged in educative mentoring assume an educational role in the development of an intern. It is not merely an emotional relationship—instead, it is one that is based on pedagogy and engaging in educational activities with interns in a way that helps them to develop a teaching practice. To do this, mentors need to develop their own skills of inquiry, collaboration, and reflection to engage with their interns, all to develop a more robust practice. To fully embrace this style of mentoring, the mentor teacher needs to relate to the intern as a colleague that is co-constructing professional practice.

Educative mentoring requires support for mentor teachers to be effective in this practice. The assumption that someone who is a good teacher would make a good mentor is a wide-spread and understandable—though troubling—notion (Barnett & Friedrichsen, 2015). By providing professional development opportunities for mentor teachers that address the use of inquiry, collaboration, reflection, and constructivism—strategies that they could use with their interns —teacher education programs could more easily allow for the development of a collegial relationship to develop between the mentor and intern that extends beyond technical information and transmission. The thought of having a teacher enter the classroom for the first time, without any support or development, is one that the profession has turned away from. It is no more reasonable to expect that pairing a mentor to an intern without any type of development or feedback could lead to the best possible results.

The findings of this study mirror many of the descriptions about educative mentoring. Each of the mentors in this study has shown evidence of educative mentoring practices. As discussed in the previous section, there are a variety techniques that can be used, such as inquiry and providing constructive feedback to their interns.

Within the professional learning literature, it is clear that Education Preparation Providers need to reconsider the assumption that because a mentor teacher is a strong teacher, that they will make a strong mentor (Stanulis & Brondyk, 2013), to a more nuanced view of developing "mentors in the making" (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006) through the development of adaptive expertise (Langdon, 2017; Timperley, 2011). This requires mentors to reconsider their own learning, and think about ways to support their learning.

In thinking about what this learning looks like on the mentoring end, Langdon (2017) described the characteristics that developing mentoring expertise should contain.

> (a) not only a commitment to learning but a willingness to unravel treasured beliefs and practices; (b) time to build knowledge and to inquire, assess, and enact new knowledge and learning and (c) a school community that supports and recognizes the work of mentors. Even given these conditions, unraveling routine practice to meta cognitively hardwire the processes associated with the development of adaptive expertise cannot be assured. (p.14)

If these characteristics are essential to beginning the process of professional learning on the part of the mentor, then it is also important to develop support strategies and opportunities to provide mentor teachers the necessary space and support to engage in developing their mentoring practices in an ongoing and sustained environment (Attard, 2017).

Designing plans to support mentor learning, require a flexible space that allows for self regulated learning and inquiry (Langdon, 2017), collaboration between mentor teachers to engage in peer review (Stanulis & Brondyk, 2013), time to enact new practices (Attard, 2017), and space to reflect on their evolving vision of effective teaching and mentoring (Stanulis & Brondyk, 2013; Timperley, 2011). Creating a space that would allow mentor teachers to self regulate their learning or desire for inquiry about their process is necessary to allow them the information necessary to model these practices for their interns and develop their mentoring practice.

The design task of planning professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers needs to account for the complex teaching and learning environments that impact a mentor teacher's ability to engage in their own learning (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Mentor teachers need to connect this learning throughout their ongoing support of practice directly into their classrooms and institutional environments. This connection allows the mentor teachers to understand how to contextualize the practice and observe their student's reactions to the strategy. The ability to observe and build upon this connection provides the mentor with greater confidence to shake up their routines, creating new experiences with which to frame their vision of effective teaching and mentoring.

Suggestions for Future Research

A fertile source for the further development of the ideas discussed or inferred in this study would be the mentor meetings. The participants in this study often referenced the mentor meetings as a place that provides space, resources, and ideas to improve their practice. Since they identified this as a space of support and development, it would have been worthwhile to have invested more time researching this space and its evolution to discover the crucial elements of its success for the regular attendees. How often do they connect with someone and continue the conversation or share resources? How important are the supportive elements of the current structure versus one that included more structured discipline-specific knowledge? How does the make up of the group impact the conversation? Does the size of the meeting matter? These are all questions that could lead

to a deeper understanding of how this space functions, who it serves, and what the possible impacts on active participants could be.

In this vein, it would be enlightening to replicate this study with mentor teachers that have never attended a mentor meeting. How would the mentoring practices and processes described in this study compare to those that may have never been formally exposed to them? Another variation might be to incorporate members from other disciplines that also hold mentor meetings, and might be more discipline specific, to compare and contrast the types of shared mentoring knowledge in groups or in isolation.

This study also inspires me to follow the self-directed narrative of transformation. Using this study as a baseline of learning a mentor teacher's narrative of their practice, it would be fascinating to investigate how and/or if they are able to transform aspects of their practice based on their own self identified interests. For example, Janet discussed that she did not feel confident with her written feedback because she is more of a verbal processor. Since she has self-identified this problem, and was given feedback and space to analyze how she used written feedback with her interns, coupled with reflective debriefing, changes should become evident over time. Tracing the self identified problems of mentor teachers through their reflection process, as well as their growth related to specific feedback they received from a qualified outsider, could provide more information about the self-directed process of transformation as compared to forced changes from an outside entity.

Limitations of the Study

Mentoring is too complex a task to assume that one study could capture the diversity that is encapsulated across relationships and local school contexts. This study was grounded in sharing the mentoring narratives of the participants and in analyzing the connections between the mentoring moments they selected and the theory of educative mentoring. I pursued this because of the lack of literature that exists related to the means and methods used by mentor teachers to learn their implementation of an educative mentoring stance (Langdon & Ward, 2015, Bullough, 2012). The mentoring moments permitted the mentors to highlight practices that they felt showcased their mentoring and then were queried about how they continued to develop their knowledge of mentoring. During the reflection process of the study, the mentors were asked to reflect on what they felt was missing from the moments and interviews, which identified some of the study's limitations.

The length of the study is a limitation. Data collection for this study focused on the Spring Semester of 2015. Thus, it only captured the second half of the interns' placement. It missed the beginning of the year, when the relationships were formed and developed from the first meeting onward. This condensed timeframe precluded a longer perspective of the types of learning and mentoring that occurred leading up to the midpoint, as well as a measurement of growth at the end of the placement. This limitation was pointed out by two mentors in different ways. Maria pointed out that she would have liked to have been able to collect moments throughout the entire placement to gain a clearer perspective of the growth and progression in her mentoring experience. Susan felt that she discussed content-related issues in more detail during the fall, and as a result, I

was not able to see how that content information had been internalized into their work process. These comments illustrate why extending the timeframe of the study could have been beneficial.

Although Juliet felt that her selection of mentoring moments provided enough information about her mentoring style, Janet and Bonnie pointed to areas that they found difficult to capture as part of this process. It was not always easy, or know how to, capture the quick moments that occur organically in the mentoring relationships when reaching for a video or audio recorder. It was difficult to record the instinctual emotional readings they experienced with their interns. Janet mentioned that she noticed her presence in the classroom caused her intern to react with high anxiety behaviors, and stated that it would be impossible for her to record or document that—but it was something that she noticed and adjusted her mentoring behavior when necessary. Bonnie indicated that some of the emotional or soft-skill-based interactions were hard to capture, even though they could have a significant impact on the mentor-intern relationship. This was an important limitation to attend to because these soft skills have a significant impact on relationship building, and could precipitate explicit strategies as mentors address these differences or concerns.

Sally pointed out that the mentoring moments did not capture the conversations about student concerns. She noted that one of the moments she was the most proud of her intern's commitment to his students was when he took an active part in an intervention for one of their students. She pointed out that this moment showed a deep sense of caring for his students and she was extremely impressed with his ability to connect with this student throughout the intervention process. In the same vein, she also mentioned that

other professional activities, such as parent teacher conferences, were omitted. Capturing the conversations to prepare for conferences, or the debriefing conversations between conferences that helped her intern understand some additional professional commitments outside of the classroom, would have enhanced the study.

Bonnie commented that the mentoring moments themselves would not have provided enough depth for understanding the mentoring process. It was the combination of the moments and the reflective interview, particularly sharing or focusing on specific examples or strategies, that helped her explain her process or thought process in greater detail. This observation reflects my experiences as a field instructor—where student observations only provide snap shots of what they are doing in their classrooms. It is only during the debriefing conversation, when you can ask questions about their choices, that the field instructor can gain a better context of a planned lesson. Knowing the proper context allows you to critique certain points in a more meaningful manner. Once the intern is made aware of possible improvements, you can guide them towards an understanding, and have them reflect more deeply on their process.

It is the same with the mentor teachers. There are strategies or actions that they feel they explicitly engage in with their interns, but when they are shown specific evidence, there is a greater opportunity to capture their thoughts and to allow them to reflect on their practice. These mentoring moments are snapshots of practice and the relationships that exist between the mentor and intern. They cannot, therefore, be mistaken for capturing all of the components of mentoring.

Reflecting on the mentor teachers' comments on moments that were not captured in the data, I would modify the study if it was repeated. The study's timeframe would be

increased to at least the full year of the placement (and perhaps for the year after as well) to see what behaviors or changes would take place on the mentor's practice with a new intern. It would be informative to document how they perceived personal growth in their practice and pursued any additional areas of development over a two-year span.

Another consideration is whether to mandate the type of mentoring moments that were captured into certain skills or concepts. This study allowed the mentor teachers to self-select the moments they chose to capture, but due to time constraints or what they felt more comfortable with in terms of technology, it was not always possible to trace the development of particular strategies or processes. For example, it was interesting to witness the evolution of how Janet decided to provide feedback to her intern. Starting with the Reader's Apprentice-based feedback, her reflection on its constraints at the mentor meeting led to the incorporation of ideas from Sally, and then in the final stages of the evolution she extended those ideas by including video or pictures into the feedback to enhance her ability to debrief her intern. Being able to capture more evidence of that type of evolution could inform the field on the development of mentoring practice, as well as the type of development in mentor's individual practices. Allowing mentors to self select the moments did not always produce the evidence needed to show the development or growth in certain areas of mentoring over the span of the semester.

Despite the limitations of this study, each of the mentor teachers commented on the value of this time to receive feedback and to stop and reflect on their mentoring practice, which is foundational to educative mentoring.

Practical Applications

The findings of this study highlight three important areas to consider in terms of mentor professional learning. The first area is that the experiences that teachers brought to mentoring interns is extremely important to them in terms of their practice. It is not enough to show or highlight what mentoring best practices exist, it is important to be able to tie their experience into the pedagogic learning about mentoring. The second area to consider is that mentor teachers want to learn to extend their mentor knowledge in community. Mentors found great support and were able to learn from their peers through mentor meetings and collegial feedback. Providing opportunities for mentor teachers to come together and learn could greatly enhance their individual abilities to learn and reflect on their own practices. The third area of consideration is the importance of helping mentors become more intentional in their mentoring practices. This intentionality would aid in the development of their mentoring practices and support intern development. Intentionality of practice would be the result of mentors combining their own experiences, with peer co-constructed knowledge, and feedback of their practice. The ability to articulate the process of mentoring and identify areas for continued growth would allow mentors to continuously develop their practice.

The mentors in this study valued the opportunity for peer-to-peer learning and professional development opportunities. If these professional development opportunities were augmented with specific mentor support in terms of providing feedback on practice, even on a voluntary basis, that could develop mentors that are more competent in educative mentoring strategies. In addition, programs that guided mentor teachers in developing a robust professional knowledge on topics such as building creative

confidence, or developing feedback strategies could enhance their abilities to break down their tacit knowledge and move beyond their personal experiences.

The mentor teachers in this study recognized the role of the mentor meetings in their development throughout the year. The opportunity to discuss, share, and inquire about mentoring practices with their peers was priceless. They were equally able to provide strategies that worked for them and they could take away just-in-time solutions to problems they were facing with their interns.

The deeper underlying value though was the peer-to-peer learning. The ability to exchange mentoring experiences helped other mentors gain a different perspective on topics and inspired them to set standards and expectations in their mentoring practice. The impact of this format for the mentors in this study is clear. This model could be used by other institutions as they consider ongoing mentor support and development. Even other structures, such as the creation of Critical Friends Groups, or PLCs, or the ability to observe other mentors, could be helpful in terms of meeting this desire for peer-to-peer learning. With some groups, even having electronic communities on social media could enable mentors to connect in a way that makes sense for them based on time and distance.

When I visited the mentor meeting to seek study participants, there was an overwhelming response from the room. Someone even wrote on the sign-in sheet, "I ♥ feedback." The desire in that room for individual feedback on their mentoring was incredible. This was echoed in the mentor teacher's reflection on the process itself especially the moments during the process when they saw the value of an outside perspective. For instance, Juliet was unsure in the beginning just how an outsider could

ever really offer anything in terms of insight to her practice, yet by the time of the reflective interview, she thought that my study should be replicated as a vehicle for mentors to receive helpful feedback.

It is difficult in large colleges of education to think about providing wholesale individual feedback to mentor teachers. Yet, there is a clear desire for it. It would be an interesting experiment to offer mentor teachers a mentor facilitator from the university to provide observation opportunities, data analysis support, and time to debrief a certain amount of lessons during a placement. While this would not necessarily provide mentor teachers the ultimate feedback they seek—from their student teachers—it would provide that outside perspective on what is occurring in that placement. It would also provide a way for the university to gain a better sense of what drives their mentor teachers, what they find helpful and are comfortable implementing, and gain a better sense of the strengths and weaknesses that mentor teachers have—all of which could drive opportunities to support them. As clinical programs continue to grow and expand, this could be a means to cultivate mentor teachers in an era where accountability measures are making it increasingly difficult for districts and teachers to agree to accept interns.

Although professional development workshops are not always an ideal mechanism for mentor teachers with limited time, it would be beneficial to offer some type of support and development addressing building creative confidence and strategies for using data to provide feedback to interns. Discussion of these topics could easily be folded into structures, such as mentor meetings or PLCs. Focusing on these topics for future development could lead mentor teachers, on the one hand, to develop language and strategies addressing their interns' needs and, on the other hand, to notice and diagnose

lessons and personal growth. These two areas tie into the important notions of collaboration between the mentor and intern as well as aiding them in noticing aspects of practice which can be used during reflection to spawn future actions found in educative mentoring. Engaging in these conversations as a group would also produce new knowledge of how to enact these strategies with their interns.

The practical applications of this study rely on the basic notions of giving mentors a space to learn from one another, providing mentor feedback, and thinking about ways to provide them with resources and space to develop their knowledge as teacher educators.

Summary of Chapter Six

Mentoring is a complicated and nuanced task with elusive targets of success, and not all mentors are trained to aim for them properly. Fortunately, there are those willing to accept the challenge with minds and spirits strongly committed to the work. I was privileged to become acquainted with a group of these wonderful people during this study. It is pretty amazing that despite all of the extra time and effort necessary to meet the basic requirements of mentoring, all of them keep pushing themselves to further develop their practices. Their dedication to training their future colleagues is inspiring, and deserves the necessary support to take on this task of educative mentoring. An important next step would be to provide them with valid individual feedback about their practice through some organized fashion. This would encourage them to persist in their professional growth, take a more reflective stance on their practice, and motivate them to seek additional resources and build networks to become leaders in the field.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Table A-1 Janet's Written Feedback Form 1

January 26: Lesson Plan
WWII: Classroom Logistics/Beginnings of War **Lesson Plan** Syllabus/books for new students 1st semester evaluation for returning students -C Introduction:WWII Routines - Cand distribute Cartoon Analysis Packet -C Start in class/HMWK: Nazi party primary doc -C

Feedback form

Date: **January 26th** Lesson topic: **Opening Day** Class period: **4th**

Evidence: I heard...I saw...I noticed...	Interpretation: I am wondering, questioning, connecting...
Students entered and began to find their seats. You quickly acknowledged their delay in getting started promptly (full minute late) Students took a survey and turned them into the bin. Class worked quietly but broke apart when turn-in began. Some students were still finishing. Students were given a chance to meet their new seat partner. Tim entered room still wearing hat. Addressed by name and asked to remove. You told him you already spoke to him about it. Tim	*I'm wondering(IW) if this will continue to be a pattern for them. Is it really impacting their overall work and performance? Carrot vs the stick? Good job to those who were ready. IW... if 4th hour might be a class where turning into the bin might be eliminated. Limiting the amount of transitions. IW...might the conversation have needed a quick prompt? They still struggle with eye contact, conversation. IW... how you will handle him this semester. Did you think of taking the hat since you already had a conversation? What about his phone? Do we need a private conversation? Do we need a call home? Does he need to come forward? Do we care?

continuously has phone out. 11:10-11:13 during the reviewing of changes. He did not engage his partner at all. At 11:14, you did catch him.	IW...Should we have asked them to write more than a star? What will it make you do differently? How are you going to be affected by this change?
	IW...How do we make sure students who enter late are caught up and turn in what they need to. Survey, etc? Seat partner holds quick conversation?
Students were prompted to read changes and star things that are different. Most students were engaged and participating.	I'm questioning(IQ)...Was everyone engaged in this conversation? How could we have had more questions /interactions with students? Many were staring in space or on technology (5 students with phones on desk facing up)
Megan entered class at 11:22. She didn't know where to sit, but you quickly moved her to her appropriate spot.	IQ...Given the important nature of this document, did we want to add it to their folder before they cleared them out? Do we expect them to keep it at home? What about days where there is time to work on them?
Conversation about new routines began 11:15 after quick partner chat. Students raised hands to respond to your questions. Sheet was posted on projector, but you did not write on it, or use it anyway. Conversation concluded at 11:26. Packets were distributed and students completed coversheet. This was completed by 11:30	IW...was this the best hook for them? Did they need a quick set of visuals from WWII? Depression globally? How did you get them excited to read this document? To source this?
	IQ...how did you connect the document that you just handed out to the activity they were just going to do? Do you think you need to walk around on the first day as they source? Stopping to comment on student work? Or lack there of? 4th hour will continue to be a group that struggles. With students using headphones, you may want to make a point to see how far they get and the quality of responses of their work. Do the headphones help or hurt?
Hook began with a connection back to Great Depression...where we left off. Packet was still on overhead. You began to lay out a timeline of our "isolationist" value. Packets were distributed at 11:34.	IW...which way did you want to pitch this assignment? An exciting look into a political party of historic significance or a check on their sourcing ability? Remember, part of this job is passion and piquing interest. Do you think you did that enough?
Preview work: You lead the review of how we source. You used the doc cam to write down suggestions from students on how to preview. You pushed them to connect to what they know(schema). You explained what the document was. You then instructed them to	IW...would it have been effective to give them some speaking time with their partners? What have you notices? What interests you? For the students with nothing, what can be done to get them engaged?
	IW...Will students continue to work on this at

make connections between the items in the document. By 11:40, they started sourcing. You also instructed they should answer questions on the back. Students were given instructions that they have the rest of the time to "start" the sourcing. 11:54...Question, is this homework? I quickly walked around the room and found students with a huge variety of work done on the document. Some had nothing(blank), some just random underlines, others full out reflections and connections. Others, just did source work. 12:00 Student began to pack themselves up and get ready to leave. 12:01 instructions were given but students were up, talking to others and not actively listening. By 12:02 students were lined up and ready to leave. Some moving closer to the door.	home?

Lesson Reflection

1) What did I feel went well? Why?

During this particular class I do not feel like I did a great job during any point of the lesson. From the very beginning I was thrown off as students were not ready for instruction. Many were out of their seats, most were talking and some had not even pulled out their materials yet. This has become a pattern with this class and I'm struggling to break this habit. I have tried holding students into their lunch hour, but this is has not proven to have much of an impact on future behavior. Even though I feel like reviewing the sourcing guidelines was helpful for some students, the conversation did not engage everybody, which makes me hesitate in calling this a success.

Did I change my goals or instructional plan as I taught the lesson? Why?

I never really changed my goals, or instructional plan as I went along. I did not do this because the conversations I was having in the classes leading up to this were better than what I got here, and I was not quick enough on my feet to change my original plan.

2) If I were to teach this lesson again to the same group of students, what would I change about the lesson? Why?

If I were to do this lesson again I would change three things:

1. While they were looking over the changes that were being made to the class I would have had them write out a sentence or two explaining how it was different from last semester
2. I would have had them simply pass up the half sheet reflection instead of having them get out of their seats to turn it in. As you point out this class really struggles with transitions, the boys in the class can't stand up without trying to disrupt the entire class.
3. I would have had a better transition into the WWII topic of the Nazi party. I think a simple photo slideshow illustrating the early days of the Nazi party and what they were up to would have sufficed. I think I am going to do this in tomorrow's lesson with the rise of Hitler. I will take the slideshow idea, but apply it to the rise of Hitler to illustrate rise to power

3) As I reflect on the lesson, what can I say about how students were productively engaged? What was the level of student engagement?

This was a pretty typical day when it comes to student engagement in fourth hour. The same five students participated when questions were directed to the whole class. Most of the class struggled with having their phones out during instruction and several were staring off into space. I have found this class to be exhausting because there are a few students who I have had conversations with about my concerns with their engagement in class, but no matter what I say to them, or how many times I have to correct a behavior they continue to disengage almost immediately from the assigned task. I have already spoken with the intervention specialist about these issues and plan on sending some of the students to her during 4th hour to give them more direct instruction and support oon difficult readings.

4) What could I do to bring more voices into the mix? To encourage student engagement?

Today I think I could have brought more voices into the conversation by asking some sort of leading question about the WWII materials. The reading was specifically talking about the Nazi party, so I could have asked a simple question like, "What do we already know about the Nazi party? Who were they? What did they believe?" This discussion would have also helped students who know nothing about the Nazis get some background information on them prior to engaging in a reading that explains in great detail what the Nazi party believed and stood for.

5) Were my instructional goals met? Did the students learn the learning outcomes of my lesson? What evidence is there that the goals and learning outcomes were met?

I think it is difficult to say that my instructional goals were met with this class today. I could say that because they had no questions when we were done discussing the major changes that we were making to the format of the class was proof that they were completely engaged and understood everything entirely, but this would be a lie. The truth is there are so many problematic situations in this

class that it is hard to stay on top of all of them at once. There are of course the intelligent sweet kids who understand everything and do as they are told and are never a problem, but then there are the students who are intelligent, but extremely lazy in their work and will do anything to shift focus from the material on to themselves. There are also students who literally never have a clue what is going on because they can't step away from their phone, they constantly have their head down, or they just get bored and stare off into space. I just feel like today there was not enough concrete evidence to say that my instructional goals were met. Tomorrow during the debrief of the Nazi primary document I can get a better read on where the students stand in their understanding and what confusions they might have. I should have framed this assignment better, yes I wanted them to practice sourcing a document, but for the most part I wanted them to get an idea of the beliefs of the Nazi party I could have framed this by saying something along the lines of, "The beliefs of this party are going to begin to scare the other nations of Europe, not only that, but it's going to scare the German government so much that they are actually going to ban this party's existence! No go discover what people were afraid of." I could have paired this with a few images of early Nazi rallies and demonstrations of their beliefs.

6) What are my final thoughts as I move forward? What did I learn about myself, my students and my teaching from this lesson? What aspects of my teaching might I change as a result of this lesson?

I need to frame assignments better, not only making students aware of what material is going to be covered, but also finding some way to hook them into that material. I also need to do a better job of finding some way to manage this particular class, I'm thinking about no longer warning students to put phones away (they have had plenty of warnings to this point they know my expectation) instead I will simply take them from the students when I see them out. The aspect of teaching I need to change is finding way to pique student interest a bit better.

APPENDIX B

Table A-2 Janet's Written Feedback Form 2

March 23: Lesson Plan
Eisenhower foreign Lesson Plan • Mapping Mondays! Quiz • Grading Eisenhower Domestic Hmwk: mapping civil rights C(where major events happened in the south)

Feedback Form

Date: March 23 2015 hr: 1st-3rd

Mapping Monday/Civil Rights

General Observations about lesson plan: Instructions listed on board via slideshow

- Mapping states
  - announced end of testing next week
  - again, tried to explain grading
  - Instructions on technology and adjusted timetable for last two tests(10 min)
  - Students were to return all items for grading tomorrow
  - Tests were all collected by the time the class timer rang

- Civil Rights beginning sheet and the Eyes on the Prize video notes
  - Instructions were given to review both sheets and complete now if work was not done earlier
    - Students worked independently to complete these sheets (~7 min)
  - Partner work
    - Instructions were given to focus on one portion of the reading with the idea that partners may talk about other sections
    - Students moved quickly to 8:00 partners
    - Clarification of sections only. Clear up confusions and …?
  - Larger group discussion
    - 1st hour's discussion focused primarily around the court cases and the leadership. Focus for the discussion was unclear.
      - Students made many claims

3rd hour's discussion

- Reminded students that conversations are documents too.
- Slideshow was projected: court cases with questions
- Ian lead discussion
- Time was cut short for discussion

Homework: mapping

Distributed at the end

Eisenhower and the civil rights movement covered in last few minutes.

	I noticed…(Janet)	I wondered. (Janet)	Your Response… (David)

Warm
Actions that met with success in reaching our audience and/or our goal for the day
	• Students were given time to complete and review Civil Rights materials in class independently before meeting with partners.
	  o David walked the room and helped students locate materials
	• Partner work using the clock allowed students to hear different voices than just seat partners
	  o Groups formed quickly and shared information
		Did the larger conversation reach your instructional goal?
		
		What was the partner work meant to accomplish?
		
		You asked students to clarify confusions with partner...but the conversation as a large group was very different.
			No it didn't because I had another slide on Eisenhower that I did not get to. I changed the order I did things in 4th hour so that we talked about Eisenhower first and then the civil rights leaders, this way we theoretically had time to finish the Eisenhower discussion, but I had to have a different talk about expectations and goals with fourth hour that once again cut our Eisenhower discussion short of my goal (especially with those damn announcements)
			Even though I didn't directly confront student confusion, I guess my hope was that the discussion about the topics themselves would help clarify any confusions. For example, if students didn't understand the outcome of the court cases then those would be discussed and clarified, but in retrospect I realized I assumed I knew where confusions were going to be and did not allow for students to address any other confusions students may have had. I can now see that this may have been a shortcoming, but I am hesitant to allow student inquiry to fully guide discussion because when I have allowed it to we get off on huge tangents about parts of the content that I feel are less important to our class.

Cool
Actions that met with limited or no success in reaching our audience and/or our goal for the day
	• Limited voices in discussion from the students (3rd hour)
	  o Sean asleep
	  o Jacob and Mike on phone
	  o Several students not engaged
		What connections are being made back to our larger unit question: Superpower	If I had placed the Eisenhower conversation earlier on in this lesson I would have been able to accomplish this goal. Unfortunately, I did not make this realization earlier

	• Homework mapping given at the end of the day	What was the mapping intended to do for students? Why should they do it? What did you notice about the civil rights materials? Did students have them completed?	that I should've switched the order. Mapping is so students have an understanding of where the events we are discussing, or that they have seen occurred. I was not going to hand this out at all (it is interesting, but probably not totally necessary) but Caitlin and I discussed wanting to collect something from the students this week and the map was discussed so I handed it out. Civil rights materials were all over the place. From what I saw 30-40% of kids had them done or close to done. the other 60-70% of kids were anywhere from they hadn't started at all to having maybe the first page or two completed.
Challenging Actions to contemplate that are greater in idea or impact than the immediate lesson	How did today connect our content together? How did it move us further along?		Today my primary goal was to have a discussion on Eisenhower, in order to propel us forward we need to understand what he was doing while these events are taking place. However, the way last week played out I was unable to debrief any civil rights materials. I needed to have some kind of discussion about Eisenhower and his (limited) role in the civil rights movement. Part of the United States becoming a superpower is surrounded by what is happening internally as a nation and of course the civil rights movement cannot be ignored obviously. However, I have learned this year that you cannot assume that students come in with any background knowledge, or if they do, it may be full of gaps or

			misunderstandings. So, before I could launch with Eisenhower and his role we had to get at least a basic understanding of what condition is the civil rights movement in during his presidency, and what progress has been made before his presidency and during his presidency (that maybe he had nothing to do with).

APPENDIX C

Table A-3 Sally's Written Feedback Form

Algebra II	5th Hour	1/22/15	Thursday
	I am noticing…	**I am wondering…**	**Response**
Warm	You walk around during HW check and "try it" problems and students are comfortable asking questions!	How can we further relationships with all students?	
Cool	All students are quiet.	If some are lost? How would you know? (*I like thumbs up and down!*) nice!	*I could ask students to talk with someone next to them and see if they got similar answers. During this time I can go around to hear conversations and listen for misconceptions students may have. Also, have students who may have misconceptions present answers on the board or have a problem they were struggling with done by a student on the board.*
Challenging	Some students finish in class "try it" problems quickly.	How can we keep our "high achievers" from getting bored?	*I could have extra problems ready to go for students getting done quick that are more challenging and have students discuss together how to check their answers. Compare and Contrast?*

APPENDIX D

Table A-4 Bridget's Written Feedback Form

<table>
<tr>
<td>My next big project is to choose a case study. I have to propose it by Saturday. I was wondering if you had any input?

Should we handout the Oceania quiz tomorrow? For Friday the 30th?

I forgot where I can get school gear. What was the name/directions for the place again?

My laptop still can't get connected to the network. Tech maybe?

Store name on Exchange St.

Emailed about the laptop

1/22
We have a digital scholastic subscription. Want to think about how we can use it? Maybe daily focus?

Username and password

Emailed link (smiley face)</td>
<td>List: eBackpack
Student A
Student B
Student C

PE on T/TR   Art on T/TR
Student A   Student A
Student B
Student C
Student D

PE on F.
Student

1/26
On Wednesday we're leaving early for quiz bowl- around 2:15 I believe.

1/28
Your questions fro the email.
1. We answered
2. Room set up Thursday after quiz bowl/MHD help?
3. Depends on how much space the Caravans maps take up on the blackboard – I might only need that.
4. Yes from what it is now.</td>
</tr>
</table>

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