

GROUP MENTORING 2.0: A CASE STUDY

The nature of mentoring between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in the context of a mandated professional development and evaluation system

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Elizabeth Anne Walters

GROUP MENTORING 2.0: A CASE STUDY

This study explored mentoring relationships in a school district in the context of mandated evaluation and professional development. This study examined elements of the relationships between Master, Mentor and classroom teachers that are identified by participants as supportive or inhibitive of teacher growth within the mentoring relationship through two research questions: 1) what elements of an effective mentoring model do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township identify in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, and 2) in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

The design of this qualitative case study employed three phases: 1) interviews of the principal of the buildings and the observation of Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and Cluster (mandated, weekly professional development) in two elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school with the intent of identifying participants, 2) the collection and analysis of qualitative data through semi-structured interviews of participants, and 3) follow up interviews.

Nine participants, three of whom were Master Teachers, three of whom were Mentor Teachers and three of whom were classroom teachers, were interviewed and observed. Data to address the first research question was analyzed through a conceptual framework adapted by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014). Data to address the second research question was analyzed through pattern-matching to illuminate themes and systemic concepts relative to

inhibitive or supportive aspects of the mentoring relationship as identified by the perspectives of participants.

This study investigated the negotiation of three sets of participants within the organizational structure as their relationship contributes to student achievement and the stability and/or turbulence of the evaluative environment. Studying the impact of peer review on the mentoring relationship between these stakeholders, given Indiana teacher evaluation legislation, provides insight into effectively negotiating the implementation of the newly defined participant role of peer-reviewer within any system of accountability.

Dr. Suzanne Eckes, Pd.D., J.D.

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.....7 Between the second and third phase of the study, a thematic summary of the analysis of data collected using the framework adapted by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) was created (See Appendix F). Between the second and third phase of research and following the third phase of research, I also coded aspects within the elements of the mentoring model perceived by participants as supportive or inhibitive to professional growth.

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Dedication

To my mother and father, who gave me the best of both of them...

The perseverance to reach my professional goals, and
the patience to enjoy every minute of the process.

Chapter 1: Overview of the Research

“Acquire new knowledge whilst thinking over the old, and you may become a teacher of others.”
Confucius

Introduction

How to best educate children is a global conversation. The achievement of students in the United States is compared to students in other countries, as education is a contributing factor to economic growth and quality of life (Aronowitz, 2001). This conversation has raised questions of how the desired growth in the achievement of children is obtained and has led to greater accountability measures placed in the classroom, specifically on the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction from teachers. According to Stronge and Tucker (2005), “Years of research on teacher quality support the fact that effective teachers not only make students feel good about school and learning, but also that their work actually results in increased student achievement” (p. 2). Numerous studies emphasize that student achievement is sustained over long periods of time after one year of instruction by an effective teacher; conversely, one year of instruction from an ineffective teacher can negatively impact student achievement for up to three years (Stronge, Ward & Grant, 2011; Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997).

Because the effectiveness of classroom teachers contributes to student success (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease, 1983; Gelman, Pullen, & Kauffman, 2004; Goldstein, 2005), understanding how teachers engage in the mentoring relationships within the evaluation process and how teachers navigate mentoring relationships during professional development activities aimed at furthering student achievement in the classroom is imperative. Teacher evaluation and its impact on student achievement is a conversation happening among policy makers, higher education institutions with teacher development programs, and in schools across the country.

Ritter and Barnett (2016) advise “Evaluations of practice using research-based standards multiple times throughout the year can provide a focus for professional development, and feedback from evaluations can encourage self-reflection and meaningful conversations focused on classroom practice among educators” (p. 48).

In all Indiana schools, recent legislation has led to an increase in more invasive, regimented evaluation systems and mandated professional development for all teachers (Whiteman, Shi, & Plucker, 2011). In 2011, IC 20-28-11.5 impacted Indiana educators through changes made to performance evaluations, teacher contracts, teacher status, and teacher compensation indexes. The legislation mandated at the first opportunity that schools have a new negotiated collective bargaining agreement and that each school and/or corporation develop a plan or adopt an already approved plan that meets the requirements of the law. Approved plans include: 1) using master teachers or contracting with an outside vendor that provides master teachers; 2) The System for Teacher and Student Advancement (*formerly the Teacher Advancement Program*, TAP); or 3) The Peer Assistance and Review Teacher Evaluation System. As these plans are already approved, any other developed staff performance evaluation plans must adhere to the four components of the law: 1) evaluations must be conducted at least annually for all certified employees; 2) objective measures of student achievement and growth must significantly inform the evaluation; 3) the evaluation must include rigorous methods of effectiveness including observations and other performance indicators; and 4) each certificated employee must be rated annually as *highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, or ineffective*.

In addition to these changes to the evaluation system, IC 20-28-11.5 calls for an increase in data-driven, differentiated professional development for schools and teachers (Whiteman et

al., 2011). Already approved evaluation models are those with professional development embedded in the model and linked to teacher evaluation data and student performance data.

Originating in 1999, the TAP evaluation system is rooted in deep research-based practices and provides an integrated system for teacher evaluation and support through professional development and mentoring experiences. In a TAP Research Summary conducted by Barnett, Hudgens and Alexander (2016), TAP provides multiple opportunities for differentiated feedback for teachers and evaluations aligned with student achievement outcomes. Additionally, teachers engaged in a TAP evaluation system become more effective over time. Schools implementing a TAP evaluation system have higher retention of more effective teachers and higher turnover of less effective teachers (Barnett, et al, 2016). Due to the impact of this evaluation system on teacher effectiveness and student achievement, research into the mentoring relationships within the system is a timely necessity.

Specifically in the TAP evaluation system, Master Teachers¹ and Mentor Teachers² are put in place not only to complete peer evaluations, but also to develop a mentoring relationship with classroom teachers through formal professional development, called Cluster, and informal follow-up observations in the classrooms. The Master Teacher and Mentor Teacher roles embody peer-review evaluation in that the classroom teacher and Master/Mentor Teacher are peers, rather than the more common evaluative structure between an administrator and classroom teacher. For any teacher rated *ineffective* or *needs improvement*, a mandated remediation plan

¹ In the TAP system, Master Teacher duties frequently include conducting weekly professional development (Cluster), conducting evaluations of classroom teachers, observing classrooms through follow-up from Cluster and classroom walkthroughs, and analyzing student data. Master Teachers can also be responsible for some direct instruction of students.

² In the TAP system, Mentor Teachers continue with direct instruction of students and frequently receive some release time and additional compensation for conducting evaluations of classroom teachers, observing classrooms through follow-up from Cluster and classroom walkthroughs, and analyzing student data.

takes the form of more rigorous professional development, often led by Master Teachers with the support of Mentor Teachers. Of the evaluation models presented that align with IC 20-28-11.5, professional development falls within a spectrum of optional to mandatory, formative or summative, and mandated for all teachers or only those rated *ineffective* or *needs improvement* (Whiteman et al., 2011).

As evaluation now impacts all teachers, and legislation has supported a peer-review evaluation structure through the mandate of the Master Teacher role, the conduct of further research of mentoring relationships within evaluation systems utilizing peer-review between teachers and evaluators is timely. Additionally, as professional development based on evaluation and student performance data is now mandated for teachers, both the characteristics of mentoring relationships among teachers as well as the development of mutual professional growth between evaluators and teachers must be qualitatively explored. This study began, and ended, as a problem of practice for the researcher. As I am engaged in developing mentoring relationships amongst my teachers, with the end goal of increasing teacher effectiveness and student achievement, the findings were not only relevant to the participants within the case study but also to my own practice as an administrator.

The Problem Statement

There is a need for further research into the relationship between mentor and mentee when a peer-review evaluation system and data-driven professional development are mandated. The purpose of researching this relationship lies in the teachers' responsibility for instruction in the classroom. As teacher effectiveness is determined through evaluation, and professional growth is the goal of professional development experiences, it is imperative that the nature of

mentoring between these professionals in this context be qualitatively explored so that training and future mentoring relationships are aligned with effective practices.

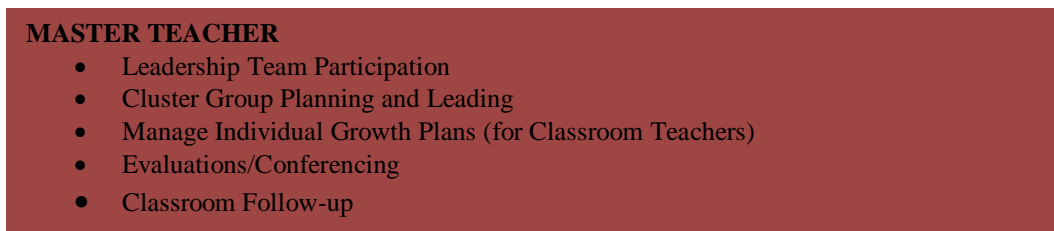
This case study will explore perceptions of participants in a TAP (*formerly the Teacher Advancement Program, currently the System for Teacher and Student Advancement*) school district. TAP is one of the approved evaluation systems in Indiana legislation and, among other things, mandates that schools place personnel in the Master Teacher and Mentor Teacher roles. Master Teachers are not only responsible for the evaluation of classroom teachers but also for the preparation and presentation of the mandated, weekly professional development time, called Cluster. Mentor Teachers are not only responsible for the evaluation of classroom teachers but also for active participation in a supportive role during Cluster. Master and Mentor Teachers are selected in this setting through priority given to instructional effectiveness, attention to data in teaching and assessment, and contribution to the profession through presentations, research, etc. Master Teachers require five years of experience in the classroom, and Mentor Teachers require two years of experience in the classroom. Positions are posted, and qualified applicants are interviewed within the school. This study focuses on how participants identify elements of the mentoring relationship in the context of mandated peer-review and professional development in the organization.

The study is situated in a suburban school district within Indiana's system of accountability and explores how three sets of participants, classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers, negotiate their relationships and contribute to the stability and/or turbulence of the environment. In the past, peer-review has not had a place in the context of the evaluation system in Indiana, and professional development relationships have largely been removed from evaluation conversations. Both the school district and these participants face

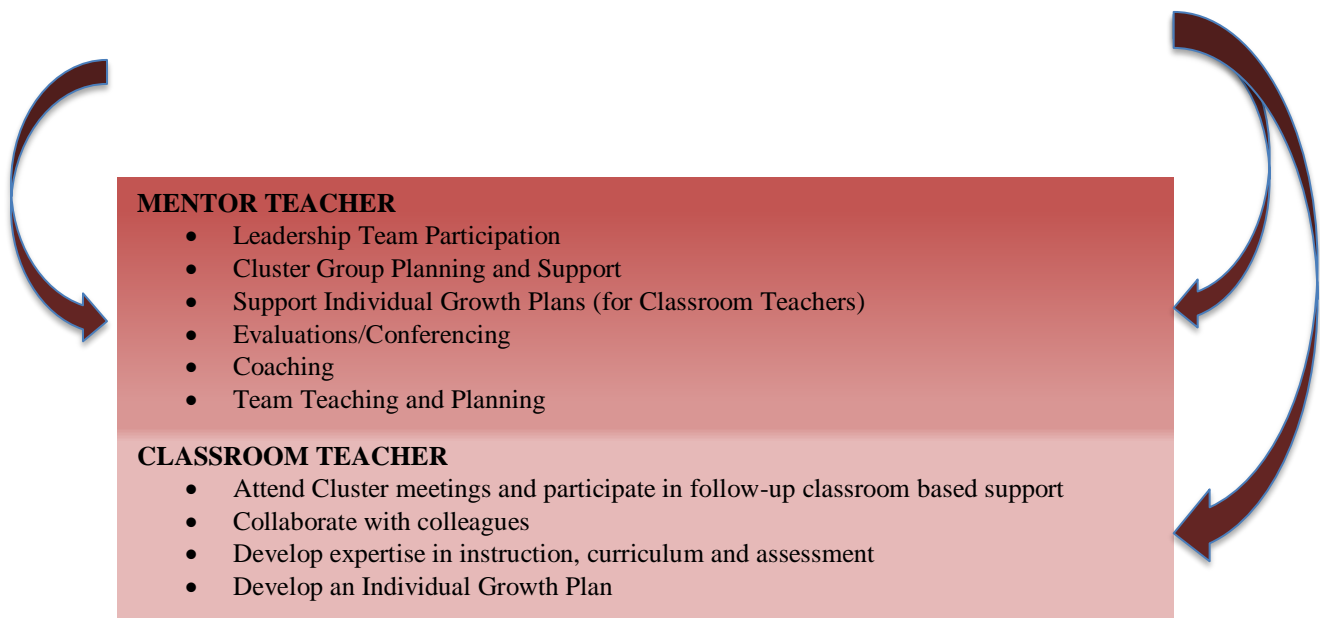
potential adverse consequences relative to the efforts and achievements of these participants. The district must implement the new evaluation system by defining the role of Master Teacher and Mentor Teacher as mentor and peer-reviewer, and classroom teachers will experience more invasive activities surrounding mandated evaluation and professional development practices.

This case study explores the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers as it relates to professional growth through the multiple and varied understandings, interpretations and perspectives of the participants. While TAP provides specific measures and rubrics aimed at delineating ‘effectiveness’³, this study focuses on the multiple perspectives of teachers regarding the supportive and inhibitive elements of a mentoring relationship within the mandated peer-review evaluation system. The hierarchy of the mentoring relationship as it relates to professional growth and evaluation in a TAP system is depicted below.

Figure 1: The Hierarchy of Mentoring Relationships in a TAP System



³ Effectiveness is defined in the Instruction, Planning, Environment, and Professionalism rubrics for the classroom teacher, the Cluster observation rubric for the Master Teacher, and the Post-Conference observation rubric for the Master and Mentor Teacher.



Purpose of the Study

Qualitative case study research allows for the study of complex phenomena within a specific context. Case study should focus on “how” and “why” questions and seek to construct an understanding of a specific case within a specific context (Yin, 2013). This case study illustrates elements of the mentoring model identified by Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher as well as explores aspects of the mentoring relationship that are perceived to support or inhibit mutual professional growth from the perspectives of the participants.

In Sage Township, teacher effectiveness is measured using the Teacher Advancement Program rubric. TAP specifies factors contributing to the effectiveness of a teacher: (a) the design and plan of the lesson, (b) direct instruction of students, (c) the learning environment, and (d) the teacher’s professionalism. Classroom teachers are evaluated four times annually by a combination of administrators, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers. Master/Mentor Teachers are highly-qualified teachers employed in an official capacity as evaluators and mentors within the context of mandated professional development and evaluation. Master Teachers and Mentor

Teachers are mandated by the TAP Evaluation System to participate in weekly professional development, called Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), to visit classrooms, and to provide formal follow-up to teachers in systematic weekly groups (called Cluster), and informal, intermittent support in the classroom (called Classroom Walkthroughs or Cluster Follow-Up). As TAP necessitates the Master and Mentor Teacher role, which takes on responsibilities of mentor, professional developer, and evaluator, exploring the existing research surrounding mentoring relationships, peer-review evaluation systems and adult professional learning is necessary.

There exists limited research that specifically identifies quality, consistent mentoring practices despite a longstanding view of the concept and a widespread agreement for the need for quality mentoring and professional development for teachers (Stewart, 2004). Mentoring literature in the last three-to-four decades has shown an increase of mentors used in formal processes in governmental departments, educational institutions and business corporations (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). Researchers present conclusions and inferences about the nature and outcomes of mentoring, suggesting an overwhelmingly positive process for all involved. In particular, they detail benefits for mentee, mentor and the institutions when a formal mentoring process exists (Ehrich et al., 2004).

Mentoring is an established concept with varied definitions, dependent on the context in which the relationship occurs. A mentor is a figure who sponsors, guides and develops (Ehrich et al., 2004), one who maintains focus on student learning, seeks lifelong learning for themselves, uses facilitation and presentation skills, engages others in shared vision and meaning, develops and maintains relationships, works with a sense of integrity and plans and organizes (Angelle & DeHart, 2011; Bowman, 2004; Briggs, Rhines Cheney, Davis, & Moll, 2013), one who breaks down barriers, and marshals resources throughout the organization (Angelle & Schmid, 2007).

As such, the concept of mentoring for teachers is a vast network of programs, packages, materials, and resources, though there is very little research on the effects of mentoring within the context of mandated evaluation. This study explores how mentoring is differently defined by participants through programs mandating peer-evaluation and professional development programs like TAP, where there is a presumed intent of mutual growth for Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher rather than a transference of knowledge and skill from expert to novice.

Though this study did not seek to measure individual professional growth, inherent in a mentoring relationship is the role of adult professional learning. Effective mentoring relationships must consider how adults learn. Self-efficacy is presented as one way adults navigate unfamiliar experiences (Bandura, 1994). An adult's self-efficacy might guide an initial response, whether efforts will stay persistent in the face of adversity, and whether the adult approaches the unfamiliar situation with anxiety or security (Bandura, 1994). More specific to building professional relationships, Knowles presents principles and assumptions on how to effectively teach adults that are self-directed (Knowles, 1970). Suggested principles include establishing an effective learning climate, and involving, encouraging and supporting the learner (Kaufman, 2003). The literature uncovers a gap between adult learning theories and practical implementation in systemic adult professional growth (Kaufman, 2003).

Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) suggest that one of the primary goals in evaluation is the improvement of individual and collective teaching performance. Another suggested goal in evaluation is the establishment of trust within a system of accountability (Redfern, 1980). Darling-Hammond et al. (1983), in a review of mentoring literature, identified potential advantages to peer review: (a) peers are in the best position to assess competence and (b)

evaluators who are familiar with the classroom experience, subject matter and demands on a teacher can render specific and practical suggestions for improvement. A link between mentoring and adult professional learning is found in TAP, as a peer-review evaluation system. The process of peer-review provides an opportunity for the evaluator to mentor the classroom teacher through observation and conversation and support efforts of mutual professional growth through weekly professional development. The connection between mentoring relationships, sustained in a culture of trust and support, and a peer-review evaluation system is suggested as a future need in the literature, but much research is needed to conceptualize this connection (Goldstein, 2004, 2005, 2007). Successful evaluation systems are not punitive; instead foster mutually beneficial professional development and growth for all participants (Ritter & Barnett, 2016).

Much research explicitly concludes that mentors have not and should not participate in the evaluation of mentees; however, some recent research provides a basis for why mentors should participate in an evaluation process (Ganser, 1993). Because of the continued disintegration of the construction of mentoring programs and mentoring relationships, there will exist continued inconsistency with outcomes and success (Stewart, 2004). The literature review chapter of this proposal will delve more deeply into the existing and current literature surrounding mentoring relationships, adult professional learning and peer-review evaluation systems, and the gaps in the research which necessitate further study of the nature of the mentoring relationship in the TAP evaluation system.

Research Questions

Miles and Huberman (1994) define case study as a phenomenon occurring in a bounded context. Within the context of the TAP evaluation and professional development system, the

purpose of this case study is to explore the ways in which the participants identify elements of the mentoring relationships when the TAP evaluation and professional development system is implemented in Sage Township. Mentoring relationships may exist in various capacities in schools in Indiana. The study solicited insights of participants relative to elements of the newly defined relationships between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers that are perceived as supportive or inhibitive of teacher growth within the mentoring relationship.

The study explores the following research questions:

1. What elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation?
2. In the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

Significance of Study & Implications to the Field

The purpose of this case study is to illustrate the identified elements of the mentoring model in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation as well as the perceived supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship from the perspectives of Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in a school district utilizing the TAP evaluation system. These aspects will be explored through interviews from the perspectives of Master, Mentor and classroom teachers using the lens of current research around elements of effective mentoring models presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014). Dawson (2014) explored over thirty research studies on mentoring, spanning three decades and

establishes a set of key elements through which to define a specific mentoring model. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) further the research into effective mentoring by presenting a conceptual framework that considers knowledge transmission within the mentoring relationship.

The valued end of the research is to use this deeper understanding to help professionals better navigate teacher evaluation systems that utilize evaluative, mentoring relationships by considering how participants in mentoring relationships in Sage Township identify key elements presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014) and how participants attribute supportive or inhibitive aspects within the mentoring relationship. There is practical knowledge interest in teasing out implications for the changing perceptions of mentoring between evaluator/mentor and mentee when peer-review and mandated professional development are introduced. Given that individuals will be placed in roles, in some capacity, to provide evaluations and professional development in all schools in Indiana, exploring aspects of this mentoring role that are generative for or inhibitive to teacher growth will benefit schools and stakeholders. Additionally, the study may help to illuminate policymaking, professional practice, and perhaps future research in the area. Specifically, there is potential for understanding conditions that support peer-review evaluative relationships and professional development for teachers. Chesnut, Stewart, and Sera (2015) suggest an opportunity for institutions of higher education and professionals in the policy environment to explore ways to better prepare future school teachers and administrators to effectively navigate mentoring relationships within the context of mandated evaluation and professional development systems.

Given the current State legislative context and larger ongoing discussion about school accountability and teacher evaluation, this is a timely study. Specifically, this case study can provide insight into how the implemented evaluation legislation affects the perception of

mentoring relationships between select stakeholders in a TAP school district. Additionally, this study can guide policymakers on the national, and international, stage in making decisions about mentoring support within educator evaluations and systemic professional development programs. Furthermore, anticipated changes in Indiana's teacher accountability laws (as proposed during the 2017, 2018 and 2019 legislative sessions) to remove standardized test scores from evaluations would not impact the importance of mentoring relationships in this context. Thus, findings within this case study will remain relevant and valid.

The TAP Evaluation System uses mentoring and professional development as central components of the desired relationship between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher to construct a road map for teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Research is needed to explore the perceptions of mentors and mentees within this relationship founded on evaluation and stakeholder accountability in hopes of furthering the growth in student achievement in all schools. The mentoring relationship between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher in a peer-review evaluation system provides a lens through which supportive aspects of this relationship can be modeled and replicated and confining aspects can be remedied. Specifically, this study can help classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers, and Master Teachers navigate the mandated roles that each stakeholder is asked to fulfill in a TAP evaluation system. Ideally, the supportive and inhibitive aspects of this relationship identified in this study from each stakeholder's perspective will provide a thematic guide through which Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers can establish a productive, co-construction of professional growth to increase student achievement.

There is much research about the relationships between mentors and teachers and the aspects of effective professional development supplied by mentors (Ehrich et al., 2004; Elliott,

Isaacs, & Chugani, 2010). However, there is little research into the relationship between evaluators-as-mentors and classroom teachers as mentees, or Master/Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher, respectively, as identified by the TAP Evaluation System. There is relatively no research and literature on the role of Master/Mentor Teacher from either the Master/Mentor Teacher or the classroom teacher perspective. The aspect of this relationship that has not yet been fully explored is the Master/Mentor Teacher's responsibility to conduct evaluations as well as to provide weekly formal and informal professional development to the classroom teacher. Mentoring literature largely portrays a transfer of knowledge from expert to novice with little opportunity for both mentor and mentee to experience professional growth. The mentoring relationship between Master/Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher provides opportunities for co-construction of knowledge and mutual, professional growth.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations inherent in this study are further presented in the methodology chapter in hopes of addressing any concerns in the research and/or analysis process. One fundamental limitation identified is that the study only explores the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in a single TAP evaluation system, thus findings may not be generalizable to evaluation systems that do not rely heavily on peer-review evaluation and mandated, weekly professional development, or to other districts having implemented the TAP evaluation system. Single case study designs do not set out to achieve generalizability. Though there exists some lack of generalizability for peer-review evaluation and mandated professional development, there is generalizability for any educational setting attempting to support mentoring relationships amongst staff.

Despite the limitations presented, the results of the study may be useful to practitioners when comparing evaluation, professional development and mentoring experiences with these research findings. Additionally, the results of this study may be useful to policymakers and legislators when considering future implications of K-12 evaluation legislation.

Ways to address limitations are also discussed in the methodology chapter of this study. Despite these limitations, a deeper understanding of the impact of this mentoring relationship on school practitioners will help professionals better navigate teacher evaluation systems that mandate peer-evaluative, mentoring relationships. This study will illuminate policymaking on evaluation and professional practice that supports peer-review relationships and professional development for classroom teachers.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature
“Study the past if you would define the future.”
Confucius

Introduction

As a foundation for exploring mentoring relationships in the context of a mandated peer-review evaluation and professional development system, literature surrounding the following three areas is discussed: the evolution of mentoring, adult learning and professional development, and peer-review evaluation.

The evolution of mentoring section explores the literature that: 1) defines mentoring, 2) identifies the need for mentoring, 3) analyzes effective mentoring relationships through identified positive and negative outcomes, 4) investigates the construction of knowledge in a mentoring relationship through coaching, and 5) presents new research surrounding group mentoring. This section concludes with information specific to mentor training in a TAP evaluation system. Though mentoring relationships specific to the K-12 educational setting provide the foundation of literature informing this study, it is important to consider the conceptual context of mentoring outside the K-12 educational setting, in higher education, business and other professional settings.

The adult learning and professional development section explores andragogy, the theory of adult learning. Until the early 1970s, research into models of how adults learn in the context of professional settings was not distinguishable from learning in general. Because mentoring in this context occurs during mandated professional development activities, the adult learning and professional development section presents the current literature that: 1) defines adult learning

and 2) analyzes the effective strategies of empowerment, efficacy and self-reflection to further adult learning in a professional setting.

The peer-review evaluation system section analyzes the history of the implementation of peer-review evaluation in the K-12 setting and current analyses of effective application of this evaluation process. Peer-review evaluation is relatively new to K-12 educational settings, and very few K-12 districts nationwide utilize models of peer-review in their evaluation systems. This section explores peer review evaluation as it relates to 1) teacher accountability, and 2) the system of mentoring, evaluating and professionally developing educators.

This chapter concludes with identified gaps in the literature, the summary and implications which guide the research, and definitions of key terms within the research study.

Literature Review Methodology

A comprehensive review of the literature surrounding mentoring, adult learning and peer-review evaluation systems was conducted using website searches (i.e. Google Scholar), electronic academic databases (i.e. JSTOR, EBSCO, ProQuest), and publications in print. Review of related literature was done with a focus on peer-reviewed findings, impactful historical studies, heavily cited studies, and recent studies.

Searches primarily focused on mentoring and professional development in a K-12 environment. Frequent keywords used were: “mentoring” in a “K-12” setting, “mentoring relationships,” “peer-review evaluation systems,” and “adult learning” in “professional development” settings.

Results from the searches provided empirical studies, scholarly articles, published dissertations and books. These publications were scrutinized for comprehensive information

surrounding historical data related to mentoring traits, programs, and relationships, mentoring through adult learning in professional development settings, and mentoring in peer-review evaluation systems. The data were summarized and analyzed through its impact on the concept of mentoring in educational and other settings, frequency of citation, and relevance to the research questions of this study. Data and relevant quotes were identified and organized thematically using Endnote and NVivo (a qualitative data analysis computer software program). The following literature review presents a thematic exploration of overall themes as it relates to the research questions of this study.

The Evolution of Mentoring

Neither sufficient conceptual clarity nor consistency surrounding mentoring exists. Eby, Rhodes, and Allen (2007) argue that there is an intuitive belief that mentoring, in general, works; that mentoring exists everywhere; and that everyone believes they are implementing effective mentoring programs. The literature surrounding mentoring in various forms is vast, spanning numerous decades; however, Allen and Eby (2010) emphasize the lack of well-defined understanding of the mentoring phenomenon. Criticism on the lack of consensus for a definition of mentoring is noted by much research throughout the years (Dawson, 2014; Eby, 1997; Grogan & Crow, 2004; Jacobi, 1991; Merriam, 1983).

In a frequently cited foundational study in the concept of mentoring, Kram (1983) conducts a qualitative case study of eighteen relationships in one corporate setting. Kram (1983) concludes that the mentoring relationship can significantly enhance development in various stages of an individual and presents a conceptual model to highlight the successive phases of this developmental relationship. Kram (1983) establishes one pervasive framework for the mentoring

relationship in that it involves a one-on-one developmental relationship between a more experienced individual (mentor) and a less experienced individual (mentee). Bozeman and Feeney (2007) assert this conceptual framework influences this area of study such that the vast majority of mentoring research supports this dualistic relationship. After more than three decades of research and practice, this conceptualization of mentoring has been applied to many settings with vast dissimilarity in practices and structure. This application has led to ambiguity in how researchers and practitioners have defined mentoring in research and in the field of education. Ultimately, a review of the literature from research employing varying conceptual frameworks of mentoring is exceptionally challenging; thus it is imperative to delineate conceptual distinctions to organize ideas surrounding mentoring as it relates to this case study.

Research surrounding mentoring includes findings that suggest mentoring relationships can be structured formally or informally (Grogan & Crow, 2004) and can exist between peers or supervisors with varying characteristics, goals and outcomes (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007; Eby, 1997). More recent research suggests that mentoring is not limited to a dualistic relationship (Eby, 2010) and explores the varying modes of communication in mentoring relationships, i.e. virtual or face-to-face (Allen & Eby, 2007). Most research concludes that the mentoring relationship is not built on singular characteristics within one structure; instead mentoring is an organic process relative to the individuals involved in the process and the context of the structure within which it is constructed (Allen & Eby, 2010).

Mentoring and the Mentoring Relationship: A Definition. The concept of mentoring has ancient roots through apprenticeships in which young novices learn a trade from an experienced tradesman. Mentoring is frequently touted in reference to Odysseus' request of his trusted friend,

Mentor. Since this beginning, the term mentor is often synonymous with expert, guide, sage instructor, trustworthy friend. A description of traits and the purpose of mentoring remains the same through the development of a mentee towards independence or fulfillment of a specific goal or set of goals (Zachary, 2005). Though some form of mentoring has existed in educational settings for at least five decades, the practice of formally mentoring beginning teachers emerged in the 1980s as a professional development strategy for achieving a variety of goals (Allen & Eby, 2010); however, it has never been more commonly utilized in the educational setting as in the 21st century (Ganser, 2002).

As recent as the 1980s, research into mentoring functions and relationships was limited (Cuthbert, McCray & Wynne, 2015). “Traditionally defined as a more seasoned professional guiding a less experienced individual, the term mentoring has gone through further development” (Cuthbert et al., 2015, p. 1). As noted in Cuthbert et al. (2015), early definitions in research exploring mentoring traditionally defined mentoring as veteran, experienced professionals in the field edifying younger, inexperienced professionals. Additional research has further defined the role and attributes of mentors. Eby, Rhodes, and Allen (2010) identified traits of the mentor as role model through providing emotional, psychosocial and career support.

As research and exploration into the mentoring process has developed, the conceptual framework has evolved. Mentoring programs in the context of education were originally introduced in the effort to combat teacher retention rates and support new teachers to the profession. According to much of the research on mentoring relationships in the work place, the last three-to-four decades has seen an increase of mentors used in formal processes in governmental departments, educational institutions and business corporations (Ehrich et al., 2004). The concept and process of mentoring has undergone much research in the past few

decades, thus, describing a concrete definition of mentoring and the mentoring process is difficult as individuals involved in a mentoring relationship perceive it differently (Cuthbert et al, 2015). In a synthesis of more than 300 research-based articles across three discipline areas, Ehrich et al. (2004) present conclusions about the nature and outcomes of mentoring, including an overwhelmingly positive process for all participants involved in mentoring relationships (Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013; Ehrich et al., 2004; Fletcher & Mullen, 2012). In particular, the literature details benefits for mentee, mentor and the institutions when a formal mentoring process exists (Clayton et al., 2013; Ehrich et al., 2004; Fletcher & Mullen, 2012). Though peer-to-peer or veteran-to-novice coaching is often used interchangeably with mentoring, mentoring differs from coaching in that it involves a formal relationship through which the mentor guides a mentee through professional development to meet the individual needs of each teacher (Huling-Austin, 1987). More recently, mentoring has evolved to specifically involve the collaboration of both mentor and mentee in a parallel process, where either can effect and impact the outcomes of the mentoring relationship (Cuthbert et al, 2015).

The literature presents a vast representation of mentor and is inherently difficult to define due to expanding types of mentoring and a general focus on attributes rather than a conceptual explanation of the mentoring relationship (Crow, 2012). Crisp and Cruz (2009), in a comprehensive exploration of the existing body of research surrounding mentoring assert that there are at least 50 distinguishing definitions of the practice of mentoring. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) emphasize mentoring definitions using research over a 20-year study. Though a concrete definition is yet to be asserted, Bozeman and Feeney (2007) are frequently cited as a standard depiction of mentoring (Huizing, 2012). Bozeman and Feeney (2007) assert: (1) A mentor is “perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience” than that of the mentee

(p. 731), (2) Mentoring relationships exist with the purpose to transmit knowledge, social capital and psychological support, (3) Mentoring relationships exist predominantly through informal communication, and (4) Mentoring relationships are perceived to have direct impact on career and/or personal development.

Though the literature presents vast definitions and a myriad of conceptual frameworks in given environments, conventionally, a mentor is a figure who sponsors, guides and develops (Ehrich et al., 2004). Mentors in professional growth settings maintain focus on student learning, seek lifelong learning for themselves, use facilitation and presentation skills, engage others in shared vision and meaning, develop and maintain relationships, work with a sense of integrity and plan and organize with long-term goals in mind (Angelle & DeHart, 2011; Bowman, 2004; Briggs et al., 2013). In almost all settings, mentors are those who are able to break down barriers and marshal resources throughout the organization (Angelle & Schmid, 2007).

In an effort to address the definitional concern elucidated in the review of the literature, Dawson (2014) explored over 30 research studies on mentoring, spanning three decades. Dawson (2014) sought to establish a set of key elements that helped define a specific mentoring model by identifying sixteen elements spanning numerous mentoring models. Recent research into collegiate principal mentoring programs has used this conceptual framework for the purpose to construct mentoring characteristics in a specific setting (Haller, 2016). Mentoring programs identified by Dawson (2014) have been found to be effective through the consideration of sixteen key elements of mentoring models. The table below lists this recent composition of elements in an effort to further define mentoring program and relationship characteristics.

Table 1

<i>Key Elements of a Mentoring Model by Dawson (2014)</i>	
Objectives	The objective, purpose or intention of mentoring
Roles	Who is involved in the mentoring model and what is the function of each role
Cardinality	The number of each role involved in the mentoring model and the cardinality of the relationships between those roles
Tie Strength	The intended familiarity/intimacy of the mentoring relationship
Relative Seniority	The comparative experience, expertise, or status of those involved
Time	Length of mentoring process and the regularity and quantity of contact
Selection	The process through which mentors and mentees are chosen
Matching	How mentor relationship are composed (i.e. mentor choice, mentee choice, random selection, administrative selection, or alternative criteria)
Activities	Actions of mentors and mentees in the mentoring process
Resources and Tools	Technological or other artifacts available to support mentors and mentees
Role of Technology	The relative importance of technology in the relationship and how it is utilized by mentor and mentee
Training	How the necessary understanding and skills for mentoring will be developed in participants
Rewards	What participants will receive to compensate for their efforts
Policy	Set of rules and guidelines governing the mentoring process

Monitoring	What oversight is performed and how it is performed
Termination	How the mentoring relationship is ended (i.e. formally or informally, given a set of certain criteria)

A literature review of mentoring programs finds that programs differ in focus and outcome. Some programs train mentors, some assign mentors to mentees, some let mentees choose the mentor, some designate location and frequency of meetings, and some are evaluated by imprecise techniques or not evaluated at all (Jacobi, 1991). Mentoring is a specific relationship that has the potential for either one-way transference of knowledge, from expert to novice, or the co-construction of knowledge between participants in the relationship.

Formal mentoring programs often pair experienced teachers with novice teachers (Hobson et al., 2009). Ganser (2002) concludes that the effectiveness of teachers is dependent on three factors: pre-existing skills, the ability to navigate workplace conditions, and the mentoring support provided. Mentoring often focuses on counseling, encouragement, and socialization of new teachers. In some instances, the focus may be on professional advancement.

According to Cuthbert et al. (2015), an effective mentoring relationship requires a developmental process. Without a purposeful process, the mentoring relationship may lack direction or cease to exist. Mentoring relationships traditionally take on three roles: technical, through which procedural transference of knowledge is gained, psychological support, through which encouragement and responsiveness is provided, and career networking, through which pedagogy and instructional resources are shared with the intent of advancement of effectiveness. As expectations for mentors often require providing psychological support, assistance with

policies and procedures, and networking connections, there exists a specific need for formal mentor program structure and training (Ganser, 2002).

Cuthbert et al. (2015) detail contemporary approaches to mentoring. Due to the increasing demand for and use of technology, mentoring is not held to the traditional in-person context; instead, electronic mentoring has taken shape in recent years. The collaborative mentoring model focuses on mentor and mentee constructing a shared outcome, through a parallel process and transference of knowledge. Traditional models, such as peer and co-mentoring, maintain a balanced relationship dependent on expert-to-novice relationships.

The Need for Mentoring Programs. Much of the literature reviewed details the need for mentoring relationships. Teaching is complex and continuously changing. Local initiatives, state and federal mandates impact novice and veteran teachers alike, such that veteran teachers become novice teachers through each local, state and federal change to the demands of the profession (Cothran, Faust, Kulinna, Martin & McCaughtry, 2005). Common needs for mentoring programs in educational settings has origins in needs associated with novice teacher induction and teacher retention. Through a quantitative meta-analysis of research studies on the effectiveness of mentoring, Underhill (2006) concentrated on research designs that compared career outcomes of non-mentored individuals to mentored individuals and found that mentoring produced a significant effect on career outcomes. Additionally, Underhill (2006) concluded that mentoring has a positive impact on fostering self-esteem, increasing commitment to the organization, and enhancing job satisfaction, though informal mentoring produced a more substantial effect on career outcomes than formal mentoring.

Formal mentoring is relatively new to the educational setting. “Only a few years ago, mentoring was not a commonplace feature of educational practice in the United States” (Davis, 2001, p. 1). Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) attributes this need to the demand for accountability. The researchers explain that “[i]n education, the ultimate concern is the student’s learning. For some, this means that student achievement is the only true indicator of teacher effectiveness” (p. 307). Components of this literature review provide insight into the organizational structure of what expectations teachers are anticipated to fulfill. Though somewhat removed from current research, the literature review presented by Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) provides one of the first indications to a context through which to view the need for mentoring as a link between professional growth and the evaluation of teacher effectiveness. Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) conclude, “If teacher evaluation is to be a useful tool for teacher improvement, the process must strike a careful balance between standardized, centrally administered performance expectations and teacher-specific approaches to evaluation and professional development” (p. 321). Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) focus on the need for a collaborative relationship, through which cooperation and motivation is enlisted while support and guidance on improvement is provided. Teachers must engage in the skill of thinking critically about classroom experiences and their professional growth (Saban, 2002; Tillman, 2003).

Cothran et al. (2005) explore the effectiveness of the outcomes of one school district’s professional development program intended to support new teachers when learning new curriculum in Physical Education classes. Through quantitative analysis of mentor and protégés responses on two inventories, the research concludes that effective mentoring programs are dependent on effective mentors. The study encourages discussion on the professional

development provided to mentors through exploring how mentor skills can be enhanced throughout mentoring relationships.

Siedentop (1976) explores professional development and evaluation of student teachers in field experiences in the classroom. In addition to sharing professional development skills needed to establish positive professional growth skills, Siedentop (1976) notes lack of teaching skills as a more acute problem than lack of subject matter knowledge in regard to teacher failure, thus calling for programs to internally develop these professional development skills. Ehrich et al. (2004) synthesize more than 300 research-based articles on mentoring across education, business and medical disciplines to make conclusions about the nature of mentoring. Ehrich et al. (2004) cite mentoring programs as having the potential for learning and growth for employees through a conscientious awareness, support for mentoring programs, mentor training, purposeful selection of participants and a rigorous evaluation of the program. Mathur, Gehrke, and Kim (2012), in a quantitative survey that focused on classroom perceptions of classroom decisions and practices during one school year, conclude that mentoring programs are successfully used to increase knowledge of practices among employees. Participants were asked to rate the degree to which participating in mentoring had affected various aspects of their own decision making and classroom practices; among others, response items included ability to reflect, awareness of evidence-based practices, collaboration with educators, and professional developments goals. Data on the type (email, face-to-face, phone, etc.) and frequency of mentor-mentee contact was also collected. Mathur, Gehrke, and Kim (2012) noted, as had previous research, that the mentorship experience was positively viewed; however, they concluded that “districts need to engage in continuous evaluation of their mentoring processes and mentor-mentee relationships to provide the most effective support for all of their teachers” (p. 161).

Stewart (2004) concludes that the increasing number of new teachers leaving the teaching profession has created an increased need for appropriately implemented mentoring programs. In recent years, there has been growing interest in orientation programs that provide support and guidance to beginning teachers; however, induction mentoring programs differ from preservice programs in that preservice provides training and preparation to candidates before employment (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Andrews and Quinn (2005) conclude that teachers in their initial years of teaching need to participate in additional training that will orient them into the demands of the profession.

Veteran teachers who have worked in educational settings benefit from collaboration and communication with novice teachers (Gratch, 1998). Swan, Mazur, Trullinger, Brock, Ross, Holman and Yost (2007) identify three phases of teacher growth: (1) survival and discovery; (2) experimentation and consolidation, and; (3) mastery and stabilization. In the survival and discovery phase, novice teachers struggle with day-to-day duties, varying student needs, and expectations of the individual educational setting. In the experimentation and consolidation phase, teachers are exposed to and experiment with new strategies in the classroom. In the mastery and stabilization phase, proficiency is established. This is often coupled with confidence and independent implementation of instructional efforts. Mentoring often exists in educational settings during the survival and discovery phase, and sometimes exists during the experimentation and consolidation phase.

The current need for mentoring programs is clear among practitioners in the field and is present in policy-making conversations. In 2015, following an identified teacher shortage in Indiana, the Indiana Department of Education formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Recruitment and Retention of Excellent Educators. The Commission studied current research in

order to evaluate potential strategies for addressing the shortage. Topics researched were: Educator Preparation; Induction and Mentoring Programs; Working Conditions; Professional Learning and Educator Evaluation Practices; Educator Career Ladders; and Compensation Indiana Department of Education. (2016). The Commission's final report, released in 2016, recommended that among eight strategies, establishing a mentoring system, based on a common set of expectations designed to support new teacher induction and nurture the reflective practitioner, was needed (Indiana Department of Education, 2016).

Positive Outcomes. Over twenty states in the United States of America require new teachers to complete a mentoring or induction program (Hightower, 2010). Mentoring programs provide positive outcomes for mentors, mentees, and the institutions housing the formal mentoring process. Consistent in a literature review of mentoring programs and relations is cooperation, collaboration and motivation (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Hansford, Tennent, and Ehrich (2002) studied mentoring relationships and found the process to be overwhelmingly positive for both mentor and mentee. Conclusions suggest benefits for mentor and mentee specifically when a formal process for the program existed. Ehrich et al. (2004) note personal satisfaction and growth as the fourth most cited benefit to mentoring programs. McGlamery, Fluckinger, and Edick (2006) examined the effects of the CADRE Project, which is a collaborative teacher induction effort between K-12 practitioners and higher education, and found that a variety of mentoring approaches are successful. The successful approaches, though, include personal interactions, mentor preparation, allotted time for the program, reflective professional development and a culture of trust.

Many studies have suggested positive outcomes for formal mentoring programs. Murray (2002) finds increased productivity, improved recruitment efforts, motivation of staff, and performance. There exist benefits on the organization in which the mentoring program resides, which include improved grades, attendance and behavior among participants. Students whose teachers participate in mentoring programs can experience improved grades, attendance, and behavior. Ehrich and Hansford (1999) cite potential for learning and growth for employees. Participants in studies note increasing knowledge of practices, time to reflect (Mathur et al., 2012), shared exchange of ideas, collegiality and networking, shared commitment to a vision, and maintenance of productive working relationships (Ehrich et al., 2004). Ehrich et al. (2004) specifically suggest psychological support as a positive outcome for mentoring programs. Participants note encouragement, friendship, advice, feedback on performance and constructive criticism as aspects of professional growth. Levinson (1978) found participants cited rejuvenation of career interest and increased confidence.

There exists a vast amount of research surrounding positive outcomes of mentoring programs for administrators, who are largely responsible for implementing mentoring programs for teachers. Similar to mentoring programs targeting the needs of teachers, positive outcomes exists for administrative mentoring programs which allow for planning, training and evaluation of program effectiveness (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Mentoring programs provide positive outcomes for schools by supporting beginning teachers in becoming effective practitioners sooner rather than later and by retaining qualified teachers through the support provided to them (Andrews & Quinn, 2005). Smith (2002) concluded that mentoring programs increase ranges of instructional strategies, teacher retention, positive attitudes among staff, feelings of efficacy and control.

Negative Outcomes. The literature review uncovered negative outcomes of mentoring relationships as well; however, negative outcomes were often attributed to errors of implementation of mentoring programs rather than inherent within the concept of mentoring. Lewis (1982) found that lack of respect for peer and teacher feedback existed and that tension in the climate of the school contributed to lack of flexibility and trust. Lack of time, mismatched mentors and mentees, lack of professional expertise all contributed to the perception that the program and/or relationship is a burden on staff (Ehrich et al., 2004; Lewis, 1982). Ehrich et al. (2004) qualify that specifically when mentors are critical, out of touch, defensive and untrusting, mentoring relationships are not successful. A mixed method study of twenty-four site-managed public schools engaged in significant restructuring sought to identify dimensions of the capacity for organizational learning in schools. Though findings indicate a strong relationship between organizational learning and teacher empowerment, studies referenced lack of time, poor planning, unsuccessful matching of mentor and mentee, lack of development of structure, lack of understanding and lack of training as contributing factors to unsuccessful mentoring programs and experiences (Clayton et al., 2013; Marks & Louis, 1999).

Construction of Knowledge in the Mentoring Relationship. Professional development activities have become a key feature in the educational setting, and are now mandated in the evaluation system in Indiana. Research suggests it might take seven years for new teachers to develop competence (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995). Construction of knowledge in a mentoring relationship is unique and complex (Eby, Rhodes & Allen, 2010). Mentoring relationships occur between individuals within a given environment, while the collective

relationships create an identifiable culture within the professional environment. “The mentoring process goes through stages in development and should not be static in nature. The mentor...and mentee should constantly redevelop the relationship to maximize the benefits to both parties” (Cuthbert et al, 2015, p. 10). Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, and Liu (2001), in a qualitative study that considers the professional cultures and interactions new teachers encounter in their school, found that there are three dominating voices: veteran-oriented, novice oriented, and integrated cultures. Veteran oriented cultures are dominated by the veteran with no shared values. Novice oriented cultures are dominated by new teachers with very little evidence to suggest veteran teachers shared experiences in the hopes of assisting new teachers. Integrated cultures sustain support through frequent exchanges across experience levels. Findings suggest that integrated cultures, with equal merit and worth given to new teachers and veteran teachers, are most successful in establishing a culture of trust and support.

Effective mentoring relationships are those in which construction of knowledge is reciprocal, with both parties benefiting from the experience (Murphy & Ensher, 2006). In a review of mentoring literature, Bozeman and Feeney (2007) identify five characteristics of mentoring in terms of how knowledge is transmitted in the mentoring relationship.

Table 2

<i>Knowledge Transmission in a Mentoring Relationship by Bozeman and Feeney (2007)</i>	
Number of Participants	The number of participants that are involved in the mentoring model

Relationship	Consideration is given to the extent to which the relationship is authority mediated (by administration, formally or informally).
Recognition	Consideration is given to the extent to which all involved understand their explicit role in the mentoring relationship.
Needs Fulfillment	The extent to which needs are fulfilled given the identification of objectives of the mentoring relationship.
Knowledge Utility	Includes knowledge presumed relevant to attaining organization mission, goals or meeting formal job requirements; the extent to which the purpose of increasing knowledge, personal growth, professional advancement or organizational improvement is attained.

The organizational structure and leadership within the professional environment heavily impacts the culture and mentoring relationships within the culture. Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), in a quantitative meta-analysis of twenty-seven studies about how leadership, through its support of professional development, impacts student learning, found that five sets of leadership practices positively impact teaching and learning, one of which is promoting and participating in adult learning and development. Findings suggest that mentoring is fostered in leadership

practices that plan, coordinate and evaluate teaching that promote and participate in adult learning and development, and that ensure a supportive environment.

Mentoring “connects the wisdom of the past with the new and creative ideas of the future” (Loeffer, 2004, p. 23). Many mentoring programs focus on procedural skills and perpetuate the status quo by replicating current practices instead of promoting co-constructed reflection between stakeholders that challenge established practices (Andrews & Quinn, 2005).

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (1999) identifies four categories utilized by mentors in the construction of rapport and knowledge through the mentoring relationship:

1. Attitude and Character: the mentor freely serves as role model and demonstrates commitment, reflection, and resourcefulness solving problems and approaching new challenges,
2. Professional Competence: the mentor is knowledgeable in pedagogy and content, excels as a teacher in the classroom, and understands school/district policies and procedures,
3. Communication Skills: the mentor shares instruction-related strategies, actively listens and utilizes coaching questions that prompt reflection,
4. Interpersonal Skills: the mentor maintains trust and is cognizant of the professional and emotional needs of the mentee (NFIE, 1999).

Self-reflection is a critical component of the TAP evaluation system. Through each evaluation, classroom teachers are required to self-score and are guided through the self-reflection process through cognitive coaching and questioning by the Mentor/Master Teacher. Boreen et al (2000) concluded that reflection is a critical component of effective teaching,

“whatever an individual’s experience or level of education” (p. 69). Effects of reflection include helping teachers organize thoughts and make sense of classroom events, encouraging inquiry and goal setting, promoting a model of learning as an ongoing process of knowledge building, and promoting collaboration with mentors (Boreen et al., 2000).

Coaching as it relates to Mentoring. Coaching is often used interchangeably with mentoring in professional settings, but research into coaching and its effects in educational settings is relatively new (Garmston, 1987; Knight, 2008). Coaching is a key component to building the mentoring relationship as many conversations surrounding mentoring involve attributes of coaching. As a general concept, a review of the literature related to coaching results in similar exasperation to that of mentoring. In an examination of approaches and perspectives to coaching, Knight (2008) identifies challenges in the numerous ways that coaching is used in literature surrounding teaching and learning. Infinite professional development activities are referred to as coaching: technical coaching, collegial coaching, challenge coaching, team coaching (Garmston, 1987). Though broad on the surface, literature exists within the intricacies of coaching as well: cognitive coaching focuses on thinking; content coaching attends to lesson design and transferability of skills; instructional coaching examines implementation of research-based practices; and literacy and numeracy coaching considers student ability outcomes (Knight, 2008).

For the purposes of this study, cognitive coaching and peer coaching were considered. Cognitive coaching was formally developed in the 1980s and has often been a topic of research in educational settings in terms of its impact on desired outcomes in teaching and learning. Peer coaching traditionally provides the additional component of teachers modeling instructional

practices for other teachers (Showers & Joyce, 1996). Though literature showed varying definitions with varying desired, and degrees of, outcomes, the purpose of this study is not to delineate aspects of coaching from those of mentoring. A review of the literature under this topic serves only to provide insight into the interrelatedness of coaching toward a specific outcome within the context of a mentoring system.

Group Mentoring. As has been established, typically, mentoring exists in, and is researched through, a dualistic relationship. Because the purpose of mentoring is to transfer knowledge and experience between participants and mentoring has such seemingly positive outcomes for individuals and the environments in which they serve, some have recently argued that group mentoring, where the knowledge and experience of numerous participants can exist, could provide substantially more benefits to mentor and mentee.

Group mentoring theories originated in the 1990s. Kaye and Jacobson (1995) initiated what has become a common model for group mentoring. In the first iteration of this model, one mentor is paired with multiple mentees to approach professional and personal topics. The mentor acts as guide, ally, catalyst, active listener and advocate. In a subsequent publication, Kaye and Jacobson (1995) added given components of successful group mentoring: (1) intentional learning, (2) examples of failure and success, (3) storytelling, (4), developing maturity, and (5) a sense of joint venture. Additionally, Kaye and Jacobson (1996) advocated for practitioner application to the environment by creating learning tasks and soliciting feedback and guidance from administrative support.

There are many different designations for group mentoring, including “collaborative mentoring,” “mentoring circles,” “mentoring communities,” and “team mentoring” (Ambrose,

2003; Eby, 1997; Huizing, 2012). In a literature review of the theory and research surrounding group mentoring, Huizing (2012) searches various terms associated with group mentoring within various databases and disappointedly finds only 34 peer-reviewed articles to contribute to this theory. Huizing (2012) does, however, identify four primary types of group mentoring: (1) peer group, (2) one to many, (3) many to one, and (4) many to many. The primary advantage of peer group mentoring “is in its broader network of collaborative input into personal and professional needs”; however, negative outcomes can occur if there exist controlling personalities or lack of purposeful facilitation (Huizing, 2012, p. 41).

Though inconclusive in the research, one to many mentoring recognizes many common dyadic mentoring relationships and can overcome some of the potential limitations noted in peer group mentoring (Huizing, 2012). Little research exists surrounding many to one mentoring; however, Huizing (2012) notes two studies that present a need for future research in “multi-tiered mentor structures that allow for bi-directional collaboration to occur” (p. 50).

Many to many mentoring is delineated from peer to peer mentoring in that two or more participants in the mentoring relationship exist in a distinct mentoring role. Research of many to many mentoring relationships provide similar positive results to those of peer group mentoring relationships (Huizing, 2012). Similar to much other noted research, Huizing (2012) concludes that substantial gaps remain in this subset of mentoring literature, and a decisive definition of mentoring, in addition to group mentoring, still remains to be established.

More recently, advances in technology and its provisions to communication between mentoring participants has contributed to the study of group mentoring (Ensher, Heun & Blanchard, 2003; Packard, 2003). Further studies on group mentoring focus on illuminating the

potential benefit to connect mentoring groups with other mentoring groups as well as limiting barriers associated with proximity and demographic groups (Huizing, 2012).

In a TAP evaluation system, though aspects of the mentoring relationships between Master, Mentor and classroom teacher are akin to a Many to One Mentoring framework explored by Huizing (2012), group mentoring takes on an altogether new form. Mentoring relationships exist between Master, Mentor and Classroom teacher in three settings: ILT, Cluster, and the evaluation process (walkthroughs, Cluster follow-up, and pre- and post-conferences). ILT consists of Master Teacher(s), Mentor Teachers and Administrators. Cluster consists of Master Teacher(s), some Mentor Teachers (depending on scheduling availability) and some administrators (depending on scheduling availability). The evaluation process consists of either a Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher or Administrator paired with classroom teacher. The complexity of the structures, purposes and settings of these settings as they relate to the development of mentoring relationships is enumerated in the findings of this study.

Mentor Training in a TAP Evaluation System. Mentor teachers serving in any capacity benefit from training in development of skills required to coach, collaborate and communicate with other teachers (Gratch, 1998). In the TAP evaluation system, administrators, Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers engage in multiple school-specific training on a bi-annual basis. Regional TAP Coordinators meet with Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT, comprised of administrators, Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers) bi-annually (or more frequently, as needed), to provide training guided by the Evaluation System Handbook and Workbook. Training is individualized by integrating the ILT long-range plans and the Cluster Cycle goals.

Traditionally, training occurs within the district, from school to school, throughout the year. ILT is also utilized within the school to provide ongoing, school-specific training for ILT members.

Adult Learning & Professional Development

This section of the literature review will explore the current literature that defines andragogy, the theory of adult learning, and analyzes three effective strategies to further adult learning in a professional setting: 1) empowerment, 2) efficacy, and 3) self-reflection. Until somewhat recently, models and theories of adult learning were largely grounded in the field of psychology and were very general in the study of learning processes (Tusting & Barton, 2006). One of the first models of adult learning stems directly from the psychological understanding of development and suggests a hierarchy of adult needs: physiological, belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization (Maslow, Frager, Fadiman, McReynolds, & Cox, 1970). In the early 1970s, research began to highlight the distinctions concerning how adults learn in professional settings (Knowles, 1970; Merriam, 2001; Tusting & Barton, 2006).

Andragogy: A theory of adult learning. As many professional mentoring relationships are designed with the purpose to increase productivity, capacity, and growth, an exploration of the literature associated with how adults learn in a professional environment is necessary. This concept is relatively new. Knowles (1973) presents a model of the way adults learn through a set of assumptions:

- Adults require the need for learning something in order to effectively learn it,
- Adults are self-directed in their learning rather than dependent learners,

- Adults link their experiences, current role and stage in life to their readiness to learn,
- Adults are driven by internal motivation rather than external motivation, and
- Adults participate more effectively in problem-centered learning rather than subject-centered learning.

A necessary distinction in learning for adults and children is the delineation between pedagogy and andragogy; while adult learning is largely associated with andragogy and child learning with pedagogy, various models can be effective for different circumstances (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 2012). Recent literature surrounding andragogy explores practical application of these assumptions to contexts of both individual and situational experiences. Literature suggests by applying the six Core Adult Learning Principles to experiences for which there are clear goals and purposes for learning (i.e. individual, institutional or societal), strong growth can occur depending on the individual and situational differences (Knowles et al., 2012).

Empowerment & Efficacy. Successful mentoring cultures are those that are organized around the use of human resources with an emphasis on professional development (Firestone, Mangin, Martinez, & Polovsky, 2005). Individually targeted adult learning activities are needed to support teachers' self-efficacy. Successful cultures pair staff with staff to increase the sharing of ideas, pedagogy and experiences (Elliott et al., 2010).

Perhaps the strongest cited impact that mentoring relationships and professional development experiences instill and support on participants is the sense of empowerment and efficacy (Armor 1976; Bandura 1982; Berman & McLaughlin 1977; Good & Power 1976; Vroom 1964). Good and Power (1976) identify the ways in which knowledge or beliefs must be

under the teachers' control. Teachers value a defined role in professional experiences contributing to the culture. Similar to individual relationships between mentor and mentee cited earlier in the literature review, collective relationships between participants in professional development experiences must embody trust and an awareness that teachers' worth will be recognized. Bandura (1982) cites the perceptions of self-efficacy as an important link between knowledge and behavior. Additionally, efficacy affects performance through responses to experiences involving failure and striving to achieve. An inherent aspect of mentoring relationships and professional development experiences is a comfort with taking risks. Berman and McLaughlin (1978) found teacher efficacy positively affected the percent of project goals achieved and improved student performance. Self-perceptions of teachers are strongly and positively related to student achievement; efficacy requires a responsive environment and is influenced by interactions with peers and organizational, cultural factors (Vroom, 1964).

Self-Reflection. Self-reflection is a key facet in the adult learning process (Jarvis, 2011; Kidd, 1973; Knowles et al., 2012; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Jarvis (2011) presents a model for adult learning that includes nine possible responses to professional development experiences. Each possible response is presented through the lens of possible outcomes: growth and development as a result of the learning experience, harmed as of a result of the learning experience, or unaltered regardless of the learning experience. Three potential responses do not include learning (presumption, non-consideration, and rejection), three potential responses do not include reflection (pre-conscious, skills/practice, and memorization), and three include reflective learning (contemplation, reflective practice and experimental learning). Responses that include reflection learning result in new knowledge, skill, attitude, and/or self-efficacy. Though self-

reflection is necessary to adult learning, no single process or set of assumptions can be prescribed, and the interaction between experience and reflection will vary greatly from adult to adult (Tusting & Barton, 2006).

Peer-Review Evaluation

This section of the literature review will explore the history of the implementation of peer-review evaluation in the K-12 setting and current analyses of effective application of this evaluation process. Peer-review evaluation systems, such as TAP, employ Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers to act as mentor, to plan, present, and engage in professional development experiences, and to participate in the evaluation process.

Teacher Accountability. As we move to an age of accountability, Jordan, Phillips, and Brown (2004) find that knowledgeable evaluation and mentoring are key elements to developing good teachers. Mentoring embedded in evaluation must be done by professionals with “observational and analytical skills who can provide immediate feedback based on systematically collected reliable and valid data to practicing and prospective teachers” (Jordan et al., 2004, p. 219).

In a review of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education (No Child Left Behind) Act Gelman et al. (2004) note two distinguishing specifications: (a) that all schools are required to employ teachers that are highly qualified and (b) that all schools are held accountable for providing high-quality professional development. The authors conclude, “the act lacks clear definitions, realistic goals, and clear steps to accomplishment. A road map of specific steps and appropriate definitions and goals are recommended” (p. 195). Highly qualified status, defined in various ways in legislation and evaluation systems, rests on the shared experiences of

teachers (Gelman et al., 2004). Within the K-12 educational system, there are very few districts and schools that support or employ peer review as a type of evaluation (Lewis, 1982); however, the literature suggests a potential, though not yet conceptualized, link between mentoring programs, professional development, and peer-review evaluation systems.

Mentoring, Evaluating & Professionally Developing. Though mentoring is not a new concept, using the observation, traditionally linked to evaluation, in professional development and mentoring relationships is relatively new in K-12 educational settings. In her article reviewing models of teachers observing teachers, Israel (2003) links mentoring through observations to teacher professional development. She contends that “[t]ypically evaluative by nature, teacher observation is usually linked to classroom performance. More and more schools, however, are using observation - teachers observing teachers - as a form of professional development that improves teaching practices and student performance” (Israel, 2003, p. 1).

An integral aspect of individual and collective staff development is the self-reflection and self-evaluation aspect of a mentoring program (Redfern, 1980). Some suggested links between mentoring and evaluation include individual goal setting, self-reflection, and motivation toward change and growth (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). Self-reflection in a peer-review setting is suggested to be the focal point of the link between adult learning and evaluation (Goldstein, 2004, 2005, 2007). The second most cited positive aspect of a mentoring program is reflection (Ehrich et al., 2004). Additionally, multiple and diverse peer-review relationships make for less reality shock for teachers entering and participating in the evaluation process (Jordan et al., 2004).

Though the link between mentoring, adult learning and peer-review evaluation systems is suggested in the literature, much research is needed to conceptualize this connection. Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) asserts that one of the primary goals in evaluation is the improvement of individual and collective teaching performance. Another suggested goal in evaluation is the establishment of trust within a system of accountability (Redfern, 1980). A link between mentoring and evaluation is found in an evaluation system grounded in peer-review. Darling-Hammond et al. (1983), in their review of mentoring literature, identified potential advantages to peer review: (a) peers are in the best position to assess competence and (b) evaluators who are familiar with the classroom experience, subject matter and demands on a teacher can render specific and practical suggestions for improvement. Ritter and Barnett (2016), in their study of about 50 teachers and policy makers involved in teacher evaluation reform, identified four findings: (a) business-as-usual fails, (b) evaluation can provide a focus for professional development, (c) meaningful evaluation creates a space for meaningful feedback, and (d) teachers revealed an appetite for evaluation. Ritter and Barnett (2016) concluded that a focus on implementation of professional, rigorous, and comprehensive teacher evaluation systems that engage teachers in meaningful conversation and reflection provides a “promising school improvement strategy” (p. 52).

Distrust can be a mitigating factor in unsuccessful mentoring and professional development relationships (Finkelstein, 2016). Finkelstein (2016) suggested that although there is one standard model for preparing or supporting mentors, four recommendations build trust between teacher and mentor: (a) let the teacher drive the professional development, (b) adopt a curious, problem-solving stance, (c) walk the walk, and (d) communicate clearly and transparently.

Mentoring in the context of mandated, peer-review evaluation calls for a measurement of effectiveness on various levels. The literature suggests the effectiveness of the mentor is an integral component in the effectiveness of outcomes in the mentoring relationship. The effectiveness of the formal professional development, both for the mentors and between mentor and mentee, is a fundamental component of the desired outcome, namely, effective teaching which impacts student learning.

Gaps in the Literature

Following a review of the literature on positive and negative aspects of mentoring relationships, it is clear that the context of the mentoring relationship with respect to professional development and a peer-review evaluation system is an important facet in the development of these relationships. There is a need for further research into the relationship between mentor and mentee in the context of the formal mentoring process in the TAP evaluation system when peer-review is mandated.

Critiques of andragogy as a model of adult learning suggest that it is largely prescriptive rather than descriptive in that it is specific to types of professional experiences adults encounter and ignores the context in which the learning takes place (Tusting & Barton, 2006). There is a need for further research into how professional growth takes place in the context of a mandated mentoring relationship focused on professional development.

This study provides a lens through which to observe the nature of the mentoring relationship between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher in the specific context of this professional development and evaluation system. Given the research questions, a better understanding of the identified elements of the mentoring relationship and of the

supportive and inhibitive aspects within the mentoring relationship provides the greatest possibility for the utmost insight and richness of data. This understanding enables a better chance of interpreting Master Teachers', Mentor Teachers' and classroom teachers' perceptions and sense-making of the relationships that are experienced in their schools. The research allows for interpretations of participants' perceptions of the reality of mentoring relationships based on the interpretivist framework, understanding of the literature review, and data collected during the case study.

Summary and Implications

This synthesis of scholarly literature serves as a foundation from which to explore the questions of the research: what elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

This research identifies the inhibitive and supportive aspects of mentoring relationships in the context of mandated professional development and a peer-review evaluation system. In the state of Indiana "effectiveness" must be measured on a scale with a rubric (Whiteman et al., 2011). This study interprets the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers, and classroom teachers as it relates to the co-construction of professional growth through the multiple and varied understandings, interpretations and perspectives of the participants. While the TAP evaluation system provides specific measures and rubrics aimed at delineating 'effectiveness,' this study focuses on the multiple perspectives of teachers regarding the 'effectiveness' of a mentoring relationship within the context of mandated professional

development and a peer-review evaluation system through perceived aspects that either support or inhibit a mentoring relationship aimed at professional growth.

Relationships are interpreted based on various factors. The ways that peer-review can affect a professional relationship can be interpreted in various ways. The understanding of the data that is collected in this research allows for elements of the peer-review relationship that contribute to teaching to provide future interpretations that evolve as layers of this causality unfold. Finally, a rating on the TAP rubric objectifies effectiveness, but the knowledge about the evaluative, mentoring relationships are interpreted from the case study data. Elements of the peer-review relationships between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers will lead to further insight into the research question, thus, developing further inquiry.

There are implications for practitioners in educational settings understanding the supportive and inhibitive aspects of a mentoring relationship. Though this study focuses on the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in a school district utilizing the TAP evaluation system, the perspectives of the participants inform practices in many educational settings. The valued end of the research is to use this deeper understanding to help professionals better navigate teacher evaluation systems that utilize evaluative, mentoring relationships. Given that individuals will be placed in roles, in some capacity, to provide evaluations and professional development in TAP schools, exploring aspects of this mentoring role that are generative for or inhibitive to teacher growth will benefit schools and stakeholders. Ideally, the supportive and inhibitive aspects of this relationship identified in this study from the participants' perspectives provide a thematic guide through which Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers can establish a productive, co-construction of

professional growth to increase student achievement. Additionally, the study may help to illuminate policymaking, professional practice, and perhaps future research in the area.

Definition of Key Terms.

1. Area of Refinement

During every evaluation observation in the TAP Evaluation System, this is identified using the rubric indicators and descriptors for the purposes of reflecting and discussing growth opportunities for teachers. In other words, this is something for the teacher to refine in future lessons as it relates to instruction and/or student achievement.

2. Area of Reinforcement

During every evaluation observation in the TAP Evaluation System, this is identified using the rubric indicators and descriptors for the purposes of reflecting and discussing continued practices for teachers. In other words, this is something for the teacher to continue to reinforce in future lessons as it relates to instruction and/or student achievement.

3. Classroom Teacher (synonymous with Career Teacher in a TAP School System)

Classroom teachers carry a full teaching load, attend Cluster, and are evaluated per the guidelines of the school/district evaluation schedule.

4. Classroom Walkthroughs

Periodic (weekly, or biweekly) visits to the classroom, conducted by Master and Mentor Teachers with the purpose of observing lesson objectives and instruction leading up to a formal observation.

5. Cluster

Comprised of Master Teacher(s), Mentor Teachers and Classroom Teachers in small groups (depending on assignment and scheduling availability), Cluster traditionally meets weekly or biweekly on an ongoing basis for professional development.

6. Cluster Follow-Up

Periodic (weekly, or biweekly) visits to the classrooms, conducted by Master and Mentor Teachers with the purpose of observing, co-teaching, or modeling the objectives from Cluster meetings.

7. Coaching (often used synonymously, or in conjunction with mentoring)

Occurs in conversation between individuals by which one individual facilitates growth with another individual. Through a framework for professional growth experiences in this study, with a focus on enhancing a skill of some kind, coaching stimulates reflection and requires active listening and questioning. Specific models of coaching, such as cognitive coaching and peer coaching, are identified in the literature as key components in building the overall mentoring relationship.

8. Field Testing

A process used in the TAP Evaluation System to pilot of student or teacher learning strategy. This process is traditionally done by Master and/or Mentor Teachers, in conjunction with Classroom Teachers, to pilot how to introduce a strategy, how to model a strategy, and how to track and analyze data related to the strategy. The field testing process is traditionally conducted in a classroom with the intent to model the process and share findings with other Classroom Teachers to recreate in other classrooms.

9. Individual Growth Plans (IGPs)

IGPs are required, to varying degrees, in schools implementing the TAP Evaluation System. IGP's are sometimes guided by administrative requirements and sometimes teacher-driven. IGP's might remain the same throughout the year, or change based on Cluster Cycle goals within a given school year. IGP's often track data related to the goal, and should indicate how the IGP will be supported by Mentor Teachers, Master Teachers and/or Administrators. IGP's are utilized in the mentoring relationship in that Administrators, Master Teachers, and sometimes Mentor Teachers provide feedback to Classroom Teachers on IGP's.

10. Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)

Comprised of Master Teacher(s), Mentor Teachers and Administrators, ILT traditionally meets weekly or biweekly on an ongoing basis for professional development. The ILT is responsible for setting specific annual student learning goals. They oversee all TAP Evaluation System activities aimed at meeting these goals including extensive group and individual coaching and support.

11. Master Teacher

Master Teachers are chosen through a competitive, rigorous, performance-based selection process. Master Teachers must have expert curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills and the ability to work effectively with other adults. They take on additional responsibilities and authority through conducting evaluations, planning and implementing Cluster meetings and participating in ILT meetings. Master Teachers are held to a different performance standard than the career teachers in their school, and are compensated accordingly. Master Teachers conduct evaluations in this setting.

12. Mentor Teacher

Mentor Teachers are chosen through a competitive, rigorous, performance-based selection process. Mentor Teachers must have expert curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills and the ability to work effectively with other adults. They take on additional responsibilities and authority through conducting evaluations, participating in Cluster meetings and ILT meetings. Mentor teachers are held to a different performance standard than the career teachers in their school, and are compensated accordingly.

Mentor Teachers conduct evaluations in the elementary settings in this study.

13. Mentee

An individual engaged in a mentoring relationship with a mentor, who fills varying roles embodying various characteristics. In a TAP system for the purposes of this study, all Classroom Teachers are mentees. Though Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers are utilized as mentors to Classroom Teachers, there can also exist mentor/mentee relationships between Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers.

14. Observation (synonymous with evaluation)

Observations can be announced or unannounced, and occur traditionally four times annually. Announced observations include pre-conferences, for the purpose to obtain pertinent background information about the lesson plan and students involved in the lesson, to give additional context to the mentor/evaluator, to build and strengthen professional relationships with teachers, and to address any potential areas of concern before the lesson by the mentor/evaluator. All observations are scripted by the evaluator and include post-conferences, for the purpose to highlight evidence from the observation as it relates to an identified Area of Reinforcement and Area of Refinement for the

classroom teacher. Post-conferences conclude with the mentor/evaluator sharing the scores of the observation with the classroom teacher.

15. The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, formerly Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) Evaluation System⁴

TAP is an evaluation system provided by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). Lowell Milken created this comprehensive educator effectiveness evaluation model to provide career advancement opportunities, professional growth, instructionally focused accountability and competitive compensation for educators. Once adopted, a TAP School/District engages in ongoing professional development through Instructional Leadership Team and Cluster by utilizing the TAP Rubrics (Lesson Planning, Instruction, Environment and Professionalism) for teacher evaluations.

⁴ For more information, visit <http://www.niet.org/>.

Chapter 3: Methodology

“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals; adjust the action steps.”

Confucius

The purpose of this study is to provide a better understanding of the mentoring relationship in the context of the mandated TAP Evaluation System through the lens of three roles: Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher within one school district. The selected methodology for this research is a descriptive case study using an interpretivist paradigm. This chapter provides a positionality statement by the researcher and describes the setting of the research, the process of participant selection, data collection procedures, the data analysis process, and timeline of the research. Further, this chapter justifies ethical considerations and explains the conceivable limitations of the research.

Though potential limitations are discussed throughout the research, it is important to note that an interpreted reality through the lens of multiple participants is no small undertaking. The methodology employed in this research provides a foundation for future research into mentoring relationships in the context of many varied environments. It is equally important to note that because a goal of interpreting one reality for mentoring relationships cannot be achieved, appropriate methodology for future research should be applied given the context of the individual environments.

From Practice to Research: Implementing the TAP Evaluation System

When I began my doctoral studies, I was an assistant principal in a high school. In compliance with the evaluation legislation, the district at the time adopted TAP as the mandated evaluation and professional development model. Prior to this, I was both a teacher evaluated

under the Council of Chief State School Officer's Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards and an administrator evaluating teachers with fewer than five years of experience on the InTASC standards. The standards define ten learning progressions for teachers: Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction, Instructional Strategies, Professional Learning and Ethical Practice and Leadership and Collaboration (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013). I participated in, and led, professional development activities that were neither systemic nor consistently aligned with topics based on evaluation data from my instructional practices or instructional practices I observed.

As I worked toward my thesis, I began to recognize that the effectiveness of the implementation of this evaluation system rested on classroom teachers working with Master Teachers⁵ and Mentor Teachers⁶ toward increased student achievement through efforts designed at mutual professional growth. I believed there were times this was happening in the building, and I knew there were times it was not. I recognized the need to conceptualize elements of the mentoring relationship as it related to effective mentoring models and began to question what aspects of the relationships between people serving in these roles supported the success of implementation of the system and what aspects inhibited success of implementation of the system. I sought out to know how to duplicate mentoring efforts when they had a positive impact on successful mentoring relationships and effective professional development and how to rectify

⁵ In the TAP system, Master Teacher duties frequently include conducting weekly professional development (Cluster), conducting evaluations of classroom teachers, observing classrooms through follow-up from Cluster and classroom walkthroughs, and analyzing student data. Master Teachers can also be responsible for some direct instruction of students.

⁶ In the TAP system, Mentor Teachers continue with direct instruction of students and frequently receive some release time and a stipend for conducting evaluations of classroom teachers, observing classrooms through follow-up from Cluster and classroom walkthroughs, and analyzing student data.

mentoring efforts when they might have an inhibitive impact on mentoring relationships and effective professional development.

Research Questions

This research explores the nature of the mentoring relationship between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher in the context of a peer-review evaluation system and mandated professional development. The following research questions will guide this study.

1. What elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation?
2. In the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

Research Design

A case study is the best method to answer the research questions because the purpose of case study research focuses on behavior and perceptions within a specific context. Yin (2013) categorizes case studies as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive and differentiates between single, holistic case studies and multiple-case studies. Explanatory case studies seek to explain the presumed causal links in situations or interventions that are too complex for survey or experimental strategies. Findings would seek to link program implementation with program effects. Exploratory case studies explore situations in which an intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes. Descriptive case studies describe an intervention or

phenomenon and the context in which it occurred (Yin, 2013). The research design is a descriptive case study exploring aspects of a single phenomenon: the perception of the mentoring relationship between professionals in the context of the implementation of the TAP Evaluation System within one school district. Thus, the case was not Sage Township as a school district but was the teacher participants involved with the TAP Evaluation System within Sage Township. Exploring the Master, Mentor and classroom teachers' perceptions in Sage will allow for a single-set of cross-case conclusions related to mentoring (Yin, 2014).

The study collected data using direct observations and semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Interviews and observations are often used within case study research to capture participants' perceptions of the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2012). Bogdan and Biklen (2006) employ an analogy of 'the funnel' for the design of a case study. The study begins in the wide end, where the researcher scouts for the location and participants that might serve as data sources. As the study progresses, the researcher looks for clues as to how to proceed with data collection, who to interview, and what aspects of the participants' experiences to explore in depth (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). The researcher continually modifies the design and procedures as more is learned about the topic of study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

The researcher is the data collection mechanism in qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). The rationale for using qualitative research with interviews as one of the primary data collection method is that interviews are often the most effective method through which the researcher can explore the interpretations that participants ascribe to experiences they have had (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Observations were also a primary data collection method because it permitted the researcher to examine the teachers in their natural settings (Creswell, 2012) as they worked under the TAP Evaluation System.

The study was conducted in three distinct phases. Table 3 below summarizes the participants, research method(s), and purpose of each phase. The first phase included interviews with the principals of the buildings within the district followed by observations of Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings and Cluster. The purpose of the first phase was to identify participants for the study. During the second phase, Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers participated in semi-structured interviews and were further observed during ILT (in elementary schools) and Cluster (in all schools) with the intent to interpret the experiences of the participants in the context of a mentoring relationship within the mandated evaluative system. During the third phase, follow-up, semi-structured interviews were conducted for the purpose of sharing the collective interpretation of data from prior interviews and observations. Follow-up interviews were designed to validate conclusions and were individualized based on participant’s feedback. Though member checking was not the primary purpose of the third phase of research, it provided a process through which a systematic check of validity was interrogated by sharing the initial data and interpretations with participants for endorsement (Creswell, 2013). In this follow-up interview, participants in the study were also asked follow-up questions to provide further clarification as it related to the research. Additionally, any deviations from the interpretivist process of data analysis were explored with the intent to validate interpretations of the participants’ perspectives on aspects of the mentoring relationship that supported or inhibited professional growth. The section below delves deeper into the research design and methods of individual phases.

Table 3

<i>Phases of Research Methodology</i>			
Phase	Participants	Methods	Purpose

First	Principals	<p>Five interviews (two elementary, two middle school, and one high school),</p> <p>Five observations of ILT (two elementary, two middle school, and one high school), and</p> <p>Five observations of Cluster (two elementary, two middle school, and one high school)</p>	Gather data about the school, observe context of mentoring activities, identify participants
Second	Master, Mentor and classroom teachers	<p>Nine interviews (three Master Teacher, three Mentor Teacher, and three classroom teacher),</p> <p>Two observations of ILT (two elementary), and</p> <p>Five observations of Cluster (two elementary, two middle school, and one high school)</p>	Gather data on and interpret mentoring experiences
Third	Master, Mentor and classroom teachers	Nine follow up interviews (three Master Teacher, three Mentor Teacher, and three classroom teacher),	Using interpretations of data collected from second phase of research, ask follow up questions for clarity

Methods

Setting and Data Collection. Sage Township, a midwestern school district in the suburbs of a metropolis, was selected because of the adoption of TAP as a state-mandated evaluation system during the 2011-12 school year. Though a few districts in the area employ TAP as the evaluation system, Sage Township was the most recent district to adopt the TAP evaluation system in the area. Additionally, the size and diversity of Sage Township, as a district with sister high schools, offers access to various people in the role of Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher.

Case study research allows for the use of multiple data sources, a strategy which enhances data credibility (Yin, 2003; Yin, 2014). As noted, data sources included in this case study are direct observations and semi-structured interviews. Direct observation is used in case study research as a method through which the researcher is detached rather than taking part; the observer strives to not become a participant in the context of the environment so as not to bias the observations (Yin, 2013).

The first phase of interviews of principals and observations of ILT and Cluster meetings occurred in all buildings in the early-to-mid Spring of 2017. Initial interviews of participants and additional observations of ILT and Cluster during the second phase of the study occurred in the mid Spring through Summer of 2017. Follow-up interviews of participants during the third phase of the study occurred in the Winter of 2017 through the Spring of 2018.

During the first phase of this case study, semi-structured interviews with the building principals were used for the purpose of gathering context surrounding mentoring relationships in the school and identifying participants. As will be explained, during this phase I sought to identify potential participants through the principal's perspective as it encompasses the system as a whole. Though Master, Mentor and classroom teacher participants were noted, I focused during this phase on identifying Master Teachers as in the second phase interviews, Master Teachers would also be used to corroborate identified Mentor and classroom teachers. Subsequently, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers were asked to identify potential participants for the purpose of corroborating overall participant selection. The interviews of the first phase occurred with the principals of two elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school and lasted no more than one hour. The two elementary schools were selected as they are fully implementing the TAP Evaluation System in that they employ both Master and Mentor teachers.

Both of the districts' middle schools were included in the study. The one high school was selected due to my previous employment in the other high school. The secondary buildings employed, and utilized, Mentor Teachers in various capacities, which will be explored in the findings of this study.

The direct observation of the first phase also included Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and Cluster meetings, which frequently occur weekly. The purpose of ILT meetings is to engage Master and Mentor Teachers in professional development experiences and to plan Cluster. Clusters are structured, weekly meetings led by Master Teachers, in conjunction with Mentor Teachers, for classroom teachers. Data were collected during the first phase of the study in an observation of five ILTs and five Clusters: one ILT and Cluster in each elementary, middle and high school. ILT observations lasted between one and two hours. Observations of Cluster in each building lasted no more than an hour. Because the purpose of this case study is grounded in mentoring relationships in the context of mandated evaluation and professional development, research was limited to direct observation of these two settings rather than observation of the entire context.

As the purpose of the first phase of the case study was to gather contextual data about professional development, evaluation, and mentoring relationships in the building as well as to identify possible participants using recommendation from the principal of the building, I recorded and transcribed observations and interviews and noted specific contextual observations and specific names of potential participants. For example, ILT meetings were observed for the purpose of collecting contextual data surrounding mentoring relationships from the perspective of Master and Mentor Teachers. As all teachers are required to participate in Cluster meetings, Clusters were observed for the purpose of collecting contextual data surrounding mentoring

relationships from the perspective of classroom teachers. These observations informed me of routines, expectations, and interactions between participants in these two professional development settings in which mentoring conversations occurred and mentoring relationships were developed.

All semi-structured interviews and observations in the first phase were recorded and transcribed. The coding of the data collected is discussed in a following section. The questions below guided the interviews of the first phase of research.

First Phase – Principal Interviews

The semi-structured interviews in the first phase of the case study with principals were guided by the following questions:

- Describe the evaluation and professional development system in the building before the implementation of TAP.
- How has TAP been implemented in the building?
- How has TAP been received in the building by classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers?
- How has the role of Master/Mentor Teacher as evaluator, mentor, and leader of professional development been received in the building?
- Please identify some classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers, and Master Teachers who come to mind when you consider their perceptions of the TAP evaluation system as either supporting or inhibiting their professional growth.

During the first phase of the study, I used an observation instrument that allowed me to identify key conceptual elements of the mentoring model as well as supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship. This same observation instrument was used during subsequent observations in the second and third phase of the study.

The second phase of the case study included additional observations of ILT and Cluster as well as semi-structured interviews with identified participants: three Master Teachers, three Mentor Teachers and three classroom teachers. As noted, participants were identified based initially on my interviews with the five building principals and observations of ILT and Cluster during the first phase of the study.

During the second phase of the case study, one ILT observation was conducted in each elementary school and Cluster observations were conducted in all five schools. Additional ILT observations occurred only in elementary schools during the second phase because these were the only schools in which Mentor Teachers participated in ILT meetings. ILT observations lasted between one and two hours. Observations of Cluster in each building lasted no more than an hour. These observations assisted in answering my research questions because the professional development activities in which mentoring occurs in these settings are crucial to understanding the scope of the mentoring relationships.

The nine interviews with participants supplied the crux of data collected during the second phase of research. These interviews were used to explore the interpretations that participants ascribe to experiences they have had relating to mentoring relationships in the context of mandated professional development and peer-review evaluation. All semi-structured interviews and observations in the second phase were recorded and transcribed. Interviews lasted no more than an hour and were conducted in a comfortable setting, determined by the

participant. The coding of the data collected is discussed in a following section. The questions below guided the interviews of the second phase of research.

Second Phase – Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and Classroom Teacher Interviews

The semi-structured interviews in the second phase of the case study with Master, Mentor and classroom teachers were guided by the following questions:

- Tell me about your teaching experiences (years of experience, subjects taught, schools in which you've worked).
- How are experiences in Cluster and the conversations associated with evaluation similar to what happened before with professional development and evaluation? How does it differ?
- I have been observing your ILT and/or Cluster for some time, but imagine that I have never been to an ILT/Cluster meeting before. Could you describe to me your role in ILT/Cluster, and what the goal of ILT/Cluster is?
- Describe a Cluster that went particularly well for you.
- Describe a Cluster that frustrated you.
- Describe a conversation you had with another teacher about Cluster or an evaluation experience.
- How do you feel about what you do during Cluster?
- Can you think of a time during which you were either planning or instructing students that you implemented a Cluster strategy? Describe it.
- How do you perceive the professional development culture in the building?

- Describe your mentoring and evaluative relationships with classroom, Mentor and/or Master Teachers? Tell me about a time when you gave feedback to a classroom/Mentor/Master Teacher.
- Describe to me how you prepare for Cluster (*specifically for Mentor and Master Teachers*).
- How does the relationship between Master/Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher contribute to:
 - The teacher's planning practices?
 - The teacher's instructional practices?
 - The teacher's assessment practices?
 - The teacher's use of data in the classroom?
 - The teacher's positive relationships with students?
 - The teacher's classroom management practices?
- Is there anything related to mentoring relationships, professional development, or the peer-review evaluation system implementation in this school that we haven't talked about and that you'd like to tell me?

The third phase of the case study included participant interviews and additional interpretive analysis of the data. During the third phase of the study, nine semi-structured interviews were again conducted with participants: three Master Teachers, three Mentor Teachers and three classroom teachers. Interviews lasted no more than an hour and were conducted in a comfortable setting, determined by the participant. Interviews consisted of direct questions and follow-up discussion designed around sharing the collective interpretations of the

data collected. Participants were provided the thematic analysis (See Appendix F). Participants were asked clarifying questions and to elaborate on feedback from the initial findings as it related to the individual participant's perspective. Participants were asked if the data illuminated within the thematic analysis were consistent with their perceptions and experiences. Interviews during this phase were used to substantiate interpretations of the participants' perspectives on aspects of the mentoring relationship that might support or inhibit professional growth through follow up questions. Participants were encouraged to interrogate the findings from the collective interpretation, and follow-up questions were posed to expand on or further explain their reflections and feedback.

These interviews underwent the iterative process of building and presenting collective findings. Through follow-up questions, this phase served to guard against bias, uninterrogated data, and potential paths unrelated to the research questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Merriam, 2014; Yin, 2013). Participants were initially asked, "According to the research thus far, the following elements capture a collective interpretation of Master Teachers', Mentor Teachers' and classroom teachers' perception of the mentoring relationship as well as the supportive and inhibitive elements of the nature of mentoring in the context of a mandated, peer-review evaluation system. How does this interpretation match, or not match, your perceptions and/or experiences?" Participants were also asked any follow up questions to help clarify the data collected earlier. Interviews during the third phase were guided by the following questions.

Third Phase – Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and Classroom Teacher Follow-up Interviews

The semi-structured interviews in the third phase of the case study with Master, Mentor and classroom teachers were guided by the following questions. Additional follow-up questions within the discussions with participants were individually tailored to each participant:

- Based on the thematic summary of data analysis provided, does this summary reflect your experiences in mentoring activities?
- Does this interpreted analysis accurately reflect what you shared during our previous interview?
- What aspects of the nature of the mentoring relationship provided adhere to your perspectives and experiences? What aspects of the nature of the mentoring relationship provided conflict with your perspectives and experiences?
- Are there any identifiable aspects of the nature of the mentoring relationship not included in this summary of data analysis?
- When considering the identified supportive and inhibitive elements of the mentoring relationship, what aspects either adhere or conflict with your perspectives and experiences?

Selection of Participants. All participant involvement in the study was voluntary. After being identified through the first phase of the case study, participants were asked to accept an invitation to participate in the study. The case study included nine participants, three of whom were Master Teachers, three of whom were Mentor Teachers and three of whom were classroom teachers. All building levels were represented. At the onset of the study, participant selection was based on semi-structured interviews with the Principal of the building and direct observations of ILT and

Cluster meetings. Selection was representative of participants' perceived relationships as reflective and non-reflective, self-directed and dependent, and exhibitive of either a supportive and/or inhibitive mentoring relationship. In sum, in order to fully interpret mentoring relationships from three varying perspectives, participants were identified as not solely embracing or solely resisting mentoring within the TAP system. Table 4 below details participant selection.

Principals were initially asked to identify participants because, as the leader of the building, their insight into every member of the building is valuable. As explained earlier, I began data collection during the second phase of the study with Master Teachers. During the second phase of the case study, Master Teachers were asked to identify Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers were asked to identify Master Teachers and classroom teachers. Classroom teachers were asked to identify Master and Mentor Teachers. The selection of participants was symbiotic in that participants were continually identifying other participants with whom mentoring relationships occurred.

Potential participants were emailed to explain the purpose of the case study, process for collecting data, and to invite them to participate in the study. Overall, 37 participants were identified and invited to participate in the study. Of the nine who self-selected, each fulfilled representation of level, building, and role. Additionally, all participants were identified by at least two other roles (principal, Master, Mentor Teacher and/or classroom teacher). Though the number of participants illuminates a potential limitation, the scope of the case study in portraying a collective interpretation of mentoring in the context of the mandated professional development and evaluation system in this setting is discussed in a later section of this chapter.

Principals, Master Teachers, and Mentor Teachers were asked not only to identify participants serving in all roles, but also to enumerate the characteristics and reasons that led them to identification of participants. At every level, principal, classroom teacher, Mentor Teacher and Master Teacher, “highly reflective” was used as a determining characteristic for identifying potential participants. Additionally, at every level, “resistance to change” was given some consideration in identifying potential participants. These phrases were used by every principal in data collection during the first phase of the research study.

When identifying classroom teachers, I noted that principals, Master and Mentor Teachers considered new and veteran voices both to the education profession as well as to the building, those who exhibit natural receptiveness to feedback through the TAP Evaluation System and those who did not, those who were highly effective in their evaluations and those who were not, and those who were vocal in evaluation and professional development activities. One principal noted, “It’s important to gain the perspective of teachers who have expressed being challenged through this relationship in ways that are not comfortable, just as it is important to gain the perspective of teachers who have natural buy-in.” Numerous principals, Master and Mentor Teachers expressed the importance of valuing the “push-back” perspective from classroom teachers as it relates to building mentoring relationships.

When identifying Mentor Teachers, I noted that principals, Master and classroom teachers considered new and veteran voices, both to the education profession as well as to the building and/or Mentor Teacher role, those who were highly effective in their evaluations and those who were not, and by the nature of their role as Mentor Teacher, those who were vocal in evaluation and professional development activities. In considering Mentor Teachers, one

principal said, “I identified (Mentor Teachers) who crave the system as well as those who challenge the system in an effort to generate collective buy-in.”

When identifying Master Teachers, I noted that principals, Mentor and classroom teachers considered new and veteran voices both to the building and/or Master Teacher role, and expressed qualities such as “visionary” and “intellectual capacity” as those that should encompass this voice. At the close of the interviews, all Master Teachers in the selected buildings had been identified by at least one classroom or Mentor Teacher.

Table 4

<i>Participant Selection</i>			
	Master Teacher	Mentor Teacher	Classroom Teacher
Elementary School	1	1	1
Middle School	1	1	1
High School	1	1	1

Participant Descriptions. The following section describes the varied background and experience of each participant group as well as participant characteristics as they relate to experiences surrounding mentoring relationships. Principals were interviewed for the purposes of establishing demography and historical data related to the school as a whole and to identify teachers. Additionally, principals, Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers, and classroom teachers were asked to identify potential participants.

Master Teachers

Master Teachers were observed in ILT and Cluster, interviewed twice, and were utilized to identify additional individuals engaged in mentoring relationships for the purposes of the study. Master Teachers who participated in the study ranged from 2-6 years of experience the role of Master Teacher.

Mentor Teachers

Mentor Teachers were observed in ILT (in the elementary setting) and Cluster (in all settings), interviewed twice, and were utilized to identify individuals engaged in mentoring relationships for the purposes of the study. Mentor Teachers who participated in the study ranged from 3-10 years of experience in the role of Mentor Teacher.

Classroom Teachers

Classroom Teachers were observed in Cluster, interviewed twice, and were utilized to identify individuals engaged in mentoring relationships for the purposes of the study. Classroom teachers who participated in the study ranged from 10-19 years of experience in education and the role of Classroom Teacher.

Data Coding. As is common with qualitative data collection, massive amounts of text-based, non-numerical data are collected. Thus, a coding framework is a crucial component of the data collection and analysis process. Overall coding was done in conjunction with the three phases of research. During the first phase of research, I coded five principal interviews, five initial ILT observations and five initial Cluster observations for contextual activities in which mentoring

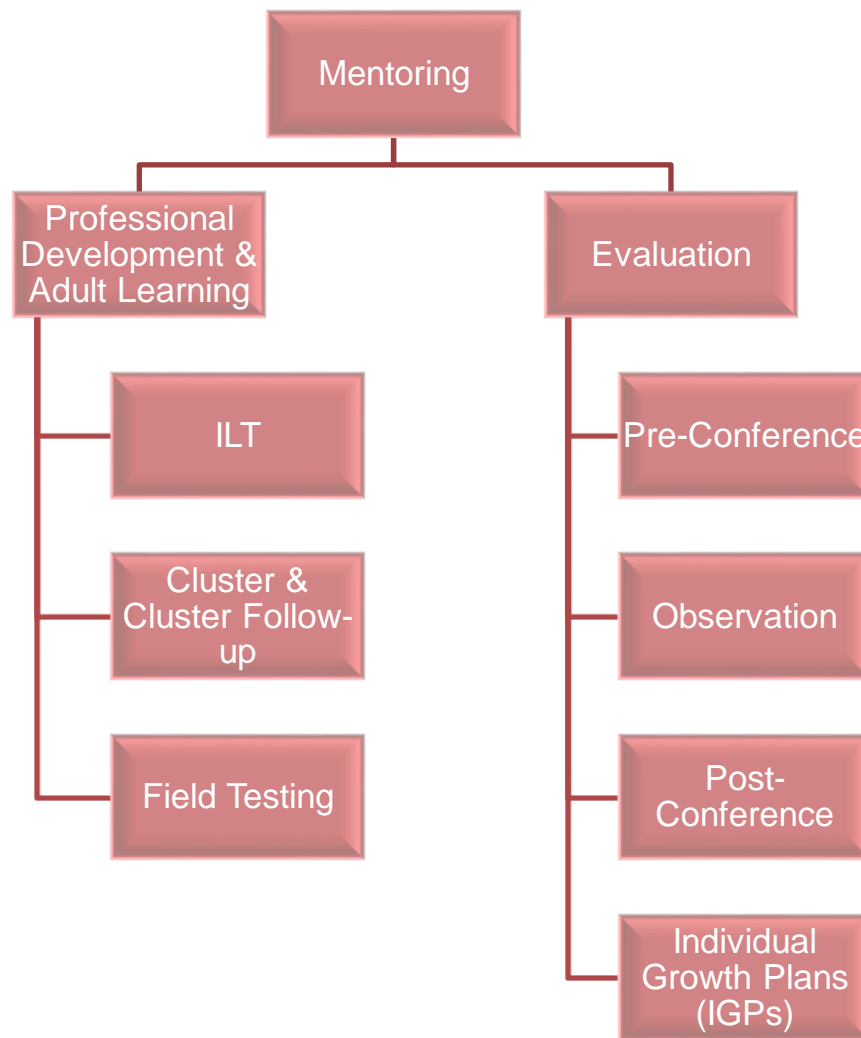
occurred. During the second phase of research, data collected included that of the first phase, two additional ILT observations, five additional Cluster observations, and nine participant interviews. To organize and analyze data related to the first research question, I first coded using elements of the analytic model adapted by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014). To organize and analyze data related to the second research questions, I then coded for identified elements perceived by participants as supportive or inhibitive of professional growth within the mentoring relationship. During the third phase of research, data collected included that of the first two phases and nine additional participant interviews. I reviewed coding assigned during the second phase of research based on participants' responses and again coded for identified elements perceived by participants as supportive or inhibitive of professional growth within the mentoring relationship.

As observations and interviews were scripted and transcribed into the NVivo analysis software, words, phrases, patterns of behavior, participants' ways of thinking, and events were coded and analyzed using the collection and analysis framework adapted by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014) (See Figure 2). Using characteristics of this framework as coding patterns (e.g. participant roles, tie strength, etc.), I was able to interpret data around commonalities and divergences across schools. Additionally, coding by participant (Master, Mentor and classroom teacher) allowed for data to be interpreted across roles. For example, if I observed the Master Teacher as leader and facilitator of Cluster activities, I was able to code data relative to Participant Roles, Relationship Authority and Relative Seniority.

Observations and interviews of Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers during the first and second phase of the study were also coded for the purpose of identifying either supportive or inhibitive characteristics of the mentoring relationship based on

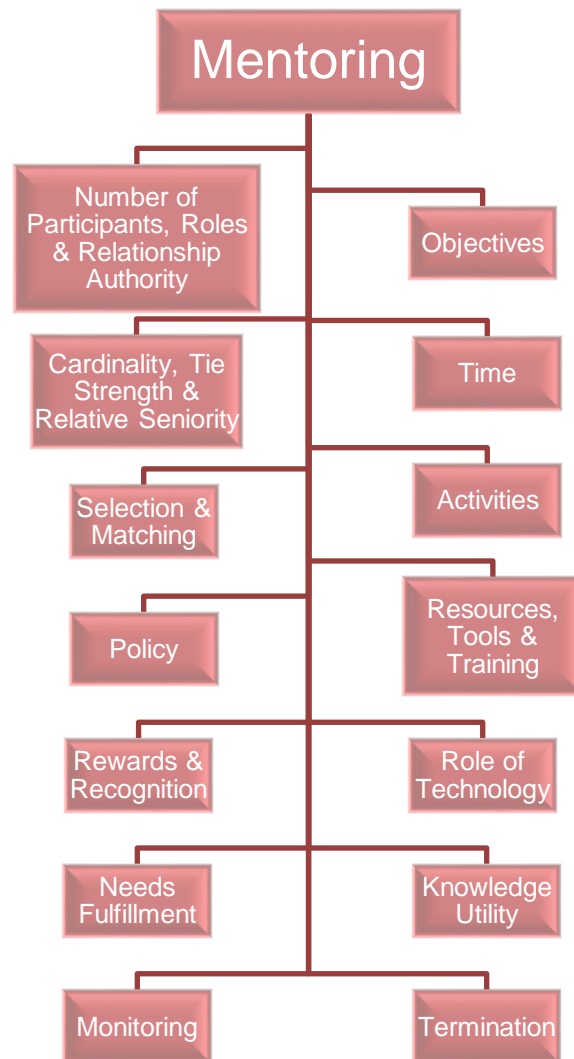
the review of literature. Observations focused on identifying interactions between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher indicative of either trust and collegiality or distrust and tension. Additionally, data collected during observations of participants were interrogated for characteristics exhibiting either self-reflective tendencies or not. Finally, using characteristics of the framework adapted by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) (See Figure 2), I was able to code observations related to supportive and inhibitive aspects of the relationship within the analytic model; for example, coding perspectives relative to how rewards and recognition, needs fulfillment, and knowledge utility occurred among participants as they related to supportive or inhibitive characteristics within the mentoring relationship. The following visuals depict the coding process through each phase of the study.

During the first phase of interviews with principals and observations of ILT and Cluster, coding was relative to building a collective description of mentoring activities related to evaluation and teacher growth, through professional development in ILT and Cluster.



In coding data collected from all phases of the research, I first coded using elements presented in the analytic model identified by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) for the purpose of organizing a collective interpretation of mentoring using specific mentoring model characteristics. Between the second and third phase of the study, a thematic summary of the analysis of data collected using the framework adapted by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) was created (See Appendix F). Between the second and third phase of research and following the third phase of research, I also coded aspects within the elements of the mentoring model perceived by participants as supportive or inhibitive to professional growth.

Figure 2: Data Collection & Analysis Coding Framework based on Dawson (2014) and Bozeman & Feeney (2007)



The Interpretivist Paradigm

Through this research, data on mentoring relationships from the perspectives of three types of participants were gathered: Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers.

An interpretive paradigm is used to analyze data in this research of mentoring relationships. Participant perspectives are grounded in social, cultural and historical interpretations of life-events (Crotty, 1998). Creswell and Poth (2017) position participants' personal and interpersonal realities and suggest that the researcher's role is to understand these realities through unpacking the significance that participants associate with aspects of their reality. The narratives of relationships that are built and evolve between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher in the context of mentoring, professional development and evaluation will vary based on social and cultural contexts (Crotty, 1998). As such, an interpretivist paradigm will be applied to analyze collected data in an effort to make sense of the contexts of participants' realities within mentoring relationships. Through this study, it is my hope to better understand how participants construct and view the characteristics of mentoring relationships in the context of a mandated professional development and evaluation system.

The interpretivist paradigm considers multiple perspectives of reality that vary based on the subjective meanings that participants ascribe to social and individual lived experiences (Creswell, 2013; Crotty, 1998). This study explores the varied reality of mentoring through the perspectives of experiences of Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in a TAP school district. The intent of this study is to navigate the phenomena of mentoring in the context of mandated professional development and peer-review evaluation. The values and beliefs that are co-constructed by the participants through social and historical experiences are used to interpret the mentoring experiences of these participants.

Data Analysis

Case study research allows for the collection and integration of qualitative data from multiple data sources, which facilitates reaching a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2013). Data from interviews and observations were compiled, coded and analyzed collectively using the NVivo software throughout the analysis process. Each data source is one piece of the interpretation of the perspective of the mentoring relationship and collectively contributes to the interpretation of the whole phenomenon. Analysis in this case study relied on working from the ground up so as to identify patterns and relationships among the data (Yin, 2013). For example, a singular code relative to the role of one classroom teacher participant was analyzed across classroom teacher perspectives and then further analyzed as the role of classroom teacher related to the roles of Mentor and Master Teacher.

Analyzing research is dependent on effectively organizing data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2013). Using a database improves the reliability of the analysis of the case study as it enables the researcher to track, organize and classify data sources. Through utilizing the NVivo qualitative analysis software program, as it is designed for text-based, non-numerical data, it allows the researcher to examine relationships in the data through classifying text and identifying trends. Additionally, NVivo ensures password-enabled, encrypted protection of the data and facilitates the recording of source detail, the time and date of the data collection, storage, and search capabilities.

During this study, the collection and analysis of data occurred simultaneously through identifying trends through coding processes previously described. The intent of analysis of field notes, observations, scripts of interviews, and self-reflections of the data collection process was used to generate and refine an interpretation of the mentoring relationship through all sets of participants' perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Yin, 2013).

Yin (2013) presents five techniques for analyzing data: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. This study employed pattern matching as an analytic technique to examine data related to the second research question. As a descriptive case study, pattern matching is used to illuminate perceived aspects of the mentoring relationship among participants. Data analysis consisted of exploring and interpreting commonalities in supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship in the context of mandated professional development and a peer-review evaluation system from the perspectives of three groups of participants: Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers.

Divergences in these aspects of the mentoring relationship were interrogated by developing patterns through themes and categories that are interrelated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Merriam, 2014, Yin, 2013). The process of developing patterns involved coding the data that was collected during observations and semi-structured interviews through both the analytic model adapted by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and themes that were described by participants to be supportive and inhibitive of the mentoring relationship. These previously described coding processes became pattern-matching categories that served as conceptual representations of recurring patterns in the data across participant perspectives as well as between schools (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Yin, 2013). As data were collected and analyzed around supportive and inhibitive characteristics of the mentoring relationships, certain words, phrases, patterns of behavior, participants' ways of thinking, and events that were repeated stood out (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). This process guided the findings of the research first by structuring the summary of the collective interpretation for participants utilized in the third phase

of the study (See Appendix F). Additionally, this process illuminated aspects that were either supportive or inhibitive of the mentoring relationship based on participants' perspectives.

By using the coding processes to facilitate the analysis through pattern-matching, the interpretations of the commonalities and divergences were organized using the analytic model and summarized by research question. Through coding data using thematic codes described above, divergences within some themes were identified between roles (Master/Mentor, Mentor/classroom, Master/classroom) and school (elementary, middle, high). Divergences within themes were interrogated and used to develop a richer, more in depth interpretation of the mentoring relationships within the system. The summary of the collective interpretation was presented to participants during the third phase interviews for the classroom teacher, Mentor Teacher and Master Teacher with the intent to provide deeper clarity to the interpretation of the varying perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). As data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously, thoughts and reflections were summarized concurrently that served to affirm or oppose presented interpretations of the data (Merriam, 2014).

Though not the primary purpose of the interviews during the third phase of the study, member checking and an audit trail of the NVivo data were utilized to increase validity for the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Member checking was used for the purpose of providing a summary of preliminary collective interpretation of findings and asking participants clarifying questions based on the collective analysis as it related to participant's interview transcript. The interviews within the third phase of the study furthered a sense of trust through a consultative process for the participant and researcher (Carlson, 2010). Potential limitations of these follow-up interviews include disagreements over interpretations by participant and/or researcher leading

to inequitable influence in the findings (Carlson, 2010). Participants were assured that disagreement is acceptable and divergences in the findings would be interrogated.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are particularly important in qualitative research as the efficacy of the data is dependent on the social and interpretive skill of the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Participants were given a sense of comfort that data collection was voluntarily through a thorough explanation of the research purpose, questions and process, by virtue of participant selection of time and place for interviews, and by visibly utilizing password-protected software and applications. Throughout the interviews, the researcher made assurances so that participants did not feel coerced or exposed to risk (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2014).

Confidentiality. As research was conducted through observing and interviewing classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers in the schools in which they work, confidentiality was critical. The importance of confidentiality is exponentially significant as participants were asked to share intimate experiences not only about the district-adopted, mandated evaluation process of which they are a part of, but also about the relationships with those with which they work on a daily basis. This study generated a large amount of data, through observations, interviews and coding techniques in the analysis phase. Participants were repeatedly guaranteed confidentiality, to the best of the researcher's ability, at every phase of the study.

Validity & Trustworthiness. The researcher should consider how high-quality data are collected. To do so, much time was spent in the school, during ILT and Cluster, observing classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers in the act of engaging in a mentoring relationship. This enabled trust to be built with the participants.

After coding and analyzing data, peer debriefing was used to further consider the credibility of the analytic model as it related to coding the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I met with a fellow administrator and provided a sample coded transcript from each phase of the research. Additionally, we reviewed the methods section of the study. Peer debriefing was utilized in order to check my personal perceptions and biases and uncover varied ways to identify codes and interpret data. Of note in this process was that we focused most on the identification of supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship as the conceptual framework provided a more specific set of criteria for coding and analyzing the data. The peer debriefer examined the progression and the outcome of the data analysis in order to evaluate whether the findings were supported by the data. The peer-debriefer did not identify any discrepancies.

During phase two and three of the study, in order to guarantee that interpretations and analyses are as accurate as possible, transcripts were provided to participants to check that data were recorded appropriately, as needed. As phase three of the study was the final attempt to limit bias and subjectivity from the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006), I employed member checks. After coding and analyzing the data collected during phases one and two, further semi-structured interviews were conducted. The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to ensure that participants' understanding of the mentoring relationship is appropriately interpreted in the

analyses. This contributes to validity and trustworthiness of qualitative methods of analysis (Yin, 2013).

Potential Limitations

Limitations inherent in this study are identified not only in hopes of addressing any concerns in the research and/or analysis process but also in an attempt to control for the limitations and any error in interpretation of data. Limitations and possible methods of controlling for the limitation include:

1. This study only explores the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in the context of one TAP evaluation system; findings are not generalizable to other districts utilizing the TAP evaluation system or evaluation systems that do not rely heavily on peer-review evaluation and mandated, weekly professional development. Though there may be some lack of generalizability for peer-review evaluation and mandated professional development, there is generalizability for any educational setting attempting to support mentoring relationships amongst staff.
2. In a literature review of evaluation systems, some research findings suggest that the accountability inherent in evaluations is at odds with the internal need for a culture of stability and trust that many successful mentoring programs are founded upon (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). The analysis of the qualitative results could indicate more data suggesting elements that are inhibitive of professional growth than supportive of professional growth in the mentoring relationships between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher due to possible lack of respect for

- peer evaluation and tension in the climate of the school contributing to lack of flexibility and trust. By controlling for a varied group of participants in the selection process, it is more likely that the perspectives of participants with respect to the mentoring relationship will vary.
3. At the onset of the research, as the identification of participants was based on interviews with the principal of the building and ILT/Cluster observations and participation was voluntary, not only might participants not be perceived as having experiences to share, but also might not fully yield self-identifying relationships between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher, thus limiting the possible access to participants' full experiences in the qualitative interviews of the study. The size of the district allowed for a controlling factor for this potential limitation and the follow-up interviews within the third phase of the study allowed for deeper interrogation into participant perspectives.
 4. The peer-review relationships are dependent on the personnel that are employed as Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers in the school. There could be limitations inherent in the state-directed evaluation model and the implementation of TAP that will be directly reflected in the relationships created between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and Classroom Teacher in a specific setting. Because of this, the results could vary greatly from school to school (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). It is through this potential limitation that possible future research could be explored.
 5. As the researcher is a former administrator in the proposed district in this study, there could be limitations in the ability to establish a trusting relationship such that participants in the interviews are open and honest (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). The

researcher strove to openly address any potential bias in hopes of assuring the participants of trustworthiness through measures related to confidentiality.

Despite these limitations, a deeper understanding of the impact of this mentoring relationship, within the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, on school practitioners will help professionals better navigate teacher evaluation systems that mandate peer-evaluative, mentoring relationships.

Chapter 4: Demographics and Context

“He who learns but does not think, is lost. He who thinks but does not learn, is in great danger.”
Confucius

This chapter describes the demographic data of the district, schools, and participants. Additionally, due to the complexity of navigating the differing roles of Master, Mentor and classroom teacher within the multiple mentoring activities that occur in the system, this chapter is structured to provide the necessary contextual information through which to better understand the presentation of findings and analysis of the data. This chapter provides the demographic data of Sage Township, describes contextual information related to Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings and Cluster meetings, portrays participant demography, and explains the implementation of the current evaluation and professional development system.

Demographic Data

Sage Township was one of a number of townships in the Midwest to adopt and implement the TAP Evaluation System after mandated state legislation, in 2010. The evaluation system was adopted district-wide in Sage Township in 2011. Prior to the entire district adopting TAP, two elementary schools within the district began implementing TAP starting in 2008.

District

Sage Township is situated as a suburban township on the outskirts of a metropolitan, Midwestern city. The district is comprised of eleven elementary schools, two sixth-grade academies, two middle schools and two high schools. Sage Township services over 16,000 students and employs just under 1,000 teachers. The teacher ethnicity is over 95% white. Years of experience in the

district is relatively evenly distributed: 30% with 0-5 years of experience, 15% with 6-10 years of experience, 20% with 11-15 years of experience, 15% with 16-20 years of experience and 20% with more than 20 years of experience.

Schools

Of the schools available to the case study in the district, the two elementary schools were selected because they had implemented TAP fully, through grant funding, during the 2008 school year. Full TAP implementation enabled the schools to staff Mentor and Master teachers in official capacities, meaning Mentor Teachers received stipends to conduct evaluations and participate in Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and Cluster meetings. Though no other schools in the district implemented TAP fully, thus did not officially identify Mentor teachers to conduct evaluations and participate in ILT meetings, all schools utilized the same evaluation and professional development system. Through implementation of this system, all schools engaged Mentor Teachers in various capacities, such as participation in Cluster and wrap-around support for classroom teachers. Variations in use of Mentor Teachers at each level will be enumerated in the data findings below. The two middle schools were selected due to size and use of Mentor/Master Teachers when compared to the sixth-grade academies. One high school was selected, similarly, due to size and use of the Mentor/Master Teachers. Additionally, the researchers' history with the other high school did not allow research to take place in it. As noted later in this chapter, participants were identified by principals, Master, Mentor and classroom teachers through observation in either Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings or Cluster and through self-selection into the interview phases of the study. The selection of the schools and participants allowed for the nature of mentoring relationships to be considered across participant

roles serving in various settings. The following provides demographic information about each school included in the study.

Trust Elementary. Trust Elementary services about 750 students and employs around 40 teachers. Years of experience in the school is heaviest on teachers with fewer than 5 years of experience when compared to other schools: 45% with 0-5 years of experience, 5% with 6-10 years of experience, 15% with 11-15 years of experience, 15% with 16-20 years of experience and 20% with more than 20 years of experience. The teacher ethnicity is 95% White, 2.5% Black, and 2.5% Hispanic. Trust Elementary employs two Master Teachers and four Mentor Teachers.

Reliable Elementary. Reliable Elementary services just over 1,000 students and employs around 55 teachers. Years of experience in the school is relatively evenly distributed: 30% with 0-5 years of experience, 20% with 6-10 years of experience, 25% with 11-15 years of experience, 10% with 16-20 years of experience and 15% with more than 20 years of experience. The teacher ethnicity is 98% and 2% Black. White Reliable Elementary employs two Master Teachers and five Mentor Teachers.

Experience Middle School. Experience Middle School services just over 1,200 students and employs around 75 teachers. Years of experience in the school is heaviest on teachers with fewer than 15 years of experience compared to that of other schools: 40% with 0-5 years of experience, 15% with 6-10 years of experience, 15% with 11-15 years of experience, 15% with 16-20 years of experience and 15% with more than 20 years of experience. The teacher ethnicity is 96%

White, 3% Asian, and 1% Black. Experience Middle School employs two Master Teachers and has utilized Mentor Teachers to provide feedback to Master Teachers and Administrators regarding Cluster goals and participate in Cluster.

Knowledge Middle School. Knowledge Middle School services just over 1,100 students and employs around 75 teachers. Years of experience in the school is relatively evenly distributed: 25% with 0-5 years of experience, 15% with 6-10 years of experience, 15% with 11-15 years of experience, 25% with 16-20 years of experience and 20% with more than 20 years of experience. The teacher ethnicity is 96% White and 4% Black. Knowledge Middle School employs two Master Teachers and has utilized Mentor Teachers to provide feedback to Master Teachers and Administrators regarding Cluster goals and participate in Cluster.

Wisdom High School. Wisdom High School services just over 2,300 students and employs around 125 teachers. Years of experience in the school is relatively evenly distributed with a larger number of teachers with more than 20 years of experience when compared to other schools: 25% with 0-5 years of experience, 10% with 6-10 years of experience, 20% with 11-15 years of experience, 15% with 16-20 years of experience and 30% with more than 20 years of experience. The teacher ethnicity is 98% White, 1% Asian, and 1% Black. Wisdom High School employs four Master Teachers and has utilized eight Mentor Teachers to provide feedback to Master Teachers and Administrators regarding Cluster goals and participate in Cluster.

Context: Instructional Leadership Team Meetings

Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings serve as professional development for administrators, Master Teachers, and Mentor Teachers (when they are included). ILT is often led by administrators, namely the principal of the building. However, depending on the objectives of the meetings, ILT can be led, or co-led, by any member. ILT meets weekly with the intent to accomplish procedural (i.e. set the evaluation schedule) and conceptual (i.e. build coaching capacity of members) goals, analyze data, develop the long-range school improvement plans of the building, and develop individual Cluster objectives.

Instructional Leadership Team meetings are grounded in a common format. Each meeting begins by identifying the need or purpose of the meeting, which guides the meeting objectives/outcomes. Relevant data sources are enumerated, including local and state-wide assessments, field testing outcomes, Cluster follow-up, student work, teacher evaluations, Individual Growth Plans (IGPs), and external resources such as book studies. Meeting activities are focused on evaluating past objectives and building on current objectives through modeling expectations. Considerable time is devoted to development activities, which require heavy participant engagement and are focused on reflection and the creation of the meeting outcomes. Finally, application of the meeting outcomes is considered as they relate to future meetings; often, assigned “Bring Backs” are described and apportioned. One ILT mission states, “As an ILT, we will build mentoring relationships through planning, monitoring, and evaluating professional development focused on best practices to create growth in student achievement.” At every ILT meeting observed, consideration was given by participants to how the new learning related to various teacher and student groups within the building (i.e. content teachers and student subgroups, such as the SPED or EL population).

Though ILT activities are driven by measurable objectives, conversation at ILT meetings frequently focused on the development of ILT members toward mentoring goals. When using the data source identified for the ILT, questions asked by, and reflected on, by ILT members focus on what conclusions can be drawn and how those conclusions impact ILT members' work with Classroom Teachers in the building. Gloria Steinem stated, "Mentoring can be very emotional for everyone involved. When people are grounded in one way of doing something, mentors have to approach everything based on their needs. The more unified we are, the more we continually speak the same language, the more people realize this isn't going away. We're here to support you and get in the trenches with you, but it takes time." Examples of ILT objectives observed in the buildings included in this study include:

- ILT members will reflect upon their roles as a leader within the change process, will review and revise strategies and outcomes for verified causes of our student learning problem, and will create a monitoring plan for the strategies outlined.
- ILT members will generate ideas to support our *tweeners* (in reference to a teacher subgroup identified in a book study) to support unity among all staff members.
- ILT members will establish inter-rater reliability and interrogate differences in scores using a common observation.
- ILT members will interrogate *Evaluate* (a student formative assessment program) data and compare proficiency averages to school goals in student performance by looking at building level, grade level and classroom level data. ILT members will then reflect on student achievement data and apply/bring back learning to identify plans to support grade level teachers for the remainder of the year.

- ILT members will develop a process to allow for options for Career Teachers to develop, analyze, and reflect on IGPs and develop measurable characteristics of appropriate reflection for teachers.

Context: Cluster Meetings

Cluster meetings serve as professional development for classroom teachers and are led by Master Teachers. Administrators and Mentor Teachers assume varying roles in professional development settings, depending on the building. Mentor Teachers sometimes co-plan during ILT, sometimes provide informal feedback to ILT members, sometimes co-led or model, but, in every building, strive to encompass a mentoring role to classroom teachers. Cluster “cycles” (the term given to delineate Cluster objectives within a school year as they relate to each other) are guided by teacher-driven goals or student-driven goals.

Similar to Instructional Leadership Team meetings, Cluster meetings are grounded in a common format. Cluster meetings are organized similarly, by identifying the need/purpose of the meeting, describing the objectives of the meeting and data sources that will be used, modeling expectations in any new learning for the teachers, developing the new learning and considering the application of the new learning. Cluster meetings frequently provide opportunity for teachers to reflect on questions posed by Master and Mentor teachers, pertaining to the Cluster objectives. Frequent share-out opportunities, allowing for teachers to respond and generate further reflection amongst each other, prompt conversation among all participants in Cluster. In all observations of Cluster, time spent with teachers talking in pairs, small groups, or with the whole group, heavily outweighed time spent with Master Teachers presenting.

In addition to tangible objectives, Master Teachers identify a consistent, conceptual goal for all teachers. A core characteristic of Cluster identified by all Master Teachers is modeling. Through sharing objectives, using data-driven analysis to guide objectives, and demonstrating best practices that can be used in all classrooms, Master Teachers “step-in” and “step-out” throughout Cluster activities to label elements that can translate to classroom instruction. Mentor Teachers, and at times identified Classroom Teachers, can be used to model best practices depending on Cluster objectives.

As Cluster meetings are larger than ILT members, in that all Classroom Teachers are divided among Clusters, grouping of participants plays a crucial role in the structure of Cluster. Cluster participants are sometimes organized by department/content area, grade level, allotted prep period during the day, or self-identified by participants based on scheduling availability. Master Teachers give careful consideration to grouping arrangements within Cluster meetings, as well, with the intent to maximize informal mentoring conversations within Cluster. Helen Keller explained, “Most of the teachers who I struggle finding where they fit, it’s a split between their own isolated professional practice and their emotional community participation. In most cases I struggle pairing those who lack taking initiative, but I don’t see them refusing to engage. They are compliant and sort of just exist.” Examples of teacher-driven objectives within Cluster cycle goals observed in the buildings included in this study include:

- Teachers will create a systemic approach to the teaching and learning process, in which students are continually assessed, the data/information is examined, and changes to instructional approaches and re-teaching are the norm.
- Through your Individual Growth Plan (IGP) focus, consider how your IGP impacts the needs of students, identify how your IGP can be integrated into lessons that focus on the

student skill of identifying the meaning of unknown words, and consider how today's strategy can impact the work toward your IGP in another lesson.

- Teachers will share best practices from their classroom in a speed-dating activity and reflect on how these best practices can translate to student achievement in all classrooms.

Examples of student-driven objectives within Cluster cycle goals observed in the buildings included in this study include:

- Through literacy-driven IGPs, teachers will track strategies' impact on student achievement by tracking student performance levels.
- Teachers will analyze student work to update the student work analysis protocol and identify student grouping needs based on evidence.
- Teachers will analyze how scaffolding questions for student learners impacts student achievement.

Context: Participants

Of all potential participants identified by principals, Master, Mentor and classroom teachers, selected participants fulfilled three qualities: 1) participants self-identified from the pool of potential participants by responding to an invitational email regarding the research study, 2) participants were identified by at least two other roles (principal, Master, Mentor Teacher and/or classroom teacher), and 3) participants were observed engaging in mentoring relationships in either Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings or Cluster. Participant names used in the study are protected for purposes of confidentiality. The pseudonyms utilized below are selected casually as famous historical mentors. Demography, namely gender, is not relative between participant and pseudonym as gender and other demography was not considered in this study.

Further aspects of demography as it relates to mentoring would provide an opportunity for additional analysis in future research.

Participants of Trust Elementary

George Boole

George is a Master Teacher with experience primarily in the elementary setting. George taught multiple grades for five years and has experience in Reading Recovery and Literacy Coaching. George has served as Master Teacher in the elementary setting for six years.

Gloria Steinem

Gloria is a Mentor Teacher with experience in the elementary setting. Gloria taught multiple grades for six years and has served as Mentor Teacher in the elementary setting for three years.

Participants of Reliable Elementary

Betty Friedan

Betty is a classroom teacher with experience primarily in the elementary setting. Betty has taught specials classes for 10 years and has experience with English Learners.

Participants of Knowledge Middle School

Marie Curie

Marie is a Mentor Teacher with experience primarily in the middle school setting. Marie has taught specials classes for five years and has served as a mentor teacher for two years.

Participants of Experience Middle School

[Helen Keller](#)

Helen is a Master Teacher with an eclectic background in education. Helen began as a teacher of students with exceptional needs in a high school in 2000. After one semester, Helen moved to an elementary setting serving the same demographic of students for three years. For nine years after 2003, Helen served in a special education classroom and English classroom in middle school. In 2012, Helen was hired as a Master Teacher in the same middle school.

[Angela Merkel](#)

Angela is a Classroom Teacher with experience in the secondary setting. Angela taught 10 years in a math classroom at the high school setting and 5 years in a math classroom at the middle school setting.

Participants of Wisdom High School

[Sandra Day O'Connor](#)

Sandra is a Classroom Teacher with experience in the secondary setting. Sandra taught 19 years in a science classroom at the high school setting.

[John Locke](#)

John is a Mentor Teacher with experience in the secondary setting with expertise in high ability learners. John taught 20 years in a science classroom at the high school setting and has served as a Mentor Teacher for two years. Additionally, John had served as a state-trained mentor prior to experience in a TAP System.

Thomas Hobbes

Thomas is a Master Teacher with experience primarily in the secondary setting. Thomas began in a middle school English classroom and has 8 years teaching experience. After obtaining an administrative license, Thomas has served two years as a Master Teacher.

Chapter 5: Presentation of Findings
“Wherever you go, go with all your heart.”
Confucius

The purpose of the study is to interpret what elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation and to illuminate supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship through the perspectives of Master, Mentor and classroom teacher. The data lead us to understand how mentoring relationships between classroom, Mentor and Master Teachers are structured in the context of peer-to-peer evaluation and mandated professional development couched in an intense focus on increased student achievement and whether participants identify key elements of a conceptual effective mentoring model. Throughout the presentation of findings, it is important to note the numerous activities in which these mentoring relationships occur in the schools included in this study: during Instructional Leadership Team, Cluster, Cluster Follow-Ups, Classroom Walkthroughs, through IGP conversations (face-to-face and digitally), and during classroom observations (through the pre- and post-conferences).

The first research question studies what elements of mentoring are identified from the perspectives of three participant roles: Master, Mentor and classroom teacher. These findings are organized using the analytic model adapted by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007) with the intent to describe aspects within the mentoring relationship that are perceived by Master, Mentor and classroom teacher.

The second research question studies supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship, as identified by perspectives of the participants. The findings of the second research question are organized around themes identified using pattern-matching within the analytic model. This thematic presentation of findings within each research question allows for aspects of

the findings that are common to Master, Mentor and classroom teacher to be presented. When necessary, deviations in perceptions among Master, Mentor and classroom teacher related to supportive or inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship are described.

The findings of this study are organized around the following two research questions.

Research Question 1

What elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation?

Through the observations and interviews in this study, data were coded using the an analytic model adapted by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014). Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014) present overlapping key elements of the effectiveness of transference of knowledge within a mentoring model⁷. Because of the massive amount of data presented in this qualitative study, these elements are used to provide an analytic model through which to consider how the mentoring in Sage Township is perceived by participants. The following sections are organized utilizing the overlapping elements below as presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014):

- **Number of Participants, Cardinality, Relationship Authority, Relative Seniority and Tie Strength.** This section combines elements pertaining to participants and their relationships to each other within the mentoring system.

⁷ See Figure 2: *Data Collection & Analysis Coding Framework based on Dawson (2014) and Bozeman & Feeney (2007)*

- **Roles and Objectives of the Mentoring Relationship.** This section will consider the roles and objectives of the mentoring relationship from the perspective of each participant: Master, Mentor and Classroom Teacher.
- **Selection and Matching.** This section will consider the selection of mentees and matching of mentee to mentor.
- **Time and Activities.** This section will consider the activities occurring within the mentoring relationship and the time associated with those activities.
- **Training, Resources, Tools and the Role of Technology.** This section will explore resources available to mentors and mentees within the mentoring system.
- **Policy, Monitoring, Rewards and Recognition.** This section will explore guidelines, oversight, monetary compensation, and the extent to which participants are knowledgeable of their roles within the mentoring system.
- **Needs Fulfillment and Knowledge Utility.** This section will explore participants' fulfillment based on the objectives of the mentoring system as well as the extent to which professional growth is attained through the mentoring relationships.
- **Termination.** This section will explain how mentoring in this model is ongoing, with informal termination to specific activities within the mentoring model

Number of Participants, Cardinality, Relationship Authority, Relative Seniority and Tie Strength. Using the key elements of mentoring models presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014), this section will present the number of participants, the cardinality and relationship authority between those participants, the relative seniority amongst participants and the tie strength between participants. The interviews and observations in this study revealed

complex affiliations and connections between participants due, in part, to the high number of participants and varying mentoring opportunities in which participants engaged within the system.

The number of participants engaged in mentoring relationships in schools within Sage Township is countless as all teachers within the building participate in the professional development and evaluation model, and the model accounts for numerous activities in which mentoring will occur. All participants in this case study reflected on this exorbitant amount of mentoring involving all teachers within the building/district. As Angela Merkel stated, “[Mentoring] is all the time. At least weekly, I’m in Cluster engaging in those conversations, but most weeks there are additional things, like evaluations, outside of Cluster.”

All classroom teachers are mandated to attend weekly professional development (Cluster) and participate in every evaluation cycle. In both elementary schools, classroom teachers experience Cluster Follow-Up weekly, during which a Mentor or Master Teacher joins the classroom teacher to observe, model, or co-teach the weekly strategy shared during Cluster. In all schools, classroom teachers experience Classroom Walkthroughs, during which Master Teachers, Administrators, and sometimes Mentor Teachers observe the teacher for a shorter time than in a formal observation with the intent to gather evidence and generate reflection opportunities regarding the instruction. All Mentor and Master Teachers are required to participate in Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) planning and implementation as well as Cluster planning and implementation.

The participants explained that there are four evaluation cycles per year in each building in Sage Township. Two observations are announced, whereby the evaluator and the classroom teacher schedule a pre-conference, an observation time/date, and a post-conference. Two

observations are unannounced, whereby the evaluator selects a date/time to conduct the observation and then the classroom teacher schedule a post-conference.

When considering the number of each role in the setting of this district and the cardinality of relationships between those roles, cardinality will vary from building to building; however, in any setting the cardinality of mentoring relationships in this system is infinite. According to the participants, a general guideline for TAP schools is to employ one Mentor Teacher for every eight classroom teachers, and to employ one Master Teacher for every fifteen teachers (Mentor or classroom). The cardinality of roles in this study ranged from four to six Mentor Teachers and two to four Master Teachers, depending on the setting.

Mentoring relationships among the roles in terms of cardinality is equally as infinite. By policy, every classroom teacher must be evaluated by one administrator annually; however, Master and/or Mentor teachers would fulfill additional evaluations. Through observations in ILT and Cluster settings, the cardinality of mentoring could exist from any Master to classroom teacher and any Mentor to classroom teacher, depending on the structure and Cluster Cycle goals. Similarly, the cardinality of mentoring in ILT settings would vary meeting-by-meeting as administrators, Master and Mentor teachers work collaboratively based on goals and objectives. George Boole reflected on the complexity of cardinality within this system, "ILT owns what happens in Cluster, but we all have to own our teacher data and our student data."

Because all classroom teachers in this setting serve as mentees, seniority is not relative to Mentor and Master Teachers; however, Master and Mentor Teachers are held, in the application and hiring process, to experience and student outcomes guidelines that are specific to highest attained degree (at least a Masters), years of experience, and demonstrated expertise in instruction and assessment (see Appendices B & C).

Within the mentoring model, Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014) consider the extent to which the relationship is authority mediated, by administrators or other roles, formally or informally. Participants in the study illuminated both informal and formal authority mediation based on during which mentoring activity the mentoring occurred. For example, Helen Keller explained, “All evaluators go into observation mentoring conversations with the authority that is vested through training and inter-rater reliability controls; however, each teacher has to be evaluated by an administrator at least once during a school year. Administrators also govern the appeal process for scores in an observation.” Overall, participants described the relationship authority in the school as one that maintains the age-old educational hierarchy of administrators, (particularly the principal) having formal authority over all mentoring relationships within the evaluation system. The mentoring relationships are ultimately governed formally by administrators; administrators have the final determination in the observation schedule (whom is paired with whom during each cycle), ILT is most often led by the Principal, and score-related appeals associated with the observations (during which most one-to-one mentoring conversations occur) are conducted by administrators, Master, and Mentor Teachers, who are outside of the classroom duties.

Master and Mentor teachers (especially if they are responsible for conducting evaluations) reflected on the difficulty of their role in terms of relationship authority. Master Teachers, by virtue of their title, experience, and role in leading Cluster, view themselves, and are viewed by others, as having authority, albeit informal, over Mentor and classroom teacher roles. When conducting evaluations, the scores reside in their authority to score the lesson. However, Mentor and Master teachers frequently described their role as *servicing* the classroom teachers with the purpose of building instructional and reflective capacity through coaching

questions. Thomas Hobbes stated, “This system evens the playing field in terms of expertise, with a focus on valuing the teacher’s reflection in the classroom and marrying that with the support and resources that the observer can bring to the process.” Mentor and Master Teachers simultaneously hold the authority to score lessons and lead professional development with the need to relinquish the authority to classroom teachers in their reflective practices. This causes questionable relationship authority as the mentor strives to build authority in the teacher through reflective capacity. George Boole reflected, “This is a very hard role from an authority standpoint, emotionally. You go into this role because you believe you can lead and make a difference for teachers and students, but you’re not an administrator. We are sometimes the ‘go-to punching bag’ when we try to mentor because we are considered teachers, but we conduct evaluations.”

Based on observations and interviews, classroom teachers illustrated the complexity of relationship authority within the mentoring system as well. Though stating that Master and Mentor Teachers are responsible for Cluster and observation scores, Betty Freidan reflected, “I really appreciate being vulnerable with each other. I see myself as the expert in my content area, just as they are the expert in providing us resources and support.” All participants illustrated successful mentoring experiences as those that value the input of both mentor and mentee and are discussion-based, rather than authoritative, especially surrounding evaluation activities.

Dawson (2014) explores tie strength in the mentoring system by considering the interconnectedness of relationships between roles. As discussed above, in Sage Township the roles of Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and Classroom Teacher are complex. Due to the complexity of these roles involved in mentoring relationships and the numerous activities in which mentoring takes place, the tie strength is similarly multifaceted. Participants identified

aspects of intended familiarity of the mentoring relationship as a function of the activity in which the mentoring occurs. In many participants' words, "It depends."

In the literature review of this study, innovative research on mentoring explored a new perspective on elements of activities where there is one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one, and many-to-many mentoring. These findings relate to the tie strength in the numerous activities involving mentoring in Sage Township. In Cluster settings, where characteristics of a one-to-many mentoring relationship exist, participants identified benefits for both mentors and mentees based on exposure to various perspectives. Angela Merkel noted, "It's the time when I not only come together with my colleagues to discuss student achievement in their classroom, but also when I have direct access to the whole school objectives from [the Master Teacher]." Classroom teachers benefit by being seen and hearing from different mentor perspectives and mentors benefit by seeing all different classroom teachers. Helen Keller noted, "When everyone comes together consistently, I can maximize my efforts in mentoring and coaching, since I have everyone there once a week to talk about our objectives and track our progress." Due to this structure, all participants identified the importance of a common objective and voice from administrators, Master and Mentor Teachers.

In ILT settings, where characteristics of a many-to-many mentoring relationship exist, Master and Mentor Teachers identified high levels of familiarity in the tie strength from mentor to mentor and mentor to mentee. Thomas Hobbes noted, "ILT is my professional development. As a mentor and coach to everyone in the building, I get to come together with everyone else who is mentor and coach to everyone in the building to make sure we're all steering the ship the same direction." Similarly, in observations, where characteristics of a one-to-one mentoring relationship exist, participants identified high levels of familiarity. John Locke reflected, "In an

observation, the stronger the relationship I have with a teacher outside of the classroom, the more comfortable I am with pushing them to consider how new learning impacts instruction and student achievement inside the classroom.” Characteristics of the many-to-one mentoring relationship exist in ILT and throughout observations in that Master and Mentor teachers sometimes hone in on one classroom teacher for whom they’ve mentored and coaches for various reasons.

The complexity of the tie strength of mentoring relationships in each mentoring activity is illustrated in the table below:

Table 5

<i>Tie Strength by Activity</i>		
ILT	Many to many	
Cluster	One to many	
Observations (Pre- and Post-conferences)	One to one/ Many to one	During individual observation/ Throughout the year
Walkthroughs	One to one/ Many to one	During individual walkthrough/ Throughout the year
Follow-up	One to one/ Many to one	During individual follow-up/ Throughout the year
The Mentoring System	Many to many	

Overall, through observations and interviews, elements pertaining to participants and their relationships to each other within the mentoring system were categorized as complex due to number of mentoring activities and number of participants. Participants did not identify authority and seniority as relative in this system as participants can fill varying roles depending on the mentoring activity, though there exists an administrative oversight on the system as a whole. Participants illuminated the complexity of tie strength within the system through each mentoring activity employing aspects of many-to-many, many-to-one, one-to-many, and one-to-one mentoring structure characteristics.

Roles and Objectives of the Mentoring Relationship. Dawson (2014) presents the mentoring objectives and roles as the first two key elements of a mentoring model. Dawson (2014) defines the objectives as detailing the purpose or intention of the mentoring relationship and considers who is involved in the mentoring model and the function of each role. This section will depict the objectives of the mentoring relationship that were observed common to all roles within the mentoring relationship and then illustrate objectives specific to Master, Mentor and Classroom Teacher.

The findings reveal that the Master, Mentor and Classroom Teachers in this study articulate both shared objectives within their roles and very specific objectives to each role within the mentoring relationship. One principal asked at the end of an ILT meeting, “What role has this leadership team played in the results of our data, how we support our teachers? What role have you personally played in this results through who you have mentored and coached?” Master and Mentor Teachers identified one overarching objective for mentoring relationships they engaged in through the hope that formal objectives (in ILT and Cluster) carry through to informal conversations among teachers. More specifically, as part of the pre- and post-conference within the evaluation process, the Master or Mentor teacher would share the Area of Refinement Objective and the Area of Reinforcement Objective in hopes that these formal objectives would guide future discussion among classroom teachers pertaining to those instructional and/or student outcome goals. All of the participants enumerated much complexity to the roles and objectives in the number of mentoring encounters within the system. For example, a week in the life of a Mentor Teacher included formal mentoring in ILT, Cluster and

an observation pre- and post-conference as well as informal mentoring through classroom walkthroughs.

Overall, the objective of the mentoring relationship detailed by Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in this study focused on the relationship between teacher needs and desired student achievement and growth outcomes. Master and Mentor Teacher participants were highly reflective in the role they played in building mentoring relationships with classroom teachers. Master and Mentor Teachers involved in planning ILT and Cluster identified the importance of prioritizing objectives related to ILT long-range planning, Cluster long-range planning, and objectives associated with individual mentoring activities. Gloria Steinem stated, “When there is so much to consider, mentors and evaluators first have to prioritize what is going to have the biggest impact, and be most translatable to all teachers and all students.” From the perspective of every participant, the observation rubric exemplifies an objective in and of itself within this system. As its role is a determinant of effectiveness in the classroom, how the rubric is defined and integrated into mentoring relationships is a fundamental component in guiding the objectives of the mentoring system.

Generally, all participants stressed the importance of objectives in all mentoring experiences being interrelated, with classroom teachers vocalizing the outcome of the observation having a more direct impact on their identified objectives of the mentoring experiences than the outcomes associated with student achievement. Specific objectives shared by participants included procedural objectives and conceptual objectives, but one key feature identified in the data is that each individual activity during which mentoring occurs includes singular objectives that relate to other activities and the objective as a whole: a focus on mentoring to promote student achievement.

Conceptual objectives identified by participants include building a culture of reflection, coaching as it relates to mentoring relationships, researching and modeling strategies to provide resources for teachers, differentiating the mentoring objectives based on individual teacher needs, content and/or grade level needs, and ultimately creating a collective understanding for the purpose of the mentoring through consistent and system feedback between those who serve as mentors and those who serve as mentees. Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers included in the study detailed the difficulty in marrying the concrete, procedural daily duties with the overall, conceptual objective of the system. Thomas Hobbes captured this common sentiment in a single sentence, “the objective in my mentoring relationships is to get teachers to approach instruction organically, based on student performance outcomes.”

Procedural objectives identified by participants exist in ILT and Cluster, and include providing a collective understanding of, and comfort with, the expectations of the evaluation rubrics, Cluster meeting times, and the observation schedule. School-wide ILT objectives and Cluster objectives are driven by data, which guide the mentoring focus of the Master and Mentor teachers. George Boole stated, “Sometimes we see that we addressed an indicator with teachers in Cluster and observations in a prior year, but if we’re not seeing it in subsequent instruction, we return to building that capacity in Cluster until we do see it in instruction.” Additionally, mentoring relationships are couched within a procedural focus on collecting and analyzing qualitative data (from observations, Cluster follow-up and classroom walkthroughs) and quantitative data (student work).

The following sections will depict the objectives specific to Master, Mentor and Classroom Teacher within the mentoring relationship.

Master Teacher

The Master Teacher's mentoring role and objectives exist in ILT, Cluster and observation activities. In ILT, Master Teachers described their roles as participant and collaborator on analyzing student data in preparation for Cluster Cycle goals and Cluster objectives. Master Teachers identified their role in this activity related to their own professional growth. George Boole stated, "This is the time in which I get guidance on how to build reflection within teachers. I refine my coaching through building ways to intentionally question."

Cluster plays a crucial function in the Master Teacher's perceived role. Master Teachers, as Cluster leaders, view their role as mentor in Cluster to provide access for teachers to specific resources and materials in conjunction with the research and evidence behind the resources. Master Teachers described their duties in Cluster: circulate among the teachers, provide individual feedback, make personal connections to what is observed in observations and walkthroughs, and reference conversations in pre- and post-conferences. At its core, the role of Master Teacher in Cluster is to monitor the application of new learning for teachers using data from Cluster, student work, and observations. Additionally, the role of the Master Teacher is to differentiate access to the resources by teacher needs (content, grade level, effectiveness). Thomas Hobbes stated, "We collectively look at data to determine a need as it relates to our long range plan. Then my role is to research it, create it, deliver it, and support it for the Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers." This role is exemplified in the context of mentoring through modeling the new learning for teachers. Master Teachers commented frequently on the importance of modeling, the act of stepping into the teacher's shoes, sharing procedures, actions, thinking, and insights, as it related to the growth of the mentee.

In conducting observations, the Master Teacher's role encompasses evaluator in the context of mentor. George Boole stated, "My role evolves in observations. During that time, I have to perceive to an individual teacher about how s/he is receiving the system and respond accordingly. My role is to facilitate the understanding that it's not an evaluation of the teacher as a person, it's an evaluation of the instruction within the classroom."

Mentor Teacher

The Mentor Teacher's mentoring role and objectives exist in ILT and observations (in the elementary settings) and in Cluster (in the elementary and secondary settings). Mentor Teachers are peers to classroom teachers in that they are responsible for direct instruction of students in the classroom; however, the Mentor Teacher's role differs primarily from the classroom teacher's role in that Mentor Teachers are the conduit between classroom teacher and Master Teacher by providing perspectives from the classroom related to specific Cluster goals. Gloria Steinem stated, "My role is to address the missing meaning and relevance for every individual teacher while providing the perspective to meet the needs of all teachers." Mentor Teachers illustrated their role in Cluster as actively participatory. Marie Curie reflected, "There is a shift in the rapport with other teachers in Cluster. Sometimes we co-present, but our role is always to support and facilitate discussions, provide follow-up questions, and make sure teachers feel comfortable with the new learning or strategy as it relates to their classroom." Additionally, Mentor Teachers take on the role of being better-versed, as they also teach in the classroom setting, in communicating how Cluster objectives relate to various classrooms for classroom teachers. Mentor Teachers identified their role as it pertains to modeling as well, in that Mentor

Teachers are well-positioned to model informal mentoring conversations as they exist from classroom teacher to classroom teacher outside of the accountability system.

Mentor Teacher participants consistently identified their role as the sounding board for Master Teachers. Frequently, Master Teachers will approach Mentor Teachers (formally or informally) at every level to discuss Cluster cycle goals, individual Cluster objectives, and identify individual teachers in need of further support with the purpose of garnering the perspective of the Mentor Teacher, who is on the ground-level in the classroom.

Classroom Teacher

The Classroom Teacher's mentee role and objectives exist in Cluster participation and through observations. Classroom teachers are traditionally evaluated four times annually, which include classroom walkthrough, pre-conferencing, reflection, and post-conferencing. Depending on the required schedule, classroom teachers attend Cluster, traditionally weekly. Classroom teachers' role is to implement the objectives or strategies shared through Cluster in classroom instruction, analyze student work, and complete required Cluster activities (sometimes occurring outside of Cluster time). Classroom teachers are often asked to communicate what the needs are for Mentor and Master Teachers in support of them.

The procedural objectives of Cluster from the classroom teacher perspective is relative to use in the classroom. Sandra Day O'Connor noted, "If we're doing it just to do it, if it doesn't translate to my specific classroom, I'm less likely to see the value in it." This translation of objectives in Cluster in the mentoring experience for the classroom teacher relates to the focus on student achievement. Because the objectives in this setting are mandated, classroom teachers

require objectives that relate to the needs in the classroom, as they consider themselves experts in the needs of their students.

For classroom teachers specifically, the outcome of the evaluation score served a crucial objective in the mentoring relationship. Gloria Steinem stated, “In all of this, the success is measured by whether or not your students met the objective, whether that be growth or performance. It’s not just about teachers. It’s not about how much you participated in Cluster or ILT, how much you reflected on your IGPs, or your scores on the evaluations. Those things all tie into it, but the objective is guided by the students’ needs.” Though carried primarily by the perspective of the classroom teachers, the objectives associated with mentoring conversations within the evaluation process focus on effectiveness of performance-based instruction.

Classroom teachers spoke to the need for higher effectiveness ratings in evaluations as a result of time spent in Cluster. The rubric factored heavily in these illustrations. Angela Merkel noted, “If the rubric is presented as a checklist, then we’re told it’s not a checklist, but then we get things checked off on our observations, it’s confusing for teachers.”

When mandated evaluation and professional development objectives are inserted into the mentoring system, the opportunity for dissention exists, based on teachers’ perspectives and expertise in content and/or student needs. Classroom teachers identified their role in terms of dealing with the human capital, the students, in relation to their perceived roles of Master and Mentor Teachers, which are more data-driven. Sandra Day O’Connor noted, “I go to Cluster and I participate in looking at and tracking my student data. I buy into the objectives that are presented to us, but then my evaluation scores don’t go up and my student performance data is still largely dependent on the students I have in the classroom.” The complexity of this role, in

translating objectives in Cluster and through the evaluation process, to instruction in the classroom, is crucial to the classroom teacher perspective in this study.

Selection and Matching. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) present selection and matching as key elements to the mentoring model in that these elements consider the process through which mentors and mentees are chosen and how mentor relationships are composed (i.e. mentor choice, mentee choice, random selection, administrative selection, or alternative criteria). This section will depict the selection and matching process in Sage Township through the mentoring activities that were described in the interviews and observed in ILT and Cluster. The data suggests that the process through which mentors and mentees are chosen is varied as all classroom teachers serve as mentees to Master and Mentor Teachers in various activities. John Locke described this complexity, “It’s so organic. The framework of activities is the same, but how we operate within them based on the needs of the students is ever changing. We are continually having conversations about how who needs to work with whom and how to make it all better.”

During the interviews, it was consistently evidenced that Master Teachers were best equipped to identify selection characteristics in the mentoring and evaluation system. Participants identified selection criteria that might happen in the evaluation observation process related to areas of reinforcement or refinement, or based on teacher needs identified through Cluster. Selection characteristics identified by Master and Mentor teachers in other mentoring activities included consideration given to prior master/mentee relationships, content area, grade level, specials (elective, EL, SPED), and the needs of the teacher based on evaluation rating (highly effective, effective, needs improvement).

As has been illustrated in the data, the cardinality of mentoring relationships in the study is infinite, thus, matching mentor with mentee is complex and varies depending on the activity and setting in which it occurs. Helen Keller explained, “There’s not a lot of room for personality matching as the matching in every activity is based on concrete evidence from student data or from observations.” Master and Mentor Teachers referenced the abundance of evidence as it relates to matching mentors with mentees in various activities. Because evidence exists from Cluster activities and from observations, matching is not haphazard or random. Instead, attention is given in Cluster and observation matching to evidence based on strategy objectives, areas of reinforcement or refinement, demographics of students taught, grade level, content area, or might simply be driven by availability of Master or Mentor Teacher.

Time and Activities. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) present time and activities as key elements to the effective mentoring model in that these elements consider the length of mentoring process, the actions of mentors and mentees in the mentoring process, and the regularity and quantity of contact. The activities identified by participants associated with the mentoring relationship include ILT (for Mentor Teachers in the elementary setting and all Master Teachers), field testing (for Master Teachers), observations/evaluations (including pre-conferencing and post-conferencing), Cluster, Cluster follow-up, classroom walkthroughs, and Individualized Growth Plans (IGPs). Due to the number of activities in which mentoring occurs, time plays a considerable role in the mentoring relationship in a TAP Evaluation System. Because all classroom teachers engage in Cluster and are observed numerous times annually, the length of the mentoring process is immeasurable and the regularity and quantity of contact is similar for every classroom teacher.

All participants in the study described the observation schedule as a substantial factor in the time associated with mentoring in this system. Master, Mentor and classroom teachers engage classroom walkthroughs associated with teachers who are being observed. Participants described walkthroughs as traditionally ranging from 5-20 minutes and occurring at least twice before an observation occurs, but possibly occurring more frequently based on teacher need. Master and Mentor Teacher participants reflected heavily on the time associated with mentoring in their roles. Thomas Hobbes stated, "Teachers' needs vary depending on the context of their experience, comfort, effectiveness, and the strategy. It is my role to figure out how much time needs to be devoted to building capacity in individual teachers and all teachers." Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in pre-conferences associated with observations. These conferences traditionally last 30 minutes and occur twice annually (due to pre-conferences occurring during announced observations). Similarly, all Master, Mentor and classroom teachers engage in post-conferences associated with observations. These conferences traditionally last 30 minutes and occur four-times annually (due to announced and unannounced observations requiring post-conferencing). Based on observations and interviews, actual observations in the classroom vary, depending on the schedule of the building, and range from 45-70 minutes. Master and Mentor Teachers shared that observations require massive amounts of time due to heavy scripting and the process of preparing for the post-conference and scoring the observations. Participants who score observations reported an average of two hours of time dedicated to each observation in addition to the time spent scripting the observation itself.

During my observations of ILT and Cluster in each building, Master and Mentor Teachers engaged differently in each activity depending on the building and level. Though ILT was predominantly facilitated by the Principal of the building, Master and Mentor Teachers (if

associated with ILT) engage in ILT; however, time associated with this mentoring activity was minimal and varied depending on administrator input and guidance. For example, the Master Teachers in the high school participated in ILT weekly while the Mentor Teachers only met monthly. During one observation in that building, ILT was associated with planning preparation for Cluster that week. In one elementary school, both Master and Mentor teachers participated in ILT weekly. During one observation in that building, the activities required heavy Master and Mentor teacher input as they were reviewing the student data that was collected during a recent formative assessment.

Master, Mentor and classroom teachers all engage in Cluster, which occurs weekly for fifty minutes. Some variation of time associated with Cluster will occur for Master Teachers and some Mentor Teachers (if involved in ILT) in planning and implementing this mentoring activity. During my interviews, all participants spoke at some point to the time associated with Cluster. As George Boole described, it is time spent “planning, implementing, making sure that one Cluster relates to the Clusters around it and the long-range plan, and then following-up with teachers about how it went and how our objectives are being implemented.” Though Master, mentor and classroom teachers are all involved in time associated with Cluster Follow-up, some variation will occur as Masters and Mentor teachers will conduct multiple follow-ups based on teacher need.

The time associated with field testing falls primarily on the Master Teacher. Through observations and interviews, I found that field testing predominantly occurs at the elementary level due, in part, to the varying content areas by different teachers taught at the secondary level. This process includes identifying a strategy to impact student achievement, field testing this strategy in a classroom (during which the Master Teacher might model or co-teach with the

classroom teacher), analyzing the data associated with student responses and work from the classroom, and planning and implementing the roll-out of the strategy in Cluster. George Boole at the elementary level stated, “The time spent on field testing is worth it as we focus on how our instructional strategies impact instruction across content areas for our teachers.” Conversely, Thomas Hobbes at the high school level did not speak at great length to field testing.

The time associated with Individual Growth Plans (IGPs) falls primarily on the classroom teacher. IGPs have a framework guided by the TAP Handbook which includes data-driven decisions when crafting the IGP, resources and support needed to fulfill the IGP, a timeline associated with the IGP, and reflection on progress toward the IGP; however, classroom teachers described varying time associated with implementation of IGPs at each level. Betty Freidan at the elementary level noted, “It is an expectation in our building to work on our IGP at least twice each week. It’s heavily factored into our Professionalism Rubric score at the end of the year, and it is meant to track my personal growth and reflection throughout the year.” Conversely, Thomas Hobbes at the high school level noted, “Our IGPs are sort of done when we’re reminded to do them. It’s not that I don’t think about the stuff that I’m working on after an observation and how it relates to everything else in the classroom and in Cluster, but I don’t document it specifically.”

Overall, participants noted the time associated with mentoring as it relates to evaluation and professional development in this system as substantial. Participants identified the number of activities and the time associated with mentoring within those activities as a significant in terms of weekly, monthly, and long-term expectations for their role within the mentoring system.

Training, Resources, Tools and the Role of Technology. Dawson (2014) presents the key elements of training, resources and tools as an indication of the artifacts available to support

mentors and mentees and the training evident for mentors and mentees to effectively utilize the resources. Dawson (2014) explores the increasing role of technology in mentoring programs. As is illuminated in various aspects of this mentoring framework in Sage Township, training is not a one-and-done model in that it occurs and is then reviewed. My observations and interviews revealed that training in this setting is organic and occurs as often as the weekly mentoring experiences occur. Master and Mentor Teachers noted that although there is support from external entities, namely the NIET System and TAP Regional Coordinators, this training encompasses building the capacity of ILT participants' ability to provide ongoing, self-sustaining training based on the needs and data in individual buildings. Trainings referenced by participants from external resources include maximizing ILT and Cluster long-range plans, interrater reliability, pre- and post-conferencing, and Instructional Rubric expertise. Internally, training identified by participants in ILT mirrored these topics.

Overall, participants identified common resources and tools that provide specific structures and templates for the purpose to prepare classroom teachers for what to expect going into mentoring conversations. NIET provides access to schools within the TAP System to the Portal of Educator Effectiveness Preparation and Support System (EPPaSS). This is a subscription-based, interactive web tool that provides individualized training and support through tutorials, documents, videos, and training presentations. This tool can be searched by grade, rubric indicator, content area, and year.

The rubrics guide all other resources and tools. Though all participants identified the rubric as the guidance resource for the mentoring relationship, Helen Keller captured the power of the rubric in the statement, "It's the holy grail. The common vocabulary of the rubric is at the heart of every single mentoring conversation I have." The four TAP rubrics provide highly

effective, effective, and needs improvement indicators, complete with numerous descriptors for every indicator. There are 29 indicators and varying descriptors associated with each level of effectiveness within each indicator. The rubric, for some classroom teachers, becomes a personified mentoring entity in this system. It is used before evaluations in the lesson planning process to see if every indicator has been considered. It is used in post-conferences to reflect on aspects of lesson planning, classroom environment, and instruction. The rubrics are used as the primary tool by Master and Mentor Teachers in scoring lesson evidence and student work associated with observations, and the common vocabulary of the rubric indicators and descriptors is found in every ILT and Cluster meeting.

Through observations and interviews, participants described activities, such as ILT and Cluster, to be supported through Cluster and Leadership Team Trainings, led by NIET Regional Coordinators and Trainers. Additionally, the Evaluation System Handbook provides explanation and examples of TAP teaching standards and rubric indicators. This tool provides pre- and post-conference planning resources, suggested coaching and reflection questions and professional development learning examples. As a supplement to the Evaluation System Handbook, the Evaluation Training Workbook provides rubric instruction, hints to evaluators for capturing evidence, effective scoring practices and practice activities, sample coaching questions for pre- and post-conferencing, templates, and guidance for writing an effective post-conference plan. The post-conference plan serves as a tool for the mentor and a resource for the classroom teacher in that it establishes the length of the conference and is guided by a greeting, open-ended, general impression question provided from mentor to mentee, the reinforcement and refinement objectives and self-reflection questions, evidence from the script and/or student work, connection

to student learning, and guided practice modeled by the mentor for the mentee. All post-conferences conclude with closing statements, scores from the lesson, and the lesson rating.

All participants identified modeling as a fundamental element in this evaluation system. Ultimately, it appears as an indicator on the Field Testing, Cluster Observation and Instructional Observation rubrics. During the interviews and observations, the act of modeling by the Master and Mentor teachers was noted as a critical tool and resources in that it provides an opportunity to differentiate support based on the needs of the teacher and the mentoring activity. For example, a Master Teacher will model a building-wide instructional strategy as a part of field testing in preparation for Cluster as well as model an instructional strategy specific to an observation with an individual teacher. The Master Teacher role requires seeking out additional external resources and tools to share with teachers and the creation or use of, textbook, curriculum and assessments. Thomas Hobbes at the high school level noted, “It’s important that I vet my strategies as I’m getting ready to roll them out in Cluster. I usually spend some time informally talking about what’s coming up with my administrators, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers before the final strategy takes form so that it includes the perspectives of everyone who’s going to use it.” The Mentor Teacher role provides resources associated with classroom and mentoring-related experiences to be drawn from. The classroom teacher becomes a resource in and of itself through the field testing process.

The role of technology is not an identifiable aspect of this mentoring system. Technology in and of itself does not factor explicitly in the mentoring relationships in this setting; however, it does play a role as an organizational tool and use in conceptual modeling by the Master Teacher. Technology was frequently cited by participants in organizing and structuring IGP creation and feedback between classroom teachers and mentors. Technology is the primary communication

tool regarding setting up pre- and post-conferencing and observations. Additionally, with the advent of shared technology capabilities, participants cited technology as housing collaborative documents, such as observation materials and templates. Participants also cited various technological use in tracking student data, using various platforms and programs. During my interviews, Master Teachers cited a conceptual use for technology in that Cluster objectives include modeling appropriate use of digital resources for classroom teachers to illustrate student-engagement outcomes in the classroom. In some settings, the role of technology is expanded to highlight instruction in the classrooms for the purpose of sharing that instruction with other teachers in the building. During one Cluster observation, Master and Mentor Teachers led classroom teachers through a “speed dating” activity during which various effective uses of technology in the classroom were shared by teachers.

Policy, Monitoring, Rewards and Recognition. Dawson (2014) explores policy, monitoring and rewards in a mentoring system by examining the set of rules and guidelines governing the mentoring process, the oversight performed on the mentoring system, and the rewards or compensation that participants in the mentoring system receive. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) utilize recognition within a mentoring system to consider the extent to which all involved understand their explicit role in the mentoring relationship.

During observations and interviews, I noted that policy in this system is guided by both external TAP policies and internal contractual policies. Overall policy is dictated by the Career Teacher Handbook, which includes explanation of TAP’s teaching skills, knowledge and responsibility/professionalism standards and expectations for coaching/mentoring before and after evaluations. It is important to note that participants identified areas in which internal needs

can govern, or outweigh, seemingly stringent guidelines provided by TAP policies. George Boole noted, “There is a very clear cut structure in what has to happen for mentoring classroom teachers (weekly Cluster, and ongoing IGP, and four observations each year), but for some teachers I look to the for field testing because they’re really strong in an area that we’re focusing on. For some teachers I’ll do more classroom walkthroughs than others to provide additional support. Some teachers just get it, and I mainly look to stay out of their way.” Though TAP provides very specific policies, expectations and procedures for mentoring experiences within the system, there is room for flexibility in implementing these policies at the local level, based on the needs of the classroom teachers.

Policy in Cluster is guided by the Guide to Effective Cluster Meetings and operates within a common framework. In all schools I observed that the Cluster leader (traditionally the Master Teacher) guides teachers to meet the identified objectives through questioning as they analyze student work to determine effectiveness or the need for modifications. Evidence of field testing of appropriate research-based strategies which target identified student need exist. The Cluster leader models critical attributes for the strategy. Teachers have time to develop understanding of the strategy and plan to embed it in future lessons. The Cluster leader and mentor teacher(s) arrange specific support and follow-up for classroom teachers. Most Cluster require “take-away” and “bring-back” activities which are specific and concrete for teachers’ implementation in the classroom.

Participants identified internal and external monitoring characteristics. Externally, the TAP certified evaluation process is monitored, by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching through ongoing training and support. In all schools in this study, evaluators must certify annually. Master Teachers are responsible for evaluation in all schools; however, Mentor

Teachers are responsible for evaluation in only the elementary settings. The observations framework, with oversight from NIET through the certification process, includes scripting and scoring a lesson and answering questions pertaining to the post-conference process. Internally, participants illuminated additional monitoring characteristics. Master Teachers noted conversations in ILT regarding developing common frameworks for observations. For example, though NIET provides policies and templates for pre- (for announced observations) and post-conference that universally include areas of reinforcement and refinement, the observation structure allows for local guidance as to how observers develop scripts for post-conferences and whether teachers can opt out of pre-conferencing. Post-conferences are guided by the Conferencing Scoring Rubric. Locally, policy exists for the appeals process for observation scores and the value of confidentiality related to performance ratings. Master Teachers in this study were better-versed than Mentor and classroom teachers on the policy and monitoring within this system. Though Mentor and classroom teachers did not directly speak to certain criteria of policy and monitoring, Helen Keller noted, “Sometimes we have to take a step back and remind everyone of the process. I usually carry eight or ten evaluations each round, four times a year. Sometimes I forget that teachers only see me once each year, individually.”

Policy and monitoring is also guided by the evaluation rubrics. All evaluation rubrics depict numerous indicators with descriptors for significantly above expectations (or exemplary), at expectations (or proficient), and significantly below expectations (or emerging). ILT is guided by the Leadership Team Observation Rubric. Lesson Observation is guided by the Instructional Rubrics (Environment, Planning, and Instruction). All participants were well versed in the evaluation rubrics and vocabulary pertaining to the indicators and descriptors was used often in interviews. As noted, these rubrics provide the common language through which mentoring

conversations happy in this system. Master Teachers spoke to a monitoring characteristic in each building through inter-rater reliability activities, during which two evaluators would observe the same lesson and discuss scores and mentoring goals together to reach consensus on performance and growth expectations for classroom teachers among those who evaluate.

Data plays a crucial role for monitoring within this system, especially in development of mentoring needs through ILT and Cluster. Participants cited data sources relevant to objectives in these two mentoring activities that were both qualitative (observation insights) and quantitative (interrater reliability associated with evaluation observations). All participants identified monitoring in terms of student growth and achievement outcomes.

The Cluster Long Range Plan provides monitoring data through individual cycle goals, weekly objectives, and the analysis of student data. The feedback process between Master/Mentor Teacher and classroom teachers associated with Individual Growth Plans (IGPs) also provides monitoring data for teacher reflection and growth. Through the evaluation observations, data is gathered on teacher effectiveness and interrater reliability, which is the process through which evaluators gauge the reliability of their scores on individual indicators, rubrics, and lessons.

Monitoring in terms of achieving long-range planning goals focuses not only on how the mentoring relationships are constructed but also how those relationships impact the identified outcomes of the long-range plan in terms of student achievement. Participants also reflected on how the actual mentoring relationships are monitored outside of the focus on student achievement and identified the ongoing feedback and focus on reflection in relation to Cluster follow-up, IGPs, and observations as a form of monitoring the impact of the varied mentoring experiences.

Rewards are externally and internally embedded in this mentoring system. Tangible, monetary rewards are specific to annually negotiated teacher contracts in conjunction with available grant monies supplied by NIET. There are stipends available for Master and Mentor Teachers, and NIET provides incentives associated with grants, where applicable based on approval. Classroom Teachers, based on grants provided by NIET and the Teacher Appreciation Grant, are eligible for monetary incentives relative to student achievement gains. Participants identified intangible rewards as well. Mentor Teachers are often given a release period from teaching to fulfill duties associated with their role. During my interviews, classroom teachers identified intrinsic rewards through the mentoring conversations associated with the Reinforcement indicator of the observation, discussed during the post-conference process, which exists to provide feedback on something that went well in the lesson that was observed.

Bozeman and Feeney (2007) present recognition as the extent to which all participants involved in the mentoring relationship understand their explicit role. It is important to review the findings through both the identified role by individual each participant and the perceives roles of all participants.

The Master Teachers' role is arguably the most explicit formal mentoring role, as leader in Cluster. Thomas Hobbes stated, "One thing I've learned as I take on the role of mentor to classroom teachers is that I'm responsible for growing their capacity to take my seat, to fill my role. Any teacher should be able to assume the role of Mentor or Master Teacher, provided there is growth and the aspiration to do so." The Master Teacher, through reflection in ILT and in the development of Cluster Cycle Goals and evaluations, heavily considers recognition in terms of effectiveness. Helen Keller reflected, "Initially it can be hard to recognize if you are meeting all the needs and how well you are meeting the needs. The mentoring system is structured such that

I have a clear picture of who I want to be, how I execute my goals, and who I can access to support me through the process. As a whole this is tracked through the data that we're collecting, whether it be instruction growth in teacher effectiveness or student achievement data. We also heavily reflect on strengths and weaknesses through mentoring conversations in all of the activities."

The Mentor Teacher's role exists as mentor in "the in-between" in that Mentor Teachers serving as evaluator varies at each building level. Additionally, though a participant in Cluster, the Mentor Teacher is often utilized at each level differently than the classroom teacher. Mentor Teachers within the study reflected heavily on the fluidity of their role. Marie Curie stated, "It's a complex thing to consider. Even being in a mentor role, you still become a mentee. There is a fluidity in the mentoring activities and responsibilities in each role."

The classroom teacher role is strictly mentee; however, as illuminated in various findings, even as mentee the classroom teacher holds some authority within the mentoring relationship through reflection and application of objectives as they relate to individual classroom settings and student needs. During interviews, classroom teachers identified recognition of the role of reflective practitioner through constant engagement in the activities involving mentoring within the system. Angela Merkel noted, "Anytime you're in a mentoring conversation and engaged in the topic, you recognize to some extent that mentoring occurs. Because of all the working pieces in this system, the structure provides the framework through which we are able to accomplish these goals. We identify objectives, set goals, track our progress, and reflect, constantly and continuously."

In terms of participant recognition of individual roles in the mentoring relationship, collective ownership was a resounding theme among all participants. Gloria Steinem stated, "A

lot of this comes down to ownership. We all carry ownership and value the skills we bring to the mentoring relationship.” Additionally, participants considered the effectiveness of qualitative data related to mentoring. Participants identified comfort with recognition associated with data related to teacher instructional effectiveness in the classroom and data related to student achievement. However, as Thomas Hobbes stated, “The role of coaching and reflection from each perspective is really difficult to quantify and monitor.”

Overall, participants identified external and internal policies and monitoring characteristics within the system. Additionally, participants noted external and internal opportunities for rewards. In all interviews, findings associated with participant recognition include collective ownership of mentoring as it relates to professional growth and student achievement outcomes.

Needs Fulfillment and Knowledge Utility. Bozeman and Feeney (2007) primarily explore elements of knowledge transmission within a mentoring relationship. Needs fulfillment considers the extent to which needs are fulfilled for participants given the identification of objectives of the mentoring relationship. Knowledge utility explores the extent to which the purpose of increasing knowledge, personal growth, professional advancement or organizational improvement is attained in a mentoring relationship. Throughout the study, participants identified objectives for their role as well as other perceived objectives for other participants as they related to their role. Through coding the data, I considered the extent to which needs are fulfilled given the identification of objectives of the mentoring relationship within each role through the lens of those who serve in the role as well as those who serve in other roles. All participants related fulfillment of needs to co-construction of mentoring goals and outcomes. Traditional models of

mentoring that involve expert to novice transition of knowledge are not valued in this setting. In the words of Sandra Day O'Connor, "This doesn't work if the mentors are resistant to the perspective of the classroom teacher." Based on observations and interviews, mentoring in the context of this system, due largely to the mandated evaluation and professional development objectives, fulfills participants' needs when there is a *mutual* exchange of expertise and marrying of perspectives in relation to objectives and goals within the mentoring relationship.

All participants related fulfillment of needs to a collective voice relating to objectives and outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Participants often spoke to the traditional mentoring model, which introduces a resource, the resource is implemented, and follow-up occurs (routinely, consistently), often through a one-to-one exchange between mentor and mentee. Based on observations and interviews, in the model illustrated through this study, multiple opportunities for mentoring occur: in Cluster, observation pre- and post-conferences, classroom walkthroughs, field testing, Cluster follow-up, and IGP feedback. These opportunities occur frequently with varying objectives, by multiple people, throughout the year. From the perspective of all participants, this breeds the possibility of disconnect from one mentor voice to another and the importance of a common voice in a mentoring model which includes activities that require characteristics of many-to-many, one-to-one, and many-to-many models.

All participants illuminated a fulfillment of need through expertise on the rubrics. In this system, the numerous mentoring conversations between various roles breeds the confidence for anyone within the system to be a mentor, through a common voice surrounding the rubric and objectives, and common participation in the same mentoring activities throughout the year. Classroom teachers specifically, however, noted the power of the rubric and its role in observation evaluations. Betty Freidan noted, "When you put a score to it, the relationship piece

is threatened. When you have to identify that area of refinement it's judging someone's teaching and ultimately telling someone what should be done differently. It's suggesting resources and aspects of teaching up until that point, and not everyone can make that transition to telling a colleague what to do differently. I love looking at lessons and talking with teachers, but when it comes to judging a colleagues' instruction, it's hard for some teachers."

Master Teachers identified needs associated with professional and personal growth through ILT, collaboration, coaching classroom teachers, and using student data to drive objectives of mentoring activities. In terms of fulfillment of needs within those roles, Master Teachers overwhelmingly identified a high level of fulfillment in mentoring relationships. Helen Keller reflected on fulfillment associated with the fact that the role exists in between administrator and classroom teacher, through the ability to work outside the classroom with numerous teachers. "You get the best of both worlds. I get to engage in mentoring all day, every day, without having to deal with anything administrative, and I get to work with all teachers in the building without being tied to the high-need responsibilities of teaching in one classroom."

Master Teachers identified needs associated heavily with coaching in mentoring relationships. Through the ability to ask reflective questions, to find and share resources, to model and team teach with classroom teachers, Master Teachers expressed a fulfillment in exhibiting vulnerability. Helen Keller reflected, "I had to get over being afraid to not look like I knew what I was doing."

Mentor Teachers identified needs associated with their role as liaison between classroom teacher and Master Teacher and valued conversations with both roles through fulfillment as a supplemental resource to both roles. Mentoring conversations identified by the Mentor Teachers surrounding the rubric generate in-depth dialogue between classroom teachers and everyone who

mentors them about not only what the rubrics say on the page, but also what the indicators and descriptors mean to the classroom teacher. Mentor Teachers exhibited fulfillment through providing supplemental understanding, or examples, of rubric-related incongruities identified by classroom teachers. Mentor Teachers expressed fulfillment of needs when a marrying of Master Teacher needs and classroom teacher needs can be achieved. Gloria Steinem reflected, “The Master Teacher brings the expertise of the rubric and external resources associated with it, but the classroom teacher brings the expertise of the students and the context of the classroom. When that expertise marries, it can be a beautiful thing.”

Mentor Teachers identified a lack of needs fulfillment in the variability of mentor use within each building as well as from building to building in the district. As Mentor Teachers are used differently in each building, participants expressed confusion relating to their role, depending on the context of the mentoring objective within the building and within the specific activity.

As classroom teachers most directly fill the role of mentee in this system, data were interpreted from the lens of both fulfillment of needs from the classroom teacher perspective as well as the classroom teachers’ fulfillment of needs from the Mentor and Master Teacher perspective. Classroom teachers identified needs associated with feedback from Master and Mentor Teachers, Cluster objectives related to classroom needs, and evaluation. Classroom teacher needs focused heavily on relevance and ratings of effectiveness. Classroom teachers collectively identified the rubric fulfilling a specific need. The rubric, as it relates to Cluster objectives and observation ratings, provides in the mentoring conversations a well-defined, quantitatively and qualitatively measurable end-goal. The end-goal relates to the teachers as well as the students. Classroom teachers identified fulfillment of needs when the rubric is made to fit

the needs of the teacher and students in a specific class rather than the teacher and students made to fit the rubric. Angela Merkel noted, “I value processes and varied ways of doing things rather than tasks. I value the discussion associated with various objectives, not being told what to do and when.” Participants spoke to the importance of scoring the lesson and not the teacher.

Though the target is clear to all participants, the process by which the target is pursued is varied. This variance causes some lack of needs fulfillment from the classroom teacher perspective. Participants expressed fulfillment of needs when Cluster and observation conversations relate to their identified needs in the classroom. Sandra Day O’Connor noted, “It is imperative that teachers are given information and support on something that is relevant to what is happening in their classroom. They can use the mentoring relationships in Cluster and in observations to work with others, but only if it’s applicable to them. If it fulfills some need.” Consequently, lack of fulfillment occurs when Cluster objectives aren’t directly related to their content area or their needs in the classroom. Additionally, if the outcome of student achievement and higher effectiveness ratings are clear, then growth in student achievement and increased effectiveness ratings should occur. Sandra Day O’Connor noted when reflecting on needs fulfillment, “Many teachers are perfectionists. Highly effective is the highest thing you can achieve, but the standard threshold of expectation is only effective. It’s taken a long time to build a culture that this isn’t a ‘gotcha’ system.”

During the interviews, all Master and Mentor Teachers identified needs for the classroom teacher associated with the capacity to value the framework of the evaluation and professional development system as well as the capacity to approach instruction organically through high levels of responsiveness to feedback in instruction. Inherent in this need lies the expectation for classroom teachers to mentor each other toward a collective goal. From the classroom teacher

perspective, there still exists a pervasive disconnect between mentoring and evaluation. Even though all classroom teachers exhibited an appreciation for engaging in the mentoring conversations surrounding the rubrics and in Cluster, each classroom teacher expressed a strong desire to not evaluate their colleagues and a strong aversion for the judgement that is innate in a rating of effectiveness.

After consideration of the fulfillment of needs of each participant based on identified objectives, knowledge utility presents the extent to which the purpose of mentoring is attained in the mentoring relationship. Consideration is given to knowledge presumed relevant to attaining the system's objectives, and the extent to which the purpose of increasing knowledge, personal growth, professional advancement or organizational improvement is attained. Using the objectives of the mentoring relationships and the roles identified by participants, data were explored and interpreted through the activities during which knowledge utility should occur: ILT, Cluster, and in observation pre- and post-conference. Knowledge utility described by the participants was illuminated quantitatively and qualitatively. All participants identified growth in student achievement and classroom instruction effectiveness ratings as monitored by evaluation scores and formative and summative student achievement scores. Betty Friedan noted, "I might feel better about my instruction after an observation, and I might get some useful feedback or information during Cluster, but when I see the growth in my students' performance from month to month, semester to semester, I know it's working."

Participants illuminated two annual activities that spoke directly to knowledge utility within the mentoring system. First, an annual survey, conducted anonymously, which focuses on school leadership, teacher leadership, professional development, student discipline, community support and overall ratings, is taken by all staff. Participants spoke to the function of this survey

tracking knowledge utility and guiding monitoring progress. George Boole noted, “When we unpack the annual data for the whole school, even though it’s anonymous and doesn’t correlate with individual mentoring relationships, I know that what’s being done in ILT, Cluster and all the observations is working.” Second, the fourth rubric in the TAP Evaluation System is the Professionalism rubric. This rubric measures annual professional growth and development, reflection on teaching, community involvement and school responsibilities. Through various tracking mechanisms specific to each school, knowledge utility is measured through self-reflection and annual ratings through the Professionalism rubric for each classroom teacher.

Termination. Dawson (2014) presents termination as the final key element of the mentoring system. Termination considers how the mentoring relationship is ended and the criteria to which termination is done. As has been illuminated in other aspects of this mentoring framework, all classroom teachers engage in various mentoring relationships within various structures, at all times. In short, there is no formal termination of the mentoring relationships or expectations in this system. However, the post-conference serves as an informal termination associated with a singular evaluation observation. Betty Freidan noted, “Even though I know there is a Cluster on the horizon, I do have a sense of completion when an observation is done. Still, even though the scores are connected to that individual lesson, my reflection on my areas of reinforcement and refinement are meant to carry me through future lesson planning and instruction. So I guess it’s always ongoing.” The post-conference template provides an opportunity for the Master or Mentor Teacher to conclude the mentoring conversation surrounding a specific experience (the observation) using a specific set of evidence. It is important to note; however, that all participants spoke to the observation mentoring conversations as having context in overall

Cluster and rubric goals, thus stressing the informal termination that this specific experience exemplifies (see Appendix C).

In summary, this study first considered what elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation. The number of participants in this mentoring model is infinite as all classroom teachers are engaged in the evaluation and professional development system. The interviews and observations in this study revealed time associated with mentoring in this model to be considerable. Mentoring activities in this model include ILT, Cluster, Cluster follow-up, evaluations, Individual Growth Plans (IGPs), and field testing. The interviews and observations in this study revealed highly complex cardinality, relationship authority, and tie strength between participants due, in large part, to the high number of participants and varying mentoring opportunities in which participants engage within the system.

Though Mentor and Master Teachers are held to experience and effective student performance outcomes, since all classroom teachers serve as mentees, seniority is not relative to Mentor and Master Teachers. Interviews and observations of participants revealed the intricacy of the mentoring relationship as it related to varying objectives during various activities. The roles of Master and Mentor Teacher are that of mentor, the role of classroom teacher is that of mentee; however, Mentor Teachers encompass both role of mentor and mentee depending on the activity. Overall, the objective of the mentoring relationship detailed by Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in this study focused on the relationship between teacher needs and desired student achievement and growth outcomes. The selection and matching process in this model is organic.

Interviews and observations in this model provided numerous examples of external and internal policy and monitoring. Further, external and internal training, resources and tools were enumerated by participants, namely focusing on the Cluster, Conferencing and Instructional rubrics. Though it does exist in a supportive aspect, participants did not identify technology as a critical component of this mentoring model.

As the key elements of an effective mentoring model presumably exist to determine the effectiveness of the outcomes of mentoring within the model, this study considers rewards, recognition, needs fulfillment and knowledge utility in terms of whether participants feel valued and mentoring relationships result in the betterment of teaching and learning. Additionally, there are monetary rewards available through contractual and grant funding. This model has no formal termination process as mentoring occurs for all teachers indefinitely.

Research Question 2

In the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

The findings of the second research question are organized around themes identified using pattern-matching and associated with the analytic model. Data collected during observations and principal interviews within the first round of the study as well as participants' responses across the interviews within the second round of the study is presented through themes identified by pattern-matching. This thematic presentation of findings allows for aspects of the findings that are common to Master, Mentor and classroom teacher to be presented. When

necessary, deviations in perceptions among Master, Mentor and classroom teacher related to supportive or inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship are described.

Supportive Aspects

All participants were asked to reflect on their evaluation and professional development experiences before engaging in mentoring relationships within the TAP Evaluation System.

Eight of the nine participants had experience outside of the TAP Evaluation System.

Additionally, all participants were asked to reflect on the implementation of the TAP Evaluation System. Mentoring occurs in this setting systemically and systematically through a highly structured framework guided by observations and weekly professional development. All participants commented on the structure and consistent feedback aligned with common outcome-based goals related to teacher need and student achievement. The following seven themes emerged that relate to supporting aspects within the context of the mentoring relationship from participants' perspectives. All participants noted the following themes in the context of a supportive aspect of the system. Supportive aspects are organized in the following section in order of breadth and depth. Supportive aspects are presented in order of how much they were stressed by participants. Supportive aspects that were noted most often and in the most depth are explored first.

Rubrics. All participants consistently cited the Lesson Plan, Environment, Instruction, and Professionalism rubrics as the single most supportive aspect within the mentoring system. George Boole noted, “the rubrics are the holy grail. Without them, nothing else matters. They provide the common language through which all conversation occurs no matter what the objective is...post-conferencing, Cluster, etc.” Similarly, Marie Curie stated, “I found it very

beneficial to engage in conversation with my colleagues about elements of the rubrics that relate to each other. I'd never considered how my grouping strategies impacted my students' problem solving in as much depth before, and I could listen to and share ideas with other teachers about those correlations across classrooms.”

Though all participants illustrated the evaluation rubrics as a significantly supportive aspect within the mentoring system, all three classroom teachers also identified the rubric as having the variable capacity to both support and inhibit mentoring relationships. To the classroom teachers, the rubrics provide the power of a common language within a systematic framework; however, the common language can be overwhelming when one does not yet speak it. Angela Merkel noted, “I knew intuitively that the rubric was important, but it takes a really long time to wrap your head around the whole thing. Once the verbiage became second-nature to me, I was able to really use it and felt good about the growth that I could articulate in Cluster and in observations, but before that it was really just like learning a new language.”

Specificity and Structure. All participants identified more specificity in the current mentoring conversations within the context of mandated evaluation and professional development. Guided predominantly by the rubric, participants' reflection on the specificity associated with conversations in weekly professional development meetings in ILT and Cluster followed by more conversations, happening more often. Thomas Hobbes reflected, “Before this [system], there was not a framework or opportunity for conversations surrounding mentoring in professional development to occur. What we have now is a specific guide to the activities and objectives that need to happen around mentoring and evaluation of classroom teachers.” All participants associated specificity with the data-driven aspect of the objectives of mentoring

activities within the system. Betty Freidan noted, “If there’s one thing I know now, it’s what is expected of me. I know what the objective was the week before in Cluster, I know what I need to bring back to Cluster, and I know what I’m tracking in the future in order to impact my students in the classroom.” All participants linked the specificity of both activities and objectives to supportive aspects within the system.

All participants identified more structure in the current mentoring conversations within the context of mandated evaluation and professional development. Participants described a shift in mentoring experiences from feeling disconnected, focused on fulfilling seemingly random state and federal mandates, to a focus on outcome-based objectives in terms of student achievement and collecting/monitoring data. Helen Keller, who had also been a classroom teacher in the district noted, “It felt like we were just checking boxes to cover requirements. TAP has created a space for us to come together and focus on our specific school goals based on the needs of our students. It mandates and facilitates the time to collectively work toward a common goal.” All participants illustrated a shift to more focused, streamlined structure and aligned this specificity and structure to supportive aspects within the system.

Data-Driven. All participants referenced the focus on data-driven decisions as a supportive aspect of the mentoring relationship in this system. Sandra Day O’Connor noted, “at the very least I know that the conversations around Cluster and evaluations are going to be heavily focused on data. I know that those conversations aren’t haphazard and frivolous. Everything is grounded in tracked data that relates to everything else.” Participants noted various data used to identify student needs, provide guidance in ILT and Cluster objectives, and school improvement long range planning. Gloria Steinem stated, “When all roles can arrive at agreement in what data

to use, what the data says, and what to do about the data, when we see what we're doing well and what we need to work on in terms of very specific student achievement outcomes...it works."

Flexibility and Transferability. All participants illustrated flexibility and transferability as supportive aspects in the mentoring system. Participants defined flexibility in terms of mentoring activity objectives able to be guided by individual or group teacher need. As Angela Merkel noted, "When I attend Cluster, it's clear that the objectives are tailored to meet the needs of students in various content areas and I can use the resources and tools to suit the needs of students in my classroom." Additionally, participants illustrated examples for which the flexibility operating within the common framework, using the common vocabulary, maintained the supportive aspect due to mentees engaging in mentoring relationships with numerous mentors throughout the year. For example, George Boole stated, "I am confident, through ILT, Cluster and evaluation conversations, that the common vocabulary used by all mentors carries through to every classroom teacher in the building."

Participants defined transferability in terms of mentoring objectives that relate to various activities in various contexts. All participants identified the importance of objectives in all mentoring experiences not only being relative to the contexts of individual classroom teachers, but also relative between mentoring activities. The supportive aspect of mentoring activities identified by participants focused on objectives transferring from ILT, to Cluster, and to observation pre- and post-conferences. Additionally, mentoring objectives in all activities are identified as highly supportive when they impact all classroom teachers, in the context of their individual classrooms, equally. Participants identified supportive aspects of mentoring

experience as those that positively impact multiple future lessons and benefit multiple groups of children.

Valuing Voices. All participants repeatedly identified highly supportive aspects of the mentoring system associated with valuing the voice of all roles within the mentoring system. Master Teachers attributed value to Mentor Teachers' voice in developing Cluster objectives and professional development activities. George Boole noted, "I cannot create an effective Cluster without the input of the Mentor teachers as they carry the field-testing data and classroom perspective that I don't have."

Master and Mentor Teachers noted the importance of the classroom teachers' voice in the reflection process during observation evaluations. John Locke noted, "The power of the teacher's reflection in the evaluation process cannot be underestimated. It's what guides the evaluator's support and feedback in every situation as it's what the teacher feels is needed the most for the students in the classroom." Ultimately, valuing the background and experience of every classroom teacher as it relates to goals and objectives is imperative to supportive aspects within the mentoring system.

Inhibitive Aspects

The core of mentoring in this setting, and the purpose of researching it in this study, lies in the fact that mentoring is done in the context of a highly structured evaluation and professional development system. All participants were asked to reflect on their experiences engaging in mentoring relationships throughout the implementation of the TAP Evaluation System. All participants noted inhibitive aspects associated with the implementation of a new system. When

considering the procedural implementation, participants in all buildings identified a similar purpose in the first year, which focused on setting the groundwork for the system and establishing the roles of the Master and Mentor teachers. Additionally, all participants illustrated an intense focus on the rubric during the first year of implementation. Development of rubric understanding for classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers, Master Teachers and administrators was the focus for ILT and Cluster objectives for the better part of the first year of implementation in every building. Participants' reflection on subsequent years of implementation varied through attention to specific identified needs of the building, as related to ILT, Cluster, and evaluation observations.

Participants' conceptual perception regarding implementation varied by role. Though participants were not asked to respond to the effectiveness of the implementation, participants did identify challenges with the implementation relating to change. Sandra Day O'Connor noted, "Change is always hard, especially since it was all so vastly different than the mentoring and evaluation system we had before." All participants noted the organic process as it relates to the change from the former system to the current system. Though participants noted various aspects within the initial change to the TAP Evaluation System as potentially inhibiting the mentoring relationship, participants reflected generally on mentoring relationships getting "better" from year to year as conversations continue to happen between Master, Mentor and classroom teachers. All participants often reflected on the perspective that not all teachers appreciate being evaluated numerous times annually and given very specific feedback on their performance; however, all participants couched this in the belief that all teachers want students to be successful. Though classroom teachers specifically noted the support that is given in this system, when compared to other systems, as a contributing factor not only benefiting teacher growth, participants identified

the shift in heavy support embedded within the mentoring system as an inhibiting characteristic through the implementation process in that the support is provided by numerous individuals at numerous times throughout the year. Participants noted this as an inhibitive of the vast increase in time associated with mentoring when compared to the past evaluation and professional development conversations as well as the new roles of Master and Mentor Teacher that embody mentoring in this system.

It is important when considering the thematic analysis of mentoring relationships in this study that these relationships occur at various times throughout the year, involving various people, depending on the context of the activity. As a reminder, ILT occurs weekly, is often led by the principal, and involves administrators, Master Teacher and, in some settings, Mentor Teachers. ILT embodies many-to-many mentoring characteristics. Cluster occurs weekly, is led by the Master Teacher, and involves Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and often administrators. Cluster embodies one-to-many mentoring characteristics. Evaluation observations, classroom walkthroughs, and field testing activities occur more sporadically throughout the year, based on a set schedule, and involves a pairing of either Administrator/Master/Mentor Teacher with classroom teacher. Observations embody one-to-one mentoring characteristics.

Because mentoring happens in the context of the evaluation system in this setting, and more specifically does not happen informally, outside of the evaluation system, many of the characteristics that participants illuminated as inhibitive to their professional growth were associated with the evaluation and professional development system structure. The complexity of the mentoring relationships in this system cannot be ignored, but it is this complexity that provides a previously uninterrogated lens into mentoring in the context of a mandated evaluation and professional development system. In short, mentoring and evaluation in this system are not

mutually exclusive and participants struggle to separate the two concepts. Inhibitive aspects identified by participants were often couched as a possibility rather than as evident in every mentoring activity or specific mentoring activities in any setting. The following five themes emerged that relate to inhibitive aspects within the context of the mentoring relationship from participants' perspectives. Inhibitive aspects are organized in the following section in order of breadth and depth. Inhibitive aspects that were noted most often and in the most depth are explored first.

Time and Mandated Mentoring. All participants identified the increased time associated with mentoring activities within the system as a possible inhibitive aspect. Angela Merkel noted, "When teachers are asked to do something and their plates are already full, this causes a strain on the mentoring relationships at every opportunity." As the classroom teacher has virtually no formal authority on who s/he is paired with in any activity, mandated mentoring has implications which range from minor to significant within the system. Minor examples provided by classroom teacher participants include assigned seats in Cluster and assigned observers throughout the observation schedule. Participants illustrated mandated mentoring impacting Cluster and pre- and post-conference conversations periodically. When mentor and mentee disagree with the other's perspectives in desired outcomes, it is often a product of the perspective being attached to an evaluative rating. Mentoring in this system isn't limited to providing resources and support. Gloria Steinem noted, "After a great conversation during a post-conference, I still have to end it with providing the scores that stifle the evaluation into one single rating of effectiveness." Those resources and support are in direct correlation to an evaluation score of effectiveness and are grounded very heavily in evidence from the classroom within the context of a monitored, student

achievement outcome-based system. In a word, when accountability is placed on a mentoring relationship, there exists the possibility of a strain on the mentoring relationship.

Included in mandated engagement in activities, this system seemingly mandates mentee reflection through a growth mindset. Helen Keller posited, “Embedded in this relationship is the need for every teacher to do the majority of the talking and reflecting. The process values their reflection and openness to try new things. Without that, it’s a different conversation with a different goal.”

Variance and Lack of Relevancy. All participants identified variance in the capability or success in implementing all aspects of the mentoring model within the system as a possible inhibitive aspect. For example, Mentor Teachers utilized differently in various building levels and variance in implementation of classroom walkthroughs as it relates to scheduling capacity of mentors serving in that role.

All participants identified relevancy as a possible inhibitive aspect in this system due, in part, to the heavy focus on instruction and student achievement outcomes. This focus leaves little room for supplemental considerations such as students’ social emotional skills, performance based skills, extracurricular and athletic values, workplace skills, and factors associated with socio-economic status and upbringing. Betty Freidan highlighted, “Sometimes the time spent on what we are being told to do hinders what we think might need to be done in the classroom, based on any given individual objective at the time.” All participants identified the complexity of a system comprised of human capital, both adult teachers and mentors as well as students in the building. Inhibitive aspects could exist when objectives in Cluster and observations don’t

appear to address some demographic needs of individual students, based on non-academic factors.

Lack of Support from Funding and/or External Governing Bodies. Schools are guided by local, State, and Federal policies and guidelines, and this guidance operates within the scope of available funding. Because mentoring is heavily related to outcomes identified by data, participants identified a strain on these relationships when funding allocation changes or external mandates are given to the school. Participants illuminated two examples, 1) when mentoring activity outcomes focus on one particular formative assessment tool and an external governing body changes the tool, and 2) when funding allocation is split to cover additional resources. Any change to the structure or resources used to identify objectives and track data within the structure will create a strain on the mentoring relationship as it reacts to the change.

In summary, all participants spoke at great length on the rubrics associated with observations, Cluster and ILT as the most supportive aspect of the mentoring relationship in that the rubrics provided a common vocabulary through which to have conversations about expectations in instruction and professional development. Similarly, all participants illustrated the specificity and structure of the mentoring model as a supportive aspect through which mentoring conversations could occur and relationships develop. Specificity and structure as a supportive aspect carried weight in the varied mentoring activities that occur within the model. All participants noted, though objectives within the mentoring model were acutely data driven, the flexibility and transferability of the objectives as they related to various grade levels and content areas contributed to a supportive aspect when this occurred. Finally, all participants

recognized the importance of valuing the voices of classroom, Mentor and Master Teachers as it related to determining objectives of the mentoring relationship.

Time was enumerated by participants as the most inhibitive aspect of the mentoring relationship. As mentoring is mandated across numerous activities, the time associated with the mentoring relationship not only impacts all participants throughout their daily activities, but also provides numerous opportunities for the mentoring relationship to either support or inhibit presumed professional goals and day-to-day objectives. The variance and potential lack of relevancy for objectives within the mentoring relationship presents a sense of rigidity for participants. Participants spoke to mandated activities and the increase in numerous, detailed requirements associated with various activities as impactful to presumed needs related to mentoring relationships, and when mentoring objectives across activities aren't viewed as meeting the needs of participants the specific mentoring activity can present a strain on the mentoring relationship as a whole. Finally, the evolution of the mentoring relationship within an everchanging system presents an opportunity for inhibiting the mentoring relationship due to changes in funding and decisions from local or state governing bodies.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings

“It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.”
Confucius

Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to build upon the vast literature surrounding mentoring relationships through the lens of one case within the context of a mandated professional development and evaluation system. As research has yet to present a cohesive definition of mentoring, this problem of practice coded mentoring characteristics within this setting using a collective analytic model presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014). As research presents varied theories of adult learning within professional development settings and effective evaluative hierarchies, this problem of practice pattern-matched supportive and inhibitive aspects specific to the mentoring relationship within the context of a mandated professional development and evaluation system from the perspectives of participants. This chapter will present an interpreted analysis of mentoring characteristics in the context of a mandated evaluation and professional development system within a specific setting according to the collective framework presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014) and present implications and recommendations based on supportive or inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship.

The discussion of findings presented in this case study seeks to better depict an evolved concept of mentoring in a specific setting given that mentoring to this point is a highly imprecise process with infinitely variable implementation models. Specifically, this case study explored and analyzed mentoring characteristics in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation. Moreover, this research will not only advance the understanding of mentoring

relationships in this, and similar settings, but may also generate implications on how mentoring relationships and their outcomes are structured in educational settings from hereinafter. The case study depicts not only elements of mentoring from the perspectives of Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers, but also interprets supportive and inhibitive aspects within the mentoring model using collective perspectives of participants through the following research questions:

1. What elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation?
2. In the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, what aspects of the mentoring model in Sage Township do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers perceive to support or inhibit the mentoring relationship?

As the purpose of the study is to interpret the mentoring relationship through the perspectives of Master, Mentor and classroom teacher, the key elements of a mentoring model identified by Dawson (2014) and the characteristics of processes for transmitting knowledge identified by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) were used in this case study as an analytic model to code and organize data. This case study illuminates identified elements by Master, Mentor and Classroom teacher based on a conceptual framework of effective mentoring. Additionally, this case study interprets the supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring relationship between Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers as it relates to the co-construction of professional growth through the multiple and varied understandings, interpretations and

perspectives of the participants. Ideally, the supportive and inhibitive aspects of this relationship identified in this study from the participants' perspectives provide a thematic guide through which Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers and classroom teachers can establish a productive, co-construction of professional growth to increase student achievement.

Study Summary & Findings

The research was conducted in a suburban school district in a midwestern city. The schools within the school district were two elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school. The participants were either Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers, or classroom teachers within one of the schools. Participants self-identified after having been invited to participate through principal interviews and observations of professional development activities within the school in which mentoring conversations occurred. Participants participated in two semi-structured interviews. Interview questions were designed to solicit perspectives of the participants as they relate to mentoring relationships within the school. The first interview sought to gather data. The second interview sought to clarify the collective findings of the data and ask follow up questions.

Data from observations and interviews were analyzed and coded using the characteristics of mentoring relationships presented by Dawson (2014) and Bozeman and Feeney (2007). Using an interpretivist paradigm, data were structured to present the nature of the mentoring relationship with consideration to collectively identified characteristics and singular divergences within the mentoring model. During the third phase of the study, member checks were used to ensure validity, and any follow up questions were asked at this time.

Using the framework presented by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014), the findings in this study highlight the importance of “a framework for specifying the diversity of mentoring” (Dawson, 2014, p. 143). When compared to elements of effective mentoring, the findings in the study can be categorized by tangible, singular-choice elements and by intangible, ongoing conceptual elements.

Sage Township’s mentoring model includes a number of tangible, singular-choice elements. From design to implementation, there is an infinite number of participants and the regulations that govern cardinality of participants is relatively conventional from school to school. Specific mentoring activities in Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), Cluster, Cluster follow-up, observations/evaluations, walkthroughs, field testing and Individualized Growth Plans (IGPs) are guided by externally created handbooks and rubrics. There exist tangible aspects of the mentoring model in training, resources and tools through external and internal policies and monitoring procedures. Similarly, the findings present specific rewards associated with mentoring goals within this model. A considerable finding in this study is the excessive amount of time devoted to mentoring within this mentoring model.

Sage Township’s mentoring model includes a number of intangible, pervasive conceptual elements. Authority and seniority among roles within the mentoring system are not relative and can vary based on changes in staffing (as related to years of experience). Authority among roles varies heavily based on the specific activity in which the mentoring occurs. Though the activities in which mentoring occurs are resolute within the system, the findings presented highly multifaceted characteristics of tie strength within and among activities through varying instances of one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to one, and many-to-many mentoring structures. Findings suggest that participant roles and objectives in the mentoring system, though guided by

professional growth and student achievement, are both shared overall by Master, Mentor and classroom teacher but also specific to Master, Mentor and classroom teacher in singular when participants are engaged in singular mentoring activities. Though the findings suggest there are some data-driven criteria associated with selection and matching procedures between mentor and mentee, participants identified this as a very organic process with few concrete variables.

In addition to findings associated with the research questions, this study illuminated two key discoveries of the mentoring relationship in this setting. Specific to the first research question, which considers what elements of mentoring do Master, Mentor and classroom teachers in Sage Township experience in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation, the findings revealed a vastly complex mentoring system overall. This complexity also permeates singular intricacies among design elements within the system. The key discovery of multifaceted tie strength among activities in one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one, and many-to-many mentoring characteristics is relevant to Sage Township's mentoring model in that findings did not suggest a deliberate focus on mentoring goals within roles and activities as they relate to the mentoring model as a whole.

Specific to the second research question, which considers supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring system, a considerable discovery in this study is the conceptual findings related to recognition, needs fulfillment and knowledge utility with respect to how well participants in the mentoring relationship understand their role, feel accomplished within their role, and find success in their role through identified supportive and inhibitive elements of the mentoring system. Findings suggest that the collective voice is valued in this mentoring model, which adds to the complexity of the elements within the system. Traditional models of mentoring that depend on unidirectional construction of knowledge from expert to novice are not valued in

this setting. Instead findings heavily support the co-construction of mentoring goals and outcomes. Findings suggest that mentoring in the context of this system, due largely to the mandated evaluation and professional development objectives, fulfills participants' needs when there is a *mutual* exchange of expertise and marrying of perspectives in relation to objectives and goals within the mentoring relationship. Though findings presented collective perceptions of supportive and inhibitive aspects of mentoring within the system, truly measuring recognition, needs fulfillment and knowledge utility is conceptually difficult to do by participants due to the complexity of the tie strength among roles within the activities mandated by the mentoring system and the focus on co-construction of mentoring objectives among those activities. This finding is relevant to the context of mandated professional development and evaluation in this setting. Whereas there exists an unconditional determination of effectiveness through an observation score, which is passed from mentor to mentee, the mutual exchange of professional growth goals and resources is dependent on the collective construction of objectives within the mentoring relationship. In this setting, this sometimes presents a challenging, symbiotic correlation through which Master, Mentor and classroom teacher must navigate.

Furthering the Literature

While much of the data were consistent with the literature on mentoring in that all mentoring systems employ elements determined by the goals of the mentoring design, findings in this study depict a highly complex combination of mentoring goals through numerous roles, activities and time associated with mentoring conversations. Allen and Eby (2010) argue that a lack of a well-defined, conceptual, transferable model for mentoring continues to endure; however, they advocate for research to consider mentoring characteristics within an individual

setting as it furthers an understanding of mentoring in all settings. Dawson (2014) presents an argument for specific elements that occur within effective mentoring systems and that instead of employing an all-encompassing, ubiquitous definition among all mentoring models, mentoring should strategically employ elements within a framework to fill a determined need. This section provides discussion and analysis of the findings of this research that impact the existing literature related to mentoring, professional development in educational settings, and evaluation.

Structurally, this system constructs mentoring activities in a highly systematized way. All mentoring activities are presented in a regulated approach, through mandated, recurrent meeting times for activities. Highly systematized procedures and methods associated with mentoring activities in all settings exist. Mentoring occurs through a complex dyadic model in which co-construction of knowledge is sought through numerous activities in which numerous people serve as mentor to individuals and groups in given activities. Though the mentoring relationship seeks equality in expertise brought by mentor and mentee, there exists an expert to novice facet of the relationship by virtue of the evaluative ratings that are passed from mentor to mentee through classroom observations. In implementation of activities, especially those related to evaluation, consideration is given by the mentor to supportive and inhibit aspects that are varied based on the process of executing the mandated evaluation and professional development system.

Based on the findings from perspectives of participants within the system, in implementation, the recognition, needs fulfillment and knowledge utility of mentoring is dependent on the co-construction of mentoring goals and outcomes based both on individual need, collective school-wide need, and student performance outcomes.

In the review of the literature on mentoring, it remains clear that mentoring is a deep-rooted concept and that most research concludes that a formally agreed upon definition or model of mentoring has yet to exist. New research into mentoring considers contexts and activities that exhibit characteristics of many to many, many to one, one to many, and one to one relationships (Huizing, 2012). Though aspects of the mentoring relationships between Master, Mentor and classroom teacher are akin to many to one and many to many mentoring frameworks explored by Huizing (2012), the research into mentoring in a TAP evaluation system in this study revealed that group mentoring takes on an altogether new and highly complex form. Mentoring relationships exist formally between Master, Mentor and classroom teacher in three settings: ILT, Cluster, and the evaluation process (walkthroughs, Cluster follow-up, IGPs, and pre- and post-conferences). ILT consists of Master Teacher(s), Mentor Teachers and Administrators. Cluster consists of Master Teacher(s), some Mentor Teachers (depending on scheduling availability) and some administrators (depending on scheduling availability). The evaluation process consists of either a Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher or administrator paired with classroom teacher, and the mentor traditionally changes throughout the year. The complexity of the structures, purposes and settings of these activities as they relate to the development of mentoring relationships provides an altogether new lens through which to view mentoring.

Based on the findings, mentoring within this system is not specific to a singular activity with a singular objective or measurement of outcome; instead, numerous mentoring activities occur singularly with specific intentionality to the roles, objectives, and resources used to accomplish specified outcomes. These singular activities combine to create an overall mentoring system which seeks to marry participants' recognition, needs fulfillment and knowledge utility through mandated professional development and evaluation of teacher performance. The system

as a whole is then governed both by the needs fulfillment of participants and by a student performance outcome.

Though the conflict between coaching and mentoring in terms of distinct similarities and vast differences is not resolved in scholarly research, the concept of coaching is often used interchangeably with mentoring as is depicted in this research. Effective coaching supports teachers in achieving professional goals by challenging thinking and supporting them with resources, provides feedback with specific rationale, and withholds judgment by presenting evidence. Effective coaching can maintain efficacy and self-esteem among classroom teachers and supports the ability to implement new teaching strategies effectively (Garmston, 1987).

Participants largely used coaching and mentoring concepts interchangeably, and this research did not seek to distinguish between the two. Based on the findings, participants identified clear characteristics in coaching conversations within mentoring activities through a focus on highly quantifiable outcomes within evaluation ratings and increase student achievement scores. The data in this study revealed the interpretation of needs fulfillment within coaching conversations and mentoring relationships among participants as evidence to suggest that intrinsic outcomes for both mentor and mentee as well as value-added outcomes for students in an educational setting help to quantify the supportive and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring model.

Review of the literature on adult learning in professional development settings is grounded in support for efficacy and empowerment of the adult learner. The relatively new concept of andragogy, a model for how adults learn, focuses on self-directed new learning, establishing a correlation between new learning and past experiences, and heavy adult learner participation in identification and development of new learning objectives. Classroom teachers

navigate survival and discovery, experimentation and consolidation, and master and stabilization (Swan, Mazur, Trullinger, Brock, Ross, Holman & Yost, 2007), through years of experience as well as through any new learning impacting classroom instruction that might occur. The literature identifies self-reflection as key to the facilitation of adult learning.

The data illuminated two new areas of understanding about mentoring in the context of mandated professional development and evaluation: symbiotic creation of objectives within the mentoring relationship and the role of peer-to-peer modeling. Based on the findings, effective adult learning through mentoring in the context of the mandated evaluation and professional development system in Sage Township suggests that relevance and classroom teacher voice must be a key component. As the findings illustrate, this is not to suggest that the professional development (Cluster) objectives are established in an expert-to-novice mentality. Regardless of whether objectives are highly data driven, consensus on professional development objectives is hard to reach when numerous stakeholders' perspectives are included. Subsequently, relevance must exist in order for time spent in mentoring activities to be applicable to every classroom and translatable from classroom to classroom. In Sage Township, professional development objectives aren't Master, Mentor or classroom teacher driven, exclusively. There is a symbiotic relationship in determining what the data suggests in terms of the student need and what should be done about it through professional development activities requiring implementation of adult learning strategies in those settings.

Though a review of the literature on peer-review evaluation as it relates to mentoring and professional development experiences is sparse, the literature uncovers the general consensus that practitioners are well-positioned to be experts in what is needed for practitioners; however, much research is needed in evaluating the effectiveness of the characteristics of models enacting

peer-review in evaluation systems. One core feature of peer-review literature stems from distrust as a mitigating factor between peers when effectiveness of instruction is measured.

Purposefulness and intentionality was illuminated as a common theme throughout the evaluation, professional development, and mentoring processes when meeting the needs of teachers. Similar to elements of peer coaching, peer review evaluation focused attention to the power of modeling. This study illuminated characteristics of practical, tangible sharing of resources through conceptual co-modeling by mentor and mentee as a potentially supportive aspect of navigating mandated professional development and evaluation through building trust between participants.

Implications and Recommendations

The complexity of the mentoring relationship becomes a key factor in addressing concerns when the highly structured and multifaceted mentoring framework within this system does not achieve the desired outcome, namely more effective instruction and higher student achievement gains. There exist implications that impact those implementing mentoring and evaluation systems in practice, those determining policy relating to mentoring and evaluation systems, those researching the nature and/or outcomes of implemented systems, and those creating new mentoring models. The following section considers implications and provides recommendation for practice, policy and research.

Practice. All schools in Indiana, and most schools world-wide, implement some form of a professional development and evaluation system for teachers. Instruction anywhere, in and of itself, provides a mechanism through which to monitor student achievement. Mentoring, whether

formal or informal, exists when educators coexist. This research provides a case study of a specific, complex, highly structured, mentoring system within the context of mandated professional development and evaluation. The research is clear that some structure must exist in order to consider the needs of the students as well as the needs of the teachers in an educational setting. In practice, the findings recommend administrators and educators consider the structure of the mentoring system, especially when it exists within the context of mandated professional development and evaluation. Though some purposeful structure is needed, the findings recommend an organic, systemic analysis of the monitoring of student data and teacher effectiveness as it relates to the use of mentoring and evaluation system models and implementation practices.

In practice, it is clear that stakeholders within an educational setting, namely administrators, educators, parents, students and community members, are not yet in agreement of a singularly effective way to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement which impacts all students equally. The findings suggest that it is crucial to consider for practitioners to garner all stakeholder voices when determining the most appropriate model for mentoring within a specific setting. Additionally, the elements of the mentoring system must impact outcomes singularly through individual activities as well as collectively through the system as a whole.

Policy. Policy makers at the local, state and national levels must consider flexibility in implementation of mentoring and evaluation systems. Due to various models existing in relation to the fluctuating needs of teachers and students in the context of any environment, this research suggests that people at the building level must have the flexibility to consider innumerable aspects of implementation. Though the desired outcomes related to teacher effectiveness and

student achievement might remain immutable, the characteristics within the process through which the outcomes are achieved are as varied as the students within the building that the model serves. Policy must allow for flexibility to organically approach, analyze and monitor supportive and inhibitive aspects of mentoring within the professional development and evaluation system.

As a companion to policy, implications exist for higher education institutions who train teachers and administrators, in their future mentoring roles and implementation of mentoring systems. It is imperative that institutions of higher education are well versed in mentoring models in the context of any mandated professional development and/or evaluation system so that supportive and inhibitive aspects of mentoring can be built and refined for future educators.

Research. Overall, when considering the nature of mentoring in this context, the findings suggest a need for additional research into the quantitative measurement of the effectiveness of mentoring activities, associated with desirable outcomes of classroom instruction and student achievement. Though supportive and inhibitive aspects were interrogated through the lens of participants, the effectiveness of these aspects in terms of instruction and student achievement was not considered.

When considering the longstanding, vast concept of mentoring the findings lead to numerous implications for further research. Mentoring within this system exists within professional development settings. Additionally, due to the sizable time devoted to mandated activities, neither professional development nor mentoring formally exist outside of mandated, structured activities. The interpretation of many to many, many to one, one to many, and one to one mentoring activities within this setting yields a need for singular interrogation of each of these activities to determine the nature of individual activities in relation to other activities as

well as the effectiveness of individual activities on the desired outcomes of instruction and student achievement.

Finally, as coaching and mentoring within the system focused heavily on teacher reflection, future research into the measurement of effective reflection and its impact on classroom instruction is needed.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study specifically addresses a gap in the literature: marrying well-founded mentoring characteristics between practitioners with characteristics of professional development and adult learning in the context of accountability and evaluation of performance.

The selection criteria of one high school, two middle schools and two elementary schools within one TAP school system, and the further narrowed selection of three classroom teachers, three Mentor teachers, and three Master Teachers is the largest limitation of this study. The single case study design somewhat reduces the generalizability of the findings. However, Stake (1995) argues, case study design focuses on particularization rather than generalization, and there is an emphasis on uniqueness. Additionally, Merriam (2009) argues that generalizability, in a statistical sense, should not be the goal of qualitative research. In this case, the ultimate goal is to provide a greater understanding of how the perceptions of participants in one school district construct mentoring relationships in the context of mandated peer review and professional development. The research encourages the reader to determine the transferability of the study and to decide if the context is similar enough for one to assume applicability to another specific situation. While the single case study design does limit the generalizability, it has the potential to add value to the research by minimizing variability that could otherwise be accredited to

differences in the data collected based on organizational culture or structure of mentoring relationships and evaluations systems if multiple sources were involved.

The data sources included in the study could also be perceived as a limitation. One source of the data collected in the study is from interviews. The nature of self-reporting can somewhat diminish the reliability of the data; however, the process of data analysis included in the study involves triangulation of three data sources, namely the perspectives of three roles: Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher. A further limitation inherent in the study is possible when considering additional demography of the participants, for example the range of years of experience, gender, race and ethnicity. Though this study did not set out to consider specific demography analysis as it relates to mentoring, it is important to note that by including additional, or different participants with dissimilar demography could have led to varying data and additional analysis. This limitation does lead to numerous possibilities for further research in this setting, and the current analysis diminishes threats to validity to the extent possible.

It is also important to consider delimitations of this case study. By qualitatively examining a single district with a single evaluation model, this study does not attempt to explore the efficacy of the TAP evaluation model or the district's implementation of it. Additionally, there are no comparisons made to other programs that may or may not implement similar mentoring programs within peer-to-peer evaluation models, and no recommendations are made involving the scalability of mentoring relationships in other contexts. Further research may illuminate application to various mentoring, evaluation and professional development programs; however, this is outside the scope of this study.

Conclusion

Mentoring is an age-old concept. As the effectiveness of K-12 education continues to exist in conversation on the local, state, national and international stage, mentoring for the purpose of increasing teacher effectiveness and student growth and achievement remains on the forefront of research. Continued research into effective mentoring practices provides unlimited opportunities to impact the efforts of educators and the success of students in any context. Mentoring in this system attempts to utilize triangulated activities with intricately measurable outcomes. Outcomes are assessed and monitored using qualitative and quantitative data on teacher performance and student achievement and growth.

Though limitations of this study include a seemingly small set of participants within a single setting, the purpose of the study was accomplished through presenting a collective interpretation of the nature of mentoring activities, supportive aspects of the mentoring system, and inhibitive aspects of the mentoring system. Because it is outside the scope of this study, future research into singular characteristics within the mentoring system and the effects of the mentoring system on quantifiable outcomes is needed.

The TAP Evaluation System isn't the singular, immutable mechanism that creates and sustains the mentoring relationships in a school system. Any individual system of professional development and evaluation will not explicitly increase student achievement. The system is the vehicle through which mentoring relationships occur, and the effectiveness of those relationships increase effective instruction, which in turn will increase student achievement. Policy makers, administrators and educators must prudently consider the system utilized in professional development and evaluation and the implementation characteristics within the setting in which it is being conducted. The voices of the mentees within the system stand at the forefront of the efforts through which their needs are met.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol & Questions
Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Project: What is the nature of mentoring between Master Teacher, Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher in the context of a mandated, peer-review evaluation process?

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Position of Interviewee:

[Using the study information document as a guide, I will describe the scope of the study, including the purpose of the study, sources of data, how I will take measures to ensure confidentiality, and how long the interview will take. Interviewee can read and sign the consent form. Interview will be recorded on my iPad in the SoundNote app.]

First Phase (Principal Interview)

Please reflect and respond to the following questions to the best of your ability, sharing as much as you feel comfortable sharing.

- Describe the evaluation and professional development system in the building before the implementation of TAP.
- How has TAP been implemented in the building?
- How has TAP been received in the building by classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers and Master Teachers?
- How has the role of Master/Mentor Teacher as evaluator, mentor, and leader of professional development been received in the building?
- Please identify some classroom teachers, Mentor Teachers, and Master Teachers who come to mind when you consider their perceptions of the TAP evaluation system as either supporting or inhibiting their professional growth.

Second Phase (Participant Interview)

Please reflect and respond to the following questions to the best of your ability, sharing as much as you feel comfortable sharing.

- Tell me about your teaching experiences (years of experience, subjects taught, schools in which you've worked).

- How are experiences in Cluster and the conversations associated with evaluation similar to what happened before with professional development and evaluation?
How does it differ?
- I have been observing your ILT and/or Cluster for some time, but imagine that I have never been to an ILT/Cluster meeting before. Could you describe to me your role in ILT/Cluster, and what the goal of ILT/Cluster is?
- Describe a Cluster that went particularly well for you.
- Describe a Cluster that frustrated you.
- Describe a conversation you had with another teacher about Cluster or an evaluation experience.
- How do you feel about what you do during Cluster?
- Can you think of a time during which you were either planning or instructing students that you implemented a Cluster strategy? Describe it.
- How do you perceive the professional development culture in the building?
- Describe your evaluative relationships with classroom, Mentor and/or Master Teachers?
- Describe to me how you prepare for Cluster (*specifically for Mentor and Master Teachers*).
- How does the relationship between Master/Mentor Teacher and classroom teacher contribute to:
 - The teacher's planning practices?
 - The teacher's instructional practices?
 - The teacher's assessment practices?

- The teacher's use of data in the classroom?
- The teacher's positive relationships with students?
- The teacher's classroom management practices?
- Is there anything related to mentoring relationships, professional development, or the peer-review evaluation system implementation in this school that we haven't talked about and that you'd like to tell me?

Appendix B: Master Teacher Job Description in Sage Township

Overview of Master Teacher Position

Master teachers function in a unique manner relative to the traditional teacher. Their primary role is, with the principal, to analyze student data and create an institute an academic achievement plan for the school. Master Teachers lead Cluster meetings and provide demonstration lessons, coaching and team teaching to Career Teachers. They also spend, on average, two hours per day teaching students^δ. Master Teachers collaborate to determine and to develop the adoption of learning resources. They are partners with the principal in evaluating other teachers. Master Teachers may also partner with the principal in sharing some of the responsibility of interacting with parents.

Role and Responsibilities

- Analyze school-wide student data as the basis for developing a school plan
- Develop the school plan utilizing the TAP processes.
- Oversee planning, facilitation, and follow-up of cluster group meetings during professional growth experiences.
- Team teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons, and develop and help implement curriculum.
- Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers' Individual Growth Plan (IGP) goals.

^δ This duty is dependent on the level of TAP implementation and the level of the school. In Sage Township, only Master Teachers at schools who fully implement TAP are held to this responsibility.

- Observe teacher performance using the TAP Instructional Rubrics and conduct follow-up teacher conferences.
- Participate in all TAP trainings and become a certified TAP evaluator.
- Attend professional development meetings.
- Work an expanded calendar year and attend weekly Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings.

Specific Qualifications Required

- Master's degree or equivalent in relevant academic discipline,
- At least five years of successful teaching as measured by performance evaluations, promotions and/or portfolio of work,
- Demonstrated expertise in content, curriculum development, student learning, data analysis, mentoring and professional development, as demonstrated by an advanced degree, advanced training and/or career experience,
- Student data that illustrates the teacher's ability to increase student achievement through utilizing specific instructional interventions,
- Instructional expertise demonstrated through model teaching, team teaching, video presentations, and/or student achievement gains,
- Classroom demonstrations and external observations,
- Proof of contribution to profession such as presentations, awards, research, publications, and/or university teaching, and
- Excellent communication skills and an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults.

Appendix C: Mentor Teacher Job Description in Sage Township

Overview of Mentor Teacher Position

Mentor Teachers are actively involved in enhancing/supporting the teaching experience of career teachers. Through the leadership team, they participate in analyzing student data and creating the academic achievement plan. With oversight and support from the Master Teacher, they actively engage in Cluster meetings, and as a result, Mentor Teachers also provide classroom-based follow-up and extensive feedback on the instructional practices of Career Teachers. Planning for instruction is in partnership with other Mentor Teachers and Career Teachers, with the input and guidance of the Master Teacher. Mentor Teachers are required to engage in professional development activities that are both self- and team-directed.

Role and Responsibilities

- Through analysis of student data, create the school academic achievement plan.
- With oversight of the Master Teacher, plan and facilitate group meetings during professional development activities and provide appropriate follow-up.
- Team teach with colleagues, demonstrate model lessons, and develop and help implement curriculum.
- Observe and provide peer assistance and coaching toward meeting teachers' Individual Growth Plan (IGP) goals.
- Observe teacher performance using the TAP Instructional Rubrics^δ.

^δ This duty is dependent on the level of TAP implementation and the level of the school. In Sage Township, only Mentor Teachers at schools who fully implement TAP are held to this responsibility.

- Participate in all TAP trainings and become a Certified TAP Evaluator^δ.
- Work an expanded calendar year and attend weekly Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings^δ.

Specific Qualifications Required

- Bachelor's degree and full credentials OR alternative certification, including passing level on licensure assessments and professional knowledge assessments,
- Proof of contribution to profession such as presentations, awards, research, publications, and/or university teaching,
- Student data that illustrates the teacher's ability to increase student achievement through utilizing specific instructional strategies,
- At least two years of successful teaching experience as measured by performance evaluations, promotions and/or portfolio of work,
- Excellent instructor and communicator with an understanding of how to facilitate growth in adults.

^δ This duty is dependent on the level of TAP implementation and the level of the school. In Sage Township, only Mentor Teachers at schools who fully implement TAP are held to this responsibility.

Appendix D: Pre-Conference Essential Components & Sample Questions
in Sage Township

- I. Build relationships through mentoring/coaching
- II. Question effectively
- III. Utilize positive nonverbal communication
- IV. Practice active listening by scaffolding questions, paraphrasing responses, summarizing, and reading body language
- V. Sample Questions
 - a. What is the objective of your lesson? What do you expect the students to know and be able to do after the lesson? How will you know that students have mastered the objectives in this lesson?
 - b. Where is this lesson in the context of your unit plan? What are the prerequisite skills that the students have to know in order to be successful in this lesson?
 - c. What changes or adjustments to the lesson will you need to make if students do not show evidence that they have mastered the objective?
 - d. How will you differentiate your instruction in order to address a variety of learning styles?
 - e. Are there any particular grouping structures in place? If so, how will you hold students accountable for group work?
 - f. What are your plans for lesson closure and reflection?
 - g. Is there anything in particular to share before going into the lesson? Are there any special circumstances to be aware of?

Appendix E: Post-Conference Template
in Sage Township

- I. Conference Introduction/Greeting
- II. Reinforcement Plan
 - a. Objective
 - b. Tiered self-reflection/self-analysis questions
 - c. Scripting evidence
 - d. Attach reinforcement indicator to student achievement
- III. Refinement Plan
 - a. Objective
 - b. Tiered self-reflection/self-analysis questions
 - c. Scripting evidence
 - d. Attach refinement indicator to student achievement
- IV. Guided Practice & Resources (model)
- V. Closing Statement
 - a. Share scores of the lesson observation

Appendix F: Data Analysis Summary

Using the coding framework adapted by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) and Dawson (2014), the following summary of mentoring elements was presented to participants at the start of the third phase of the research.

Number of Participants. The number of participants in this system is infinite, comprised of numerous mentors and all classroom teachers engaged in highly structured, time-consuming mentoring activities.

Objectives. Objectives in this system focus on teacher needs in the classroom and data-driven student achievement and growth outcomes. Singular objectives encompass specific activities: ILT, Cluster and observation pre- and post-conferences. Embedded in objectives of mentoring relationships identified by participants involve building a culture of reflection through coaching.

Roles. Master Teacher mentoring roles exist as collaborator in ILT, leader in Cluster, and facilitator in observation pre- and post-conferences, field testing and classroom walkthroughs. Mentor Teacher mentor roles exist as collaborator in ILT (in elementary settings), facilitator in observation pre- and post-conferences (in elementary settings), and facilitator in Cluster in all settings. Classroom teacher mentee roles exist as reflective practitioner in Cluster, observation pre- and post-conferences, classroom walkthroughs and field testing.

Relationship Authority. Mentoring relationships authority is mediated formally by administration and varies informally by activity. Master Teacher mediates authority in Cluster. Evaluators

mediate authority in observation pre- and post-conferences. Relationship authority roles blur as participants in formal authority roles identify as *servicing* those in non-authority roles.

Cardinality. Though the number of roles and cardinality between the roles varies by school due to the number of teachers, cardinality in this system is ultimately infinite.

Tie Strength. Due to the complexity of roles and numerous activities, tie strength is complex and multifaceted.

Relative Seniority. Because all classroom teachers serve as mentees in various activities by various mentoring roles, seniority is not relative in this system.

Time. Participants' time engaged in mentoring activities is considerable in this mentoring system.

Selection and Matching. Mentor selection and matching in this system varies by activity. Matching considerations identified by participants include prior mentoring relationships, content area, grade level, specials (electives, EL, SPED), and data-driven needs of the teacher.

Activities. Mentoring occurs in ILT, Cluster, observation evaluations, classroom walkthroughs, field testing and Cluster follow-up.

Resources and Tools. The TAP Evaluation System rubrics are the primary resource, driving objectives of all activities. External training, templates and a professional portal are utilized.

Internally created resources and tools based on activity are shared primarily by Master and Mentor Teachers.

Role of Technology. Technology does not explicitly factor into the mentoring relationship; however, participants identified technology as a communication tool utilized in mentoring activities.

Training. Training is ongoing and provided by internal and external sources.

Rewards. Participants identified extrinsic monetary rewards and release time, when grants are available, and intrinsic rewards associated with increased efficacy in instruction and student achievement.

Recognition. Member checking within the third phase of the study served as the process through which the extent that participants understood their explicit roles in the mentoring relationship was achieved. All participants validated their perceived roles and reflected on the iterative process through which mentoring relationships evolve during the numerous activities provided in the system.

Policy. System policies are guided by external NIET TAP System policies and internal contractual policies.

Monitoring. Monitoring practices exist in every activity and include qualitative and quantitative processes of data analysis in ILT and Cluster, long range planning in ILT and Cluster, and inter-rater reliability in observations.

Termination. All classroom teachers engage in numerous mentoring activities, with numerous mentors, throughout the year. There exist no termination processes in this system.

Curriculum Vitae

ELIZABETH ANNE WALTERS

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Career Goals

- To further my growth as an educator and administrator
- To promote life-long learning in students, faculty and staff
- To further the conversations regarding K-16 educational policy and teacher and school accountability
- To promote educational accountability at the international level
- To integrate technology into the educational landscape for the betterment of students, faculty and staff

Education

Ed.D. Indiana University, Educational Leadership, School of Education, May 2019
Certification: Superintendent's License, March 2015

M.S. Indiana University, Strategic Management, Kelley School of Business, May 2015

M.S. Indiana University, Educational Leadership, School of Education, August 2006
Certification: School Leaders License, September 2006

B.A. Yale University, May 2003
Major: English Literature
Certification: Secondary English, State of Connecticut
Certification: Secondary English, State of Indiana

Employment Experience

July 2015 – Present Principal, Beech Grove High School, Beech Grove, IN

July 2007 – June 2015 Assistant Principal, Southport High School, Indianapolis, IN

- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment development
- Evaluation and professional development of staff
- School accreditation
- Online building calendar

August 2006 – June 2007 Dean of Girls, Southport High School, Indianapolis, IN

- Discipline of students
- Maintenance of website

- August 2004 – August 2006 Brain Game/White River Academic League Coach,
Southport High School, IN
- August 2003 – August 2006 Teacher of English, Southport High School, Indianapolis,
IN
- Throughout teaching and my master’s coursework, I participated in many administrative duties, such as the ISTEP Camp and NCA Accreditation Review Committee
- August 2003 – August 2006
Indianapolis, IN JV Girls’ Soccer Coach, Southport High School,
- June-July, 2002 NCATE Accreditation Research Assistant, Department of
Education, Yale University
- Organized the collegiate accreditation process
- May-July, 2001 Technical Assistant, Zayed University Library, Dubai,
United Arab Emirates
- Organized technological resources and support systems
- Summer, 2000 Assistant to the Registrar, Dar Al-Hekma College, Jeddah,
Saudi Arabia
- Organized online enrollment and course-structure for students

Publications & Presentations

Kaiser, M., Seitz, K., & Walters, E. (2014). Transgender policy: What is fair for all students? *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 17(3). doi: 10.1177/1555458913518538

February 2016 Indiana New Administrators Leadership Institute
Cognitive Coaching in Professional Development Conversations

September 2016 AdvancED Indiana Fall Conference
Increasing Academic Success by Meeting the Social and Emotional Learning Needs of All Students at the High School Level

September 2016 Indiana New Administrators Leadership Institute
Using Data Efficiently & Effectively

Professional Organizations

ASCD

NASSP

Honors & Awards

IASP Executive Committee	Vice-President (2017-18), President Elect (2018-19), President (2019-20), Past President (2020-21)
November 2015	Paula Silver Case Award (University Council for Educational Administration) <i>Recognized for the most outstanding case to be published in the 2014 volume year of the Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership</i>
April 2013	Indiana Association of School Principals Assistant Principal of the Year (District 7)
November 2004, and April 2005	Southport High School Monthly Faculty Meeting Excellence Award
1999	All American (soccer), U.S. High School Soccer Coaches Association

Service Activities

2016-2018	Indiana University School of Education Alumni Association Board of Directors
2016	Chair, Paula Silver Case Award Selection Committee
2015-2017	Indiana Association of School Principals, AP Liaison
2015-2018	Principal Representative for the Indiana High School Forensics Association
2012-2013	Presenter, Indiana Association of School Principals Conference
2003-2005	Director, ISTEP Camp Presenter, Adolescent Literacy Conference Mentor Teacher, Summer Reading Program Committee Member, NCA Accreditation and Curriculum Mapping Committee
2000-2001	Publisher, <i>Rumpus Magazine</i> , Yale University
1999-2003	Yale University Varsity Women's Soccer Team

Travel Experience

Australia, Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Holland, India, Jordan, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Poland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom

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