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Responding to Disproportionality of Students of Color Through Addressing Teacher Practice

by

Judy Jaramillo Argumedo

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in the Educational Leadership

in the Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Bernard R. Gifford, Chair
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ABSTRACT

Responding to Disproportionality of Students of Color Through Addressing Teacher Practice

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Doctor of Education

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Professor Bernard Gifford, Chair

The Acquiring Common and Collaborative Educational Systems and Strategies (ACCESS) is a design dissertation which provides a professional learning experience for teachers that builds awareness of how the deficit mindset of students of color lead to inequitable practices. The learning model is based on using instructional coaches to facilitate discussions about race, model effective strategies and provide experiential learning. The learning sequence will also focus on professional competence that highlights how teachers can intervene and utilize best practices with students in the classroom. Shifting teacher mindset is challenging and difficult to accomplish, but, with a focus on professional competence, teachers may change practice as they realize it is within their domain to act. With the focus on changing specific teacher practices, teachers may see improvement in the classroom environment shifting their thinking.

DEDICATION

This is for All My Relations, especially Agustin Mazcote Camargo and Catalina Villegas, my grandparents; *they gave me la esperanza (hope)*, for seven generations, a gift I can never repay.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the culmination of all the support I have received from numerous people (and some family pets) over the course of my life. It feels like a journey that started when my maternal grandparents whispered that I was smart and that I could be the first person in my family to go to college.

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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT/KNOWLEDGE BASE

Introduction

Students of color are being tracked out of mainstream classes, which can limit their access to higher education opportunities (Oakes & Wells, 1997). Many districts have been referring students of color to special education in higher numbers than their white counterparts (Hosp & Reschly, 2004).   In addition to being funneled into special education classrooms and alternative education programs, students of color are dropping out of school at higher rates than the national average (Pang & Foley, 2006). This represents an urgent equity challenge for educational leaders. Three issues have emerged in the literatures that have an impact on students of color: segregated settings, racism, and deficit thinking.

The Office for Civil Rights has identified disproportionality of minority students in alternative settings as a discriminatory practice that causes racial segregation in violation of Title VI (Losen, 2002). According to the Office for Civil Rights, the number of Latino and African-American students in special education classes, alternative high schools, and pullout programs across the country is disproportionate when compared to white and Asian students. Minority students in special or alternative settings have not had the same outcomes as their white counterparts in similar settings; this difference in outcomes has led to segregation, which can be damaging to students (Losen, 2002). Holtzman & Messick (1982) reported how educators have used alternative settings as a way to address the challenges of educating students of color who are struggling in the mainstream classroom. Among their findings, they concluded that placing students of color in special education and alternative settings appeared to many educators as an effective practice to support students that may be struggling in the mainstream classroom. Special education was designed to address the needs of students with disabilities, and not as an equity tool (Holtzman & Messick, 1982). Holtzman & Messick also reported that as more students of color are being tracked out of mainstream classes and into alternative settings, segregated schooling occurred under the guise of meeting student needs.   In addition to these findings, other researchers have concluded that students of color have been overrepresented in alternative education, and opportunities for higher education for students of color have not yielded positive outcomes (Hosp & Reschly, 2004).   These paths have frequently led to dire outcomes such as poverty and incarceration for students of color (Oakes & Wells, 1997). School organizations have been structured for inequality, which is detrimental to student outcomes beyond the K-12 setting (Oakes & Wells, 1997). Therefore, it is essential for school leaders to take a deep look at the practices built within their own districts that promote this type of segregation.

At the secondary level, educators have found it challenging to address the disproportionate number of students of color being referred to alternative and special education (Duffy, 2007). Districts have established many practices that contribute to this complex issue of disproportionality. Tracking systems have been

used as tools to funnel students of color out of mainstream classrooms, misidentify them as special education, or put them in alternative schools without full access to a comprehensive high school experience (Oakes & Wells, 1997). In Jeannie Oakes and her colleagues' seminal study of detracking efforts (1997), the authors concluded that these efforts could be successful to begin to restructure schools for equity, but that detracking is only the beginning. Tracking of students has been shown to lead to low self-esteem, misbehavior, and dropping out of school. The Oakes study also cited how lower aspirations of students by teachers are a result of tracking systems. This type of tracking is not only damaging to students, but also limits student access to college and career opportunities (Skiba, Simmons, Ritter, Gibb, Rausch, Cuadrado & Chung, 2008). An inequitable system of tracking students to alternative settings mirrors earlier tracking systems of minorities into vocational education programs and white students into college preparatory programs (Oakes & Wells, 1997).

Students placed in alternative settings, such as special education classes, continuation schools, and alternative high schools, are part of the tracking systems that move students out of the mainstream classroom. These alternative settings have created educational segregation and misused programs set up for students with disabilities as tools for equity (Holtzman & Messick, 1982). Student outcomes from these settings have shown limited opportunities for students of color (Blanchett, 2006). Educators have used alternative settings to remove students from classrooms instead of addressing instructional practices that might not be equitable for all students. Students in these restrictive settings do not have access to the same type of resources available in a traditional school (Pang & Foley, 2006). In closing, it is clear that there are many factors that have contributed to the struggles of students of color and their disproportional referrals into alternative settings. As I analyzed the literature, the themes of racism and stereotype began to emerge as factors that contribute to the disproportionate number of students of color referred to alternative settings.

Issues of racism are pervasive in US society (Landsman, 2004) and a comprehensive discussion of these issues is beyond the scope of this paper. However, three aspects of racism particularly relevant to this discussion are: stereotyping, deficit thinking and student identity, and teacher mindsets. Each of these is discussed briefly below.

Children spend 12-13 years in an education system where interacting with their teachers is an integral part of their learning. Because of this interaction, teachers have a great impact on how a child develops as a student. Thus, teachers need to understand the consequences of referring students to alternative settings (Hirschfield, 2008). School settings mirror society's norms and values and are used as a system to produce law-abiding citizens who contribute to society. However, these systems are based on western European mentality (Delpit, 1988). Many ethnic groups in the United States have been excluded and have not been part of America's perceived identity. There are negative stereotypes about Latinos and African Americans that affect students' experiences in the education system (Steele, 2011). One such stereotype is the perceived notion that these two groups do not care about education, have low IQs, and are unwilling to learn standard American English (Ladson-Billings, 1992; Valdes, 1996).

Administrators and teachers have not been thoroughly trained in culturally relevant pedagogy (Valencia, 1997). When educating students of color, deficit thinking, defined as teacher perception of underperforming students due to limited intelligence, lack of motivation, or inadequate home situation (Valencia, 1997), has made it challenging to create classrooms sensitive to and respectful of the diverse cultures that compose 21st century classrooms in the United States. Thus, the need of classroom teachers and administrators for an innovative strategy that affirms and supports a student's identity so that all students are able to access the academic content in the mainstream classroom (Delpit, 1988).

Changing practice requires teachers to perceive students of color as capable (Sleeter, 2001). Addressing the mindset of teachers through professional development is not only challenging, but also difficult to measure. Critical race theory suggests that racism is part of the educational institution (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005), which implies that teachers, as part of the educational system, engage in perpetuating the power structures that allow students of color to be mislabeled as learning disabled, or candidates for an alternative high school, due to lack of cultural relevant pedagogy in the teaching profession (Howard, 2002; Delpit, 1988; Sullivan, A'vant, Baker, Chandler, Grace, McKinney, & Sayles, 2009). Changing the mindset of teachers to not only recognize the inequity of these types of practices, but also become someone willing to act as an agent of change is questionable. This is not practical as a tool that will be successful to change all practitioners. However, changing practices that create classroom environments that are culturally safe for students can lead to students feeling empowered and less threatened (Voltz & Brazil, 2003; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Howard, 2002).

As students have perpetuated the need for assimilation and conformity to the mainstream culture, students have participated in settings that contribute to issues of stereotype threat. Stereotype threat is defined as a person experiencing anxiety about confirming a negative stereotype associated with their representative group (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Students critiquing and questioning their own abilities can lead to poor academic performance. This poor performance led to teachers believing that students need academic support. On the contrary, students needed teachers to create classroom environments that were identity safe. Students needed to be in classrooms that affirmed their values and beliefs and reduced feelings of stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995). The threat of stereotypes illustrated by the Steele and Aronson study led to student poor performance. In Steele's social psychological research book, *Whistling Vivaldi*, he interviewed many college level students in regards to feeling stereotype threat in the classroom. Steele argued that stereotype threat can heavily impede classroom performance and inhibit students from participating fully, thus reducing learning opportunities. Steele's recommendations for teachers and instructors included proactively creating climates of safety to promote full participation. Poor performance in school settings has manifested itself in various forms. Student poor performance due to stereotype threat and identity safety coupled with deficit thinking has led educators to believe the student incapable of learning in a traditional classroom setting, triggering the need for an alternative setting placement.

In sum, one cannot examine teacher practices that have contributed to or interrupted the disproportionate referral of students of color to alternative settings without situating those interactions into the larger context and history of schooling. I have argued here that patterns of segregation, reinforced by community pressures for maintaining the status quo, institutionalized and internalized racism, and students' own experiences with stereotype threat, partially compose the context in which teacher practices occur. Further, I have suggested that these contextual factors present obstacles to change that must be taken into account as educational leaders consider remedies to the current counterproductive patterns of referrals. Below, I have analyzed the existing teacher practices that lead to creating classrooms that inhibit success for students of color. I have also highlighted practices and strategies that create classroom environments that increase engagement and foster success for students of color.

Problem

Peninsula School District (PSD) sits in the heart of Silicon Valley. It is in a city that is highly resourced with a population that is highly educated, affluent, and values education. This is evidenced by voters continuing to fund school parcel tax measures, and by the community repeatedly giving large contributions to the non-profit organization, Parents for Schools, to fund teachers in art and music. The district serves approximately 12, 486 students, and it is comprised of a majority of white and Asian students from highly resourced and affluent backgrounds. Underrepresented minorities compose approximately 10% of the student population, and about 4% of this population is bussed in from East Peninsula through the desegregation program, Avenidas Program. Approximately 66% of the Avenidas students are on free and reduced lunch, as compared to 10% of Peninsula's population. Peninsula School District has one of the largest achievement gaps in the state (California Department of Education, Dataquest, 2013). In 2007, the district was identified as having a disproportionate number of students of color in special education programs and classes, and was charged with creating plans to reduce disproportionality.

Pressured from many points to support a wide variety of learners in the classroom, and not always equipped to do so, teachers in the district have operated under the belief that it is not in their sphere of influence to help struggling students succeed. The large fight on behalf of district teachers to not institute California's A-G college requirements with high school requirements illustrated this mindset. High school math teachers wrote a letter to the board indicating that not all students, specifically students of color, had the brain capacity or resources to meet rigorous math courses (Peninsula Online 2013). Furthermore, the PSD teaching staff that I worked with as part of a district needs assessment survey, explained that teachers are more likely to make this assumption due to community and district pressure that stresses accountability to the demands of affluent and well-resourced parents. Teachers are conditioned to believe that their professional responsibility is to provide academically rigorous courses, so that students will be prepared for higher-level classes. The affluent parents regularly exercised political influence to ensure that teachers focus on academic rigor, and that teachers' time and effort are not

distracted from this primary focus, which helps to ensure that their children are getting the curriculum they need to attend elite universities. The numerous televised school board meetings that displayed parents demanding to keep tracking structures in place support this point. Many of these same parents used private tutors and other resources to address any learning challenges or needs their student may have encountered, and thus did not rely on schools for re-teaching and practice of the curriculum. Teachers are accustomed to the practice of private tutors covering basic material and the students coming prepared to accept the academic rigor and pace of classes.

  PSD started a district-wide initiative to address the needs of struggling students. Response to Intervention (RtI) was adopted, with elementary schools taking the lead in 2013-2014, and secondary schools expected to follow the next school year. This initiative has been mildly successful in elementary. An elementary RtI leadership team analyzed teacher referrals, created explicit teaching plans for teachers to meet the needs of referred students, and brought in specialists to support teachers with instruction. The out of classroom support became the second level of support for elementary students. There has not been progress in secondary schools to address struggling students, due to ineffective leadership at the district level and missing accountability structures at the secondary level. The teaching force at the secondary level faces two challenges in addressing struggling students. First, because basic teaching and support is expected to happen at the home through tutors, there are expectations on the teachers to provide high academic, rigorous courses without differentiation. Second, the secondary level teachers lack professional development and supports targeted for the struggling students.   Many of Peninsula's teachers are new to the district and to teaching, so may have not had the full experience of how to teach to a variety of students. Thus, without targeted professional development, structural supports, or a mandate from district leadership, teachers are left unequipped to address student needs in the classroom, and accept the failure of struggling students as a norm.

<center>Classroom Practices: Moving from Deficit- to Asset-Oriented Practices</center>

  In this next section I addressed the existing practices in classrooms that are used to refer students into alternative settings.   I discussed how teacher practices create classroom environments that are not optimal for students of color, thus, leading to poor student performance (Steele, 2010), which I argued can lead to students being misplaced in alternative settings. There are many site and district level structures that contribute to the disproportional number of referrals students of color into alternative settings (Hosp & Reschly, 2004), but this paper focused on teacher instructional practices. Teachers are the primary source of referrals into special education, and therefore, are a practical starting point to address the larger issue of disproportionality (Voltz & Brazil, 2003). Specifically, the practices I reviewed are referrals based on subjective measures, practices concerning discipline, and teacher engagement of students' background knowledge. The last part of this section outlines the desired teacher practices that hold promise for keeping students of color engaged and productive. I highlighted how the use of data

and monitoring by teachers can bridge the gap from subjective referrals to referrals based on evidence of poor academic performance. Through teacher practice of engaging students' background knowledge, by avoiding equity traps, and by using equitable teaching strategies, teachers can create environments that foster learning and identity safety (McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004).

Prevailing Practices Based on Deficit Thinking

Amongst some of the typical teacher practices that have led to the over-referral of students of color to alternative settings are misconstruing cultural or linguistic mismatch as a different type of learning challenge, teacher practice being influenced by low expectations, and problematic discipline practices. Below, I provided some context and examples for each of these sets of practices. I concluded that teacher deficit thinking of students of color led to discriminatory practices that resulted in classroom environments not conducive to learning, and poor student performance, which eventually lead to referrals to alternative settings.

The classroom teacher is typically the first educator to refer a student to special education (Holtzman & Messick, 1982). Classrooms have now seen a growth in diversity, with students of color becoming a larger part of the student population (Pine and Hilliard 1990). As this population grows, teachers may be ill equipped to address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Valles, 1998). As a result of teacher inability to address culturally and linguistically diverse students, teachers have been over-referring students of color to special education. In order for teacher referrals of students of color to decrease, teachers must become aware that the use of subjective measures to refer students out of the classroom is not an equitable practice for students of color (Holtzman & Messick, 1982; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Landsman, 2004). Teachers hold beliefs that the mainstream culture and expectations are applicable to all students and implement teacher practices exclusively to the mainstream culture (Delpit, 1988; Sleeter, 2001). Teachers perceive students that are not part of the mainstream culture as incapable, and may unintentionally withhold support for the academic needs of the students, which limits access to the core curriculum (Delpit, 1988). A specific expectation from teachers is that students come to their classroom with prior knowledge of the mainstream culture (Voltz & Brazil, 2003). Teachers are only recognizing the cultural capital students who represent the mainstream culture (Moll & Gonzalez, 1997).

The non-recognition of a student's cultural capital and the expectation that students will understand mainstream references and definitions can create an environment for poor performance. Teachers frequently misidentify this gap in knowledge as a disability. In effect, the student's culture and cultural background knowledge is seen as a disability by teachers (McDermott & Varenne, 2005). An example of this type of misidentification can be illustrated with English language learners. As English language learners acquire language, their comprehension of the classroom content is limited; therefore, assessment performance is poor. In a 2011 study, Hoover and Klinger describe this type of poor performance as leading teachers to misidentify students as needing extra support and placing them in

alternative settings (Hoover & Klingner, 2011), when, in reality, the student may have the cognitive ability to comprehend the content, but his/her language acquisition level may be limiting access.

<p style="text-align:center">Teachers' Low Expectations of Students of Color</p>

Changing practice requires teachers to perceive students of color as capable (Sleeter, 2001), yet addressing the mindset of teachers through professional development is not only challenging, but also difficult to measure. Critical race theory suggests that racism is part of the educational institution (Ladson-Billings, Tate, Dixson, Celia, 2006). Thus the implication that teachers, as part of the educational system, engage in perpetuating the power structures that enable teachers to mislabel students of color as learning disabled, or as candidates for an alternative high school due to lack of cultural relevant pedagogy in the teaching profession (Howard, 2002; Delpit, 1988; Sullivan, A'vant, Baker, Chandler, Grace, McKinney, & Sayles, 2009).

Low expectations for students of color can contribute to the issue of subjective referrals; additionally, low expectations of students of color may result in poor performance for some students (Hoover & Klingner, 2011). An example of low expectations of students of color is best illustrated by the Landsman article (2004), which recounts how a teacher, when reviewing for an upcoming AP test, asked the white students the tough questions while the Latino and African-American students received the easier questions. The justification the teacher provided was that she did not want to embarrass the students; at the same time, she did not have any evidence the students would not have been able to answer the question. Low expectations play themselves out in the form of assigning the easier questions to students of color, and not allowing wait time for students to answer, and in how teachers frame questions (Landsman, 2004). These practices of excluding students of color from actively engaging in the classroom can lead to poor performance.

The current tracking system funnels a disproportionate number of students of color to alternative settings, effectively creating a substantial inequity problem. Placement of minority students in alternative settings has led to segregation, which is harmful to the student (Blanchett, 2006). Students of color in special education may suffer stigma and stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Furthermore, minorities in special education and alternative programs do not have the same career opportunities (Arnold & Lassmann, 2003). Districts must begin to address the disproportionate numbers of students of color being referred to alternative settings outside of the mainstream classroom because it leads to segregated schooling.

Addressing this issue, however, is not as simple as one may think. One cannot just put a stop to the practice of referring students of color into special education without addressing their needs. Additionally, as school leaders move towards detracking high schools, they have seen a large backlash from the affluent communities that have benefitted from tracking systems in high school. These communities would like to keep the status quo of the college track for students who have historically performed very well in these systems (Oakes & Wells, 1997). This

poses a challenge for districts that would like to raise achievement of underperforming students of color through systems that do not track students.

Many secondary schools have taken a critical look at their current systems and resources to address disproportionate referral rates of students of color to alternative programs and special education. Models such as Response to Intervention have emerged to address this practice (Duffy 2007). Response to Intervention is a three-tiered approach to creating systems and protocols that provide responsive instruction, preventative measures, and targeted intervention that provide access to a high quality education (National Center Response to Intervention, 2013). There is some evidence of success in elementary schools using the Response to Intervention model (Danielson, Doolittle, & Bradley, 2007). While the Response to Intervention model is undoubtedly a large undertaking for a district, I argue that the tools and strategies from this model can be used in addressing the problem of disproportionality of students of color in special education and alternative programs.

Response to intervention relies on the teacher as the primary agent of change in the process of minimizing student referrals to alternative settings. However, the task of improving opportunities for students of color can be challenging. The disconnect between white teachers and students of color is an obstacle which creates environments not conducive to learning (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Richard Valencia (1997) describes how deficit thinking regarding students of color can affect student performance. **Not all** teachers are prepared to work with students and families of different cultural backgrounds (Delpit, 1988). For example, many Latino families who have migrated to the United States do not feel comfortable on the school campus because of the language barrier making it difficult to understand how the U.S. education system works, resulting in a less visible presence on the school campus of these families (Valdes, 1996). This behavior is misinterpreted by schools as Latino families not caring about their children's education. I argue that this can lead to teachers having lower expectations for their students of color.

In addition, students' perceptions of their role in rigorous academic classes make it difficult for students of color to achieve success as they combat stereotype threat, racism and miscues in the learning environments (Steele, & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat coupled with low expectations from teachers has made the classroom a difficult and challenging learning environment for students of color.

It is teachers who have initiated referrals to alternative settings, which suggests that these teachers are unable to enact interventions in the classroom that support the referred students. Evidence has suggested that what truly affects outcomes of student of color is how teachers work with them in the classroom; that connection is key to student engagement in school (McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2004). It makes sense to look at teacher practice to help to clarify why students of color are being referred disproportionately. The problem starts with the lack of understanding by teachers of their sphere of influence. If it is assumed by teachers that the reasons kids struggle are beyond teacher and classroom control, then they will not feel that it is in their power to help such students (McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2004). The focus of this design addressed the issues that face students of color, racism, stereotype threat, and low expectations, by embedding activities that

promote equitable practices through a professional development sequence that also targets best teaching practices.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY OF ACTION

The theory of action and intervention for this design were based on designing a professional learning sequence facilitated by instructional coaches that focused on best practices. Coupled with the sequence's experiential learning activities was a reflection on current practices. The theory of action component of the workshop was based on the Linda Darling-Hammonds readings on how instructional coaching along with four focused goals can promote teacher learning. The theory of intervention component was based on the framework for workshops presented in McKenzie & Scheurich's article on equity traps. The combination of these two frameworks helped to guide my theory of action and intervention in designing a series of experiences for secondary math teachers. In this next section I have addressed my research questions, theory of action, theory of intervention, and workshop plan.

Design Challenge

<u>Theory of Action</u>

The research questions addressed in my design are:

1. How does a professional development centered on students' of color background change teacher mindset?
2. How does grounding an equity-based workshop in reviewing best practices for struggling students affect teacher practice?
3. How can instructional coaching through a case study of a struggling student build the professional responsibility to address student needs?
4. Will instructional coaching and professional development focused on equity for minorities change the way teachers discuss student of color?

There are many practices that have led to the placement of students to alternative settings; the practices targeted in this design were referrals based on subjective measures and teachers having low expectations of students of color. I argued that by changing the teacher practices that have contributed to the mismatch of teachers and students, it would follow that the deficit thinking by teachers about students of color would be deconstructed. I further argued that in order for classrooms to create an equitable system of access for students of color, current teacher practice must be changed so that intervention strategies are implemented in the classroom; this change in practice is supported by targeted professional development that addresses issues of race, stereotype threat and segregation. Through the strategic use of best practice Response to Intervention strategies and a focused professional development sequence dedicated to RtI strategies, plus the creation of collaborative partners through instructional coaching, teacher practice can change to become more supportive of students of color.

There exists an expectation by PSD teachers that students arrive in their classrooms with the academic skills necessary to succeed within a rigorous curriculum without any differentiation or remediation. PSD teachers have been resistant to differentiate instruction in the classroom, operating under the belief that differentiation takes away from the academic rigor posed by their teaching and content. There has been a reliance on intervention classes as a way to provide students with basic differentiation strategies. Thus, those students in need of differentiation are consistently referred out to support classes, rather than supported within the mainstream classroom setting. A majority of the students referred to these settings are students of color.

There has also been the continued practice by PSD teachers to plan and deliver rigorous courses for the students that are academically prepared for challenging work, while expecting that intervention classes will provide the differentiation to struggling students. Teachers have indicated that most students come prepared with basic skills, but felt that if students were not prepared, teachers did not have time to address this through remediation or differentiation. The emphasis was placed on ensuring kids are ready for the next level of courses, rather than ensuring learning for all students through differentiated instruction. Teachers have indicated on surveys and in trainings that they feel highly accountable to the affluent parents in the district, and they feel that their job security relies upon meeting those parents' expectations.

Response to Intervention (RtI) models direct districts to use teacher and content specialists as coaches for classroom teachers, so that they can deliver universal interventions. The first year PSD tried to implement RtI as a model to address disproportionality, secondary sites met the initiative with great reluctance. The requirement of teachers to implement interventions, with the support of specialists as coaches was met with heavy resistance. District and site administrators did not make RtI trainings mandatory, hence few teachers attended workshops. Secondary principals did not support RtI models, and instead chose to continue to rely on local intervention models historically used in PSD, thus continuing the practice of referring struggling students to alternative settings. Secondary sites did not hold teachers accountable for struggling students. Teachers did not feel ownership of the students; instead, they felt that outside intervention teachers held the professional accountability and responsibility for helping struggling students. Additionally, content teachers indicated it was not their responsibility to address students' math or reading skills.

In the second year of RtI implementation in PSD, administrators attempted to mandate the use of the RtI framework in secondary schools, however, due to few offered trainings and a lack of resources allocated for implementation, teachers at secondary sites chose to ignore the mandate. The district's secondary schools continued to work autonomously on creating interventions and structures; however, neither the interventions nor the structures created were measured for effectiveness, and progress for students of color were not achieved. Administrators noted the lack of RtI strategies during classroom visits and observations; they also found that teachers did not use common planning time to discuss interventions for struggling students. When asked why, teachers referred to other work that they felt

to be a higher priority; for example, working on their curriculum to maintain the academic rigor expected by the community.

The professional learning community can be a structure that promotes teacher learning (Grossman, Weinberg & Woolworth, 2000). In her paper Professional Community and Professional Development in the Learning-Centered School (2006), Judith Warren Little focused on strategies that enhance professional learning as a tool to further build the quality of teaching and learning. Little's argument that many professional development opportunities are disconnected from problems of practice can be addressed by using the disproportionality problem of practice as a focal point for ongoing learning. When beginning to use professional development as a tool, it is imperative to review the research in regards to its effectiveness with teachers. Although the research literature was not promising, Little's review and new framework provided a structure that I argued would be effective when coupled with collaborative learning teams. In Little's (2006) research, she argued that there are four goals for teacher learning:
1. School's Central Goals, Priorities, or Problems
2. Building Knowledge, Skill, and Disposition to Teach to High Standards
3. Cultivating Strong Professional Community
4. Sustaining Teacher's Commitment to Teaching

Little's research introduced the concept of an instructional triangle. The triangle connects content, student, and teacher through the use of teacher knowledge of the content, knowledge of diverse students, and knowledge of student thinking (Little, 2006). The instructional triangle is essential to the goals listed above. The professional development sequence below encompassed the triangle as a model to create effective learning workshops for teachers. By employing Little's four goals for teacher learning and the instructional triangle, there stood promise in addressing the problem of disproportionality of students of color referred to alternative settings by providing a professional development sequence using other key elements from research on professional development that have proven successful, such as instructional coaching, collaborative learning, and critical reflection.

Teachers, coaches, and teams needed to work collaboratively to create lessons, use key intervention strategies, and plan interventions for students. The creation of best practices that help struggling students access the core content was a goal, as was increasing teachers' understanding of the backgrounds of struggling students in order to develop more confidence in their ability to develop professional care of students. This was anticipated to enable teachers to feel the professional responsibility to be able to support struggling students and feel accountable for their success, which should be reflected in a decrease of referrals of students of color to intervention courses outside of the mainstream classroom. Figure 2.1, illustrates the overall problem, behaviors, and targeted interventions and desired behaviors my design attempted to address.

McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) define an equity trap, as "ways of thinking or assumptions that prevent educators from believing their student of color can be successful." McKenzie and Scheurich explicitly state the problematic schemas

teachers' hold about students of color and how as a community they can be addressed. However, the role of meta-cognition must be taken into consideration when addressing professional development.

The role of professional development in schools is as embedded as the school calendar. It is an accepted tradition that does not vary or stray from the typical model. However, research has surfaced that suggests many teacher learning initiatives do not "penetrate the black box", and have little or no impact on classroom practices (Bryck, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu & Easton, 2010). To create a professional development sequence that is effective in producing insights and understandings, the designer must take into account elements that have proven successful in teacher learning environments. The shared vision of student learning can help create a mindset for teacher learning (Little, 2006), while providing the opportunity for practice and coaching can facilitate the actual learning (Schein, 2004). Instructional coaches can also provide the model and exemplar for teachers for them to visualize their own personal goals.

How do educational agencies think about learning and build collective cognition? Teacher learning and the professional development model must look at theories of metacognition. For shifts to occur in teacher practice and mindset with students of color they must undergo a process that examines their own awareness and thought process. Metacognitive knowledge can assist learners in understanding their own strengths and weaknesses in particular subjects, as well as motivating them to learn new materials (Pintrich, 2002). The self-knowledge can guide self-regulated learning and either motivate or cause a barrier to new understandings. Some teacher may realize their weakness and begin to change, while others may not be accepting of the new cognitive paradigm and feel high levels of discomfit, therefore adhering to their beliefs and views. To address them the latter group, workshops must cultivate safe environments that mirror professional learning communities to address these challenges as a group through reflective discussions (Schein, 2004).

In conjunction with Little's framework, addressing "equity traps", as defined by McKenzie & Scheurich, was expected help PSD teachers confront the problem of "equity traps" and through a cycle of inquiry, change teacher mindset and practice.

Desired Behavior
The desired behavior for teachers in PSD entailed them providing differentiation, intervention, or remediation within the classroom setting, with support from instructional coaches. As referenced earlier, student outcomes from educational segregation indicate limited opportunities (Blanchett, 2006), and those students do not have the same access to resources available in the mainstream classroom (Pang & Foley, 2006). Additionally, students staying in the mainstream classroom would assist in alleviating tracking systems' outcomes of low self-esteem, misbehavior, and limited access to college and career opportunities (Skiba, Simmons, Ritter, Gibb, Rausch, Cuadrado & Chung, 2008).

The frameworks for the cycle of inquiry and equity traps were used to create change in teacher mindset. The focus on best practices for students was intended to build teacher confidence and skill, leading to equitable practices.
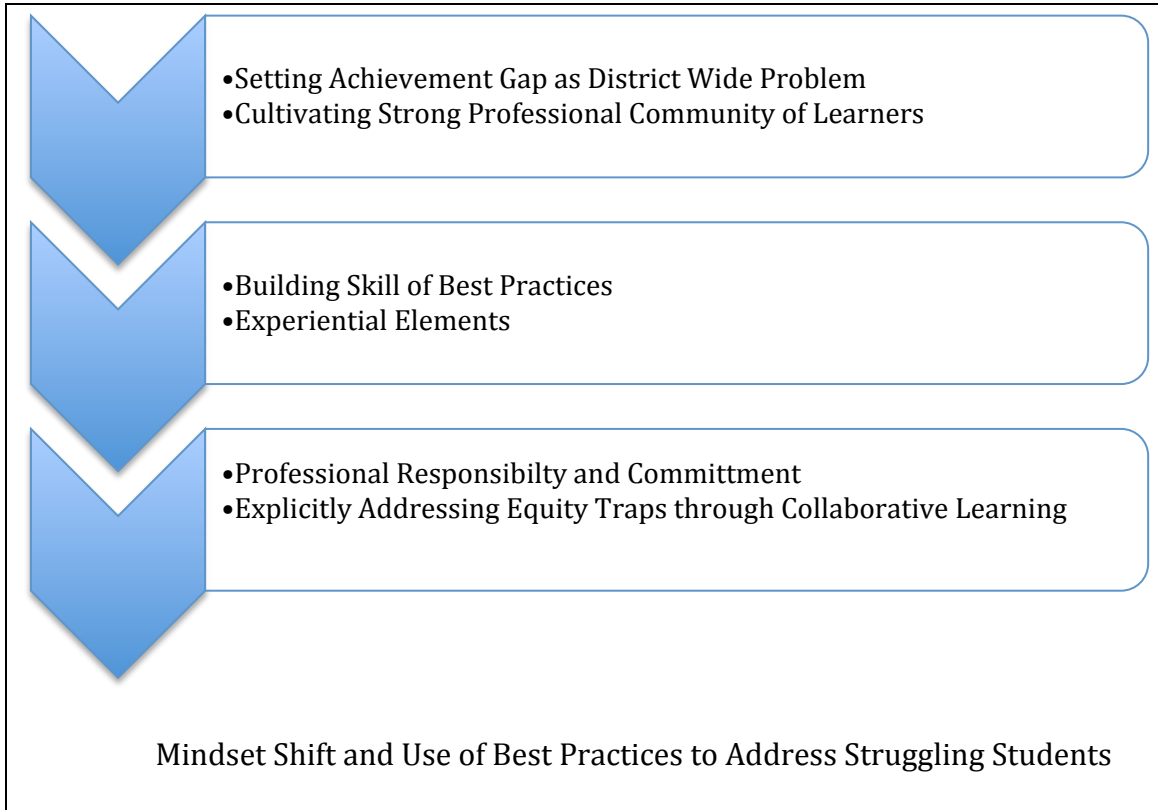
My theory of action illustrates how the problem of teachers having deficit views of struggling students was addressed through my intervention. The behaviors of teachers not utilizing best practices has led to student referral for out-of-classroom supports, which as discussed in Chapter One, leads to inequitable outcomes for students. My design was intended to intervene and create desired behaviors that helped to inspire teachers to change practice and mindset.

Figure 2.1 Theory of Action

Problem	Behaviors	Intervention	Desired Behaviors
Teachers have deficit views of struggling students and do not utilize universal practices to provide differentiation.	Students are being referred to supports out of the mainstream classroom, causing segregation. Teachers are not utilizing best practices.	Professional Learning: Focus on best practices; reflection on practices through instructional coaching and experiential activities.	If we do raise awareness (empathy) and professional competency (skill), then teachers will utilize classroom interventions and practices that enable students to stay in the mainstream classroom.

The theory of intervention was based on creating shared understanding of the achievement gap as a district wide problem that is our collective responsibility. Through instructional coaching, participants were a part of experiential learning and a review of best instructional practices. Next, participants were asked to build teacher responsibility through addressing the four equity traps of McKenzie & Scheurich: racial erasure, paralogical beliefs, deficit views and avoidance, and employment of the gaze. Teachers then had time to reflect with the guidance of instructional coaches.

Figure 2.2 Theory of Intervention

•Setting Achievement Gap as District Wide Problem
•Cultivating Strong Professional Community of Learners

•Building Skill of Best Practices
•Experiential Elements

•Professional Responsibilty and Committment
•Explicitly Addressing Equity Traps through Collaborative Learning

Mindset Shift and Use of Best Practices to Address Struggling Students

Appendix A
 Acquiring Common and Collaborative Educational Systems and Strategies (ACCESS)
Targeted Group: Middle & high school math teachers (pre-Algebra, Algebra I)

Session	Articles
Introduction to Study	
First Workshop: **Vision and Purpose**	A compelling vision *Schein (1985/2010)* *Mintrop (2012)* *Valdes (1996)*
Second Workshop **Formal Training of Targeted Instructional Practices**	Formal training *Schein (1985/2010)* *Elmore (2004)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group	
• Cycle of Inquiry Pre-Conference	
Third Workshop: **Case Study and Observations**	Involvement of the Learner *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)*

Fourth Workshop: **Informal Training & Practice, Coaches & Feedback**	Informal Training & Practice, Coaches & Feedback *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)* *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Garcia & Guerra (2004)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group	
• Cycle of Inquiry Observation	
Fifth Workshop **Positive Role Models**	Positive Role Models *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)* *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Nasir (2011)*
Sixth Workshop **Reflection and Learning**	Reflection and Learning *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Little (2006)* *Rothman (2011)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group • Cycle of Inquiry Post Observation • Impact Data Session Selected Group	

Justification

In 2013, I began a pilot RtI High School training with teachers from the core departments from both high schools. The training started with discussing the problem of disproportionality in PSD, and included a basic overview of the RtI model as a framework and not a program. Teachers attended eight trainings with a focus on a couple of struggling students. Teachers were asked to use intervention strategies that were universal, and were encouraged and given time to get to know individual students; through this, they were able to feel a sense of empathy and to develop a sense of confidence. Through this experience, teachers developed a sense of ethical responsibility to help all students. When the pilot ended, teachers asked to continue for the next school year, and invited counselors and administrators to join them in learning on how to help struggling students. The pilot encouraged me to develop a series of workshops based on research to inspire staff to look at current practices and make changes for struggling students.

Intervention

By creating set protocols and guidelines, coupled with a professional learning sequence that included instructional coaching that targets classroom strategies and techniques, teachers were challenged to shift their mindset of low expectations and deficit views, while utilizing best practices in the

classroom to address struggling students. This professional learning focused on using student strength as a building block to build effective classroom practices that help struggling students. A second component was to focus on teachers building their professional competence with students of color. Teachers needed to build their own awareness of identity to recognize how their position in society informs the decision-making process of referring students of color to alternative settings. The problem of disproportionality of students of color in alternative settings had to be set as a priority needing to be addressed at the site level. It was imperative that the administrator use the professional learning time to create collective responsibility surrounding this problem and set goals for the on-going professional development (Little, 2006).

 Professional development must be strategic and ongoing (Rosenholtz, 1989). One-time workshops are not effective because learning involves a time commitment and must be sustainable with follow up (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Little, 2006; Richardson, 2003). Professional development that is aligned with the school vision and goals will help facilitate the implementation of a new model and support teacher mindset growth. The professional development piece must be incorporated throughout the year.

Staff professional development needed to focus on building a work group formation (Mintrop and Charles, 2011) and avoid members feeling incompetent in the process (Rosenholtz, 1989). The professional development offered had to be supportive of the teachers and not focus on the teacher as the problem. Interventions that address specific teaching practices that need to be modified or changed are harder to implement. As with any systematic change, teacher defensiveness can be an obstacle and should be avoided (Achinstein, 2002).

District and site leaders had to work together to create a professional development that addresses, three key elements: "buy in" from teachers, examination of practices that are most effective in supporting struggling students in the classroom, and restructuring current referral processes for alternative and special education settings (Buffum, Mattos & Weber, 2008). In order for change to occur in the classroom, schools need teachers to accept the need for change, or at a minimum, be willing to cooperate. "Buy in" is defined as the belief that there is a problem and a willingness to address the problem by making changes (Turnbull, 2002). Teachers must be willing to change practice to implement the targeted intervention (Gravois & Rosenfield, 2006). The site leadership must be focused, strong, and have a plan that will move teachers towards the intended goal and vision (Blanchett, 2006).

Based on the analysis of creating a shared vision of the problem (Richardson 2003, Schein 2004), I argued that as part of the professional development sequence, districts must address teacher "buy in" and mindset to be successful in changing classroom practice. In consideration of Little's model of the instructional triangle, teachers will not implement professional development in and of itself if there is not a level of acceptance among them that there exists a problem of disproportionality of students of color referred to alternative classroom settings. It was also made explicit that special education is not a tool for equity. This process needed to

include time for teachers to reflect on and discuss struggling students, in addition to reflecting on their own effectiveness in providing support for those students.

To better facilitate that learning, teachers needed trust and collegiality, plus knowledge that their assigned district instructional coaches was held to confidentiality. The coaches and facilitators of the professional sequence had been trained in cognitive coaching and equity support as a means to support staff through conversations of race and culturally relevant teaching. PSD allocated resources to build instructional cognitive-coaching models throughout the district to support initiatives. It was my belief that by using staff trained in cognitive coaching to deliver professional development (PD), equitable practices would be targeted through reflection and used as a resource that benefitted the implementation of key intervention strategies.

The focal group of this study was secondary math teachers. Teachers needed to build awareness of classroom practices that are deficit-oriented, and to realize how negative stereotypes and mindset affected referrals to alternative settings. The activities that teachers engaged in were a series of professional development workshops that included instructional coaches. The first series worked on building awareness of the problem of practice in PSD, and addressed negative stereotypes and mindset. Teachers were trained on the best practices adopted by PSD for supporting struggling students, practices that focus on explicit teaching tools and identifying student strengths. The teachers focused on identified strengths when choosing appropriate interventions and strategies to implement in the classroom. The instructional coaching piece was crucial at this point. Teachers had the chance to discuss and reflect on what types of strategies were needed. This helped teachers move to asset-oriented practices when working with students. Teachers worked with instructional coaches to create lesson goals and plans for targeted students. Coaches observed teachers and provided feedback on the lesson in follow-up meetings.

The follow-up coaching days focused on guiding selected teachers in two areas: first, on how to incorporate key intervention strategies into daily lessons, and second, on how holding high expectations for struggling students helped to identify strengths that students bring to the classroom. The reflective coaching delved into how these interactions changed their assumptions about students of color.

Conditions

The preconditions for this study included site administrators committing the math departments to attend the Professional Development series, along with implementing the cycle of inquiry with the designated instructional coach. Site administrators needed to support teachers' new practices as a focus for observation for a minimum of one semester. The teachers received training from the district on the problem of disproportionality and how the RtI framework addresses the needs of many students within the classroom.

The facilitators of the professional development sequence are experienced instructional coaches who have worked with the Beginning Teacher Assessment and Support (BTSA) program. The facilitators also have had experience addressing issues of equity for newly hired teachers through a pilot program designed by my

office. Facilitators have participated in workshops, conferences, and book studies on the issues of race, culture, and best practices, and were trained in both mentoring and coaching practices.

My study focused on the district's math departments. The series of professional development workshops addressed how to create an asset-oriented classroom. These workshops were based on new teacher equity trainings given through PSD's BTSA department. I worked with the BTSA department in PSD to develop these trainings, which were conducted from 2013-2015 by a team of instructional coaches that were trained in equity strategies and instructional coaching. The goal of the study was twofold. The first goals were to build awareness in teachers that having a deficit-mindset towards students of color led to inequitable practices. The second goal was a focus on professional competence that highlights how teachers can intervene and utilize best practices with students in the classroom. While shifting teacher mindset is challenging and difficult to accomplish, teachers may, with a focus on professional competence, change their practice as they realize it is within their domain to act. With the focus on changing specific teacher practices, teachers may see improvement in the classroom environment shifting their thinking.

Challenges

Many teachers did not feel a connection to struggling students in the district. Teachers held assumptions about race, socio-economic status, and bias against transfer students from East Peninsula and low-income families. Many of these families are not as involved in schools as white and Asian families due to socio-economic factors, or not living in Peninsula. Teachers have assumed these families do not care about school or have no interest in their child's education, therefore releasing teachers from a sense of accountability. Teachers type casted many students of color as not interested, having with low parental support, and a basic inability to perform in academically rigorous classrooms (Peninsula Online, 2013). Pressure from the community to keep classes academically rigorous has affected teachers' perceptions and abilities to differentiate instruction in the classroom. Another challenge was getting site leadership to address struggling students as a priority.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Methodological Choices

I used the design development to address the current problem of underutilization of best practices in addressing struggling students. The design relied on creating a treatment using data collected throughout the process of the treatment. The design development format was most appropriate for addressing the complex problem of disproportionality in secondary schools because it required me as the researcher to delve deeply into the problem through data analysis. The design development study allowed me as the researcher to go through a cyclical process of analysis, reflection, and evaluation and revision (Van den Akker, 1999). This design development allowed for me to review and observe teacher learning and discourse in the workshop setting. My role as the researcher and participant not only informed the workshops, but also allowed me to gather data on the expected outcomes that are expected to assist the organization in making progress on the problem of over-referrals. Furthermore, because I have an understanding of the obstacles in PSD, I was able to be of assistance in creating more conducive environments that allowed for the design to flourish.

I used four characteristics to frame my design and incorporate the action research component to provide the collaboration cycle of inquiry (Appendix H-J): *preliminary investigation, theoretical embedding, empirical testing, and analysis and reflection on process*. As a researcher, I also used the cycle of inquiry method to collect data. The district currently uses the cycle of inquiry for the BTSA program. I work closely with the BTSA director and the BTSA coaches on this state accredited program. The cycle of inquiry process is used statewide to address teacher professionalism, standards-based instruction, and as a tool to build teaching skills. The data I collected included a comprehensive interview protocol of the teachers from the math department in secondary schools. Next, I documented the formal and informal conversations and discussions from the workshops to track how teachers talked about students. Lastly, I collected data on the ethnicity and linguistic characteristics of students referred outside the mainstream classroom to use as data from the workshop series.

The theoretical embedding component was based on the preliminary investigation results and the findings from my local assessment. I based the intervention I used with previous success in pilot programs. Those pilot programs were based on the model of McKenzie and Scheurich, which proposed equity traps as a framework to create strategies for schools. Research suggests that educators need prolonged cycles of professional development to understand how their own beliefs about education can create low expectations for students of color (Garcia & Guerra, 2004), so there were multiple workshop sessions in my study. Each workshop session focused on an equity trap described in the McKenzie and Scheurich study. Through an analysis of the data collected, which included pre-, and post-interviews, reflection logs, and observations, I was able to measure the effectiveness of the design elements. The final component, analysis and reflection, included the analysis of the data collected to determine the overall effectiveness of each follow-up session, along with the use of tools and protocols to compare with

the outcome data. Given that I played multiple roles in the research (planner, implementer, evaluator), I used action research as a methodology.

The use of critical friends to debrief initial findings assisted in minimizing bias associated with the playing of multiple roles. For this intervention design, I observed coaches from the BTSA program as they helped facilitate the workshop series. Debriefs with the facilitators helped address bias and challenges due to my multiple roles. I had an active role in the study and primarily focused on exploring and understanding the data through an insider's perspective (Coghlan & Brannick, 2007). By analyzing the data and having an active role in delivering the professional development sequence, I was able to adjust the follow-up sessions. As the action researcher, I held an insider perspective to interpret data, observe the workshops, and understand local factors that may prohibit teachers from implementation.

Elements of Research Design

I have discussed both my theory of action and intervention design, and have below described the research design I employed for this study.

Types of Data

For this study, I used interviews with teachers as my main source of data to measure the impact of the design. The use of pre- and post-interviews during the professional development sequence was utilized to check for subtle changes in the teachers' use of new practices. For the process data, I observed each session and kept notes. I also used reflection logs to measure teacher growth throughout the process. I did meet with instructional coaches after each session to change upcoming sessions, but I did not use these discussions to measure teacher growth. In Figure 3.1, I have mapped out the theory of action addressed in the professional development (PD) sequence. In Figure 3.2, I have mapped out the design element and data that measured the anticipated change. Lastly, in Figure 3.3, I have mapped out how the change element was measured through a collection of varied tools. Although the coaches did observe teachers and met with them on lesson reflections, I did not collect this data. The reasoning behind not using this as a data point was to ensure that trust and rapport was built and kept between the instructional coach and the teacher.

Below I have included the design element of the workshops and the change element I hoped to see after the workshops, which will be measured as impact data.

Figure 3.1 Design Actions for Building Teacher Skill

Design Element	Change Element	Change Element
PD Aspect: Effective Strategy of explicit lesson objective setting	Implementation of Strategy *of explicit lesson objective setting*	
PD Aspect: Effective Strategy oral language development	Implementation of Strategy *oral language development*	
PD Aspect: Effective Strategy checking for understanding	Implementation of Strategy *checking for understanding*	
PD Aspect: Experiential Elements - Hypothetical Lessons with Reflection	Increased empathy	Awareness of effective practice (repeating instructions)
PD Aspect: Experiential Elements to foster Empathy - Bus Ride	Increased empathy	Awareness of student background and obstacles to fully access school resources
PD Aspect: Log as a tool for reflection	Increased empathy	Increased Awareness of Student Strengths
PD Aspect Student background		

Figure 3.2 Design Elements

Design Element	Data Source	Data Source	Data Source	Data Source
PD Aspect: explicit lesson objective setting (Practice)	Observation of PD	Pre-Post Interviews	Workshop Observation	
PD Aspect: oral language development strategies (Practice)	Observation of PD	Pre-Post Interviews	Workshop Observation	
PD Aspect: checking for understanding (Practice)	Observation of PD	Pre-Post Interviews		Workshop Observation
PD Aspect: Experiential Elements - Hypothetical Lessons with Reflection (Belief) Socio-economics indicate intelligence ability	Observation of PD	Reflective Log	Post Session Surveys	Pre-post interviews
PD Aspect B: Language acquisition is not related to intelligence	Observation of PD	Reflective Log		Pre-post interviews
PD Aspect C: Student background	Observation of PD	Reflective Log		Pre-post interviews

Figure 3.3   Mindset Change Elements

Change Element	Data Source	Data Source	Data Source
Teacher Practice: Clear and Explicit Objectives	Reflective Log	Pre-Post Interviews (Understanding and thinking about change in practice)	
Teacher Practice: Oral language Development Strategies	Reflective Log	Pre-Post Interviews	
Teacher Practice: Checking for Understanding	Reflective Log	Pre-Post Interviews	
Teacher Belief: Socio-economics indicate intelligence ability	Pre-Post Interviews	Reflective Log Pre-Post Interviews	Observation of PD (for teacher espoused beliefs)
Teacher Belief: Language acquisition is related to intelligence.	Pre-Post Interviews	PD Observations	Observation of PD
Teacher Belief: Student's backgrounds prevent learning	Pre-Post Interviews	PD Observations	Observation of PD

Data Collection Strategies and Techniques

      For this design study, the most important data collection was the observation of the professional development sequence to understand why the teachers showed growth. The pre- and post-interviews and reflection logs of teachers were able to measure if teachers showed growth, but not how that growth occurred. The teacher group consisted of seven math teachers. The reflection log given at the first workshop session was used extensively to track changes of belief and action. The qualitative aspect of this data is important to be able to understand how teachers create meaning from their experiences (Creswell, 2009). I used the online software Dedoose program to organize interviews, observations, and logs. I created codes of emerging patterns and themes. This data collection helped me understand the preliminary findings (Creswell, 2009). This constant reviewing of the data collection guided the design to determine if the professional development sequence

along with instructional coaching led to a change in teacher practice. The collection of this data helped the action research component change, and the instructional coach team adjusted the ongoing professional development sequence as preliminary findings created new questions and steered the series to address new challenges (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data Analysis Procedures

For this design study, the most important data collection was the observation of the professional development sequence coupled with the pre- and post-interviews and surveys of teachers. I used the Dedoose software programs to create codes of emerging patterns and themes. I recorded the workshop sessions and observed the facilitators' interactions with teachers. The facilitators are current equity instructional coaches that have been working in the BTSA program. The teachers kept a reflection journal. I collected these forms, edited and summarized the data, organized the information, and drew conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During the professional development sequence, I observed participation in activities and teacher engagement and dialogue when presented with issues of race, equity, and access. I recorded each session with an audio recording device. For the pre- and post-interviews, I used questions that targeted the mindset of the participant. In creating questions for the interview, I used questions that attempted to remove bias and offered the participant to derive his/her own meaning. My protocol used wait time and phrases such as "tell me more" to have the participant expand his/her thoughts. The interview and reflection log data were crucial to measuring growth in mindset compared to the observational data (Appendix E & Appendix K). These data tools helped me understand the mindset of the teacher at the beginning of the professional development sequence, and as I analyzed the data themes in the reflection logs, helped determine the effect of the professional development.

Figure 3.4 Data Analysis

Research Question	Data Collected	Analysis
How does a professional development centered on students' of color background change teacher mindset?	Pre- and post-interviews	Open coding
How does an equity-based workshop in best practices for struggling students affect teacher practice?	Reflection logs	Open coding of logs
How can instructional coaching build the professional responsibility to address student needs?	Pre- and post-interviews Reflection logs Field notes from workshop	Pre- and post-interviews, open coding
Will instructional coaching and professional development focused on equity for minorities change the way teachers discuss student of color?	Observation of workshop sequence	Coding of deficit thinking

Reliability, Validity, Transferability, Rigor, Threats to Rigor, Bias

I used impact data that is standardized, with clear criterion and with very low inference, which contributed to the reliability of my study. The process data followed clear protocols and was analyzed throughout the design to be able to connect the intervention to the outcome data.

Validity was established internally by collecting a variety of evidence (Yin, 2009). I established a relationship between teacher practice and referrals to alternative settings by reviewing reflections, interviews, and interactions during the professional development sequence. I used explicit measures to determine if teachers showed growth in their practice and qualitative data to help find any emerging patterns. I used a collaborative review team to help identify inherent biases that arose and to be an external measure of how to interpret the collected data. The reflection logs helped create validity with the interviews and observations. I assumed teachers might be more open and honest in their own reflections than in interviews or observations.

This current project has broader implications for affluent districts with smaller populations of struggling students. As disproportionality becomes a larger issue in education, this study provides an opportunity to examine how districts flush with resources face the same dilemmas.

The transferability of this study is limited by the use of systems of collaboration and instructional coaching used at sites, and by the culture of the school district in regards to struggling students.

Intervention Design

Main Activities

The targeted teachers participated in a professional development sequence that targeted intervention strategies. I used PSD best practices (Appendix G), adopted at the elementary level as part of the RtI implementation, as a training tool to focus on building and strengthening teacher skills for struggling students. As part of the professional development, teachers received instructional coaching and participated in a general case study of struggling students. The instructional coaches were a part of the reflection practice of each session. Teachers were encouraged to use the instructional coaching sessions to deepen their understanding of how the current school culture in PSD has affected student expectations (Appendix B). For teachers to be able to shift their mindset from low expectations, they must understand the context of working in Peninsula. Coaches used a generic case study tool to deepen their understanding of how classroom instruction can encourage student participation and create high expectations for the student. The analysis of this data helped the action research component change and the instructional coach team adjusted the ongoing professional development sequence based on preliminary findings to create new questions and steer the series to address new challenges.

Expected Outcomes

During each session, the presenters and I focused on three key areas: building awareness of student strengths, using logs as a tool to reflect on practices, and how to utilize effective intervention strategies in the classroom. As teachers built their own skills in addressing struggling students, an expected outcome was that teachers would experience students being more actively engaged as expectations rose, and that teachers would feel connected to students previously ignored. This shift of the teacher's mindset to taking more responsibility for struggling students in the classroom would help raise achievement, prompting a shift in thinking. Little's framework of the triangle connecting content, student, and teacher through the use of teacher knowledge of the content, knowledge of diverse students, and knowledge of student thinking (Little, 2006), helped guide the expected outcomes of each session. The sessions resulted in teachers developing not only an awareness of how they have not been accessing student strengths, but also recognition on how these strengths can be a foundation for intervention strategies in the classroom. Teachers should be more willing to use the classroom to address struggling student needs and use referrals to outside intervention classes as a second layer of support, not the first.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The professional development sequence consisted of six workshops for secondary math teachers facilitated by instructional coaches. The focus of the six professional development workshops was to increase teacher knowledge of strategies that help ensure students gain access to classroom content, while broadening their knowledge on how implicit bias of race, language, and social class impact student teacher interactions. The workshop also centered on teacher beliefs about professional responsibility in supporting struggling students in the mainstream classroom.

During this design, impact data was collected at the beginning and the end of the professional development process to determine growth and assess design elements. I collected three types of data during the sequence; pre- and post-interviews, teacher reflection logs, and observations of the workshops. I used the Dreyfus model of skill (Benner, 2005) to assess and interpret the two areas of teacher knowledge and belief, as mentioned in the previous chapter. In this chapter, my impact and process findings are presented, and then discussed.

Section I: Impact Data Analysis

The workshop series targeted secondary math teachers. Teachers were recruited to the workshop through the district's professional development calendar. Participation in the workshop series could satisfy district professional development requirements hours. The workshops targeted three dimensions of learning: knowledge and skills in supporting struggling students, beliefs about intelligence, and professional responsibility. By focusing on these three dimensions, using an instructional coach model, creating experiential learning experiences, and providing rich discussion, I assumed that teachers would experience a shift in mindset that would inspire them to implement best teaching practices for struggling students within the classroom.

Initially, ten teachers signed up for the workshop, but after the first pre-meeting to discuss the content and research protocols, only seven teachers remained: two males and five females, of whom four were white teachers, two were Asians, and one was Hispanic. All teachers had four or more years of experience, and had been teaching in the district for two or more years. The teachers taught grade ranges from sixth to ninth grade; five were at the middle school level and two taught at the high school level.

Impact Data Collection:

Before the workshops began, I collected baseline data by interviewing all teachers (pre-interview) about: their own knowledge and skills with struggling students, beliefs about families of color, and their own professional responsibility. Teachers were also asked to include demographic data about their experiences with diverse student bodies or communities prior to coming to the Peninsula School

District. I collected data at the end of the professional development through post interviews on the same three dimensions of learning, knowledge and skills in supporting struggling students, and beliefs about intelligence and professional responsibility, by asking questions that supported each dimension of learning. I used the Dreyfus model of skill to create a rubric to initially place teachers during pre-interviews on the dimensions of learning and to compare growth at the post interviews. Due to all teachers in the study being tenured, and having gone through a student teaching component, I chose to use a 3-point scale, with the understanding that all teachers had passed a three-year probationary period in the district. Below is the rubric I used.

Figure 4.1[1]

Dimensions of Learning	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Expert
Knowledge and skills in supporting struggling students	Teachers know few instructional strategies to address struggling learners; they are not knowledgeable about resources or tracking systems in the district that support or hinder students.	Teachers are familiar with many instructional strategies to address struggling learners and understand the basic systems of supports and tracking in the district.	Teachers are very knowledgeable about instructional strategies to support struggling learners and understand the complexity of the tracking systems and how to create supports for students in the system.
Beliefs about intelligence	Teachers hold stereotypical beliefs about intelligence, such as poverty and race as factors that inhibit intelligence	Teachers believe that most students can learn, but still hold some stereotypical beliefs about poverty as an indicator of intelligence.	Teachers believe that all students can learn, and understand that racism and poverty are challenges, but not an indication of intelligence.
Professional responsibility	Teachers do not feel a professional responsibility to provide access and support beyond the classroom, and expect students to come prepared.	Teachers do provide some support to struggling learners, but still expect students to get support outside of the classroom.	Teachers feel that providing support and access in and out of the classroom is part of their responsibility.

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[1] Table and rubric created in a conversation with faculty advisor, School of Education (Dr. Bernard Gifford, Professor University of California, Berkeley, oral communication 26th, September, 2015.

Below I have my pre- and post-overall impact findings of the three dimensions of learning using the Dreyfus model of skill.   Three teachers were placed at advanced beginner section, and two of those teachers moved to the competent section; one teacher did remain in the advanced beginner section. Three teachers were placed in the competent section. Two of those teachers moved over to the expert section, while one remained in the competent section. One teacher was placed in the expert section and made no movement; however, had I created a master category, I may have seen growth. This omission was limiting on my part as the research designer. The majority of teachers stayed in the competent section.

Figure 4.2
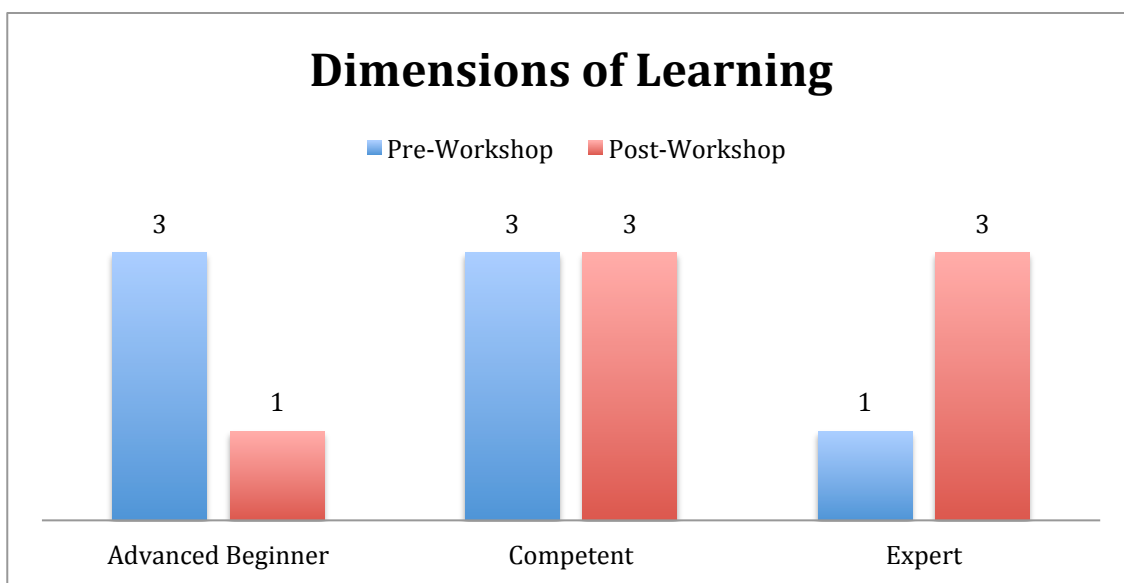
These finding indicated that teachers did show growth in the three dimensions of learning in each category after the workshop series. In this section, I have delved deeper on how I measured change overall. My findings regarding the impact of this intervention in each of the learning dimensions are summarized below.

Three Learning Dimensions

My research design was a qualitative study with a relatively small sampling of math teachers. Small sampling can be beneficial in revealing small, hidden populations that help the researcher uncover meanings of organization from the perspective of that group (Watters, Biernacki, 1989). For this design study, it was imperative that I target math teachers at the secondary level to understand how the beliefs, knowledge, and skill level of these teachers affect their classroom practice. This is a specialized group whose meanings and common beliefs could be lost in a

greater sampling. A greater sample involving other districts may not clearly uncover the occurrences within the organization (Watters, Biernacki, 1989).

How many case studies should be used to be able to generalize? According to Small's 2009 article, there are various alternatives to creating large samples. Small's first alternative of using the extended case method relates to my design study in that I looked at the organization as a whole, rather than only gathering data on the achievement of struggling students. Another consideration for using a small sampling was due to the nature of qualitative studies. Qualitative studies center on finding meaning and not making generalized hypothesis statements (Mason, 2010). According to Mason's article on sample size and saturation, too many samples will have a negative effect, but small samples can create a "shared view of the world." I realized the limitations of a small sample, but believe that the patterns that emerged are representative of the mathematics departments in Peninsula Unified.

In the next three sections, I will present my findings through categorizing the pre- and post-interview questions by patterns observed throughout the study. Figure 4.3 illustrates the patterns that arose in each learning dimension.

Figure 4.3 Dimension of Learning Legend

| Dimension of Learning	Pattern
Knowledge and Skills in Supporting Struggling Students	- Perspective on teaching struggling students - Skill on instructional strategies for struggling students - Skill on English Language Learner Strategies - Knowledge of District Systems of Tracking
Beliefs about Intelligence	- District Culture - Assumptions and Stereotypes - Home life Determines Success
Professional Responsibility	- Experience with Diverse Populations - Responsibility to Provide Access - Support of Segregated Settings - Ideal Support of Student in Classroom

Knowledge and Teacher Skill

This section focused on the learning dimension of teacher knowledge and skill, for which pre- and post-interviews questions focused on four areas: perspective on teaching struggling students, instructional strategies for struggling students, instructional strategies for English learners, and teacher knowledge of district systems of tracking and placement procedures in mathematics.

Perspective on Teaching Struggling Students
Teachers' knowledge and expertise in delivering content is essential to the growth and learning of students. The workshop sequence sought to ascertain whether teachers needed more professional development to learn and implement strategies to support struggling students, Instructional coaches facilitated the workshops to be able to guide teachers in building their individual capacity. To set a baseline measure for the first dimension of learning, teacher skills in supporting struggling students, I asked the following questions in the pre-interview:

- *Why did you decide to pursue your single subject and become a math teacher?*
- *Are there students that you are worried about in your classroom this year?*
- *Across your teaching experience, have you changed your perception about how to address struggling students?*

Figure 4.4
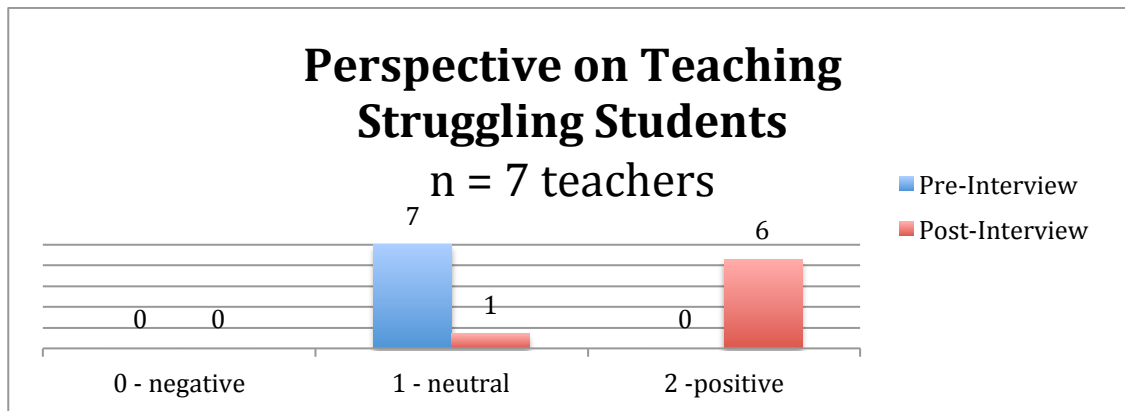
I measured responses on a 3-point scale:
- "0 – negative" indicated negative interactions with struggling students
- "1- neutral" indicated that teachers were not aware of those students in the classroom, did not interact with the students, or believed it was not an issue
- "2 – positive" indicated that teachers had the skills to be able to assist the students and believed assisting students was a positive aspect of teaching.

Some examples of how I measured responses on teacher perspectives of teaching struggling students are below. None of the teachers commented negatively

about working with students who were struggling: the majority of the responses were neutral. A typical neutral response was,*"I like the diversity in Peninsula. I like the rigor. I bring rigor to my classroom, and I think these kids have rigor. I can do a lot with them, so it's a challenging environment, and I like that."* This comment, like many others, did not have a positive or negative perspective on struggling students; rather, it appeared as if struggling students were not a focal point in teaching. Therefore, I assigned it a neutral rating. An example of a positive comment came from a middle school teacher: *"I check in with those students more often. If I see that they are struggling, I offer them extra help, extra support after school."*

Six out of the seven teachers moved from neutral responses to positive responses. Another comment referred to not being worried about teaching students in the Peninsula: *"I can teach in the district and not be worried kids are falling behind."* This comment illustrated how struggling students are not really part of the teacher's perspective or responsibility. However, by the end of the training, six out of the seven teachers had moved to the positive perspective about teaching struggling students, as illustrated by one teacher's post-interview comments:

> *"I feel like they're forgotten a lot in the district. So for me to stay here and be able to work with them and try to give them that opportunity…"* High School teacher.

However, there was a high school teacher who did not move in her thinking about struggling students in the Peninsula District. Her stance on struggling students did not move pre and post, which was very interesting, and she held fast to her beliefs that other factors contributed to poor performance in class.

All the teachers were initially neutral in their responses and did seem puzzled by the questions. One teacher commented, "*The Peninsula does not have struggling students.*" All teachers responded that they did not have many struggling students throughout the day. This presented a pattern of unawareness of a problem in Peninsula.

Instructional Strategies

The next two questions measured how well teachers knew strategies that help support struggling students, with a subset question of how English Language Learners were targeted:

- *What type of strategies do you use to address struggling students?*
- *What type of strategies do you use to address English Language Learner students?*
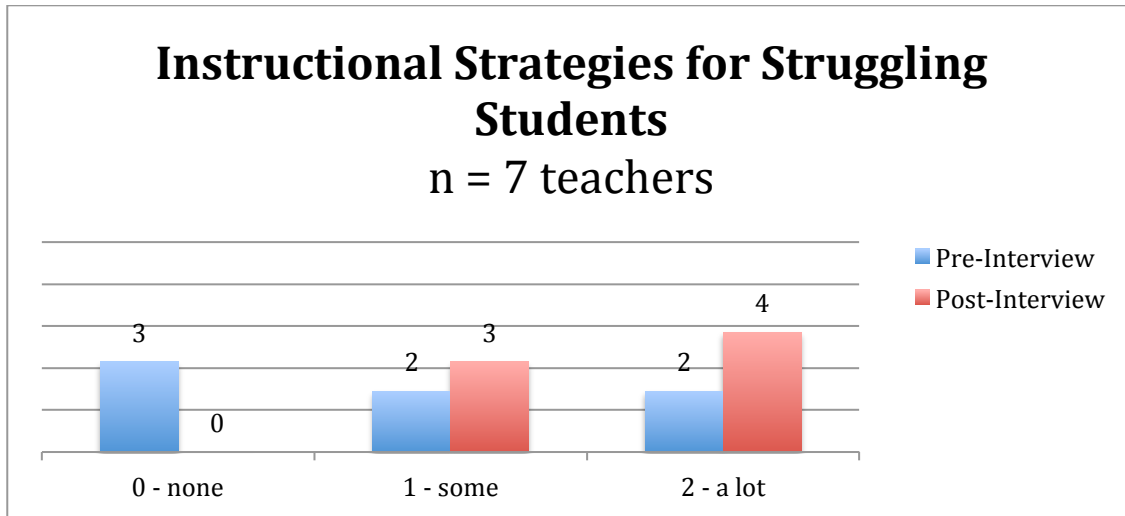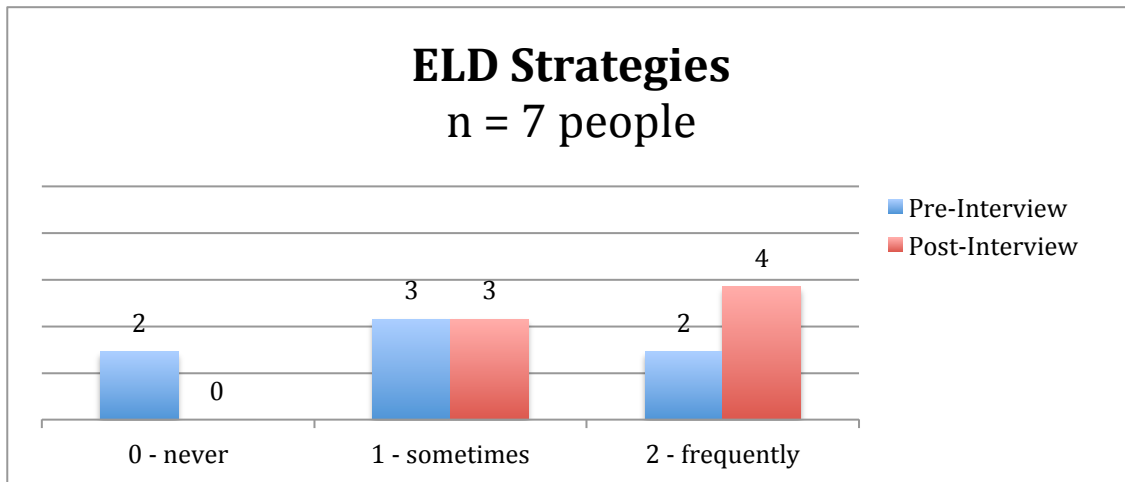
Figure 4.5

Instructional Strategies for Struggling Students
n = 7 teachers

Pre-Interview (blue): 0 - none = 3, 1 - some = 2, 2 - a lot = 2
Post-Interview (red): 0 - none = 0, 1 - some = 3, 2 - a lot = 4

Figure 4.6

ELD Strategies
n = 7 people

Pre-Interview (blue): 0 - never = 2, 1 - sometimes = 3, 2 - frequently = 2
Post-Interview (red): 0 - never = 0, 1 - sometimes = 3, 2 - frequently = 4

In order to measure instructional strategies and ELD strategies, I measured the responses on a 3-point scale:

- "0 – none, never" indicated that teachers did not use instructional strategies to target struggling students in class
- "1 – some, sometimes" indicated that sometimes strategies were used, but inconsistently
- "2 - a lot, frequently", indicated that teachers used instructional strategies frequently in the classroom.

The ELD question was measured in the same way. Some examples of how I measured responses on teacher perspectives of teaching struggling students are below:

Zero: "*I think being in a class where kids are above and beyond the level of sixth grade, which is what I teach, sometimes that might make them feel like they're not smart enough. That can make them lack motivation. I think that's hard on a student, a child. That's how I see it in my class, at least. For those students, they need a smaller setting.*"

One: "*Knowing that while everybody's math achievement isn't going to be the same, that there's a basic level of competence that I think everybody could attain.*"

Two: "*I contact the parents to let them know that I would like to work with them after school. I also refer them to our math workshop class, which is just additional support in math.*"

Movement was made from the pre- to post-interview. In instructional strategies, two teachers moved from "some" to "a lot", and three moved from "none" to "some," showing the workshop sequence did have a slight impact on improving teacher skill. The ELD strategies workshop was not as impactful, as many teachers did have knowledge of and skill in using English Learner strategies. Two teachers who did move from a "none" to "some" did not have English learners in their classrooms and had not had much experience with those strategies. However, at the post-interview, indicated basic understanding of English learner strategies and moved columns.

Knowledge of Systems and Math Laning

The last section of the learning dimension of teacher knowledge and skill focused on teachers' knowledge of systems and math laning, and explored how unfamiliarity about tracking systems in the district affected teachers' view them as equitable. The questions asked about systems of tracking included:

- The district uses lanes for math grouping beginning in middle school. What are your thoughts on that?
- Are you very familiar with the placement procedures?

Figure 4.7

Knowledge of Systems
n = 7 teachers
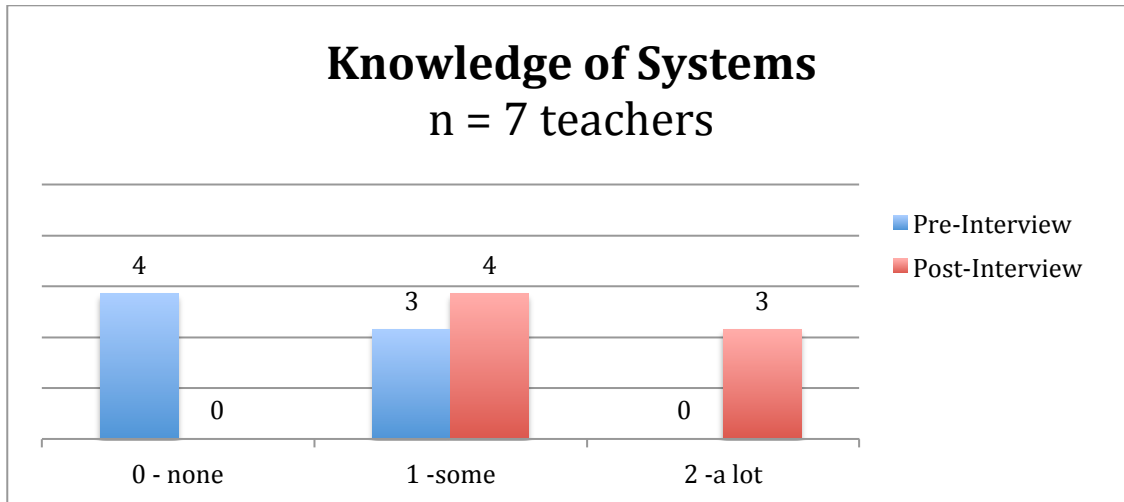
The responses were analyzed on a 3-point scale:
- "0 - none" indicated no knowledge of how the laning system worked.
- 1 - some" indicated some knowledge, which did not necessarily reflect accuracy
- "2 - a lot" indicated knowledge of how students move through the system

Zero: "*I don't have any African Americans in the advanced lanes, although I do have Hispanics.*"

One: "*I absolutely think every kid is placed where they want to be or where they need to be. If they're not, they can challenge to go into another lane. They can test out to go to a different lane. It's not what mom thinks they should be. The kid comes into the school and their (sic) teacher, who knows them the best, places them. If the student is not happy with that, they can challenge to be in another position.*"

Two: "*Second, I'm conflicted because it feels like, at least in math, I don't know about the other subjects, the primary purpose for the laning is because the advanced lane, now they're going to call it the accelerated lane, is going faster than the other lanes. I'm very conflicted with that because it really feels, again, like it's perpetuating a system where we're weeding out instead of supporting and creating equal access.*"

When collecting the baseline data, it became evident that five of the seven teachers were not aware of the overall systems and procedures of tracking in mathematics (called laning in the district). The fact that it is called laning and not tracking, and that students were allowed to move between lanes of math, was proof to many in the study that the district did not track. Teachers commented that laning offered choice to students and was very different from tracking. I asked all seven

36

teachers to describe the laning process. Of the seven teachers interviewed, only the two middle school math teachers knew the protocols for student math placement. The impact data has illustrated that when teachers were given full knowledge of how systems work, how rubrics were used for placement, which students accessed waivers to higher math lanes, and how the process was communicated to parents, not only did knowledge increase significantly, but opinions about laning changed dramatically.

Five of the seven teachers did not believe that supporting students to enter higher lanes is allowed or encouraged in the district; they believed that it fell on students to apply, ask, and understand how to move across math lanes. Also, teachers believed parents were given sufficient information on how to access waivers through family nights. As one middle school math teacher said, *"We have family math night to go over the rubric."* Many teachers had not considered that language barriers might prevent families from attending family nights or understanding information shared family nights. Translated materials of the laning rubric, pathways, and waivers have not been available in the district. Many participants believed that all students who had received an A or B were referred to higher lanes in math, and were surprised to learn that a teacher recommendation could override a math grade as criteria for higher lane assignment. However, six of the teachers acknowledged that the math laning rubric was unfamiliar. At the beginning of the workshop, many were not interested in getting students to a higher lane.

All seven teachers reflected growth in learning about math laning in the district and post-interviews reflected expanded knowledge. As reflected in this comment from a middle school teacher: "*I check in with those students more often. If I see that they are struggling, I offer them extra help, extra support after school. I contact the parents to let them know that I would like to work with them after school.*"
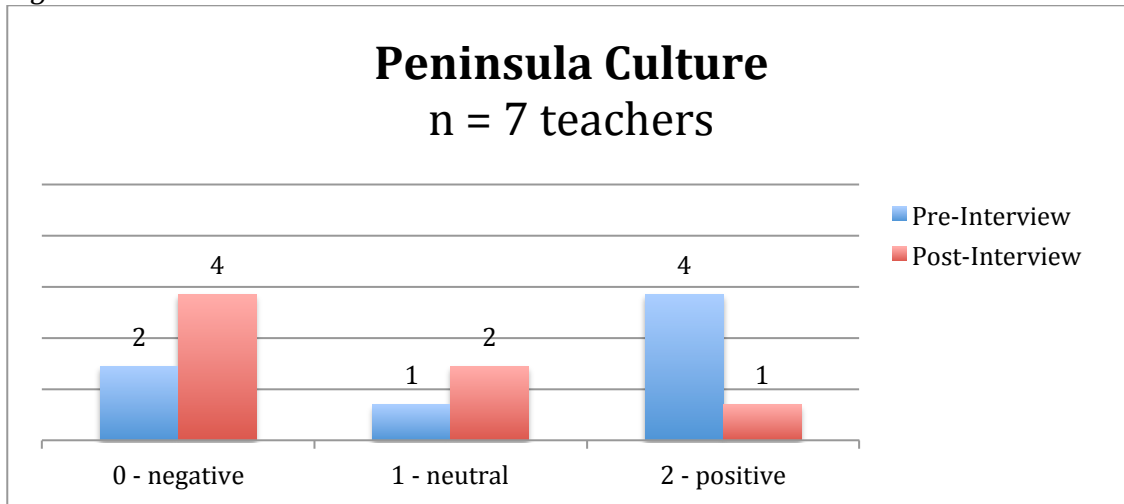
Teacher Beliefs

This next section focused on the learning dimension of teacher beliefs, and how teacher beliefs about families influence the way teachers interact with students in the classroom. Pre- and post-interviews focused on questions about Peninsula culture, assumptions and stereotypes, and student home life determining success in the classroom.

Peninsula Culture
In this next section, I have discussed the patterns that emerged when interviewing teachers about Peninsula culture, as measured by responses to the following questions:
- *Why did you apply to the district specifically?*
- *I don't know if you're aware, but Peninsula has been identified as having a huge achievement gap. What do you think might be the reason?*
- *Can you think of a struggling student? What are the key problems for this student?*

Figure 4.8

Peninsula Culture
n = 7 teachers

Pre-Interview
Post-Interview

| 0 - negative | 1 - neutral | 2 - positive |

(Pre-Interview: 0 - negative = 2, 1 - neutral = 1, 2 - positive = 4; Post-Interview: 0 - negative = 4, 1 - neutral = 2, 2 - positive = 1)

I used a 3-point scale to determine if teachers felt that Peninsula culture was a negative or positive influence, or if they felt neutral about it:

- "0 – negative" indicated that teachers responded that the district had negative impacts on students
- "1 – neutral" indicated neither positive nor negative feelings about the overall culture of the district and its impact on students.
- "2 – positive" indicated that teachers responded that the district is a place of opportunity and resources that had great positive impacts on students.

A typical positive remark about Peninsula included: *" I think the students that do better are the kids that do study. They do their homework, but also are involved in other aspects of the school, like clubs or sports and activities."*

Negative statements about Peninsula culture were about affluent parents and a lack of overall support for struggling students.

> *My thought is probably controversial. I know we get a large donation from Parents for Schools. I feel like they are very specific about where they want the money they donate to go because they want it to support their children. A lot of times, the people volunteering at Rancho High School or the people donating money to Rancho High School, are not the people who have kids who aren't doing well. They want to make sure their money goes to sports programs or theater programs or more AP classes. They're not worried about the support systems we need for students who are not successful or students who need extra support of food or stuff like that.*

Six out of the seven teachers felt either negatively or positively about Peninsula culture; only one had a neutral response. Four out of the seven teachers identified

Peninsula culture as a positive for students, citing the many opportunities in the Peninsula as contributing to the positive effects.

A popular saying within the district and community reflects the culture of Peninsula: "That is how things are done in Peninsula." The district has a reputation for being academically rigorous, a beacon for families who want their children to go to elite universities, highly affluent, and a place with entitled and overscheduled students; there is also the belief that students of color are not a priority.. The district is a beacon for affluent families who would like their children to go to elite universities and that students of colors are not a priority. The pre-interviews have overwhelming portrayed this picture of Peninsula.

Teachers felt that many parents had high expectations in regards to communication, homework notification, and prepared lessons. In return, teachers felt that the highly affluent parents took care of any struggles their children had through tutors and extra support outside of the classroom, thus relieving teachers of that duty. It was an "unspoken agreement." Students who did not have the abundant resources represented by the majority in the Peninsula District were not a priority, as evidenced in this pre-interview response: *"You can have a parent who knows how to navigate the system. I feel like that's a really key point.*" Typically, the parents of students of color were not as involved, did not demand frequent communication, and were not as aware that students may be struggling until report cards were delivered. Many teachers felt that the Peninsula culture was to blame for low performance.

At the end of the six workshops, however, this assumption and the participants' own views on student background as a disability had changed slightly. An example of this is reflected in a positive response from one of the two high school teachers: "*Maybe a lot of students have come here from other areas, landed in the Peninsula and, 'OK, now you're expected to do the highest and the best you can do.'*"

Additionally, after the six-week workshop, teachers did have different perspectives on the Peninsula culture, with two more teachers believing that the district had a negative influence and one teacher moving from positive to neutral. As one teacher in the neutral column responded:

> *It (the Peninsula culture) is really complex, and I think it's multi-faceted. Where it becomes difficult to talk about is people feel like they're going to get blamed. I feel like there's guilt because if we talk about a culture of winners and losers, then people feel like, 'But I worked for this.' So they might feel like their own achievements are being attacked. Or, because of the position of power as teachers, it is our responsibility. And I think people can feel helpless, like it's such an entrenched inequality that people can also feel powerless to do anything. Like, "what am I supposed to do?' But yes, I think the first step is making people comfortable in being able to talk about it.*

Assumptions and Stereotypes

Another pattern that emerged through pre- and post-interviews was teacher assumptions and stereotypes of families and students. In this section, I asked the following questions:

- What types of students are successful in Peninsula?
- What are the challenges?
- The Peninsula has been identified as having an achievement gap between White/Asian students and students of color, defined as African-American/Pacific Islander/Latino. What do you think might be the reasons for the achievement gap?

Figure 4.9
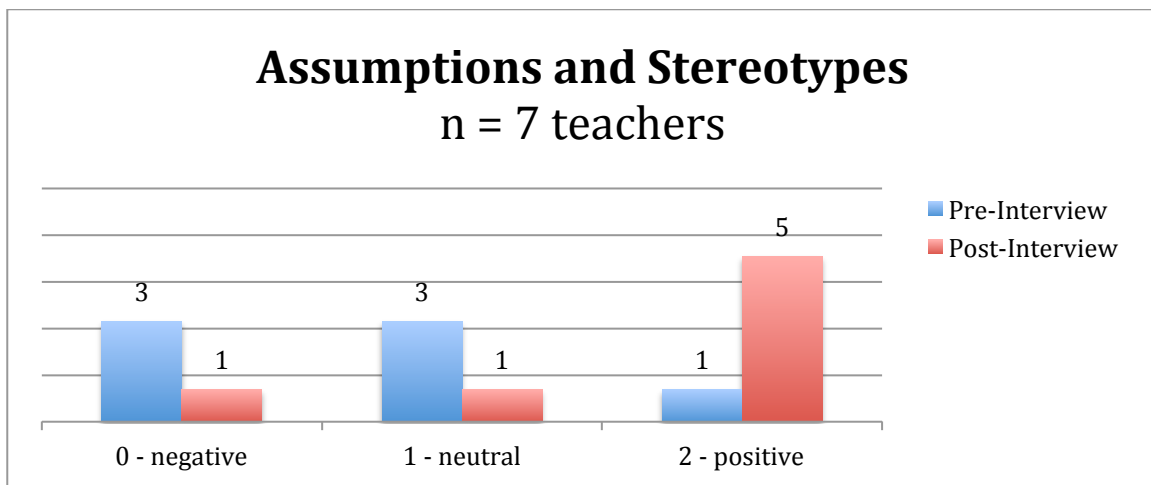
I measured the responses on a 3-point scale:

- "0 – negative," indicated deficit thinking about a student of color, or an assumption or stereotype about a racial group.
- "1 – neutral" indicated that the teacher did not say anything negative or positive when discussing students of color.
- "2 – positive" indicated a response free deficit views and indicated diversity, bilingualism, or another factor as an asset.

Pre-interview responses are illustrated below:

Zero: *"In my experience, the Asian students are very successful, as well as the affluent white students."*

One: **"***I think the challenges are that when they (minority students) get here, they're already one step behind. They may not have the background to make them successful. They may not have the home life to make them successful."*

Two: **"***Well, one of the good things about the Tinsley Program is that it has allowed students from East Peninsula to attend the Peninsula schools, where there are still arts programs, they still have music, they have drama – stuff that has been cut in other districts. I think the kids get a more enriching education and experience – at least I would hope, and think, that they do.***"

Impact data has indicated that teachers did change many of their assumptions and stereotypes about students of color. In pre-interview responses, only one teacher had a positive response about students of color, whereas there were three teachers that held negative views and three that held neutral views. Six out of the seven teachers showed growth in their responses about students of color. Four of the middle school teachers had positive responses and commented on student diversity as an asset, as reflected in this response: "*We have to know about ourselves and know about each other before we can do the heavy-duty work of how can we make a change for these students in our class. So I think that relationship building piece has been the most important.*"

One teacher did move from a negative to a neutral response, citing that her interactions with students of color in the district were limited. One teacher did not change beliefs about students of color and was insistent on equating minority students with low socio-economic status, as evidenced by the comment:

I think it has to do partly with socioeconomics. Those students have more opportunities to attend after-school tutoring. They also have opportunities to take trips with their parents to museums. They are just exposed to a lot more, I think, enriching activities that your low socioeconomic students or students of color don't necessarily have.

Home Life Determining Success
Next, I discussed the norms in the district around the belief that home life determines success for students. For this topic, I asked the following questions:
- What are expected norms for parental involvement?
- How does it influence student success?
- What types of students are successful in Peninsula?

Figure 4.10

Home Life Determines Success
n = 7 teachers

Legend: Pre-Interview, Post-Interview

Values shown on chart:
- 0 - never: 0 (Pre-Interview), 1 (Post-Interview)
- 1- sometimes: 4 (Pre-Interview), 5 (Post-Interview)
- 2 - frequently: 3 (Pre-Interview), 7 (Post-Interview)
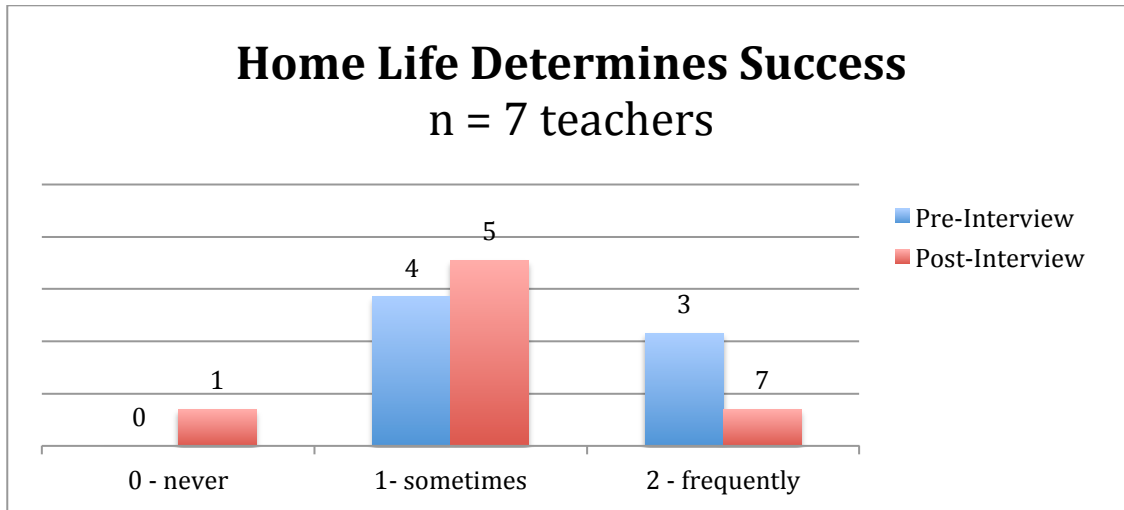
The way I measured if teachers believe that home life determines success is by assigning:

- "0 – never" indicated teacher belief that parental support, socio-economics, or geography was not the biggest indicator for a student to have success in the classroom.
- "1 – sometimes" indicated that the teacher felt those factors somewhat determined success.
- "2 – frequently" indicated that home life was the biggest factor that helped students achieve success.

The data on this subset was not as consistent. Three out of seven teachers believed home frequently determined success in school, and two of those teachers moved to sometimes during the post-interview. The following is an example of a two (frequently) response from a middle school teacher: "*It is really frustrating to me that we're so strong in our communication to parents.*" This same teacher did move her thinking by the end of the workshop and her post-interview response reflected this change: "*We send stuff home, but a lot of it doesn't go home in Spanish.*"

Five out of the seven teachers responded with comments that were scored a one (sometimes). An example of a comment that was scored a one came from one of the high school teachers: "*I think teachers look at students who aren't successful and they don't see what's really going on with them because they don't identify with that struggle.*" One teacher scored a zero (never) at the end of the training with her comment that focused on the system: "*The way school is structured and the way the curriculum are taught I think favors the dominant group which, in Peninsula, is whites and Asians.*"

According to pre-interviews, these behaviors as displayed by families are expressed through emails, campus presence, and financial support of school activities. Tutors are a large part of parental involvement in academics. Teachers were very consistent in describing the accepted norms for parent involvement and

advocacy. By the end of the workshop activities and readings, markers for parent involvement and advocacy had changed.

Impact data in the post-interviews revealed teachers finding other explanations for achievement gap issues and access for students of color. Teachers did give preference to the Peninsula parent stereotypes, "helicopter parents," due to assumptions that job security was tied to satisfaction these parents. Parents who do not advocate in typical ways do care. Translation of materials and notices needed to become a priority and teachers needed to advocate for these types of materials. Mindset changes about parent involvement led to changes about student advocacy as well.

Teacher Responsibility

This next section focused on the learning dimension of teacher responsibility in regards to struggling students. Pre- and post-interviews focused on four areas: experience with diverse populations, responsibility to provide access within the classroom, support of segregated settings, and ideal support of struggling students in the classroom.

Experience with Diverse Populations

I first collected data about teacher experience with diverse populations. I asked the following questions:
- What was the level of diversity at your college?
- Did you participate in community tutoring, or any other experiences with students of color? Any other experiences?

Figure 4.11
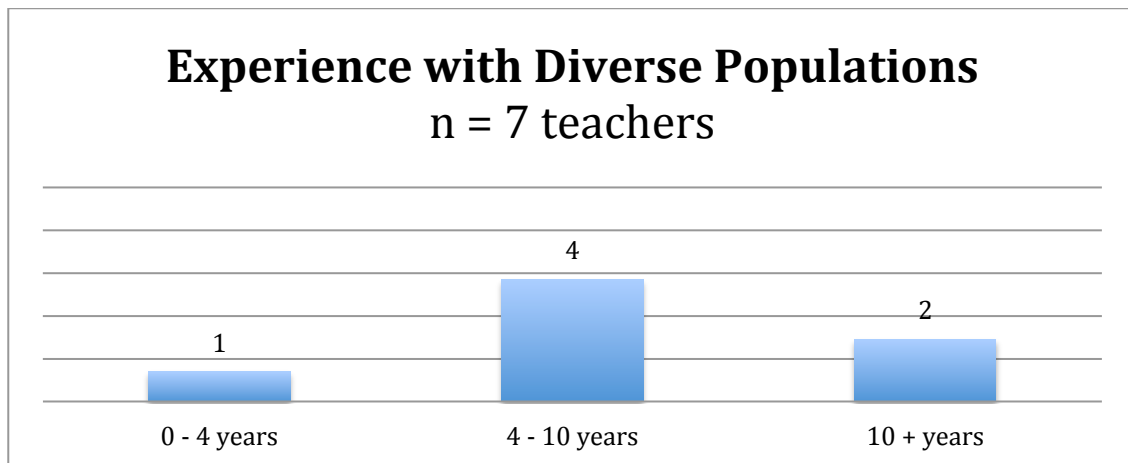
I measured a response with a zero only if there was not one reference to diversity or experience with students of color. One high school teacher did not have any experience with students of color, and did not at the time have students of color in her classroom. Four of the seven teachers had some experience with students of

color in college demographics, some type of tutoring or volunteer experience, and had students of color in the classroom. Two out of the seven teachers had a lot of experience with students of color over the entirety of their careers.

The two middle school teachers had the most experience with students of color, through tutoring, volunteering, and previous teaching experience. These two teachers had the most open mindset in regards to working with students of color and regularly used instructional strategies to support struggling students. They were also the teachers that did not see culture, or a second language, as a deficit, but commented on how diversity helped the entire school. One male teacher commented:

> *Students of color who are on our campuses, that's a positive. Without that, the actual population of the school or the city would be more segregated. Even if students tend to self-segregate themselves on this campus, there is a mixture, there's different representation on campus, different kinds of people. It gives the chance, the opportunity to make connections across cultures and locations.*

Beliefs About Professional Responsibility
Prior to collecting baseline data, I had thought that teachers did not know about differentiation strategies or how to address struggling learners. While teachers did lack skills on how to implement strategies in classrooms that had a very small percentage of struggling learners, for the majority of teachers, knowledge of strategies was not an issue. However, teachers did hold varied beliefs about teacher responsibility to implement strategies and provide extra support to struggling students.

I collected baseline data about teacher responsibility to provide access for students through the following questions:
- What responsibility is on the teacher to provide students with access to resources, translations, and other opportunities?
- How have you provided access to resources to struggling students?

Figure 4.12

Responsibility to Provide Access
n = 7 teachers
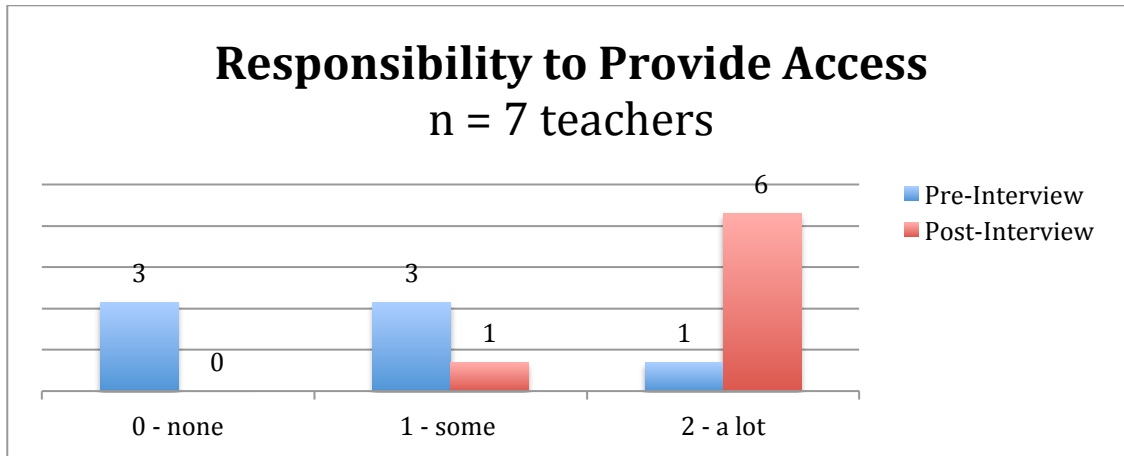
I measured the responses on a 3-point scale:
- "0 – none" indicated that the teacher felt he/she did not feel responsible to provide access to resources, but only to teach content.
- "1 – some" indicated that the teacher stated he/she felt some responsibility to provide access to after school and in class support.
- "2 – a lot" indicated that the teacher felt a lot of responsibility to ensure students had access to resources in and out of the classroom, and felt that teachers needed to facilitate that process.

Specifically, teachers referred to these areas when stating opinions about why the achievement gap persists. Student ability was not questioned, which surprised me. What arose from the data was that six out of the seven teachers believed the students were capable but not prepared or supported at home. They conveyed that it was not their professional responsibility to provide extra support to allow students access to the content, but the responsibility of the parents. A middle school teacher felt remorse but helplessness, and was considered a zero in the pre-interview. She stated, "*The ones I think are successful are the ones who have parents who are really into academics at home. That's where I see the big gap in Peninsula. That makes me sad, because I want to reach all of them somehow.*" When questioned with what she had done, however, she replied she had done nothing. This teacher did show movement by the end of the workshop series by citing the strategies of translation and one-on-one help as what she would do for struggling students. This did move her to a scale of one for the post-interview. All three teachers who felt it was not within their realm to provide access did move to a higher rating.

Two high school teachers and one middle school teacher did believe that providing access was some of the teacher's responsibility. The middle school teacher commented, "*I think good teachers are part of it (access). I think that helps a lot. I think they are doing quite a bit with the tutoring and all those other extra activities.*" At the end of the post-interview, six out of the seven teachers believed

that teachers hold a lot of responsibility in providing access to resources. This was clearly supported by this middle school teacher's comment:

> *I wonder, 'What can I do to engage the student further? Or what can I do to let the student know that I care?' When I'm constantly badgering the student to turn in his/her homework, how is that being perceived? Does that mean they think I'm picking on them? Or do they realize that I am trying to hold them to high standards? I definitely take our conversations and think about stuff with my current students, and try to make little tweaks or changes here or there with my current students.*

Many of the teachers held the belief during the pre-interviews that the school district had a stronger professional responsibility to ensure student success, and that students would get help through outside support. When further questioned, teachers said they believed the district was monitoring students, and alluded to the roles of counselors and administrators. Also, teachers commented that a referral was an indication to counselors and administrators that a student needed help, and that the site would take responsibility for supporting the students with low performance. Other teachers felt unsure of whom to rely upon for resources for students and were unfamiliar with what types of resources were available. Many teachers felt that the district prioritized content and high achievement, which then distracted the teachers from supporting struggling students. Adding to this dilemma was the high sense of responsibility the teachers felt towards affluent and active parents.

After the six-week workshop, many of the teachers changed their beliefs about teacher responsibility towards implementing differentiation strategies and addressing struggling students in the mainstream classrooms. One teacher summed up her experience at the end of the workshop concerning teacher responsibility:

> "*It's really easy to get caught up in yourself and your subject and forget about how big of a scope this profession comes with and how we need to focus on more than tests, grades, but the student*".

Support of Segregated Settings

One of the patterns that emerged throughout the pre- and post-interviews was the positive support for alternative settings for students who were struggling in the mainstream classroom. I collected baseline data about teacher support for segregated settings through asking the following questions:

- When a student is struggling, what is your process for getting them support?
- What are your thoughts on pullout classes for struggling students?

Figure 4.13

Support of Segregated Settings
n = 7 teachers
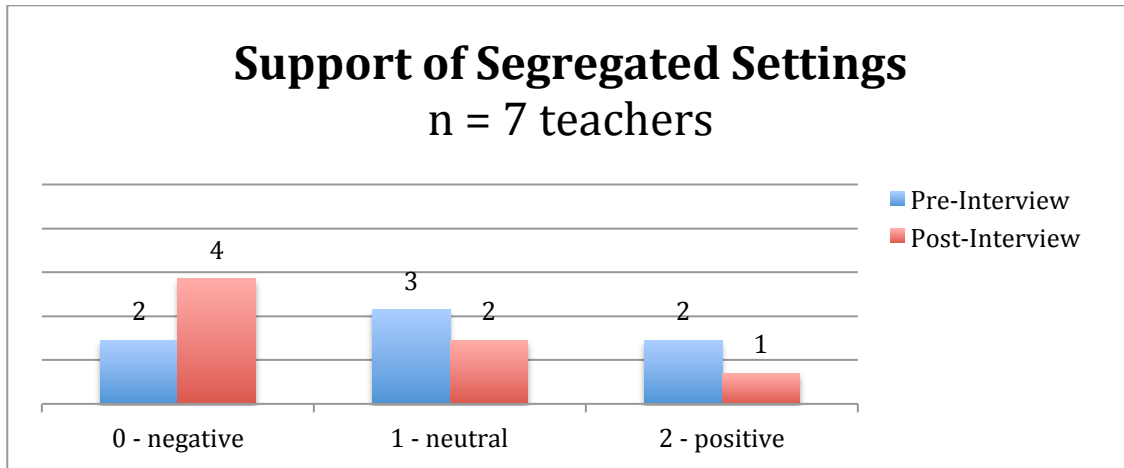
I measured responses on a 3-point scale with a negative, neutral, or positive response.

- "0 – negative" measured a response that indicated that taking students out of the mainstream classroom was negative; for example: *"students miss content when they are going to support classes."*
- "1 – neutral" measured a response that relied on the site making the best decision for the student; for example, this response from a high school teacher: *"the counselor knew the student was not doing well and put the student in a lower lane."*
- "2 – positive" measured a response that indicated that taking students out of the mainstream classroom was positive; for example, *"I think smaller class sizes for these students, to really focus the attention on them, would help a lot."*

Post-interview responses showed a lot of movement, with all but the two high school teachers moving to either neutral or negative. The two teachers who did not move had these two comments:

> *Positive rating: "My point is that it has to do with differentiation of teachers and our ability to provide different experiences for different levels of students. That's hard and it takes a lot of work and a lot of individualized energy. So there's a tendency to not want to do that. It's easier to just have homogeneous groups because it makes lessons easier. But I don't really think it's the best thing for kids."*

> *Neutral rating: "I think being in a class where kids are above and beyond the level of sixth grade, which is what I teach, sometimes that might make them feel like they're not smart enough. That can make them lack motivation. I think that's hard on a student, a child. That's how I see it in my class, at least. For those students, they need a smaller setting."*

Clearly, teachers felt that segregated settings were not ideal, but were still positive and necessary. Teachers who felt segregated settings were negative in post-interviews shared comments such as this, from a middle school teacher:

> *To get out of that (segregated setting) is WAY challenging, and you've got to be super-motivated. It has to be a conscious decision on the part of the student, and students already feel so disenfranchised at that experience that it's hard to imagine.*

Teachers were able to envision that segregated settings were not always the best placement for students and that being placed outside the mainstream classroom had a tremendous effect on students.

Ideal Support of Student in Classroom

Ideal settings are defined as the best placement for struggling students as perceived by the teacher. In this section I have discussed what teachers initially believed was the ideal placement for struggling students and what impact the workshop series had on those beliefs. The interviews revealed that educators do believe that settings outside the classroom will provide the support students need to be successful. The literature revealed that this is a misconception for students of color. I asked the following questions to collect baseline data about teachers' ideal support for struggling students:

- What is the best way to support struggling students?
- Do you think separate classes for struggling students is a good placement? Why?

Figure 4.14

Ideal Support of Student in Classroom
n = 7 teachers
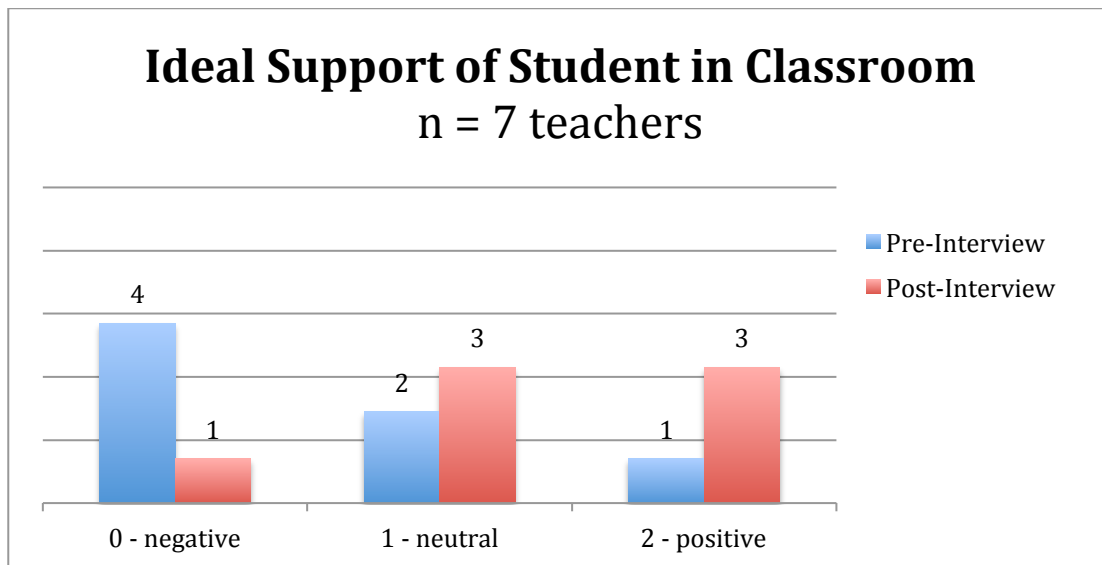
I measured the responses on a 3-point scale:
- "0 – negative" indicated that ideal support was outside of the classroom.
- "1 – neutral" indicated that the teacher was not in favor of either, but wanted support for the student and would let others (administrators, counselors) make that decision.
- "2 – positive" indicated that the teacher felt the student should be supported in the classroom.

A zero in pre-interviews was demonstrated by this high school teacher's response: *"English Language Learner students would be better served in their own communities and Peninsula is not a fit."* There was resistance to the idea that instructional practices should change to fit the student, and the idea that students should fit the Peninsula student mold. In pre-interviews, four out of the six responded that for students who do not fit the mold, segregated settings are the best placement, which was categorized as negative. Neutral responses included *"that decision is not mine to make but the admin or counselors,"* as stated by a high school teacher who did not encourage nor protest student movement. Positive responses were illustrated by a middle school math teacher: *"I want the student to stay in my class, the other teachers do not always know the curriculum, or focus on the right units."*

Post-interview responses showed a lot of growth, with the exception of the high school teacher, who remained firm in her belief that the ideal support of students was not in the mainstream classroom, and felt that segregated settings were the most helpful: *"I absolutely think every kid is placed where they want to be or where they need to be."* Three of the seven teachers moved to more neutral ratings, where their responses showed that they could not make up their minds as to where students who are struggling should fit. One middle school teacher replied, *"I'm conflicted. What if outside support best fits their needs?"* However, three of the seven believed that the ideal support was in the classroom and that classroom support was an overall benefit for struggling students. A middle school teacher best says this:

> Students who feel confident in the classroom. Students feel they're adequately supported. Students who feel like other people believe in them. So supported in practical sense, and they feel emotionally supported.

The workshops affected teacher beliefs about segregated settings and ideal supports for students. Three of the teachers left the workshop conflicted about this topic, but had deeper questions, whereas one teacher held fast to previous beliefs.

Conclusion of Impact Findings
Overall, the pre- and post-interviews illustrated growth in the three learning dimensions: knowledge and skills in supporting struggling students, beliefs about intelligence, and professional responsibility. Patterns indicated that teachers with previous experience with students of color were more apt to change beliefs.

However, not all teachers moved; specifically, the two high school teachers showed the least movement, and in some areas, showed no movement at all.

Section II: Process Data Analysis

In this section I have reviewed the design process and elements from the inception until the end. The design development went through many cycles, and changes were implemented as I gathered data from various sources. Process data was collected throughout the workshops, which occurred over a three-month period. The sessions were facilitated by a district instructional coach team, which had been trained through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Department on coaching and instructional strategies. The team had also previously reviewed the workshop materials. The BTSA coaches and I had been creating workshops for new teachers to onboard them to Peninsula, and these workshops had been influenced and molded by my classes in the LEEP program. I had been a part of the trainings for new teachers, but for this design, which focused on tenured and veteran teachers, I was an observer at the workshops. However, I debriefed with coaches about how to improve sessions and discussed what changes needed to be made to agendas and activities. All teachers were given reflection logs to record thoughts, questions, and experiences. After each session, participants engaged in a 10-minute discussion where coaches solicited their feedback about the session. The coaches and I discussed the feedback and reviewed the upcoming sessions. As a group we adjusted the agenda, which resulted in changes for the upcoming session.

Many components of the original workshop had to be modified after reflections and discussions from session one revealed that some activities would not be practical or could not be implemented. For example, teachers were initially going to do a case study of one student, but discussions revealed that teachers were unwilling to delve deeply into a case study of a single student.

In the next section, I have reviewed each learning dimension, discussed the activities that fell under each respective domain, and analyzed the process data collected.

Knowledge and Teacher Skill

This section is focused on the learning dimension of teacher knowledge and skill, and how my observations and teacher reflection logs revealed data in four areas: perspective on teaching struggling students, instructional strategies for struggling students, English learner strategies for English learners, and teacher knowledge of district systems of tracking and placement procedures in mathematics. The Dreyfus model of skill, referenced in my impact findings, guided me in my analysis of teacher reflection logs and workshop observations. Included below is the rubric for the first dimension of learning.

Figure 4.15[2]

Dimensions of Learning	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Expert
Knowledge and skills in supporting struggling students	Teachers know few instructional strategies to address struggling learners; they are not knowledgeable about resources or tracking systems in the district that support or hinder students.	Teachers are familiar with many instructional strategies to address struggling learners and understand the basic systems of supports and tracking in the district.	Teachers are very knowledgeable about instructional strategies to support struggling learners and understand the complexity of the tracking systems and how to create supports for students within the system.

The workshop components that addressed this dimension of learning were the demonstration lesson by the instructional coach and the presentation of tracking systems for mathematics, called laning in Peninsula.

Demonstration Lesson

Before the demonstration lesson, the teachers discussed as a group the most effective strategies for struggling learners and English learners. In my observations, I was very surprised at the knowledge of skill in the group. Many of the teachers discussed best practices for English learners, such as sentence starters, preview of vocabulary, oral language practice, and use of glossaries in science and math content areas. Teachers did have a good foundation for struggling learners as well, citing best practices. My observations of the discussion led me to change the upcoming sessions that focused on teaching the group these skills.

As the demonstration lesson began, the teachers were shocked when the lesson on math probability was not conducted in English. The coaches and I had brought in a Spanish Immersion teacher to teach a 45-minute fourth grade lesson on basic probability. Through my observations, I was able to visually see the tension and anxiety rise in the group. During the lesson, many teachers flocked to the one participant in the workshop who is bilingual in Spanish, asking for guidance. The lesson utilized many best practices for English learners and provided quick assessments of growth. The lesson was very successful in utilizing best practices, and the debrief afterwards was very revealing.

All teachers, except the bilingual one, shared that they felt less intelligent because they could not follow basic instructions, yet when graphic organizers were passed out and sentence stems were used, their anxiety levels dropped. Teachers

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[2] Table and rubric created in a conversation with faculty advisor, School of Education (Dr. Bernard Gifford, Professor University of California, Berkeley, oral communication 26th, September, 2015.

experienced how strategies can give access to students, yet many admitted they do not use them on a regular basis. As one middle school teacher wrote in her log, *"It really got me thinking of all the ways to be mindful of all learners. Thanks for showing a concrete lesson example."* Another teacher wrote, "*The demo lesson prompted meaningful discussion for me and I want to use more visuals and graphics. I need to increase student talk time. I need to simplify directions."*

The demonstration lesson built awareness of how and why to use best practices for English learners. The teachers had earlier shown great knowledge of strategies to use, but admitted they hardly used them. This activity prompted them to rethink how they might utilize strategies for all learners.

Math Laning

The next activity, which addressed knowledge and teacher skill, was the presentation of how tracking works in Peninsula. Through my observations, I gathered a lot of data. First, the teachers did not initially believe that laning was the same as tracking. Below is the data I gathered from the reflection log that revealed that teachers did not have much knowledge about tracking in Peninsula.

Figure 4.16
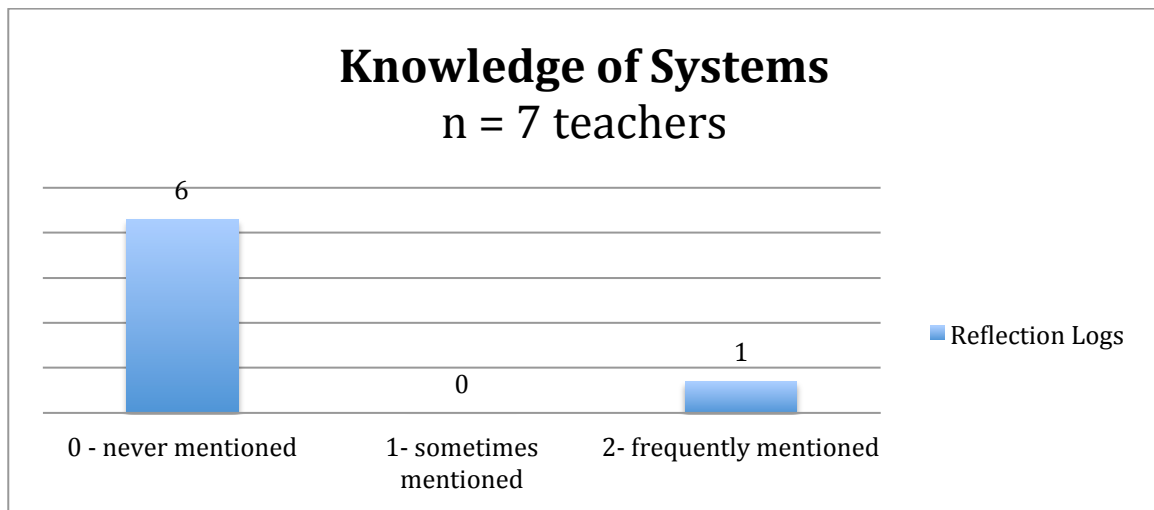
Theoretically, students in the Peninsula District students could move from one math lane to another. First, they had to have received an A in the lower lane class, and then received an A in a summer transition course. However, data presented showed that while students did move lanes in Peninsula, they primarily moved down to an easier lane and very rarely moved up to a higher lane. At the middle school level, not one student of color had successfully moved up a math lane. Parents could waiver their students into the higher lane, which many did. In 2014, only three of the 55 students whose parents waivered them into the higher lane were students of color. None of the teachers, except the sixth grade math teacher, had extensive knowledge of how students are tracked, beginning in sixth grade. The high school teachers believed that tracking was through a series of assessments and

grades. The high school teachers expressed concern to the nine-point rubric used by sixth grade math teachers at the end of the school year to separate students into two lanes for seventh grade. High school teachers expressed dismay that the rubric contained challenge work not assigned in class as a component, and that application problems, which were not part of the sixth grade curriculum, were also used in placement. The rubric was not translated into other languages, but all parents were invited to a short presentation in the fall on the criteria for math placement for seventh grade. However, notifications of the presentation were sent through email and not translated. At this point in the workshops, many teachers began to write in their logs. One teacher wrote, "*I am distraught that our system is so bias (sic).*" However, other teachers wrote more positive learnings, such as: "*Through these trainings I feel that I have had a great opportunity to put myself in my students' shoes, and have generated in myself broader awareness for me about focusing on inclusion for all my students.*" The process data also revealed that five of the seven teachers were unaware of the correlation between A-G college readiness and access to higher math courses.

However, not all teachers wrote about the laning system being a negative. One high school teacher wrote that in math there are foundations of learning and that criteria must be set. She went on to say that not all students are prepared to take higher math, and that rubrics and criteria were beneficial to teachers teaching the higher lanes, to better be able to focus on teaching at a certain level.

Teacher Beliefs

This next section is a review of the patterns that emerged from observations and reflection logs that collected data on how teacher beliefs about families influenced the way teachers interact with students in the classroom. The patterns emerged in five areas: district culture, assumptions and stereotypes of families of color, home life determining academic success, parental support, and access to resources. The framework I used to analyze reflection logs and observations on this dimension of learning are below.

Figure 4.17

Dimensions of Learning	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Expert
Beliefs about intelligence	Teachers hold stereotypical beliefs about intelligence, such as poverty and race as factors that inhibit intelligence	Teachers believe that most students can learn, but still hold some stereotypical beliefs about poverty as an indicator of intelligence.	Teachers believe that all students can learn, and understand that racism and poverty are challenges, but not an indication of intelligence.

The workshop components that addressed this dimension of learning were a bus ride into East Peninsula and Peninsula, and the data presentation. Below I have included the three patterns I noticed when coding the reflection logs: the Peninsula culture, access to resources, and assumptions and stereotypes. Initially, the teachers believed that the home life of students of color to be a mismatch to the Peninsula culture, and that student background and home life of students were unaligned; these were given as the most the prevalent reasons for underachievement.

One teacher wrote in his log, *"we cannot fix their (students) home life, or if they are poor."* Another teacher wrote, "*It is hard for students who come from the Avenidas program to compete with the Peninsula kids."* Many of these reflections revealed deficit thinking about students of color. During the sessions, data was presented that students of color living in Peninsula also did not fair well in the district. In my observation I noted that participants then asked questions such as, "Are the Peninsula students low socio-economic?" Coaches presented data that disaggregated data and revealed that students of color who were not low socio-economic and lived in Peninsula still presented an achievement gap when compared to white and Asian students.

By the end of the workshop sequence, definitions of the Peninsula culture shifted and empathy was built, as reflected in a log from a participant: "*Empathy-Understanding a lack of understanding is not a lack of effort/attention. Willingness to spend time creating scaffolding or reviewing for students who have accessibility concerns."*
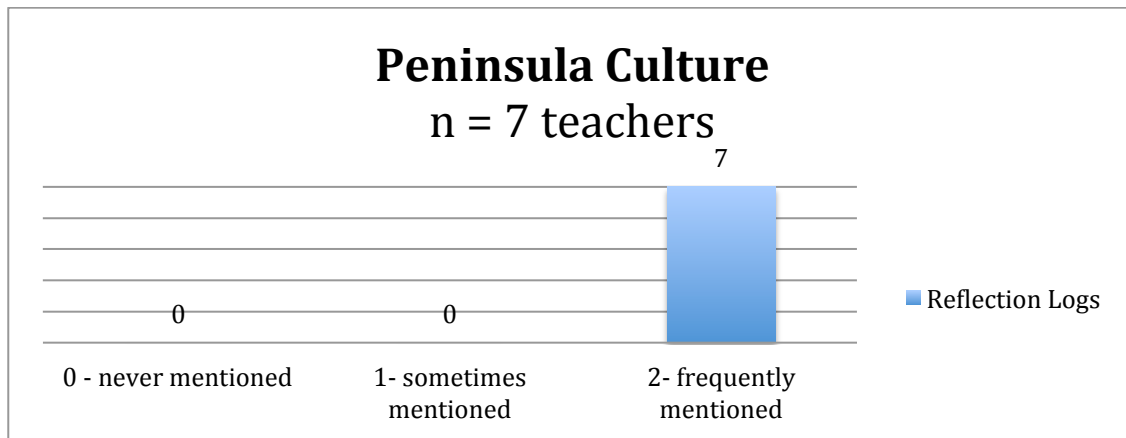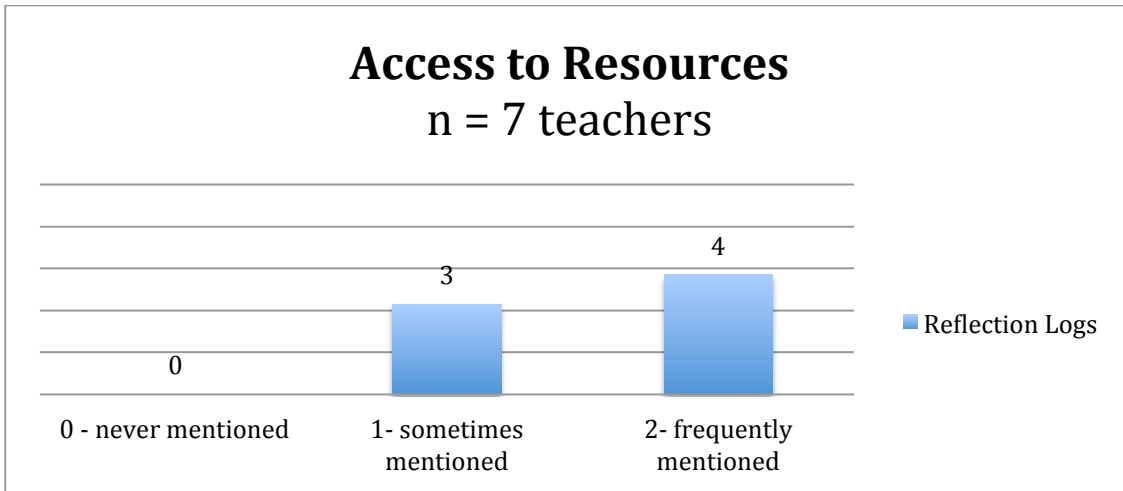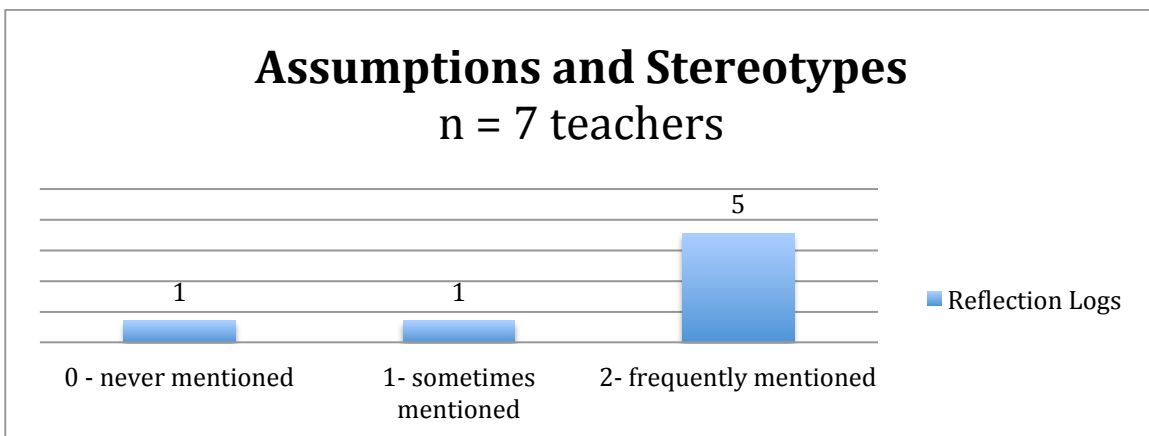
Figure 4.18

Figure 4.19

Access to Resources
n = 7 teachers

0 — 0 - never mentioned
3 — 1- sometimes mentioned
4 — 2- frequently mentioned

■ Reflection Logs

Figure 4.20

Assumptions and Stereotypes
n = 7 teachers

1 — 0 - never mentioned
1 — 1- sometimes mentioned
5 — 2- frequently mentioned

■ Reflection Logs

The teachers rode the bus that comes in from East Peninsula during one of the sessions, and it had a tremendous impact on them. I observed that it was eye opening for many who had never been through neighborhoods in East Peninsula. Many did not know that there were homes, condos, and townhomes in the area. Teachers had not realized how long students traveled to get to school, and discussed how spending three hours daily on the bus is an obstacle to learning. Many discussed that parents had a commitment to education. One teacher wrote, "*I am not sure I would put my son on a bus for a better education, it is a long ride."* Teachers were appalled that not all sites have welcome plans for students, but did admit they were not sure if their site had a plan. Teachers also discussed how to minimize the early bus ride by scheduling electives or physical education for students in the morning, and they wanted to know if sites were aware that this could be beneficial. What was probably the most emotional part of the trip was when is was disclosed that high school students from East Peninsula rode two different public bus systems to get to school because the district did not offer a

school bus. However, those high school students who lived in Peninsula and High End Hills were offered a bus. Their parents paid a fee per semester. The district policy on providing the bus is that since the "hill" riders could pay, they would get a bus. This caused much discussion about inequity, and a few teachers did approach district leadership. To note, a high school bus was purchased in 2015 as a result of parent and teacher groups petitioning the district for equitable treatment.

The reflections, discussions, and observations provided great data to understand the process of learning for each teacher. The data presentation and bus ride were important ways to give teachers the experience of the students. These experiences also allowed them to confront their own assumptions and stereotypes on how the Peninsula district culture affects students and how access to resources is a challenge, although one that is mitigated in some instances by the school district.

Teacher Responsibility

This next section is focused on the learning dimension of teacher responsibility in regards to struggling students. Reflection logs and observation data covered four areas: experience with diverse populations, responsibility to provide access within the classroom, support of segregated settings, and ideal support of struggling students in the classroom. The framework I used to analyze reflection logs and observations on this dimension of learning are below.

Figure 4.21

Dimensions of Learning	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Expert
Professional responsibility	Teachers do not feel a professional responsibility to provide access and support beyond the classroom, and expect students to come prepared to class.	Teachers do provide some support to struggling learners, but still expect students to get support outside of the classroom.	Teachers feel that providing support and access in and out of the classroom is part of their responsibility.

The workshop component that addressed this dimension of learning was the article readings of McKenzie and Schuerich's equity traps and a reflection of the workshop series. The equity traps article divides deficit thinking into four categories: deficit views, racial erasure, avoidance and employment of the gaze, and paralogical beliefs and behaviors. When reading the article, the participants recognized that activities throughout the workshop had focused on building skills and knowledge on how to avoid these equity traps. The participants were able to connect the learning they had experienced to the articles. During one of the previous sessions, participants had viewed a TED Talk entitled "The Danger of a Single Story" by Chimamanda Adichie, which discussed deficit thinking from her

own experience as being the one categorized with a single story, then herself categorizing others with a single story. This TED talk moved many of the teachers to examine their own thinking. The demonstration lesson grounded the teachers in "the gaze" aspect, and teachers discussed how the lesson made them realize they had been avoiding the students of color who were struggling and the English learners in the class due to small numbers. They discussed how easy it would be to incorporate best practices if they were mindful. They said the bus ride was a strategy to combat paralogical beliefs and deficit thinking. The article was thought provoking, and provided a base for a rich discussion on what role teachers played in providing access not only to content, but also to resources.

Patterns Not Related to Dimensions of Learning

Other patterns that emerged only through reflection logs and observations, but not in pre- and post-interviews included a culture of fear among teachers, beliefs about student advocacy, and comfort levels discussing student race and achievement.

Culture of Fear (Do Not Rock the Boat)
Reflection logs and observation also uncovered a culture of fear among teachers to go beyond the classroom in supporting students and families. There was expressed a fear of upsetting colleagues because the individual teacher is doing "extra work" and making other teachers feel guilty. During the observations and interviews, teachers referred to colleagues questioning why teachers are translating materials:

> *When we were doing conferences, I asked my teaching partner how to get a translator and he didn't know, even though he's been here 10+ years. He said, 'I never needed one.' I said, 'When we send out the emails, (which are all in English) for the parents to sign up for conferences, do you call the ones that haven't signed up yet and follow-up with them?' He said, 'Oh no, I just figured if they didn't sign up, they don't want a conference.'*

Teachers were instructed by other teachers to refer to counselors or administrators for extra support of students, and collaboration periods did not include sharing of strategies for struggling students. Many teachers expressed appreciation that the workshops included time to discuss strategies and to see a model lesson with highlighted strategies illustrated by the instructional coaching. For example, one participant wrote in the reflection log:

> *I greatly increased wait–time in my teaching practice. Kids now expect that I will patiently wait for more explanation, and they work to restate themselves. This deepens their understandings and allows them to catch their own misconceptions.*

However, a culture of fear also arose from the assumption that affluent parents did not want attention taken away from their high-achieving students, and that the focus needed to be on the academic rigor of classes. This fear was not realized, as many could not direct me to evidence of this, but it was an assumption made about Peninsula parents. Lastly, there was an idea that the district does not mandate equity at sites. Many teachers were surprised that the district had taken many steps to address equity, but it did seem to indicate that each site was autonomous. Participants varied on this response according to their assigned site. One middle school site that had three teachers participating in the workshop series felt that equity was being addressed; all other participants did not share this belief.

Student Advocacy

Reflection logs and observation data also revealed that teachers gave priority to students who advocate for themselves, and that teachers believed those who did not do so did not care. Teachers did encourage students struggling with a subject to seek other supports, such as tutors or to access voluntary tutorials after school. Teachers discussed how many of the students who accessed tutorials were AP and Honors students. Teachers did feel that since the AP and Honors students were dealing with more rigorous work, they deserved priority. By the end of the series, these ideas did change slightly, as evidenced by the following reflection log entries: *"I feel more aware of the various challenges my students face and more capable of providing an inclusive and accessible educational environment."* Another reflection log revealed: *"I have really gained a much stronger understanding for what equity is and what it looks like specifically in the classroom! I feel empowered to be a better more aware teacher and make sure every student is learning."*

Issues such as language barriers worked as obstacles to becoming more involved. Many teachers used email as the primary contact and did not utilize phone calls. Issues of access to technology and email were acknowledged as an issue. Many teachers assumed all students of color participated in the district's desegregation program and were astounded to learn that out of the district's 1,700 students of color, only 600 were part of the program, and that of the 600, 66% were on free and reduced lunch. Teachers faced data that showed that issues of poverty, language, and demographics could not explain the large achievement gap in the district. Teachers wanted to see change throughout the district as evidenced by this reflection log entry:

> *We provide parent education around literacy and math to our EL and Desegregation Program families. We provide differentiated academic interventions for students. I would not like to see teachers blaming parents or socio-status for students' learning needs. I would also want teachers to stop making assumptions about students' backgrounds. For example, many teachers continue to associate the Avenidas program, with EL and socio-economically disadvantaged.*

Discomfort discussing race and student achievement

During the informational session, teachers were asked about their comfort levels in discussing race and student achievement. All teachers indicated a willingness to participate in such discussions. However, in the first session, my observations were that many teachers felt high levels of discomfort and did not participate. As revealed in the impact data, only two teachers had extensive experience with diverse populations, even though the majority of teachers had between four and ten years of experience. The two teachers who had experience with students of color in their college or student teaching were more apt to participate in race and achievement discussions with low levels of discomfort and were able to view data as a district problem, rather than as a deficiency in students. Teachers with fewer than 10 years of experience with diverse student populations felt some discomfort discussing race and the achievement gap, and did not lead discussions. The one teacher with almost no experience showed obvious discomfort and did not participate in discussions. Also of interest were teachers with diverse populations experiences wanted to understand how systems work and had positive responses towards professional responsibility in providing access to students. Furthermore, they were more interested in educating students for success rather than teaching content.

Conclusion

In sum, the workshop design and iterative process of collecting data and debriefing with the instructional coaches helped to create a series that shows promise in moving teachers from deficit- to asset-oriented thinking about students, as well as teacher roles in creating environments in school that foster learning and access. The instructional coaching led teachers from a discussion about best practices to an experience with them as learners, from hearing disaggregated data about student populations to then experiencing a small part of their lives, from reading Equity Traps by McKenzie and Schuerich, to building skills and knowledge in recognizing and changing deficit-oriented mindsets. This workshop aligned with Dreyfus' theory of action that experiential learning assists in building mastery. All but one teacher moved a level toward Expert. The one teacher who stayed in the category of Advanced Beginner did make some movement within the category, but did not show through her reflection log or observations that she was competent in any of the three learning dimensions. Throughout the workshops, experienced instructional coaches for discussion and reflection guided teachers. The coaches were instructed to keep those discussions private and they were not disclosed to me. I had not accounted for that in my workshop, but do believe that it helped teachers have authentic experiences and build a level of trust for them to be open to the activities.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Students of color in public education face challenges such as racism, low expectations, stereotype threat, and tracking, just to name a few. School reform leaders have attempted to pass legislation holding districts, schools, and teachers accountable to having all students meet arbitrary benchmarks. Despite this legislation, an achievement gap persists, and a primary agent of change to closing that gap is the teacher. Through all the legislation, the achievement gap persists. Teachers, who meet daily with students and make daily decisions about such things as grades, tracking paths, and discipline, can have the biggest influence on students' education careers. However, research on the achievement gap show that teachers have deficit thinking about students of color and that these same students are referred to out of classroom settings at a much higher rate (Valencia, 1997). Teachers also hold assumptions and stereotypes of students and families of color that affect classroom practices (Steele, 2010). Also, the responsibility to provide access to the classroom instruction goes beyond the teacher's skill in delivering content through best instructional practices (McKenzie & Schuerich, 2004). Judith Warren Little's framework of creating a shared vision of instruction and connecting teachers and students through instructional coaching helps to attain a clearer picture of how professional development can be instrumental in creating change. By explicitly naming the equity traps in McKenzie & Schuerich's study and visiting the strategies that target them, teachers can be the primary agent of change.

In this study, I designed a workshop for teachers based on deeper theoretical understandings from the research that built awareness about students of color, reinforced best practices, and created a sense of responsibility to provide access to resources. The seven math teachers that participated in the study went through a three-month process of experiential learning, coaching, and reflection with instructional coaches. In this chapter, I argue that my theory of action and intervention using the ACCESS model showed promise on how to create a teacher learning experience that moves teachers from advanced beginners to experts in creating classrooms that support students of color. First, I identify the key aspects that contributed to teacher growth. Next, I address the changes and modifications that occurred in the study and how they provide an opportunity to learn. Last, I present the study's findings and how they might impact future workshops for teachers that center on equity.

Theory of Action and Intervention

For this study, I asked four essential questions: How does a professional development sequence centered on students' of color change teacher mindset? How does grounding an equity-based workshop in best practices for struggling students affect teacher practice? How can instructional coaching through a case study of a struggling student build the professional responsibility to address student needs? Will instructional coaching and professional development focused on equity for minorities change the way teachers discuss students of color? The three key dimensions of learning were building teacher knowledge and skill, disrupting deficit

thinking in teacher beliefs, and building teacher responsibility to provide access to content and resources in classrooms through equitable practices.

The professional development workshops I created used Judith Warren Little's framework of the instructional triangle and focusing on the four goals of:
1. School's central goals
2. Building knowledge and skill
3. Cultivating strong professional community
4. Sustaining teacher's commitment to teaching

Along with Little's framework, I used McKenzie & Schuerichs' idea of equity traps and proposed solutions to create experiential learning opportunities for teachers. Dreyfus' theory of development through experiential learning helped guide me to measure teacher growth in the three dimensions of learning. Before this project, veteran teachers did not have to go through an equity training or professional development sequence that targeted the achievement gap. Many pilots were completed. New teachers to Peninsula District are obligated to attend professional development training through my department in order to receive tenure. In the past, those trainings were prepared by outside consultants and did not receive positive feedback. The feedback centered on Peninsula Unified being unique in that populations of minority students were small, the district was highly resourced, and overall achievement was high. Many of the consultants had expertise in addressing low resourced districts with large populations of students of color. The workshop series was adopted by Peninsula Unified to train new teachers, and the training team was comprised of district BTSA coaches and other instructional coaches.

The ACCESS workshop design was intended to promote new learnings and ideas around students of color and to create discord within teachers themselves. I wanted teachers to question their own practices as well as their sites' practices, and to reflect on the idea that maybe the mainstream classroom was the best place for struggling students, and that as the teacher, they had the skill and responsibility to keep students in a safe learning environment. The findings of the study have indicated that teachers did grow in the three dimensions of learning. Six out of the seven moved to a higher level of competency, indicating that the theory of actions and intervention and overall design showed growth. However, the design was flawed in the first dimension of learning, in my first assumption that teachers needed training on what best practices were needed to address struggling students. I had first assumed that teachers needed extensive training on best practices for struggling students and English learners. As it turned out, districts, especially Peninsula Unified, had provided wonderful professional development in providing teachers with differentiation strategies, English learner strategies, and strategies on guided reading, inclusive environments and teaching different types of learners. What was lacking was two fold: first, how to target these learners while still maintaining the unofficial mandate of affluent parents, and second, the why of using these strategies with populations that they assumed did not care, were small, and did not affect numbers, or the California Academic Performance Index (API). The

second dimension of learning, teachers' assumptions and stereotypes of students did change through the ACCESS workshops. Those changes were mitigated by experiential learning, as was the third dimension of learning, teacher responsibility.

Key Aspects

The interviews and observations revealed that educators assumed that settings outside the classroom provided the support students needed to be successful. However, thinking shifted after the training, and teachers indicated that not only was the best placement for the student in the classroom, but that it was within the teacher's ability to keep the students in the mainstream classroom. This shift occurred over the course of the workshop series, after many patterns related to why teachers initially assumed students needed support outside the classroom arose. Through the impact findings, seven patterns emerged that related to how teachers interact and teach students of color in Peninsula Unified:

- Beliefs About Professional Responsibility
- Culture of Fear (Do Not Rock the Boat)
- Knowledge of Systems
- Peninsula Culture
- Norms for Parental Involvement
- Teacher Advocacy
- Student Advocacy

All seven math teachers were veteran educators with a wide range of experience, but none had participated in a workshop that examined why the achievement gap was so wide between students of color and white and Asian students. Many had applied to Peninsula with ideas that all students were at grade level or beyond. Peninsula's high status, top test scores, and small populations of students of color masked the achievement gap. Initially, I assumed that teachers lacked the skills to teach struggling populations, and operated from a deficit mindset. However, the evidence suggested that teachers were very skilled in instructional practices and strategies that target struggling students. Teachers understood clearly that goal setting, sentence frameworks, the development of oral language, vocabulary preview, and other strategies were essential to students learning a new language, and that these students had different prior knowledge than the typical Peninsula student. The district had dedicated vast professional development monies and staff to build the skill level of teachers, yet the district had not seen results. My own design aimed to focus on building skills. However, the learning for the seven teachers laid in the responsibility to deliver those strategies on a daily basis to students that struggle in the Peninsula District.

The Peninsula District has grappled for years on how to address the achievement gap, with scrutiny increasing as local community groups began to question why the gap persisted. The experiential learning activities in the design

were a key aspect of the learning progression for teachers. These activities sparked conversations with instructional coaches about the teacher's assumptions, stereotypes, and paralogical thinking. Through the use of instructional coaches, teachers were able to verbalize their own fears of using instructional time to focus on struggling students. Many of these fears were of the Peninsula community and colleagues.

In the professional knowledge base, it was suggested that experiential learning coupled with guidance and reflection had the biggest impact on teacher expertise and learning, as reflected in the post-interviews and reflection logs. Through my own observations of the workshops, I saw how the discussions and interactions with the instructional coaching team helped create meaning from the experiential activities. The experiential learning activities had the biggest impact on changing beliefs for teachers and inspired them to discuss taking on more responsibility for student access to content and resources in the classroom. The bus ride and the demonstration lesson were the two activities in which the teachers experienced the student perspective of school and the classroom. Post interviews, and reflection logs revealed that the discussions and reflections with instructional coaches after each experience helped teachers rethink initial assumptions and stereotypes about students and families.

The discussion after the bus ride revealed new ideas that disrupted beliefs about students of color from East Peninsula. Teachers had not realized that parents had opted to send children as young as four years old on bus rides that lasted over an hour in the hope of getting a better education. Discussions after the bus ride centered on how much parents valued education due to their efforts and sacrifice to send their children to a "better" district. Teachers talked about the responsibility to bus students. This activity aligned with McKenzie and Scheurich's strategy for attacking an equity trap by learning about the community one serves. The ride through East Peninsula offered teachers the opportunity to look at the wide spectrum of housing, people, and resources they may not have considered. The bus stopped at the library during the activity and teachers remarked how well used it was and what a great facility to have in the city. Teachers faced with all these experiences could not rely on the perspective that students came from East Peninsula with zero background and resources. Teachers also had to come to terms with the fact that the students bussed in face a greater challenge with time management, as three hours of their day was spent on a school bus. This challenge brought up the idea of homework, and the discussion centered on how valuable was it to expect students to do 2-3 hours of homework after being on the bus, and what type of homework was valuable. The bus ride provided a great starting point on the discussion of deficit thinking.

Another key aspect was the demonstration lesson. Initially, the demonstration lesson was to focus on building teacher skill in the classroom. However, as the process data revealed teachers were skilled, the lesson instead focused on how to engage the teachers as students that relied on those strategies for access. The math probability lesson was done in another language, one not familiar to six of the seven participants. The demo lesson teacher focused on English learner strategies to deliver content. The experience for the teachers was eye opening.

Many teachers struggled with the lesson, even though it was about probability, something they all had extensive knowledge about. The post-lesson debrief highlighted how much the teachers had relied on explicit goal setting, visuals, and connection to the presenter. The teachers reflected on how students may benefit from small strategies, and the teacher who was fluent in the demonstration language noted that it was not obvious to him that the teacher was "going out of her way" for other students. In fact, he said he enjoyed the clarification. From my observations, it did appear teachers had a lot of thoughts and reflections from this activity. Many teachers stayed beyond the workshop time to discuss all of the strategies used in the demonstration lesson. This activity was fruitful and created a dialogue on how important teachers are in creating safety in the classroom.

The teachers viewed a TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and were able to relate to the idea of the one narrative towards students of color. Many had assumptions and stereotypes that did not include a spectrum of experiences, incomes, education, and narratives from their minority students. The combination of the bus ride, the demonstration lesson, the equity traps article, and the TED Talk provided a rich foundation for teachers to discuss the single story they carried with them about students and families of color, and helped them learn in this workshop series.

Modifications

Although I have argued that the ACCESS workshop series was successful and the theory of action and intervention were effective, there are several modifications I would suggest. To begin with, I had high hopes that teachers would use a case study of a struggling student to experience how teacher practices could improve student performance. I had not taken into account the teacher reluctance of adding this type of work to their workload. Secondary teachers have over 120 students on their caseload and following one student and charting progress, discussions, and strategies was something that was not practical for them. I did modify the workshops to have teachers discuss particular students and look for trends in their instruction when working with struggling students. In retrospect, this activity may have stirred up feelings of discomfort I had not anticipated.

The professional workshops also occurred within a three-month period that was not optimal for teacher and coach reflection time. For new learning to occur, teachers need time to process new experiences and reflect on next steps. I would hope for other iterations to include extending the trainings over a year and schedule more individual meetings with instructional coaches.

The design also did not include collecting data from the coaches about teacher growth, as they were only facilitators of the workshops. However, in my debriefing meetings, I realized the coaches had valuable insight into the how the participants were making meaning of the activities and articles. This was a huge oversight on my part. The coaches were an integral part of the study and they could have been a great source of data on why some activities were welcomed while others were not.

While the ACCESS series was intended to build knowledge and skill of instructional strategies, I had underestimated teachers. Teachers were very skilled at understanding and delivering instructional strategies for struggling learners. Implementation of those skills varied among teachers for various reasons. The student case study was a component that failed, however, future sessions would include analyzing student work and classroom assessments. Instructional coaches would support teachers in spotting trends across student work that could help teachers choose the best instructional supports needed in class periods.

Lastly, involvement of a site administrator in the sessions might help support teachers that felt pressure from departments or other teachers. My design did not investigate if the teacher felt threatened by school policy, department protocols, or individual teachers. This area did warrant further investigation to uncover the hidden rules of Peninsula Unified.

Implications

When meeting the design challenge and making the necessary adjustments throughout the process, I kept comprehensive notes on how this study could inform similar districts. The process data provided the most insight on the how my study could assist districts in not only changing fixed mindsets, but also organically creating experiences for staff that help connect students, teachers, and administrators. The four areas that arose from this study are hiring practices, engaging teachers in the communities, professional development planning, and the use of instructional coaches.

Hiring Practices

When I began this study, I wanted to measure the change of current veteran teachers, however, as I took down demographic information and compared it to growth in the three learning dimensions, a couple of patterns stood out. First, experiences with diverse student populations demonstrated higher growth in the area of teacher responsibility. Second, all teachers in California must go through a student teaching course at the university and student teacher placement in diverse schools should be mandated. Many universities target low resourced districts to place teachers, and this experience has been deemed critical to creating student to teacher connection. As student teachers are placed, the universities have a unique opportunity to ensure that all teachers new to the field have positive experiences with diverse student populations. University staff and the site master teacher support student teachers. These two mentors must be able to not only demonstrate excellent teaching practices, but also explicitly direct teachers to view students of color from a strength-based perspective. Hiring teachers with experience with diverse populations is a good practice for districts

Opportunities to learn about communities

The bus ride, demonstration lesson, and TED Talk had the largest impact on teachers. Many wrote, dialogued, and expressed a great interest in these three activities. When teachers were put in similar scenarios as their students, the learning was much greater as compared to reading articles or following discussion protocols of learning. As districts grapple with the problem of raising test scores, implementing new standards, and graduation rates, a focus on professional development has become a key component. However, districts taking a step back might help the overall goals of teaching and learning. Schools need to reinvest in the community they serve. A shift from bringing in high paid consultants, sending training teams to conferences, and attending long lecture type learning to having teachers learn about the community they serve and learn to value the diversity each student brings to the classroom could bring about great change. Of course, these opportunities have to be done with guidance and support from a team equipped to discuss race, economics, deficit thinking, as well as be able to practice reflective coaching, but this can hold promise in the area of teacher learning.

Professional development opportunities and Instructional coaches

Districts have long viewed professional development as a mechanism to promote teacher learning, but it has not always used best practices for implementation. Providing these opportunities has centered on building skills in current best practices and strategies. The data gathered from my design did reveal that the district had done a great job in building the skills of teachers. However, the teachers were still not implementing best practices within the classroom. The responsibility to use targeted instructional strategies is many times overshadowed by other pressing needs and pressure from the community and colleagues. Districts need to do a better job of creating a shared vision of all students. The workshop model is an established practice in education, and many times is seen embedded in teacher contracts. The tradition of this model has not undergone major shifts in decades. The role of the ACCESS workshop is designed to produce insights and understanding through the model of instructional coaches using the cycle of inquiry within a professional development sequence.

The use of instructional coaches has recently been applauded (Rosenfield, 2002) for moving teachers from novice to experts in the arenas of academic skills. However, the use of instructional coaches to help teachers change mindset and create dialogue on how to best serve historically underrepresented minority students has great potential for districts. The instructional coaches are the middlemen between administrators and teachers that can be instrumental in observing teachers and providing feedback without the power differential creating distrust. The instructional coach model provides unique opportunities for districts to expand their role of providing support. As the leaders of the workshop, coaches were able to lead teachers through very difficult conversations about race, identity, and low expectations.

Topics of race and social justice are not easy conversations in society, school districts, or even in homes. School districts expect teachers to attend trainings, learn new skills, and then begin implementation. That is not how we teach students

difficult content. Teachers need to engage all of their own learning modalities, understand the real world application to the information, and have someone guide them through their learning experiences. The instructional coach can provide teachers with this guidance and support. Due to the nature of these topics, teachers, with the help of instructional coaches, can be reflective and dig deeper within themselves [3]to understand new learnings. This approach does call for extensive training of the instructional coach, and unfortunately my design did not include a component for this type of training. That is for another design. The instructional coaches used in this study were from the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) department. Those coaches help new teachers transition from teacher preparation programs to the classroom. I assumed their expertise could be utilized outside the BTSA program to engage veteran teachers as refresher courses.

Conclusion

This study shows promise in creating equitable classrooms through professional learning experiences, the key word being experiences. Teachers are very much like their students in that they need to have real world applications and understand "the why" behind any new learning. Teachers with diverse teaching experience are the ones who were ready to change beliefs about students of color. Those same teachers were able to understand their role as an agent of change and look critically at the obstacles students of color faced. This design was not able to move teachers intent on teaching content and not facing the broader implications of the achievement gap, which can appear daunting. However, as the teaching workforce is increasing once again, I do see an opportunity to build workshops that not only build teacher skill, but awareness. Districts and universities can partner to create stronger student teaching experiences for new teachers. This study also has implications in hiring practices and the questions that districts ask of new hires. At the end of this design, this study holds promise for districts. Districts are training teachers on best practices through focused professional development. However, the missing component is providing time for teachers to understand the professional responsibility in providing these strategies on a daily basis to keep students in the mainstream classroom.

The design of the ACCESS professional development workshop was based on four objectives. The first was to create a safe place for teachers to work with instructional coaches when examining how beliefs and stereotypes can affect the performance of students of color. The workshops were designed to examine how to interrupt deficit thinking. I wanted to provide a structure for teachers to work with instructional coaches to view diverse backgrounds as assets by using research-based frameworks to examine the social factors that hinder the performance of these groups.

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[3] Table and rubric created in a conversation with faculty advisor, School of Education (Dr. Bernard Gifford, Professor University of California, Berkeley, oral communication 24th, October 2015

My second objective was to have teachers participate in thoughtful discussions and share their own experiences and understandings of how to work effectively with diverse populations within a safe environment. Teachers would be given time to challenge their sense of self and explore sensitive topics. The assumption was that teachers would build trust with the instructional coach team and that the exchanges would allow authentic dialogue to occur in the workshops.

The third objective was to be able to observe the interactions among the teachers and coaching team in the workshop. I wanted to examine these exchanges and capture the process of change occurring within the group. Then I wanted to identify the activity, discussion, or moment that had the greatest impact. The observations would also allow me to adapt upcoming sessions that would further motivate teachers to participate fully.

The fourth objective was to analyze the learning progression of teachers through observations and interviews to be able to provide guidance and support to the current professional development models. As districts provide trainings addressing equity, this design could serve as a planning tool on how to create safe space for teacher dialogue intended to changing teacher mindset about students of color.

My expectation is that as the use of instructional coaches as a tool for teacher effectiveness develops, districts will look beyond addressing content and skill level, and begin to address the challenging problems faced by educators who practice in silos as autonomous educators. The activities in this design, specifically the demonstration lesson, the visit to the community, and the TED talk, can be replicated in other districts. However, it is essential that the delivery and reflective dialogue are part of the overall design.

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Appendix A

Acquiring Common and Collaborative Educational Systems and Strategies(ACCESS)
Targeted Group: Middle & High School Math teachers (pre-Algebra, Algebra I)

Session	Articles
Introduction to Study	
First Workshop: **Vision and Purpose**	A compelling vision *Schein (1985/2010)* *Mintrop (2012)* *Valdes (1996)*
Second Workshop **Formal Training of Targeted Instructional Practices**	Formal training *Schein (1985/2010)* *Elmore (2004)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group	
• Cycle of Inquiry Pre-Conference	
Third Workshop: **Case Study and Observations**	Involvement of the Learner *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)*
Fourth Workshop: **Informal Training & Practice, Coaches & Feedback**	Informal Training & Practice, Coaches & Feedback *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)* *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Garcia & Guerra (2004)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group	
• Cycle of Inquiry Observation	
Fifth Workshop **Positive Role Models**	Positive Role Models *Schein (1985/2010)* *Little (2006)* *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Nasir (2011)*
Sixth Workshop **Reflection and Learning**	Reflection and Learning *McKenzie & Scheurich (2004)* *Little (2006)* *Rothman (2011)*
• Process Data Session Selected Group • Cycle of Inquiry Post Observation • Impact Data Session Selected Group	

Appendix B

Workshop Plan

Acquiring Common and Collaborative Educational Systems and Strategies
(ACCESS)
Plan

Targeted Group:
Middle School Math teachers & High School (pre-Algebra, Algebra I)

Workshops	Professional Development Activities
Workshop 1: **Vision and Purpose**	**Workshop Goal:** Participants will be introduced to the problem in the district and understand how teachers are agents of change. **Activity:** • Problem Introduction • Data review of problem • Strengths, Limitations, Observations and Threats Tool • Introduction of Equity Goals
Workshop 2: **Formal Training of Targeted Instructional Practices**	**Workshop Goal:** The group will discuss the underlying factors that may create or contribute to the problem of disproportionality and what strategies might ameliorate the problem. Key classroom strategies will be introduced and discussed. **Activity:** • Staff log introduced • Teachers will review SLOT activity • Key intervention strategies will be introduced • Case study will be presented
• Process Data Session Selected Group	• Debrief with presenters on workshop effectiveness and discuss changes to upcoming workshops.
• Cycle of Inquiry Pre-Conference	• Facilitator will meet with participants in anticipation of classroom observation
Workshop 3: **Case Study and Observations**	**Workshop Goal:** The group will experience model lessons from the

	facilitators that utilize key intervention strategies and then debrief as a group on how to incorporate within their own classroom. Teachers will also choose two students to focus on that are, ELL, Special Ed, or not a grade level. **Activity:** • Discuss case studies in their own classroom • Debrief model lessons
Workshop 4: **Student Lives, Expectations and Norm of Peninsula City**	**Workshop Goal:** Teachers will participate in the bus ride experience of the students from East Peninsula **Activity:** • Bus ride from the routes to all three middle schools • Teachers will plan lesson with three key intervention strategies as targeted practice
• Process Data Session Selected Group	• Debrief with presenters on workshop effectiveness and discuss changes to upcoming workshops
• Cycle of Inquiry Observation	• Facilitator will observe teachers in the classroom with students during an opening lesson.
Workshop 5: **Positive Role Models/Case Study Review**	**Workshop Goal:** Teachers will debrief lesson observation as a group and discuss how effective practices are for students. Teachers will also review case studies. **Activity**: • SLOT activity of key intervention strategies • Case study review
Workshop 6: **Reflection and Learning**	Workshop Goal: The teachers will connect how strategies affected targeted students in the classroom and discuss their own learnings Activity: • Write in reflection log about learning • Compile classroom instruction strategy recommendations for math departments in the district

• Process Data Session Selected Group	• Debrief with presenters on workshop effectiveness and discuss changes to upcoming workshops
• Cycle of Inquiry Post Observation • Impact Data Session Selected Group	• Facilitator will meet with teachers to discuss lesson observations and impact of workshop on lesson

Appendix C

ACCESS
Introduction
Agenda
4:00-5:00pm

Purpose
- LEEP Work and Research
- Protocols of Study
- Commitment of Participants
- Letters of confidentiality
- Components

ACCESS
Workshop # 1
Agenda
4:00-6:00pm

Workshop Goal: Math teachers will review an overview of district wide issues of disproportionality as they relate to alternative placements (Special Education and Alternative Education) and identify how teaching practices can be improved as a strategy to address PSD equity challenges.
The group will discuss how teachers are essential agents of change in shifting practices at the classroom level. To ground the conversation, the group will engage in an environmental assessment "Strengths, Limitations, Opportunities and Threats" (SLOT) to gauge current practices and gaps in the supporting students of color. The results of the SLOT will drive and guide the co-construction of an initial tool, and inform future training needs. The group will be provided a log to capture thoughts and reflections of this session. These logs will be collected at the end of each session.

Purpose (Reculturing for Equity) 45 minutes
- PSD Mission
- Activity: Strengths Limitations Opportunities Threats on current PSD efforts to address disproportionality issues with students of color

Review of Data (Accountability) 30 minutes
- Questions
- Activity: Strengths Limitations Opportunities Threats on current PSD efforts to address disproportionality issues with students of color

Set Goals for Workshops and Discuss (Equity) 45 minutes
- Staff Log will be distributed and explained (Mindset)

- Review of Equity Goals

- **Self- Awareness and Identity**: Teachers will personally and collectively reflect on their own racial and cultural identity and how it shapes their practice as educators. Teachers will examine the impact of bias and become aware of the diversity of the Peninsula.

- **Relationships and Community:** Teachers will understand the aspects of building learning focused trusting relationships across difference relationships to support students' investment in their own learning.

- **Learning**: Teachers will personally and collectively understand and apply equity focused instructional practices in their everyday teaching in order to better serve the most underserved students.

ACCESS
Workshop #2
Agenda

Goal: The group will understand what factors may create or contribute to the problem and what strategies might ameliorate the problem of disproportionality. The group will read an abridged version of equity traps article and engage in an icebreaker based on these reading to begin discussion. The group will participate in a case study review to illustrate how current conditions and processes are based on a deficit-based model, and not culturally relevant for many students. Teachers groups will then review the SLOT activity and begin prioritizing interventions that will guide development of tools at the classroom. The group will be provided a log to write down thoughts and reflections of this session.   These logs will be collected at the end of each session.

Review SLOT Outcomes (Peninsula Culture, Schein) 30 minutes
- Prioritize
- Identify Key Intervention Strategies

The Culturally Responsive Teaching Frame (Equity, Schein) 30 minutes
- Self Awareness and Identity (read Equity Traps)
- Relationships and Community
- Learning
- How to use targeted instructional plan with Key Intervention Strategies

What is Cultural Schema? (Decision and Equity) 30 minutes
- Peninsula Culture
- Target non Target Activity
- Implicit Bias Article
- Single Story Video:
http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

ACCESS
Workshop #3
Agenda

Goal: The group will experience model lessons from the facilitators that utilize key intervention strategies and then debrief as a group on how to incorporate within their own classroom

Model Lesson by Facilitator that highlights Key Intervention Strategies
- Teachers debrief lesson

Readings
- Warm Demander Article

Case Study Discussion
- Break into groups

ACCESS
Workshop # 4
Agenda

Workshop Goal: Teachers will participate in the bus ride experience of the students from East Peninsula and lesson plan for the upcoming observation

Activity:
- History of Avenida students in the district
- Bus ride from the routes to all three middle schools
- Lesson planning and choosing three key strategies
- Scheduling the pre-conference protocol

ACCESS
Workshop # 5
Agenda

Goal: Teachers will debrief lesson observation as a group and discuss how effective practices are for students.
 Teachers will also review case studies

Activities
- SLOT of intervention strategies
- Debriefing the lesson observation process

ACCESS
Workshop # 6
Agenda

Goal: Teachers will debrief the entire workshop session while discussing and reviewing targeted equity goals.

Activities
- Debriefing the lesson observation conference
- Creating recommendations for the math department best practice tool

Appendix D

Pre Interview

Thank you for participating in this interview. Would it be okay for me to tape you? Before I begin to tape do you have any questions?

1. Tell me a little bit about how yourself.
2. Where did you attend college? What was the level of diversity at your college?
3. Did you participate in community tutoring or other experiences with students of color?
4. Why did you decide to pursue your single subject and become a math teacher?
5. Why did you apply to the district specifically?
6. What types of students are successful in the district?
7. What type of strategies do you use to address struggling students?
8. What type of strategies do you use to address English Language Learner students?
9. Across your teaching experience, have you changed your perception about how to address struggling students?
10. The district has been identified as having an achievement gap between White/Asian students and students of color defined as African-American/Pacific Islander/Latino. What do you think might be the reasons for the achievement gap?
11. Are there students that you are worried about in your classroom this year?
12. Can you think of a struggling student? What are the key problems for this student?
13. What are the challenges?
14. What are expected norms for parental involvement? How does it influence student success?
15. What responsibility is on the teacher to provide students with access to resources, translations and other opportunities?
16. How have you provided access to resources to struggling students?
17. When a student is struggling what is your process for getting them support?
18. What are your thoughts on pull out classes for struggling students?
19. What is the best way to support struggling students?
20. Do you think separate classes for struggling students is a good placement? Why?
21. The district uses lanes for math grouping beginning in middle school. What are your thoughts on that?
22. Are you very familiar with the placement procedures?

Appendix E

Professional Development
Observation Log

Date	Presenters:	Attendees	Session # Topic:

Activities

Opening:

Main Activity

Discussion Topic:

Participants	Comments	Patterns/Themes
Teacher 1		
Teacher 2		
Teacher 3		
Teacher 4		
Teacher 5		
Teacher 6		
Teacher7		

Appendix F

Reflective Log

Date:

Workshop ideas:

Classroom observations:

Student observations:

Questions for next workshop:

Challenges:

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE RANGE OF LEARNERS
BEST PRACTICES FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

What does instruction in the regular classroom look like?

> ***Best First Teaching Practices*** *and* ***Key Teaching Methods for Prevention*** *provide the core instruction in the classroom.*

In addition to that base, the following strategies provide suggestions for supporting the academic success of the range of students in the classroom. These include effective practices and differentiation techniques for all students. This list is not all-inclusive.

Teaching Techniques
Use natural gesturing, slow speech, eye contact, or vary voice volume *Examples:* stress important content or words via voice tone; act out information; role play; etc.
Use visual aids in giving directions or instruction *Examples:* write directions on the board, overhead or chart easel; use pictures to depict steps; provide graphic organizers (and instruct students in how to use them)
Give "alert" cues to emphasize essential/critical information/ideas *Examples:* "This is going to be important"; "I'm going to ask you about this later"; "You'll need to tell a partner what you've heard"
Repetition of directions or instruction *Examples:* rephrase; demonstrate/model what is to be done
Have students repeat or paraphrase directions, concepts, or key ideas to check for understanding
Simplify directions or instruction Assess the quality and clarity of verbal directions, explanations, and instruction given. Provide clearly stated verbal directions (make directions as simple and concrete as possible). *Examples:* give concrete directions one step at a time; use simple language; give directions in small, distinct steps

Teaching Techniques
Physical proximity to struggling student *Examples:* stand near the student; walk around the room & continually return to the student
Pre-expose students to key ideas and vocabulary *Examples:* vocabulary assignment or glossary; word wall; connect to prior knowledge or to personal life
Provide study guide depicting important terms and key questions *Examples:* main concepts; questions that students must be able to answer; content vocabulary that will be tested
Build background knowledge *Examples:* use realia; connect learning to prior experience; connect learning to prior knowledge
Provide alternatives for traditional verbal directions *Examples:* tape recorded directions; directions given by peers
Other:

Environment
Change seating to increase proximity to teacher or to key instructional visuals *Example:* sit in the front row/desk/table; sit near the whiteboard
Reduce distractions *Examples:* sit away from door, window, or other high traffic areas; eliminate background noise or unnecessary talking; eliminate extraneous stimuli (clear desk); seat away from friends who distract
Provide independent and/or quiet work area (away from friends or other distractions) Note: provide as an alternative location, not as a punitive consequence
Change student groupings *Examples:* do not group with friends who would distract; group with friends who support & motivate the student; group with peers with complimentary skills; provide cooperative learning groups (preceded with training); assign jobs to leverage student's strengths

Environment
Provide "breaks" & opportunities for movement *Examples:* take a message or deliver materials to another classroom or the office
Prepare student for transitions *Examples:* use signals, gestures, etc. that have been pre-arranged with the student; give 5-minute oral alert
Support with peer or cross-age tutors *Examples:* group with student(s) who are at 1-2 levels higher (not several levels higher); identity student in higher level/grade class to help at recess/lunch/after school
Other:

Materials
Use different materials, resources, and/or study aids *Examples:* manipulatives; books on tape; dictionary; thesaurus; graph paper; data charts; unit outline or study guides; vocabulary lists; flash cards with vocabulary words or math facts; math facts chart at student's desk (e.g. multiplication chart); math reference sheet for student to keep at his/her desk showing steps in doing subtraction, multiplication, & division problems
Highlight with color the important information in texts and worksheets
Provide a written copy of directions and/or class notes *Examples:* assignment sheet; photocopy another student's notes; provide a copy of overhead; record SmartBoard lesson
Use of assisted technology *Examples:* computer for word processing; calculator; tape recorder; iPod; iPad; computer programs like Raz-Kids
Tape record difficult reading material for student to listen to as he/she reads along
Other:

Assignments
Extend time to complete work and/or provide a timeline to complete work in stages; require work to be completed in smaller chunks *Examples:* have daily goals for weekly and long-term assignments; determine baseline production and create achievable goals
Frequent checks of planner/binder/assignment sheet *Examples:* provide time at the beginning or end of each day for student to organize materials and assignments, then sign after assignment has been written in; review what student has done to ensure that the assignment has been recorded completely and correctly
Highlight/underline important sections/directions *Examples:* due dates; key words such as "except" or "not" or "all"; key directions; main idea sentences; content vocabulary; relevant dates
Check that the student is taking notes and is clear on what is happening in class *Example:* provide outline; provide copy of the board/overhead for student
Give shorter or substitute assignments or alternate task structure *Examples:* divide worksheets into segments; reduce number of items on page; oral response instead of written; reduce number of questions or paragraphs on a report or essay; alternate shorter assignments instead of one big project
Other:

Assessments
Have student practice with a sample test with teacher or aide before actual test and provide specific feedback
Administer test in small group setting
Extra time to complete assessment
Make notes, word bank, glossary, and/or text available
Read test aloud for student
Oral response to questions

Assessments
Design independent project instead of a test to demonstrate competence
Use manipulatives and other hands-on materials to demonstrate knowledge
Other:

PSD Pre-Observation Conference

Name: ____   Date: _____

Goals and Context for Lessons
• What are the objectives of this lesson (content, condition, level of thinking, behavior, performance level)? What Key Intervention Strategy will you be implementing?
•

Determine Evidence of Student Achievement
• How will the students know your expectations? How will you make your instructions explicit?
• How will you be checking for understanding throughout the lesson?

Explore Teaching Strategies and Decisions Made
• How will the instructional strategies and resources you are using during the lesson promote student learning? (active participation, realia, visual aids, models, demonstrations, group work, etc.)
• How will you promote elements of identity safety (autonomy, belonging, competence, diversity as a resource, explicit instruction) during this class period/lesson? Identify strategies.
• How will you scaffold or differentiate instruction to support all learners including your identified students (EL, Special Ed, GATE)?

Identified Focus for Data Collection
• What are you curious to learn from this observation? How do you see the data being collected?

PSD Class Profile

The gender, ethnic backgrounds, and special learning needs of students influence the teaching and learning that occurs in a classroom. The intent of this activity is to help raise your awareness of the composition of your class (or one of your classes) and to explore resources available to you at the site and district levels.

Number of Students in class: ___   Male/Female Ratio: ___

Ethnic Representation

Ethnicity	#	%
Alaskan Native		
American Indian		
Chinese		
Japanese		
Korean		
Vietnamese		
Asian Indian		
Laotian		
Cambodian		
Native Hawaiian		
Guamanian		
Samoan		
Tahitian		
Other Pacific Islander		
Filipino		
Hispanic/Latino		
African-American or Black		
Caucasian		
Other		

Special Needs

Special Need	#	%	Resources available to assist me and/or info to consider
English Language Learner			
Non-native English Speaker			
RSP			
504 Plan			
Gifted (GATE)			
Reading Specialist (K-5)			
Speech/Language			
Hearing Impaired			
Visually Impaired			
Other Health			
Autistic/Asperger's Syndrome			

Special Program

Avenida Program		
Other		

Additional Demographic Notes

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Appendix J

PSD Post Observation Conference

Teacher: ___   Number of Students: ___

Date: ___   Grade: ___   Subject Matter: ___

Teaching Standard: ___

Lesson Objective:	**Key Intervention Strategy:**

See notes of observation.

Summarize Impression of the Lesson • What are your impressions of the lesson? What do you think were the strengths?
Recall Data to Support Impressions/Assessment • In what ways did your students meet or not meet your expectations and learning goals? How do you know?
How effective were the strategies you used for your EL, or special education?
How did your use of identity safety strategies impact your lesson?
Where do you see evidence that progress was made toward your goal? What do you notice about the data collected? What conclusions do you draw?

Synthesize Learning, Draw Conclusions, Next Steps What are some next steps? How might you support your students in moving forward in their learning? How might you follow up on this lesson? If you could repeat this instructional experience what would you do differently?
Reflect On The Observation Cycle Regarding the lesson what helped further your professional growth and what did not?

Appendix K

Post Interview

1. Tell me a little bit about what your goals were for the training.
2. As you were participating in the training, were there particular students that you had in mind, either whom you thought would really benefit from it or who you were worried about?
3. What types of students are successful in the district?
4. What type of strategies do you use to address struggling students?
5. What type of strategies do you use to address English Language Learner students?
6. Across your teaching experience, have you changed your perception about how to address struggling students?
7. The district has been identified as having an achievement gap between White/Asian students and students of color defined as African-American/Pacific Islander/Latino. What do you think might be the reasons for the achievement gap?
8. Are there students that you are worried about in your classroom this year?
9. Can you think of a struggling student? What are the key problems for this student?
10. What are the challenges?
11. What are expected norms for parental involvement? How does it influence student success?
12. What responsibility is on the teacher to provide students with access to resources, translations and other opportunities?
13. How have you provided access to resources to struggling students?
14. When a student is struggling what is your process for getting them support? What are your thoughts on pull out classes for struggling students?
15. What is the best way to support struggling students?
16. Do you think separate classes for struggling students is a good placement? Why?
17. The district uses lanes for math grouping beginning in middle school. What are your thoughts on that? Are you very familiar with the placement procedures?
18. What was most helpful about the trainings?
    a. Is there anything that you felt was transformative?
    b. Were there things in the training that you wish had gone differently?
    c. How do you feel about trainings that focus on content versus professional responsibilities?