

## **ABSTRACT**

Title of Dissertation: **WORKING WITH STUDENT TEACHERS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY TO EXAMINE THE ROLES AND SELF-IDENTIFIED DISPOSITIONS OF COOPERATING TEACHERS**

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A critical component of teacher education is the field experience during which candidates practice under the supervision of experienced teachers. Programs use the InTASC Standards to define the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions for teaching. Practicing teachers are familiar with the concepts of knowledge and skills, but they are less familiar with dispositions. Practicing teachers who mentor prospective teachers are underrepresented in the literature, but they are critical to teacher preparation. The research goals were to describe the self-identified dispositions of cooperating teachers, identify what cooperating teachers consider their role in preparing prospective teachers, and explain challenges that cooperating teachers face. Using a mixed methods design, I conducted a quantitative survey followed by a qualitative case study.

When I compared survey and case study data, cooperating teachers report possessing InTASC critical dispositions described in Standard 2: Learning Differences, Standard 3: Learning Environments, and Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, but not Standard 6: Assessment and Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration. Cooperating teachers assume the roles of modeler, mentor and advisor, and informal evaluator. They explain student teachers often lack skills and dispositions to assume full teaching responsibilities and

recommend that universities better prepare candidates for classrooms. Cooperating teachers felt university evaluations were not relevant to teaching reality. I recommend modifying field experiences to increase the quantity and duration of classroom placements. I suggest further research to detail cooperating teacher dispositions, compare cooperating teachers who work with different universities, and determine if cooperating teacher dispositions influence student teacher dispositions.

WORKING WITH STUDENT TEACHERS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY TO EXAMINE  
THE ROLES AND SELF-IDENTIFIED DISPOSITIONS OF COOPERATING TEACHERS

By

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Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
2016

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## **DEDICATION**

For my dad and in memory of my mom  
You gave me every opportunity and supported all of my dreams  
I am the best of both of you

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is not a journey I could have accomplished alone. First I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Linda Valli, who guided and encouraged me throughout the process. Your knowledge and expertise were indispensable and I would not have been able to do this without you. In addition, I would like to thank my committee members: Dr. Saroja Barnes, Dr. Robert Croninger, Dr. David Imig, and Dr. Nelly Stromquist. Your advice and ideas made my proposal and research possible. Dr. Croninger, thank you for your guidance about my quantitative analysis. Dr. Imig, thank you for your ideas and support over the past few years.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their support and words of encouragement. Dad, you have always pushed me to do well. You were the first to go to college and your unwavering expectation that we would do great things is central to our success. Mom, I know you are with me at every step and I hear your encouragement when I need it most. Michael, you are the best brother anyone could ever be lucky enough to have! And Meghan I am so fortunate to have you as family (thank you for changing my password)! You two have been a source of sanity throughout this process and your threats to finish were always on my mind! Camille, thank you for your editing and statistics skills- you are next! To the many other friends who have listened and inspired me along the way, Diana and Joe, Rebecca, Louise, Danika, Sarah, Donna and Andrew (TOGDIADD), Olive, and countless others- THANK YOU! Without all of you, this would not have been possible.

Finally, thank you to all of the cooperating teachers in the Roosevelt School District who accept the responsibility to help prepare our future teachers. Your participation and candid discussions were invaluable to my research, and I hope I have represented your commitment and dedication not only to prospective teachers, but to the students you teach every day.

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH ON TEACHERS' DISPOSITIONS

In the United States, there are over 3 million teachers with unique personal histories, experiences, and traits that influence the way they teach and interact with their students (<http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372>). These teachers face a myriad of pressures and demands stemming from administrator, personal, student, parent, and policy expectations, which affect their teaching. To guide teachers and standardize idiosyncratic teaching knowledge and approaches, standards (along with in-school protocols, system expectations, licensure rules, and teacher evaluation criteria) have been developed. These standards outline what educators should know and do and how they should act with students, including making students feel valued, adapting practice to meet the needs of each learner, and believing that all children can learn at high levels (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013).

Standards also guide the work of teacher educators. Teacher education programs are accountable to standards from specialized professional associations (SPAs), such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the International Reading Association (IRA), as well as to accreditation standards from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). These standards are intended to shape programs of study and confirm the quality of preparation programs. Increasingly, teacher evaluations also incorporate state learning standards that reflect the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards (Freeman, 2007). The InTASC standards describe knowledge and skills for teaching as well as a third area—dispositions, which is the focus of this research.

In the final stages of teacher education, teacher candidates typically complete a fieldwork experience during which they can apply their knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In 2009-2010,

there were 342,864 teacher candidates (47.1% of all teacher preparation students) taking part in a supervised clinical experience (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Practicing teachers (professional practitioners) are the primary source of school-based supervision (cooperating teachers) for this clinical experience. Preparation programs and scholarly literature use the terms cooperating teacher and mentor teacher interchangeably, but school systems often describe professionals who are paired with novice teachers during their initial years of teaching as mentors. I use the term cooperating teachers for this research to avoid confusion.

A few years ago, my principal informed me that I was going to be a cooperating teacher. At first, I imagined it would be a new challenge, an opportunity to learn, and an interesting change from classroom teaching. The subsequent reality was a surprise. My preparation consisted of an overview of the student teaching handbook and provision of some copies of lesson plan templates. I felt lost. I did not know if my role was mentor or evaluator. I did not know to what extent I should cover topics such as classroom management, lesson planning, content knowledge, professional behavior, and assessment. I did not know how to handle my concerns about the teacher candidate. He knew the Biology content, but he was not able to implement lessons. He lacked classroom presence and could not follow detailed lesson plans. As we progressed, I realized he lacked a work ethic: he arrived late, did not take notes during observations or conversations, and did not prepare lessons or materials in a timely manner. He also fell asleep during class; and during his limited interactions with students and teachers, he did not maintain eye contact. I tried to support him, but I felt I did not help him progress, and eventually, the university decided he would not continue.

Throughout this experience, I had many questions, including how I could better support a prospective teacher, what responsibility I had to his future students, what the university

considered my role to be, and whether another teacher might have been more successful. Since this frustrating experience, other candidates have observed my classroom as part of their initial methods classes. They enter a classroom for the first time with great expectations to change student lives. I also witness their shock when they see some of the extreme classrooms situations and they begin to inquire about how to handle different situations. I share what I enjoy about teaching, but I also think it is important to be honest and share some of the frustrating aspects of teaching, including extraneous responsibilities unrelated to instruction, the distractions that result from inappropriate student behavior, an increasing focus on standardized testing that imposes on instructional time, and the struggle to motivate students. I have wondered if my experiences are unique or if other cooperating teachers experienced the same feelings, questions, or challenges.

At about the same time that I was mentoring my student teacher, I learned about the InTASC standards and the concept of dispositions in my doctoral studies, two items of which I was previously unaware. I started to question if my lack of knowledge caused my failure as a cooperating teacher or had affected my student teacher in any way. Now, when I interact with prospective teachers, I worry if my attitude and resulting actions with candidates and during teaching (my dispositions) influence them negatively. I question if I have the dispositions described in the professional standards. I also want to know what dispositions the student teachers' universities promote and, if they share that information, what my role is in supporting student teacher dispositions. I also wonder if other cooperating teachers are unaware of the dispositional standards and expectations of preparation programs.

Due to these experiences and questions, I began reading about cooperating teachers. I found research identifying characteristics of cooperating teachers (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Clarke, 2001; O'Brian, Stoner, Appel, & House, 2007), research indicating that cooperating

teachers influence candidates instructional strategies and teaching styles (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Hewson, Tabachnick, Zeichner, & Lemberger, 1999; McNamara, 1995; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012), and research documenting candidates who mold their behavior in order to avoid conflict with their cooperating teacher (Clift & Brady, 2005; Schussler, Stooksberry, & Bercaw, 2010; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009). I also noticed that there was a gap in the literature describing cooperating teacher dispositions. Before scholars conduct research on whether cooperating teachers influence candidate dispositions, it is valuable to define the dispositions that cooperating teachers possess and if they align with the InTASC standards and dispositions that universities try to develop. In order to pursue answers to my questions and to contribute to the literature on cooperating teachers, I conducted research about cooperating teacher dispositions.

### **Research Questions**

There is a large body of scholarly literature on cooperating teachers' knowledge and skills compared to a much smaller amount of research on dispositions. In order to build on the literature base that informs teacher preparation, a more complete understanding of classroom teacher dispositions is needed for both teacher educators and professional practitioners. I do not attempt to establish causality or correlation between cooperating teacher dispositions and candidate quality or effectiveness. Instead, my research focused on practicing teachers who accept positions as cooperating teachers (teacher educators who are often absent in teacher education research) and their dispositions. My research questions are:

1. What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions?
  - a. What role do they think dispositions play in good teaching? How important do they think dispositions are?
  - b. How do they describe the development of their own dispositions?
2. What do cooperating teachers think their role is in preparing prospective teachers?
  - a. Do they include dispositional preparation in that role?
  - b. What knowledge do they have of various sources of dispositional standards (InTASC, university, district)?



- c. What is their understanding of the way the university develops candidate dispositions?
3. What are the challenges cooperating teachers face concerning their role, especially as they relate to prospective teachers' dispositions?

### **Dispositions**

The varied terms used in conjunction with disposition, to define disposition, and as a synonym for disposition can make discussions unclear. Teacher educators and state licensure officials use the term *disposition*, but also terms such as *attitudes*, *habits*, *actions*, and *behaviors* when describing teacher characteristics. I differentiate between these terms below. In addition, I explain the different definitions of disposition that scholars use and clarify the definition that I apply in my research.

Before dispositions were formally included in teaching standards, the term *attitude* was (and sometimes still is) used to describe teacher characteristics. Katz and Rath (1986) argue that an “attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner” (p. 112). Freeman (2007) agrees that an attitude is a predisposition to act based on perceptions and feelings toward a subject. Since attitudes are predispositions to act and not actions themselves, researchers can use surveys to identify attitudes and try to predict behavior. However, the intention to act is not a reliable predictor of future behavior (Freeman, 2007). The literature about dispositions also uses the terms *values*, *morals*, and *beliefs*, but these are not reliable predictors of a person’s actions. In contrast, dispositions are summaries of observed actions and can provide a basis for predicting future behavior trends (Katz & Rath, 1986). It is these trends of behavior that teacher educators and schools are interested in when they prepare and hire teachers to educate *all* students.

The word *habit* occurs in literature about dispositions. Definitions for habit include an automatic or almost mindless action (Katz & Rath, 1986) or an action that is the consequence of

conditioning (Arnstine, 1967). Habits occur without specific intent and without reflection. In this sense, a habit is always distributing papers from the left or checking homework during the drill. Dewey has an alternative view and says that habits motivate and organize behavior and result from thoughtfulness and consideration of consequences of actions (Dottin, 2009). Dewey's *habits* are similar to Katz and Raths' (1986) *dispositions*, which involve actions that "require serious conscious attention to what is occurring in the educational context" (p. 6). Due to the disparate definitions, I do not use the term *habit*.

There are numerous definitions of *disposition* in the scholarly literature. The terms *behavior* and *action* often are concurrent in discussions and definitions of dispositions. An early definition of disposition, "an attributed characteristic of a teacher, one that summarizes the trend of a teacher's actions in particular contexts," emphasized that isolated actions are not dispositions (Katz & Raths, 1985, p. 301). Behavior is a series of goal-oriented actions (Ajzen, 1985). Dispositions are chosen patterns of "behavior exhibited frequently and in the absence of coercion and constituting a habit of mind under some conscious and voluntary control, and that is intentional and oriented to broad goals" (Katz, 1993, p. 10). Another description says disposition is a characteristic of a teacher's behavior that is displayed in classroom actions (Murray, 2007). These definitions suggest that actions are discrete events that collectively constitute behavior. Freeman (2007) takes this a step further and suggests that dispositions can be determined by observing and explaining a summary of actions.

In 2006, the *Journal of Teacher Education* invited submissions for a special issue aimed at examining the challenges associated with defining and assessing dispositions (Borko, Liston, & Whitcomb, 2007). There is still not a consensus about the definition or conceptualization of disposition (Almerico, 2011; Johnson & Reiman, 2007), but teachers' classroom behaviors and

the ways they *apply* what they learn and know is a start. Dispositions are shaped by candidates' personalities and possibly the personalities of the people who prepare them, but they can be difficult to define, assess, and develop (Oja & Reiman, 2007). Johnson and Reiman (2007) agree that dispositions involve cognitive constructs, including the way people think about and act on situations. Schussler (2006) concurs that dispositions are not discrete from behavior and thinking. They are an awareness and reflection on behaviors and thinking. In other words, people's actions stem from their cognitive appraisal of a situation.

Scholars agree that dispositions are similar to attitudes and beliefs, but dispositions extend to conduct. Dottin (2009) explains dispositions as habits of mind distinguishable from temperament by their cognitive core; they are not the ability to do something, but the proclivity to do what is known, a state of performance. Therefore, dispositions will manifest in actions and behavior, including responses to the challenges of teaching (Almerico, 2011; Rose, 2013; Shulman, 1998). Professional educators in educational settings use their knowledge and skills that "are influenced by the consistent internal motivation for them to conduct themselves intelligently or in other words, to exercise sound professional judgment in action" (Dottin, 2009, p. 85). A concern that teacher educators have is candidates who may possess the knowledge, skill, and competence to teach effectively, but do not have the inclination to transfer those skills to professional settings or apply and enact them in a desirable way with students (Diez, 2007; Dottin, 2009). This gap between knowledge and enactment could be due to lack of disposition.

In addition to disposition definitions in scholarly literature, the InTASC definition is relevant because universities seeking accreditation must provide evidence of candidate competency and program quality to develop and assess dispositions in teacher candidates (CAEP, 2013). CAEP has adopted the InTASC standards and definition of dispositions, "the

habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie” an educator’s performance and play a key role in how teachers act in practice (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013, p. 6). The 43 critical dispositions (See Appendix A) in the ten InTASC standards are the model for CAEP: 1) Learner Development, 2) Learning Differences, 3) Learning Environments, 4) Content Knowledge, 5) Applications of Content, 6) Assessment, 7) Planning for Instruction, 8) Instructional Strategies, 9) Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, and 10) Leadership and Collaboration. According to InTASC, teaching dispositions include respecting learners’ differing strengths and needs; engaging learners in critical thinking by encouraging exploration, discovery, expression, and collaboration; working with learners to establish a positive and supportive learning environment; and deepening awareness and understanding of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction. CAEP endorses “the InTASC standards in their entirety,” including the performances, knowledge, and dispositions that are extensions of those standards (CAEP, 2013, p. 21). Three concepts are common in the InTASC documents: 1) fairness, 2) the belief that all learners can achieve at high levels, and 3) respect for diversity.

While definitions vary, there is a mutual emphasis on teachers’ tendencies to act rather than on their mere thoughts, intentions, habits, or attitudes. However, those internal attitudes, values, and beliefs motivate actions and responses to situations. Dispositions are not the cause of isolated behaviors or individual actions, because those may be singular events. For example, an observer may assign a supportive disposition to a teacher who praises a student, but a single event does not indicate a tendency to act and is not a result of the disposition. Instead, the repeated use of praise coinciding with other actions such as responding patiently to repeated requests for explanation, not jumping to conclusions about behavior, and seeking explanations for behavior could lead to identifying a supportive disposition. Dispositions are tendencies and

patterns of behavior that are evident in repeated events and discernible in classrooms (Katz & Raths, 1986). Furthermore, the manifested actions will be consistent and discernible in teacher responses. The definition that I use for the purpose of my research is:

Dispositions are attributed characteristics of a teacher that represent a trend of a teacher's interpretations, judgments and actions in ill-structured contexts (situations in which there is more than one way to solve a dilemma; even experts disagree on which way is best). Further, it is assumed that these dispositions, trends in teacher judgments and actions, develop over time when teachers participate in deliberate professional education programs. (Johnson & Reiman, 2007, p. 677)

I selected this definition because it indicates that evidence of teacher dispositions is discernible in trends of classroom actions. Therefore, analyzing interviews for evidence of cooperating teachers discussing their classroom actions can lead to identifying dispositions. The definition also acknowledges that due to the complexity of the classroom, different judgments and actions can occur, and teachers' different reactions do not necessarily make teachers or their dispositions wrong. In addition, it suggests that judgment, making decisions based on contexts, not performing a mindless habit regardless of context, is part of dispositions. Finally, this definition suggests that teacher dispositions, whether seasoned veterans or first year teachers, can develop with professional education. The opinion and evidence that support the view that dispositions can develop is important to this research; it makes it worthwhile to pursue an understanding of cooperating teacher dispositions for the benefit of developing professional development opportunities that support their efforts with teacher candidates.

The scholarly definitions lack explanations of what behaviors or specific observable characteristics dispositions include. Johnson and Reiman (2007) say that dispositions are trends

in judgments and actions, but they do not describe specific instructional practices, interactions with students, or professional pursuits that demonstrate the dispositions. Research about dispositions involves trying to understand attitudes and beliefs, which are internal constructs that can be intangible and difficult to assess (Flowers, 2006). This is where the InTASC standards complement the literature and delineate expected teacher performances. For example, teachers may believe that all students can learn, but until they enact that in the classroom with a variety of teaching strategies, and incorporate a caring attitude and high expectations, that belief does not become a disposition. The delineation of expected performances makes the process of identifying observable behaviors more concrete and places the focus on actual dispositions rather than pre-dispositions.

### **Rationale for Studying Cooperating Teacher Dispositions**

If one aim of teacher education is to prepare teachers with desirable dispositions, then programs need to identify specific observable characteristics to teach candidates and incorporate ways to develop and assess these in programs. Cooperating teachers could support the development of desired dispositions, but it is advisable to consider cooperating teacher dispositions and their knowledge of dispositional standards before relying on them to support prospective teachers in this area. This study attempts to start providing information to this effect.

Scholars have documented the influence of cooperating teachers on the perceptions and practices of teacher candidates (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Hewson et al., 1999; McNamara, 1995; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012). The CAEP standards suggest that programs should select cooperating teachers who also develop candidates' dispositions (CAEP, 2013). However, not all programs have a strategy to ensure that candidates will have the experiences that are necessary to obtain the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed to be

effective (Darling-Hammond, 2010), including direct supervision by a qualified cooperating teacher who exemplifies ideal practices much less desired dispositions. Since teacher education programs have only begun to assess dispositions regularly in the past decade, some cooperating teachers might not have learned or developed the dispositions outlined in the current standards. If cooperating teachers are unaware of or have divergent dispositions from the program, this could result in unintentionally promoting preconceptions, stereotypes, or behaviors that a teacher education program has worked to transform. However, at present there is minimal literature describing the dispositions of cooperating teachers or methods to measure them.

A search for dispositions in the existing literature and recent American Educational Research Association (AERA) and American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) conference papers yielded recent studies that primarily investigate the development or assessment of candidate dispositions. There were some studies on practicing teachers, but there was minimal empirical research on the dispositions of those who serve as cooperating teachers or the way their dispositions may shape candidate learning or development. There is some evidence to suggest that a commitment to equity (Brown, Benkovitz, Muttillio, & Urban, 2011) and teacher expectations (McKown & Weinstein, 2008) affect teaching styles, and teaching styles impact effectiveness. Assuming 1) a relationship between certain dispositions and teaching quality and effectiveness exists and 2) that cooperating teachers influence dispositions similarly to teaching style and practice, then selecting cooperating teachers with certain dispositions and cultivating certain dispositions is relevant to teacher preparation and preparing effective teachers.

When reflecting on preparation, teacher candidates often cite the field experience as the most important part of their education (Clarke, 2001; Goodlad, 1990) and the cooperating teacher as one of the leading contributors to their preparation. As teacher preparation programs

apply the InTASC standards and work to cultivate specific dispositions in candidates, it is logical that all aspects of the preparation program should be consistent. However, the selection of cooperating teachers is often an arbitrary process. Scholars recommend that further research about field experience focus more attention on how cooperating teachers teach (which includes dispositions), since a student teacher spends significant time observing classrooms. Scholars have suggested that documenting “the characteristics of cooperating teachers would further extend our understanding of the conditions for teacher change and might allow teacher educators to shape those experiences toward desired outcomes” (Rozelle & Wilson, 2012, p. 1205). More purposeful pairing of cooperating teachers and teacher candidates according to strengths could increase consistency across the preparation program and strengthen the field experience for all candidates (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001).

I conducted this research in Maryland where organizations such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) influenced the movement that led to the development of Maryland’s student teaching internship policy. The 1995 *Teacher Education Task Force Report* (commonly called the *Redesign of Teacher Education*) outlines a distinct policy that requires prospective teachers to complete an extensive field-based internship with a minimum of 100 full days in a professional development school (PDS) with a minimum 15-week full time internship (Maryland State Department of Education, Revised 2011). The Maryland discussion to reform teacher education began following a national conversation about teacher education reform that included the Carnegie report, the Holmes group, and NCATE recommending that teacher education eliminate undergraduate education majors, require basic skills and subject matter competence, develop clinical experiences and promote internships, and include multiple evaluations



(Clemson-Ingram & Fessler, 1997).

In 1989, Shaila Aery assumed the role of Maryland's Secretary of Higher Education. In response to a study indicating that higher education needed to improve undergraduate programs, she targeted teacher education as a place to start the improvement and suggested eliminating undergraduate education programs (V. Pilato, personal communication, November 28, 2012). The MHEC formed a task force that met during 1991-92 and produced a *Blue Ribbon Report*, but few educators were involved so a second task force was formed (Clemson-Ingram & Fessler, 1997). Task Force II was a year in the making and included upwards of 200 members that represented all stakeholder groups, including educators. The task force consisted of five design teams to consider the academic preparation of teachers, clinical experience, assessment (two teams), and continuing education. A year of meetings resulted in the *Teacher Education Task Force Report (the Redesign)*, which MHEC adopted in 1995 (Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004).

The effort to redesign teacher education in Maryland was extensive, but coordination between the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the colleges of education was integral to implementation. In order to receive program approval from MSDE, colleges participate in on-site reviews every five to seven years and must satisfy the Maryland Institutional Performance Criteria based on the Redesign. According to the Redesign, institutions must satisfy component areas and conditional or probationary status results if they receive an unsatisfactory rating in any one of the five criteria:

1. Strong student academic background
2. Extensive Internship- field-based preparation with a minimum of 100 full days in a professional development school (PDS)

3. Performance Assessment- assessed by a standards-based rubric, provide formative and summative at critical milestones
4. Linkage with PreK-12 priorities- prepare educators to teach diverse student population (ethnicity, SES, ELL, gifted and special needs) and show how the performance assessment measures candidate proficiency, competent in technology, reading courses
5. State Approval/CAEP Accreditation Performance Criteria- all educator certification programs have state program approval and CAEP accreditation

In order to comply with federal Title II legislation, the state must identify institutions “at risk for being identified as low performing or low performing” with conditional or probation status. The State Superintendent, who is responsible for higher education terminates state approval if programs do not meet the requirements.

In addition to MSDE and colleges of education, CAEP plays a role in teacher education in Maryland, delineating the processes and policies for granting accreditation to teacher education institutions. Maryland uses the CAEP standards and accepts the decisions of this national accrediting agency as evidence of program content quality. The Redesign sets the requirements to be a Maryland Approved Program and CAEP evaluates, but colleges of education helped develop the policies and they abide by these policies for the financial and reputational benefit. Education programs earn significant tuition for relatively minimal expenses, and Title II grant funds assist approved programs in meeting state and federal mandates. Even as MSDE governs student internship requirements, the 23 colleges of education with state approved programs enact the requirements. As long as the state approves the program, each college can include different components and design the PDS partnerships in the way they deem most beneficial to their students. This can result in different experiences for prospective teachers and

cooperating teachers.

The *Professional Development Schools Implementation Manual* (Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004) outlines expectations for what a PDS may include. The higher education faculty are expected to become immersed in the school, providing on-site coursework and PD opportunities or serving on school improvement teams and other advisory groups. Teachers can be involved as a site-coordinator, preservice mentors, or adjunct faculty. They can also mentor peers, present at conferences, team teach with higher education faculty or conduct action research. A Coordinating Council comprised of stakeholders from the school, college of education, and community organizes the PDS relationship, including assessing professional development needs. The “participation in the PDS affords pre-service mentors, as well as other staff members, opportunities to participate in on-site courses, workshops, inquiry/action research groups, conferences, and other professional development activities” (Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004, p. 5). The PDS partnership is intended to enhance the student teaching experience while simultaneously improving K-12 education.

Researchers are only beginning to understand the impact of individual, instructional, and contextual factors on learning to practice (Clift & Brady, 2005). During field experiences, it is difficult to isolate the influences of different factors that include seminar courses, meetings with university supervisors, interactions with other candidates, and observations of cooperating teachers (Wilson et al., 2001). Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) suggest the field needs more in-depth studies of how different players affect the process of learning to teach, which can help programs target elements that have more impact on K-12 student learning. Preparing teachers to meet the needs of all learners “may begin with understanding how teachers’ beliefs

are integrated within their classroom teaching and behaviors” (Taylor & Sobel, 2001, p. 501).

NCATE recommends expanding knowledge on what makes clinical preparation effective (NCATE, 2010). In order to determine relationships between candidate learning and influences present during their preparation, specifically if and what dispositions may influence candidate development, scholars need to know what dispositional characteristics cooperating teachers contribute to the field experience. This is comparable to research that tries to determine the influence of cooperating teachers’ credentials or experience; before we can determine the influence, we need to know the characteristics. Conducting research that explicates the characteristics of influences on student teaching, such as cooperating teachers whose voices are frequently missing or underrepresented in teacher education literature and research, may ultimately contribute to increasing student achievement (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2007).

### **Methodology**

The focus of this study is the dispositions of the cooperating teachers who guide prospective teachers. I seek to describe cooperating teachers’ self-identified dispositions. In addition, I examine what cooperating teachers know and think about dispositional standards and their role in developing these dispositions in candidates. In order to investigate the complexity of these constructs, I used a mixed methods approach that included a survey and case studies. The combination of the survey data and case study interviews provided sources to triangulate, corroborate, and expand my understanding about what teachers identify as their dispositions and the role they have in supporting prospective teachers (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### **Survey**

The first part of my research employed a descriptive survey that I used to address the research question about what cooperating teachers self-identify as their dispositions. I used a

modified Teacher Disposition Index (TDI) (See Appendix B) (Schulte, Edick, Edwards, & Mackiel, 2004) and obtained permission from Laura Schulte, one of the designers, to use the survey in my research (See Appendix C). The survey includes 45 closed-ended Likert scale questions about dispositions. I also piloted the survey with co-workers to determine if answers would vary and I found that their responses fell across the range of the Likert scale. I describe the survey and my selection criteria in Chapter 3. Using the survey response data, I began to identify, categorize, and describe trends in the dispositions of a sample of cooperating teachers.

### **Multi-case Studies**

A second purpose of the survey was to recruit participants for the second step of data collection, the in-depth, multi-case studies. Likert scales asking people to rank themselves on a range of dispositions are useful to a degree, but they do not reveal the thinking behind the ratings (Diez, 2006). The research questions about cooperating teachers' knowledge of dispositions, the role they play in developing teacher candidate dispositions, and the challenges they experience are best examined with open-ended interview questions that allow for follow up and exploration of interesting topics. Therefore, I conducted case studies and interviewed cooperating teachers about what they know of the InTASC dispositional standards, the role they think they have in supporting dispositional development in prospective teachers, and challenges they experience as cooperating teachers. I analyzed the interviews for intricacies and nuances of individual dispositions that may not be evident in survey data.

My goal with multiple data sources was to examine more fully the dispositions of cooperating teachers and to develop a more complete description of characteristic dispositions by comparing survey ratings on dispositions with what teachers describe in interviews. Qualitative findings can add a perspective to the survey results because “qualitative research allows

researchers to get at the inner experience of participants” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 12).

### **Application of Findings**

Research indicates that teacher candidates experience shifts in dispositions over the course of their preparation (Diez, 2007). However, Dewey (1916/1944) cautions that unless an environment has been “deliberately regulated with reference to its educative effect,” (p. 18) aspects of that environment, including cooperating teachers’ dispositions, are open to chance. Due to the uncertainty of preparation environments, Dottin (2006) suggests that a program “must place the characteristics it deems necessary for its candidates into the components of the educative process” (p. 41) and that “the unit must create a culture that facilitates the acquisition of these habits or moral sensibilities,” so candidates acquire necessary proficiencies (p. 43). The teacher preparation culture includes the coursework, the professors, other students, the field experiences, and the cooperating teachers. If programs lack information about cooperating teachers, it is unclear how they deliberately place teacher candidates with cooperating teachers who have the desired characteristics, in this case dispositions, or how they create a culture to facilitate the acquisition of dispositions during student teaching.

Just as prospective teachers are not clean slates upon entering a program, cooperating teachers bring their own experiences to the classroom. The cooperating teachers play a significant role as they model concepts that candidates learn in university classrooms. However, cooperating teachers may possess and model dispositions that diverge from the university mission or that are even undesirable. I do not approach cooperating teacher dispositions from a deficit perspective. Instead, I consider that if teacher preparation programs have and assess disposition standards, then the way they communicate those to cooperating teachers and the dispositions of cooperating teachers are of interest to improving the candidate experience.

My research does not attempt to establish causality or correlation between cooperating teacher dispositions and candidate quality or effectiveness. Instead, I aim to contribute to the research about cooperating teachers' dispositions. I anticipate that my findings may aid teacher education programs as they make purposeful arrangements for field experiences. My research is available on dissertation databases for schools, government organizations, and universities as a potential resource to inform future research. Teacher education programs may use research about cooperating teacher dispositions to design professional development for those teachers; to develop mutually beneficial, ongoing partnerships with schools and teacher candidates; to choose strategies to communicate and promote the desired dispositions with cooperating teachers; and to inform the way teacher education classes promote desired dispositions in candidates. Although “the degree with which findings derived from one context may be assumed to apply in other settings” may vary, understanding the dispositions of a sample of cooperating teachers could be valuable to teacher preparation programs (Shulman, 1997, p. 13). Considering that dispositions are an aspect of teacher and teaching quality, I hope my research contributes to the evolution of teacher preparation programs as they meet the needs of all students.

The gaps in the literature about dispositions and cooperating teachers were the starting point for my research. Research exists that explicates cooperating teachers' influences on candidate teaching practices and learning. In addition, there is research describing demographics and academic characteristics of cooperating teachers. However, there is minimal literature on the dispositional characteristics of cooperating teachers. As universities and districts try to improve and expand relationships between teacher education programs and student teaching placement sites, information about existing cooperating teachers may inform professional development opportunities. Before scholars can determine if cooperating teachers influence candidate

dispositions and which dispositions may have more of an impact on candidate learning, it is important to know the dispositional characteristics of cooperating teachers.

While this is not a comprehensive study of all cooperating teachers in even a single preparation program, it begins to describe a previously little studied aspect of teacher education and provide a preliminary understanding of cooperating teachers. Teacher education programs have the responsibility to prepare high quality teachers and to consider the elements of a teacher's preparation that could influence student achievement. Programs exist in a university setting, but the external student teaching setting and the cooperating teachers play an important role in the preparation of prospective teachers.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As accrediting organizations emphasize dispositions, teacher education programs work to develop dispositions in teacher candidates. Teacher education communities aim for common educational growth, so they incorporate necessary candidate characteristics into the educative process (Sockett, 2006). One place a teacher education program can target necessary characteristics is the culminating experience of a prospective teacher's education—the field experience guided by a cooperating teacher.

Teaching is unique compared to other professions in that the new entrant assumes the same responsibilities of a veteran. This requires the novice to possess the ability to work independently and involves the management of multiple variables, including student behavior, intellectual engagement, student interaction, materials, physical space, and time (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000; Worthy, 2005). However, the student teacher's primary experience is dependent on the supervision of a cooperating teacher whose level of knowledge, skills, and dispositions may vary (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Veenman, 1984). Much of learning to teach happens through observations and the promulgation of traditional methods, which sustain continuity with past practice even if that practice is undesirable (Lortie, 1975). Therefore, at the onset of their career, educators may imitate teaching that they saw, rather than applying dispositions that they studied in preparation courses. While there is research about the dispositions of preservice teachers and the ways they develop, there is minimal research about the cooperating teachers' dispositions that candidates might imitate.

In addition to the official curriculum and coursework, teacher education programs have a hidden curriculum that includes the way program personnel interact with candidates and the

values, beliefs, ideals, and ideas that are enacted in program experiences (Carroll, 2007). The cooperating teacher is part of this hidden curriculum, helping to shape the candidates' evolving understanding of teaching and learning. Disposition development is not automatic; dispositions are acquired through a socio-cultural learning process influenced by modeling and assisted performance (Feiman-Nemser & Beasley, 1997; Oja & Reiman, 2007; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Tomlinson, 1995). Predicting the impact of a model teacher, a specific course, or an experience is difficult, but the impact of these socio-cultural influences could be different from what the program desires (Clift & Brady, 2005). The limited literature about cooperating teacher dispositions and their role in the hidden curriculum are reasons I pursued this research.

This literature review aims to answer the following questions: What does the scholarly literature say about the inclusion of dispositions in teacher preparation and the dispositions that are important for teacher candidates? If dispositions can be developed, what are some of the strategies used in teacher preparation to develop them and how can they be assessed? How do dispositions contribute to teacher quality? What are the intended roles of the cooperating teacher during field experiences? How do cooperating teachers influence the development of teacher candidates?

### **Teacher Preparation Standards and the Evolution of Dispositions**

The term disposition and the concept of dispositions as attitudes, morals, values, or beliefs have been part of the teacher education conversation since the 19<sup>th</sup> century normal school, but the use of the term in teacher education standards is relatively new. The decision by scholars to incorporate dispositions in the standards in part stemmed from a commitment to educate an increasingly diverse student population. Educators were also working to elevate the professional standing of teachers by prioritizing the development of professional standards.

An early document that influenced the profession's inclusion of the term disposition was *Minnesota's Vision for Teacher Education: Stronger Standards, New Partnerships* (1986) for which James Rath, a prominent scholar in teacher education and author of numerous articles on dispositions, was a consultant (Freeman, 2007). The document, which outlined dispositions towards self, the learner, teaching, and the profession, was the product of a task force directed to recommend changes in teacher preparation so programs could address contemporary and anticipated teaching conditions. These conditions included changing family structures and increases in students from culturally diverse backgrounds, students with identified special learning needs, and students moving into urban areas, concurrent with a decrease in teachers from minority groups and teachers with experiences that prepared them to meet the needs of their students (Task Force on Teacher Education, 1986).

Simultaneously, spurred by criticisms of public schools in the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk*, the Carnegie Foundation formed a task force to respond to condemnations of teacher quality. In 1986, the task force produced "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," and with significant input from scholars Lee Shulman and Gary Sykes, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) formed to implement the recommendations and design a national board assessment for teachers (<http://www.nbpts.org/beginnings-movement>; Shulman, 1987). In 1989, the NBPTS produced a policy statement called "What Teachers Should Know and be Able to Do." This document went beyond the knowledge that teachers should possess and explained what teachers should *do* regarding the treatment of students, the management of student learning, and interactions with peers. It also emphasized a focus on teacher work with the use of a portfolio to analyze practice (NBPTS, 2002).

With the NBPTS document as a resource, the Council of Chief State School Officers

formed the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC, now InTASC<sup>1</sup>) in 1987 and invited professional organizations from various interest groups, including the Council of Chief State School Officers, AACTE, National Education Association (NEA), NCATE, and NBPTS to contribute input. With her work at the RAND corporation helping to design an assessment system for Minnesota (Darling-Hammond, 1990) and her professional connections to Shulman, the NBPTS and Minnesota documents likely influenced Linda Darling-Hammond in 1992 as she chaired the INTASC committee. In an attempt to demonstrate that teaching has a distinctive knowledge base and to identify what beginning teachers should know, the committee (consisting of state department of education leaders, teacher union representatives, and teacher educators) developed a set of model core teaching standards that include knowledge of the learner and learning, content knowledge, instructional practice knowledge, and professional responsibility (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011). INTASC contributed to the disposition conversation by delineating three aspects to frame and define core teaching standards—the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for beginning teachers (Collins, 2006). These standards complement the NBPTS document intended for practicing teachers and serve as a model for states to prepare and assess new teachers.

Teacher preparation has long attended to candidate knowledge and skills, but the INTASC committee’s formal selection of *disposition* to replace the more universally employed term *attitude* was new and it began an ongoing scholarly focus on dispositions (Diez, 2007). Decades before, Arnstine (1967) discussed the importance of dispositions in teaching, and Katz and Raths (1985) suggested that dispositions be added as goals for teacher education programs. However, inclusion in the INTASC standards was the first time dispositions received widespread

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<sup>1</sup> INTASC removed “new” from its name to become the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) because the standards are not intended only for beginning teachers, but as professional practice standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013)

attention in the teacher education arena and made developing dispositions an obligation of teacher educators (Wise, 2007). The replacement of the term *attitude* happened quickly, due, in part, to an INTASC committee member asking, “When are you going to stop recommending candidates for licensure who are mean to kids?” (Diez, 2007, p. 389). This question is at the heart of the definition of dispositions, because while being mean is a behavior, the tendency to act that way is indicative of unwanted dispositions. With a focus on trends of action, teacher educators moved away from assessing personalities and competencies and instead, emphasized teachers’ sensitivity to learners as individuals and their use of moral reasoning (Diez & Murrell Jr, 2010).

Aside from the conversations in AACTE’s Teacher Education as Moral Community (TEAM-C) committee that began in 1996, there were few scholarly articles or conference presentations on dispositions before dispositions were included in the INTASC standards (Freeman, 2007), but with the rapid integration of the new term, areas for research emerged and scholarly debate ensued. Scholars reacted by trying to define disposition as it applied to teacher education and classroom teaching (Diez, 2007; Dottin, 2009; Katz, 1993), identifying desired dispositions (Freeman, 2007; Katz & Raths, 1985; Schussler et al., 2010), discussing ways (and debating whether it was even possible) to incorporate and cultivate certain dispositions (Diez, 2007; Frederiksen, 2010; Johnson, 2008; Talbert-Johnson, 2006), determining if there is a relationship between disposition and teacher quality (Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005), and developing methods to assess dispositions (Diez, 2006; Diez, 2007; Frederiksen, 2010; Frederiksen, Cooner, & Stevenson, 2011; Jung & Rhodes, 2008; Whaley, 1999). I discuss these topics in more depth below.

Influenced by INTASC, in 2000, NCATE announced revised standards that included

“knowledge, skills, and dispositions” of teaching candidates as a focus. NCATE defined dispositions as the “values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors towards students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development.” Dispositions are “guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, and responsibility” and “might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment” (NCATE, 2001, p. 30). A subsequent mandate by at least 30 states and NCATE ensured the incorporation of dispositions as a critical instruction and assessment area for teacher education programs as they demonstrate program effectiveness for accreditation (Diez, 2007). Teacher education has the responsibility to attend to the moral and ethical development of teachers in addition to knowledge and skills, but the profession lacked a consensus on the moral and ethical dimension of teaching (Wise, 2006). Wise (2006) predicted that the addition of dispositions to the standards would prompt institutions to search for the moral and ethical foundation of the profession of teaching. Programs had to develop an understanding of what a disposition is, determine what dispositions educators should exhibit, and assess whether candidates possessed these dispositions (Freeman, 2007).

As teacher educators and professional organizations focused on designing professional standards for teaching, lawmakers wrote federal legislation, such as the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) and Race to the Top (RTTT), to improve the academic achievement of U.S. public school students. One goal of NCLB was to have only highly qualified teachers teach students. In the legislation, “highly qualified” means that teachers possess a minimum of a bachelor’s degree, have state certification or pass a state licensing examination, demonstrate subject area competence in the subjects they teach, and raise student test scores or improve

student achievement. Similarly, RTTT has an emphasis on teachers, but places the focus on teacher evaluation. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 allocated 4.35 billion dollars to fund state RTTT grants. States across the nation are promoting education reforms consistent with RTTT, including the use of common academic standards, the revision of teacher evaluation, retention efforts to reward effectiveness, and the reform and improvement of teacher preparation (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheet-race-top>). Indirectly, these reforms start to address dispositions. As part of the RTTT initiatives districts have to revise their teacher evaluation systems to include rubrics based on the InTASC standards or other standards based systems such as the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

In 1996, Charlotte Danielson published *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. This book identified aspects of teachers' responsibilities that have been documented through empirical studies and theoretical research to promote improved student learning (Danielson, 2011). The framework divides teaching into 22 components organized into four domains of teaching responsibility: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. The Danielson Group has aligned the framework to the InTASC standards. With CAEP's influence, teacher preparation programs incorporate the InTASC standards in their evaluations of prospective teachers. Simultaneously, as school districts shift to identifying effective teachers with standards-based evaluations to meet RTTT requirements, the Danielson Framework for Teaching has gained prominence. This is due in part to the public relations and marketing strategies of the Danielson Group, comprehensive rubrics available to administrators, and the vast array of professional development provided by the Danielson Group. In Maryland, where I conducted this research, the teacher evaluation system does not use InTASC. Instead, in 22 of the 24 counties, 50% of teachers' evaluations are based

on the four Danielson Domains (Slotnik, Bugler, & Liang, 2015). Regardless of the evaluation tool or the standards used, dispositions have changed the landscape of teacher education and teacher evaluation.

### **Research and Debates about Dispositions**

Since dispositions became a permanent part of teacher education standards, there have been ongoing conversations about establishing a common definition, identifying desired dispositions and deciding which are more important, discussing ways to cultivate dispositions (if it is even possible), developing methods to assess dispositions, and determining if there is a relationship between dispositions and teacher quality. The ongoing ambiguity about dispositions requires “clarification of what we mean by dispositions, the role that they play in the preparation of candidates fit for teaching, whether they can and should be assessed, and if so, in which ways and with which tools” (Burant, Chubbuck, & Whipp, 2007, p. 399). In Chapter 1, I discussed the definitions that researchers use and the definition I use in this research:

Dispositions are attributed characteristics of a teacher that represent a trend of a teacher’s interpretations, judgments and actions in ill-structured contexts (situations in which there is more than one way to solve a dilemma; even experts disagree on which way is best). Further, it is assumed that these dispositions, trends in teacher judgments and actions, develop over time when teachers participate in deliberate professional education programs. (Johnson & Reiman, 2007, p. 677)

Here I examine the literature concerning the other “debates” in the disposition conversation.

#### **Should Dispositions be Included?**

Before addressing other debates, it is relevant to consider that scholars disagree about whether dispositions should even be included in teacher education and assessment. Those who



argue against including dispositions as part of candidate evaluations cite the lack of a common definition, the possible abuses of the term in teacher preparation, and an inconclusive relationship between teaching quality and dispositions (Hess, 2006). Without a concise and universal definition, it is difficult to develop candidate dispositions, to measure dispositions reliably, to assess accurately the development of teacher candidate dispositions, to prepare observers to recognize dispositions and evaluate without bias, and to gather empirical evidence to determine the impact of teacher dispositions on student achievement (Damon, 2007; Johnson, Johnson, Farenga, & Ness, 2005; Johnson, 2008; Raths, 1999; Thompson et al., 2005). Murray (2007) cautions against using actions as signs of dispositions without a research base on the relationships between private beliefs and intentions and overt actions. For example, a teacher who separates children from the group and does not pressure them with difficult answers may have low expectations or could be sparing children embarrassment that stems from anxiety. This scenario illustrates that evaluating candidate dispositions necessitates a clear understanding of motivations. The lack of clearly defined constructs for dispositions complicates the inclusion of dispositions in teacher education and subsequent evaluation of candidates.

Scholars who support inclusion argue that dispositions represent an individual's tendency to act in a certain manner and are predictive of patterns of action (Katz & Raths, 1986). Therefore, examining dispositions can help predict if candidates are likely to apply the knowledge and skills from their preparation program in their own classroom, especially when they are not being watched or evaluated (Wilkerson, 2006). A gap can exist between what a teacher can do (competence) and what a teacher does do (performance) because having the skills does not guarantee a person will use or apply them in a positive way with students. This discrepancy can be caused by environmental factors (workload), situational factors (lack of

supplies), or personal factors (dispositions) (Dottin, 2009). Scholars also assert that teacher beliefs about students and teaching, such as a belief in students' capacity to learn, are essential to excellent teaching. Those beliefs can influence learning, with students learning more from teachers with certain characteristics or dispositions (McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Nieto, 2003; Richert, 2007; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). Developing a candidate's dispositions may also increase a teacher's ability to work in a professional community that supports learning for all students (Diez, 2007). By nurturing and assessing dispositions, programs may support candidates in transferring dispositional conduct to professional settings, acting in certain ways, and overcoming factors that prevent enactment of knowledge and skills.

Teacher educators on both sides of the debate on including dispositions recognize that developing reliable, valid assessments and conducting research on the relationship between dispositions and teacher effectiveness is important. CAEP advocates for including dispositions, but acknowledges that there "does not seem to be a clear measure for these non-academic qualities" (CAEP, 2013, p. 11). Regardless of the debate about including dispositions, they are a prevalent component of many programs of study. Since dispositions became a part of teacher preparation standards, scholars have discussed which dispositions institutions should emphasize.

### **What Dispositions are Important?**

The CAEP standards (2013) state "there is strong support from the professional community that qualities outside of academic ability are associated with teacher effectiveness" (p. 11). These qualities include the amount of a teacher's tolerance, the ability to discern and "flex" to multiple perspectives, the tendency to base decisions on evidence, and the capacity to be a model of social justice (Johnson & Reiman, 2007), but the "research has not empirically established a particular set of non-academic qualities that teachers should possess" (CAEP, 2013,

p.11). Even so, CAEP expects universities will prepare candidates according to the InTASC standards and provide evidence that illustrates candidate “mindsets/ dispositions/ characteristics such as coachability, empathy, teacher presence of ‘with-it-ness’, cultural competency, collaboration, beliefs, that all children can learn; or professionalism, perseverance, ethical practice, strategic thinking, [and] abilities to build trusting, supportive relationships with students and families during preparation” (CAEP, 2013, p. 41).

The InTASC standards state that teachers are “required to appreciate, realize, have enthusiasm for, believe, respect, value, recognize, be sensitive to, be willing to, be concerned about, be committed to, understand, [and] take responsibility for any number of ideas” (Murray, 2007, p. 381). However, these terms are open to interpretation. Each institution decides on the dispositions to emphasize in its course of study. These dispositions often are selected based on their alignment with the mission of the university, so the selection of which dispositions are important can vary according to the aim of the teacher education program.

By reviewing statements from teacher education programs across the US, scholars have identified different dispositional categories on which programs focus. Sockett (2006) identified dispositions of character (self-knowledge and integrity), dispositions of intellect (wisdom, consistency applying rules, fairness and impartiality, and open-mindedness), and dispositions of care (receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness). Misco and Shiveley (2007) designated personal virtues and educational values. Personal virtues include being caring, honest, respectful, and sensitive, as well as having a sense of common good and the “attributes of a good, upstanding, thoughtful, and moral person” (p. 1). Educational values include respect for diverse student abilities and beliefs, the ability to work with diverse stakeholders, an appreciation for different viewpoints, the belief that all students can learn, and a regard for reflection, critical

thinking, collaboration, and professional growth.

Ruitenbergh (2011) categorized the concept of dispositions into two areas: 1) general personal values and beliefs, which include what candidates think of certain social or moral issues or their religious beliefs and 2) professional commitments and actions, which include teachers performing the tasks of the profession. Ruitenbergh (2011) suggests that teacher educators attend to professional dispositions attributable to a candidate's observed actions, rather than personal values because "what matters is not whether a professional holds a certain personal belief but whether, if and when this personal belief conflicts with a professional requirement, the latter will override the former" (p. 49). Therefore, it is advisable to use caution with personal values because evaluations based on personal beliefs can prompt complicated legal situations if students feel excluded due to religious or political principles. With a focus on professional commitments, an important distinction is the difference between "professional behavior" (being on time, prepared, dressed professionally) and dispositions or "observable actions" (Rose, 2013, p. 3). Dispositions or "observable actions" are the focus of this research because professional behavior is not exclusive to the teaching profession.

While each dispositional category contains worthy dispositions, programs cannot focus on every one. Considering the categories that scholars identified and the InTASC standards, there are three prominent dispositional areas on which teacher education programs may focus their effort. The first is knowledge of and respect for diverse student abilities combined with the ability to work with those diverse students. A second area is a disposition for fairness toward students. Finally, teachers need a pedagogical disposition to nurture student thinking and learning. These dispositions are specific to education and have educational value; they support the desired outcomes of student achievement and learning through ethical practice.

When considering dispositions that may improve student achievement, there is urgency for preparation programs to prepare teachers with knowledge of, respect for, and ability to work with diverse students. The majority of teachers are white, middle class, and female. As the population of culturally, linguistically, and ethnically different students increases in the US, with more than 40 percent of the student population consisting of students of color, teachers encounter students whose backgrounds differ drastically from their own (CAEP, 2013). An important matter is candidates' ability and willingness to use their knowledge to address the educational needs of all learners and to change instructional methods to meet varying needs of students (Johnson & Reiman, 2007).

It is unlikely that all candidates enter a preparation program with the ideas that all students can learn and that implementing a variety of instructional techniques is beneficial for student achievement; they need to be taught that. Cultural dissonance and biased expectations can predispose culturally diverse students to failure (Taylor & Sobel, 2001). For example, McKown and Weinstein (2008) found the achievement gap was larger when teachers had ethnically-biased expectations. There is related evidence that shows a relationship between higher student achievement levels and teachers who use culturally responsive strategies (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Evidence of ethnically biased expectations demonstrates that at least some teachers lack both the belief that "all children can learn at high levels" and the commitment to "deepening awareness and understanding of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction" (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013, p. 38). Therefore, as programs attend to improving student achievement for all students, they may want to incorporate InTASC critical dispositions that address diversity:

- The teacher respects students' differing strengths and needs

- The teacher believes that all children can learn at high levels and persists in helping all children reach their full potential
- The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into instructional practice
- The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction
- The teacher is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (culture, gender, language, abilities) and the potential biases in these frames.

A second prominent dispositional area that is relevant and defensible to include in teacher education is the disposition for fairness. This includes teaching equitably along with encouraging and appreciating all students. While the InTASC standards do not specify a disposition for gender equity, this is a component of the disposition for fairness. Villegas (2007) emphasizes that “teachers have a moral and ethical responsibility to teach all their pupils fairly and equitably” (p. 371), and this extends beyond culturally and ethnically diverse students. For example, research has found that some teachers think the inclusion of students with special needs in general education classrooms is unfair to general education students (Garriott, Miller, & Snyder, 2003). Irvine (1990) found that teacher misunderstandings about students can lead to low expectations, harsh discipline, and blaming academic and behavioral problems on students’ home environments. Therefore, as programs work to prepare teachers who treat students fairly and equitably, the relevant InTASC critical dispositions include:

- The teacher respects students’ differing strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to further each student’s development
- The teacher makes students feel valued and helps them learn to value each other

- The teacher is committed to working with students to establish positive and supportive learning environments.

Finally, since the main role of a teacher is to instruct students, it is logical that a third dispositional area to emphasize is pedagogical dispositions that nurture student thinking and learning. Pedagogical dispositions are “habits of pedagogical mindfulness and thoughtfulness (reflective capacity) that render professional actions and conduct more intelligent” (Dottin, 2009, p. 85). Smith (2004) suggests that pedagogical sensitivity, reflective capacity, and critical mindedness are dispositions of good teaching because they promote open-mindedness and teachers’ abilities to reflect and revise their views based on evidence. Therefore, if programs are intent on preparing teachers who support learning, while also valuing diversity and acting fairly, then programs may prioritize InTASC dispositional standards focused on instruction:

- The teacher keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field
- The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances
- The teacher values open and flexible learning environments that encourage student exploration, discovery, expression, and collaboration across content areas
- The teacher takes professional responsibility for aligning learning goals with instruction and assessment.

With dispositions for valuing diversity, fairness, and pedagogy as critical dispositions for teacher education programs, the next debate is whether or not dispositions can be developed in candidates and, if so, how to develop them.

## **Can Dispositions Be Developed and What Strategies to Use?**

A current scholarly debate is whether dispositions are a fixed “entity” or “incremental” (Diez, 2007; Dweck, 1989). In the entity view, dispositions are stable qualities; personality factors with little room for change (Damon, 2007). The *Handbook of Child Psychology* refers to “dispositional traits” that show “continuity across development” with long-term consequences for a person’s future directions (Caspi & Shiner, 2006). For example, a child prone to tantrums demonstrates the specific observable disposition of ill-temperedness, which may persist into adulthood. Scholars with an incremental perspective say that dispositions develop over time and are influenced by context, experience, and interaction (Oja & Reiman, 2007). Therefore, children prone to tantrums could learn to control their tempers with coaching on how to react without anger, exposure to frustrating situations, and interactions with people who react calmly.

The tension between scholars with the entity perspective and those with the incremental perspective can shape the methods that teacher preparation programs use to select and work with teacher candidates. For example, scholars with the entity perspective advocate for dispositional screening when interviewing prospective students and faculty. Programs might use an assessment instrument such as the Human Relations Incidents (HRI) to screen individuals for admission based on the inherent fixed dispositions of applicants (Kyllonen, Walters, & Kaufman, 2005; Wasicsko, 2007). A challenge with screening candidates is that it can cause discrimination and may exclude people who interpret questions differently. Additionally, as I discuss below, some research indicates that candidates’ dispositions can change, so excluding candidates before trying to develop their dispositions could deny potential quality teachers.

Wasicsko (2007) argues, “core-perceptions (values, attitudes, and beliefs) are formed over a lifetime and change slowly” (p. 57). Findings from observations of prospective teachers



support this assertion, indicating that in the time of a preparation program it is difficult to sufficiently change pre-existing behaviors, misperceptions, and beliefs about teaching, many of which are dispositions that are formed over a lifetime (Clift & Brady, 2005; Griffin, 1989; Wasicsko, 2007). Therefore, if programs with an entity perspective admit candidates who do not possess all of the desired dispositions, then programs may offer coaching that helps candidates learn to use their dispositional strengths and to minimize weaknesses.

In contrast to the way programs with the entity view may screen and coach candidates, programs with the incremental view might emphasize developing dispositions so teachers learn to respond and act according to the varied contexts of teaching (Ruitenberg, 2011). But if desired dispositions do not develop spontaneously or consistently, then programs are responsible for developing those dispositions in similar ways that programs develop content knowledge and instructional practices- through instruction, observations, and practice. Results from a case study of preservice teachers indicated that some teachers' beliefs about knowledge changed during their participation in a methods course and that classroom behaviors subsequently changed in accordance (Tanase & Wang, 2010). This suggests that a transformation of beliefs, which influence dispositions (Damon, 2005), may change teaching ideas and practice. If teacher educators support the transformation of candidate beliefs, they may be able to develop certain candidate teaching practices, such as having high expectations that increase student learning.

Once a program chooses to cultivate particular dispositions, it has to consider the means by which to help candidates acquire and develop the dispositions deemed necessary for practice (Ruitenberg, 2011). If one goal of student teaching is to bridge the theory-practice gap, then during field experiences candidates can test and develop the theoretical dispositions learned in coursework. Scholars argue that the development of dispositions and the strategies that programs

use to teach and promote desired dispositions are important, but there is limited empirical research on the strategies (Rose, 2013; Schussler et al., 2010). Programs develop ways to nurture and assess dispositional conduct “so that candidates may transfer their dispositional conduct to professional settings” (Dottin, 2009, p. 87) because it is one thing to say a candidate will treat students fairly and another thing to do it in the course of a lesson while handling the demands of 25-35 students. Some of the strategies that scholars suggest to foster development include organizing optimal interactions (Oja & Reiman, 2007), creating a culture that nurtures dispositions (Tishman, Jay, & Perkins, 1993), discussing demonstrated dispositions (Rose, 2013), providing opportunities for candidates to see dispositions (Dottin, 2009), and promoting self-awareness of dispositions (Schussler et al., 2010).

Oja and Reiman (2007) assert that the development of dispositions occurs when “there is optimal interaction with the environment” (p. 95). Learners tend to act in ways cued and supported by their environments. Teacher preparation programs have incorporated a variety of learning environments with the goal to provide optimal interactions during which dispositions can develop. In order to create a culture that nurtures dispositions, optimal interactions can provide candidates exemplars of dispositions, more time to experience dispositions and interact with people in ways to foster dispositions, and immediate feedback about strengths and weaknesses in dispositions (Dottin, 2009; Tishman et al., 1993). As candidates interact in environments that both support and challenge their growth, the cooperating teacher can be one of the influences and interactions. However, without some prior knowledge about the cooperating teachers’ dispositions, it can be difficult to know if the interactions will be optimal or nurturing.

The strategies of having candidates discuss demonstrated dispositions and providing opportunities for candidates to see dispositions are related. A survey to determine the strategies

that universities were using to promote candidates' understanding and the practice of desirable dispositions found four general instruction categories: direct instruction; student writing; conversations; and observations, simulations, and case studies related to dispositions (Rose 2013). Within the general categories, programs identified five specific strategies as the most effective: 1) candidates' written responses to instructor feedback, 2) discussions of dispositions demonstrated by teachers in the field, 3) hypothetical situations and case studies, 4) journaling after direct instruction, and 5) modeling by faculty with ensuing discussion. If cooperating teachers are unaware of or do not have the desired dispositions, then candidates may observe undesirable dispositions. While a discussion about undesirable dispositions can be beneficial, there is no opportunity to observe or discuss desired dispositions. If programs invited cooperating teachers to participate in professional development about desired dispositions, then teachers might purposefully incorporate specific dispositions. Candidates could then discuss the demonstrated dispositions later. The strategy of providing candidates opportunities to see dispositions combined with a subsequent discussion of the demonstrated dispositions could strengthen both strategies for fostering disposition development.

A final strategy to promote dispositional development is to encourage candidate self-awareness and improve their ability to judge and question situational contexts in a non-threatening environment. Journals from teacher candidates show a lack of awareness of their own background and the ways it can affect student learning. However, with self-assessment and reflection, "teacher candidates become aware of the dispositions they tend to manifest in particular contexts" (Schussler et al., 2010, p. 351). Encouraging candidates to reflect on their own values, their own cultures, and the cultures of their students can increase awareness of how these affect their views of students and inform pedagogical decisions (Schussler et al., 2010).

When candidates are more aware of their dispositions, they will be more purposeful in their teaching and more likely to achieve their goals (Dottin, 2009). With evidence that teacher candidates are unaware of their dispositions, a relevant question to ask is if the same is true of cooperating teachers. Moreover, if cooperating teachers became more aware of their dispositions, would they be more purposeful in their mentoring of candidates?

While most programs attend to dispositions and implement strategies to develop dispositions, at least one institution says there is “little formal discussion of dispositions, although we are talking about including it in our program. At this point, I’m not sure that our students are familiar with the term, but they are familiar with the concepts” (Rose, 2013, p. 7). It is not clear if this quote is from an accredited program, but it has implications for the role cooperating teachers play in developing candidate dispositions. If dispositions are not discussed at the programmatic level, then there is no indication that students are exposed to concepts such as fairness, that cooperating teachers have the preparation to support the candidates’ disposition development, or that candidate dispositions are assessed. Once a program decides on strategies to develop dispositions, the next step is to determine how to assess the dispositions.

### **How to Assess Dispositions**

Scholars do not agree on when or how to assess dispositions. When NCATE identified the development of professional dispositions as an explicit obligation of teacher education, one research area was to develop instruments to assess candidates’ “depositional fit” for a career in education (Wasicsko, 2007). Researchers who consider dispositions a separate fixed entity from knowledge and skills are inclined to assess dispositions independently for admission or evaluation (Wasicsko, 2007; Wilkerson, 2006). Rather than develop dispositions, programs with the entity perspective sometimes defer acceptance of “candidates who cannot demonstrate the

minimal level of acceptable dispositions... until such time as they can supply such evidence” (Wasicsko, 2007, p. 71).

Programs with an incremental approach assess candidate dispositions and development throughout coursework, analyzing more holistic complex sets of interactions that include using skills and interacting with students in ways that demonstrate specific dispositions. With this approach, prospective teachers may not initially possess all of the desired dispositions, but they can build knowledge and skills in certain areas to develop their dispositions in the course of their preparation (Diez, 2007). For example, students who lack dispositions that support teaching in multicultural settings because they are unfamiliar with cultures different from their own can still learn to appreciate diversity in the classroom, respect diverse cultures, and support social justice. Albee and Piveral (2003) suggest that in order to assess dispositional development, teacher educators have to identify and monitor dispositions, as well as support improvement in areas of concern. Candidates can receive formative feedback when programs create multiple checkpoints and embed evaluations of dispositions in all courses and field experiences (Cosgrove & Carpenter, 2012). If candidate dispositions do not develop, then programs can use the assessments to counsel students out of teaching (Almerico, Johnston, Henriott, & Shapiro, 2011).

Regardless of whether a teacher preparation program takes an entity or incremental approach, teacher education programs are actively developing and using disposition assessment instruments with teacher candidates. The focus on assessment is in part due to CAEP accreditation requirements to measure, document, and articulate candidate dispositions. A difficult situation can occur when a teacher candidate has all of the knowledge and pedagogical skills, but does not have the dispositions to apply them in the classroom. Therefore, programs employ a variety of tools in university classrooms and/or during field experiences to assess

dispositions as an admission requirement, as benchmarks throughout the program, and as part of a culminating evaluation. As part of the process to select a survey tool for this research, I examined numerous existing tools, a sample of which I describe in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Examples of Assessment Instruments*

Tool	Description
Dispositions Assessment: University Classroom Setting/ In Field Setting (Almerico et al., 2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides early warning so teacher educators can address problems with inappropriate attitudes and actions</li> <li>• Professionalism, a positive attitude, effective oral and written communication skills, a value for diversity, preparedness, collaboration, reflection skills, and respectfulness</li> <li>• Does not assess the dispositions that every child can learn or fairness</li> </ul>
Professional Disposition Assessment- Washington State University (Washington State University)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on strengths and areas to be improved throughout program</li> <li>• Professor can use with a candidate they feel is not demonstrating acceptable performance of particular dispositional standard</li> <li>• Respectful in discussions, clearly express themselves, listens responsively, interact empathetically across range of situations, ensure high quality learning opportunities, solve problems independently and collaboratively, and are responsible colleagues</li> </ul>
Mansfield University (Mansfield University)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote and assess dispositions and to respond to candidates with negative or unprofessional dispositions</li> <li>• Essays and observations to assess 11 dispositions- reflection, respect for diversity, professional conduct, high expectations, compassion, respect for others, advocacy, curiosity, dedication, honesty, and fairness</li> </ul>
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrument based on InTASC principles</li> <li>• Interview applicants to determine their disposition for teaching</li> </ul>
InTASC Readiness Survey, Texas A&M University (Capraro, Capraro, & Helfeldt, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrument aligned to InTASC standards</li> <li>• Likert scale survey to determine candidates feelings of preparedness</li> </ul>
Educational Candidate Disposition Inventory Northwest Missouri State University (Albee & Piveral, 2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed by candidate, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor at end of field experience</li> <li>• Used as one determination of candidate readiness to teach</li> <li>• Likert scale items on professional commitment and responsibility, professional relationships, and critical thinking and reflective practice</li> </ul>
Jacksonville State University (Notar, Riley, Taylor, Thornburg, & Cargill, 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluates professional dispositions- attendance, appearance, poise, attitude, initiative, rapport</li> <li>• If dispositions not consistently displayed, candidate completes a remediation program</li> </ul>
Eastern Teacher Dispositions Index- Eastern Connecticut State University (Singh & Stoloff, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate self-assessment tool</li> <li>• Included dispositions prompted by NCATE and InTASC requirements</li> </ul>

Assessment instruments may incorporate reflection journals, observations of teaching, interviews, checklists, and evaluations by professors (Wasicsko, 2007). Teacher educators can also include K-12 student feedback about teachers and deduce teachers' dispositions based on student responses (Wilkerson, 2006). Some programs include an essay for admission to serve as a benchmark along a continuum of checkpoints (Cosgrove & Carpenter, 2012). In written assignments such as journals and lesson plans, candidates can explore reasoning and motivation, identify their personal dispositions, and reflect on experiences (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2007). Self-reflections offer candidates a way to "thoughtfully explore their reasoning and motivation and look at how they enact it through their words and actions" (Diez, 2006, p. 59). However, Dottin (2009) cautions that evaluators should combine self-reflections with faculty reviews and other disposition assessment tools because "dispositional misfits" may make inaccurate self-reflections that would lead to self-selecting out of teaching.

Another important part of disposition assessment is observations by faculty, supervising teachers, or cooperating teachers, since dispositions manifest in actions, especially in the unpredictable environment of the classroom. Different interest groups suggest expanding teacher qualifications beyond certification and test score requirements, instead, measuring teacher quality with assessments that attend to factors beyond content knowledge and acknowledge the InTASC dispositions. Some institutions use "classroom performance to assess dispositions indirectly because dispositions can only be determined through evaluating actual practice" (Rose, 2013, p. 3). For example, the Teacher Quality Department of the NEA produced a policy brief entitled *Profession-Ready Teachers* that supports using classroom-based performance assessments focused on teacher behaviors. Candidates have to demonstrate the ability to plan and deliver instruction to students with different learning styles (InTASC Standards 7 and 8), to

assess student learning (Standard 6), and to collaborate and reflect (Standard 10) (National Education Association, 2013). By examining past and present behaviors, teacher educators assume that candidates who show behavior patterns that demonstrate specific values such as enthusiasm for learning, respect for others, and empathy are more likely to enact teaching behaviors characterized by those values (Almerico et al., 2011). The NBPTS portfolio to become a board certified teacher also focuses on teacher actions and asks teachers to reflect on student work and their teaching (Standard 10). These assessments focus on *recurrent* classroom performances and interactions and expand teacher evaluation beyond content knowledge and isolated performances to examine dispositions, the *trends* of teachers' classroom actions.

Vague definitions or definitions involving beliefs and attitudes, rather than observable actions, could cause difficulties when teacher educators try to separate beliefs and actions so they can assess professional actions (Flowers, 2006). Programs could abuse dispositional assessment and scrutinize a candidate's thoughts rather than actions, even if those actions are incongruous with potentially undesirable personal beliefs (Ruitenbergh, 2011). For example, candidate journals submitted as course requirements often ask students to produce confessional narratives. Candidates may reveal personal characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, and diligence that are vital to teaching and reasonable components of candidate assessment. Candidates may also vent about frustrations or difficulties with a student or reveal an undesirable response they had in the classroom. They may even write that they are not sure if they should remain in teaching (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). If programs use entries to assess candidates' abilities to teach, then that sustains the idea that personal and professional beliefs are inseparable.

Specific examples of abuse include a LeMoyne College student who was dismissed (and reinstated after winning in the New York Supreme Court) when he submitted a paper supporting



corporal punishment; the college cited a mismatch between his personal beliefs and the college program goals (York, 2006). In another case, a religious university in Canada required students to agree to refrain from “biblically condemned” practices, including homosexual behavior. In this situation, a reference to one’s sexuality in a journal could result in dismissal. The court ruled that the university could uphold the requirement because there was no concrete evidence that the preparation of teachers at the university fostered discrimination in the public schools, even though the requirement discriminated against candidates (Ruitenberg, 2011).

These cases demonstrate conflicts with assessing dispositions and distinguishing between beliefs and actions in assessments. One solution to such cases is to set definitional and behavioral limits on disposition standards (Damon, 2007). For example, CAEP could encourage teacher education programs to refrain from assessing attitudes and beliefs related to sexual orientations, religious preferences, or political ideologies. However, it would be reasonable to assess beliefs directly related to candidates’ capacity and motivation to teach, such as if candidates believe that all children can learn and demonstrate that through consistent verbal and nonverbal behaviors (Damon, 2007). Setting definitional and behavioral limits on dispositional standards could mitigate the risk of teacher education programs supporting a social or political agenda or screening candidates based on dispositions that result in biased admissions (Borko et al., 2007).

Rather than set definitional and behavioral limits on disposition assessments, another approach would be to consider teaching a role that people play, separating the role from personal beliefs and compartmentalizing professional beliefs from personal (Ruitenberg, 2011). With this approach to assessing dispositions, a program may identify a candidate who has a negative attitude towards a certain group of students, whether it is an ethnic minority or students with learning differences, but could allow that individual to continue because the professional

requirement overrides the personal belief and the teacher does not act on the attitude. An argument to this approach is that research has demonstrated that even subtle actions can negatively affect student achievement (McKown & Weinstein, 2008). Therefore, while periodic negative attitudes demonstrated in reflections may not constitute a conflict, personal beliefs that clash with program goals could be a concern. In this case, programs would not want candidates to play a role; adopting definitional and behavioral limits would be appropriate. While there is significant attention on assessing teacher dispositions, a larger question is whether dispositions have any effect on student learning.

### **Do Dispositions Improve Teacher Quality and Affect Student Learning?**

The overall goal of teacher education is preparing teachers who positively affect student learning, but there is disagreement about what makes an effective teacher, including characteristics beyond qualifications such as dispositions. In order to meet the highly qualified requirements of NCLB, states focused on teachers' content knowledge as measured by standardized teacher test scores. This does not account for teachers who are highly qualified on paper, but may not enact their knowledge and skills and may lack the dispositions to be high *quality* teachers. Teacher educators are concerned about preparing *high quality* teachers. The professional standards expand the evaluation of teaching to include complex tasks and teacher actions in the classroom, which may be more difficult to measure but can indicate quality (Freeman, 2007). The NEA recommends that states "require all teacher preparation providers to meet the CAEP national standards to ensure that their programs are training profession-ready teachers" (National Education Association, 2013, p. 3). When government officials, the media, and education scholars talk about teaching, they often refer to teacher/teaching quality or teacher effectiveness.

The quality distinction is important in education reform because research has documented that teacher quality is a significant school-related variable influencing student learning and achievement (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2000b; Rice, 2003; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wang, Odell, Klecka, Spalding, & Lin, 2010). Differentiating between teacher quality, teaching quality, and teacher effectiveness, I use Goe's (2007) definitions and posit that the knowledge (a component of teacher quality) teachers possess is applied to classroom actions (teaching quality) and can affect student outcomes (effectiveness). Rice (2003) and Wayne and Youngs (2003) describe teacher quality as teachers' characteristics that enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. Dispositions towards students and teaching are part of those characteristics that can influence the quality of teaching (Johnson & Reiman, 2007). In today's assessment-driven culture, researchers often define effective as teachers who increase student learning; outcomes are the number of students who are academically successful on state standardized tests or who meet student learning objectives (Thompson et al., 2005).

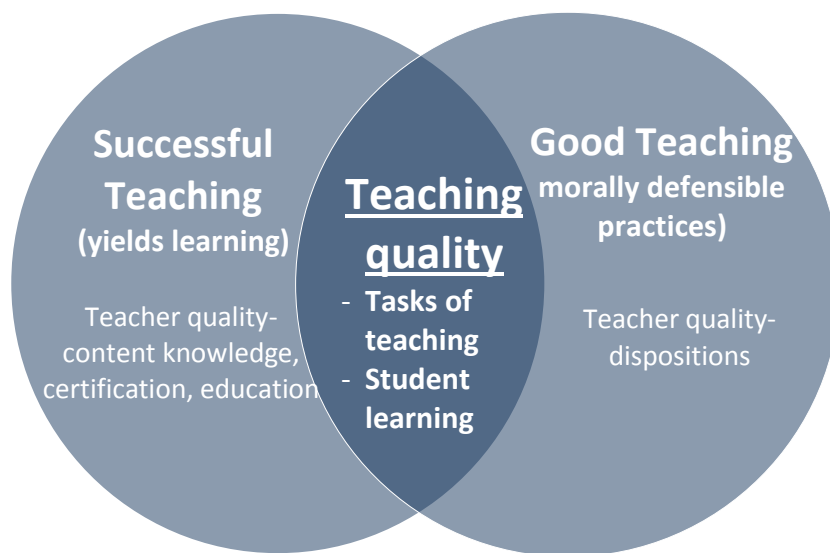


Figure 1: The relationship of teacher quality and teaching quality

Using Goe's (2007) explanation of Fenstermacher and Richardson (2005), I expand

teaching quality to include two dimensions: a) the task of teaching (what teachers do) and b) achievement (learning fostered by teachers), which Fenstermacher and Richardson (2005) call successful teaching. Successful teaching yields learning, but it is the combination with good teaching, teaching that uses “morally defensible and rationally sound principles of instructional practice” (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005, p. 6) that generates quality teaching (See Figure 1). Desired dispositions can be thought of as the bridge between successful teaching that results in learning and good teaching that involves moral practices (not harming students to achieve learning and not using harmful practices) to arrive at quality teaching. Teacher quality manifests in what teachers do in the classroom, and dispositions are evident in the actions teachers take. If dispositions are evident in actions and teacher quality includes the tasks of teaching, then a teacher’s dispositions may influence student achievement.

Often, teacher evaluations include tangible characteristics such as certification, education, licensing, and test scores. Researchers have conducted studies to determine teachers’ attributes that have positive effects on student achievement and teacher quality, but evidence linking these observable characteristics to increasing student achievement is inconsistent. For example, there is evidence that certification, specifically in secondary education and mathematics (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Goe, 2002; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien, & Rivkin, 2005; Rice, 2003) and attending a traditional preparation program (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, et al., 2005) have a positive effect on student achievement. On the other hand, some studies contradict that a preparation program has any effect on student achievement. This indicates that variables other than preparation may have greater effects on student achievement (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007). Other factors, including teachers’ verbal ability, subject matter knowledge and preparation,

pedagogical coursework, and student teaching contribute to teacher effectiveness (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Ehrenberg & Brewer, 1995; Monk, 1994). Much of the research focuses on the effects of qualifications and content knowledge; not the critical dispositions outlined in the InTASC standards (See Appendix A).

There is still scholarly debate about how much measurable teacher credentials predict teacher quality or student achievement (Rockoff, 2004). Student test scores are helpful in identifying which teachers are effective, but “other measures of teacher quality (evaluations based on classroom observations) might be even better predictors of teachers’ long-term impacts than value-added scores” (Chetty et al., 2011, p. 6). Variations in teacher quality are often due to difficult to measure characteristics such as beliefs and attitudes, which could be why “many issues related to the role of dispositions in teacher education remain unsolved” (Borko et al., 2007, p. 359). There is a lack of empirical evidence demonstrating that certain dispositions improve teacher effectiveness, and therefore, quality (Hess, 2006). However, there is empirical research documenting four related topics: 1) the characteristics of effective teachers (Berry, 2002; Collinson, 1996), 2) the effect of specific teacher characteristics on student learning (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Goldhaber & Brewer, 1999; McKown & Weinstein, 2008), 3) the relationship between certain teacher characteristics and classroom actions (Rushton, Morgan, & Richard, 2007; Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011), and 4) the way classroom actions influence student achievement (Freeman et al., 2014; Ross, 1992; Slavin, 1983).

The first set of literature details the characteristics of effective teachers, with effectiveness based on student test scores, evaluations, and classroom observations, with the goal to predict future teacher effectiveness. Knowing effective teachers’ characteristics and predicting teacher effectiveness would be useful; teacher education programs could develop specific

characteristics in order to prepare effective teachers, and school districts could hire effective teachers based on those characteristics. Scholars assert that teachers who help students reach higher academic standards know their subject matter, organize and teach lessons so diverse students can learn, and understand how and why students learn (Berry, 2002). In one study, outstanding teachers specified reflecting on practice, showing respect for self and others, and displaying care and compassion as characteristics of effective teachers (Collinson, 1996). Effective teachers are also described as flexible, creative, and adaptable (Schalock, 1979; Wise, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 1987). Teachers whom principals identified as effective were consistent in following rules and procedures, developed rapport with students, and engaged their students in a teacher-centered classroom (Thompson et al., 2005).

Some characteristics identified in effective teachers are dispositional qualities, but the literature does not establish causality between the characteristics and achievement. These studies document existing qualities of effective teachers, but they do not establish if qualities were what caused the achievement. The studies also identify some qualities, such as engaging students in a teacher-centered classroom that do not align with dispositional standards. The studies do not address which characteristics, if any, have an impact on student learning, which would be useful for schools and teacher preparation programs to know. Therefore, a second area for research is that which attempts to document the effect of teacher characteristics on student achievement.

Teacher characteristics can be categorized broadly into observable and non-observable, or internal, characteristics. Some researchers found that observable characteristics such as a teacher's experience (Clotfelter et al., 2007; Hanushek et al., 2005), test scores (Clotfelter et al., 2007), and licensure (Clotfelter et al., 2007; Goldhaber & Brewer, 1999; Rice, 2003) positively affect student achievement. Other studies indicate that teacher subject knowledge (Aaronson et

al., 2007; Goldhaber & Brewer, 1999; Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005; Rockoff, Jacob, Kane, & Staiger, 2011) can positively affect student achievement. While some observable characteristics positively affect student achievement, there are characteristics such as possessing a graduate degree that do not significantly affect student achievement (Rockoff et al., 2011). Some researchers who have examined how personality factors such as extroversion (Rockoff et al., 2011) or shyness (Damon, 2007) may affect student learning found that these factors did not significantly affect student achievement or only had a speculative relationship with student learning (Damon, 2007). When many other variables have a measureable effect on student learning, it is not advisable to assess personality traits.

While it is informative to know that observable characteristics such as certification and content knowledge can affect student achievement, it is more relevant to the proposed research to consider if certain internal characteristics play a role in teacher quality. These characteristics include teacher behaviors and intangibles such as commitment to equity, care for students, expectations, enthusiasm, extraversion, efficacy, and a caring, affirming disposition (Brown et al., 2011; Delpit, 2006; McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Nieto, 2003; Rockoff et al., 2011; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). Many of intangible characteristics or dispositions are evident in teacher actions, so research that includes observations may be a way to evaluate candidate quality and dispositions and the effect on student achievement.

Scholars consider factors such as knowing and valuing how and why students learn (InTASC Standard 6), collaborating with colleagues (Standard 10), setting high expectations for students (Standard 2), motivating at-risk students, and creating an encouraging classroom environment (Standard 3) as possible indicators of teacher quality and student achievement (Berry, 2002; Goe, 2007). Exemplary teachers say that respect for students is indispensable and

the best learning occurs when relationships with students are developed by caring competent teachers (Collinson, Killeavy, & Stephenson, 1998). The InTASC standards incorporate these claims in critical dispositions such as respecting students' differing strengths and needs, valuing the input of families, respecting students as individuals, making students feel valued, and respecting families' norms and expectations.

In a study of ethnically-biased teacher expectations, researchers found that the “different expectations teachers hold for children from stereotyped ethnic groups” can contribute an average of 0.6 grade equivalents to the year-end achievement gap, “a substantial gap attributable to different expectations for equally-achieving children from different ethnic groups” (McKown & Weinstein, 2008, p. 258). Another study examined school characteristics between schools with small and large achievement gaps. Results indicate that teacher credentials, education, and experience were consistent between the schools (Brown et al., 2011). Instead, the principals of small gap schools were more deliberate in recognizing, encouraging, and celebrating academic achievement; monitoring teaching and learning with instructional feedback; and expecting excellence for each student. Additionally, the staff spoke more consistently about caring about their students' learning. The evidence suggests that dispositions such as having high expectations, treating students equally regarding those expectations, encouraging achievement, monitoring learning, and caring about student learning can influence student outcomes.

There is compelling research showing that another characteristic, teacher and student relationship quality, affects student academic achievement (Stipek & Miles, 2008). When gender, ethnicity, and cognitive ability were accounted for, students' relationships with their teacher predicted aspects of school success (Harme & Pianta, 2001). Relationships with warmth, trust, and open communication nurture student motivation for learning, support positive task



behaviors, and predict gains in academic achievement (Hughes, Luo, Kwok, & Loyd, 2008).

Teacher qualities such as intuition, feeling, empathy, and listening found in effective teachers are valuable for relationships.

There is a need for more research to establish a correlation between certain characteristics and teacher effectiveness, but a third area of research focuses on the relationship between teacher characteristics and classroom actions. Rockoff (2011) found that extroversion did not affect student achievement directly, but Rushton et al. (2007) found that extroverted, intuitive, and perceptive teachers are more likely to be successful and innovative problem-solvers. Problem solving is key when developing differentiated lessons for a range of abilities and learning styles and when handling unpredictable moments in the classroom. Confidence, in addition to intuition and empathy, promote collaboration and listening within the classroom (Rushton et al., 2007; Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). Confident teachers are more likely to differentiate instruction for diverse learners and teach for higher levels of learning (Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). Those teachers who are not inclined to work collaboratively and are more authoritarian are likely to be teacher-centered (Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). These studies indicate a correlation between teacher qualities and classroom actions, but not student achievement.

Research documents the characteristics of effective teachers, establishes that some characteristics affect student learning, and links characteristics to classroom actions. A final research area connects classroom actions and achievement. The qualities of extroversion, intuition, perception, and confidence are linked to classroom actions (differentiating instruction, problem solving, collaboration, and having high expectations), but it is important to explore if those actions positively influence student outcomes. Banks et al. (2005) linked differentiating instruction to higher student achievement, and found students' achievement can increase when

teachers use knowledge about the social, cultural, and language backgrounds of their students to plan and implement instruction. When a teacher has high expectations and aims for higher levels of learning, there is a positive correlation with achievement gains (McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Palardy & Rumberger, 2008). Additionally, a structured course design with intensive practice and active-learning can reduce achievement gaps (Freeman et al., 2014; Haak, HilleRisLambers, Pitre, & Freeman, 2011). Cooperative learning produces positive achievement outcomes when individual accountability and group rewards are part of the activity (Slavin, 1983). In terms of teacher actions outside the classroom, one study found that student achievement was higher with teachers who interacted more with mentors during the implementation of a new curriculum (Ross, 1992). While this correlational finding does not specify causality, it adds to evidence that collaborating with mentors may positively affect student achievement.

Reinforcing effort, providing recognition, and giving constructive feedback have a positive effect on student achievement (Marzano, 2003), and these actions stem from teacher qualities of respectfulness and care. Students of teachers whose practices are compatible with students' learning styles are more motivated and achieve higher goals. Therefore, it is important that teachers are aware of their teaching styles so they can adjust to fit the individual needs of their students (Brown, 2003). Adjusting requires the qualities of flexibility and reflecting on practice found in effective teachers. Since evidence suggests that certain characteristics and dispositions affect teaching practices, and certain teaching practices have been linked to student outcomes, then it is possible a link can be established between dispositions and student achievement.

Scholars continue to debate different aspects of dispositions, including what dispositions are important, ways to develop dispositions, and links between dispositions and student

achievement. However, with accreditation requirements, dispositions play a significant part of a teacher candidate's preparation and assessment. Therefore, it is appropriate to pursue research on ways to support the development of dispositions. An important factor in this discussion is the clinical experience and the role of the cooperating teacher, which I address next.

### **Clinical Practice in the United States**

Teaching is a skilled profession that necessitates preparation during which candidates learn by developing and enacting knowledge about teaching. Campus courses provide a foundation for pedagogy and content knowledge, but professional groups, policymakers, and practitioners alike agree that field experience is an essential or even the “most important” part in preparing teachers (AACTE, 2010; Carnegie Forum on Education, 1986; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Dewey, 1965; Holmes Group, 1986; NCATE, 2010). Teachers “see clinical experiences as a powerful- sometimes the single most powerful- element of teacher preparation,” (Wilson et al., 2001, p. 2) and they consistently rate the field experience as the most beneficial part of their preparation (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Although teachers say the field experience is the most beneficial part of preparation, it is important to consider the empirical research documenting how candidates benefit.

### **Field Experience**

As CAEP emphasizes preparing quality teachers for a changing field of education that includes an increasingly diverse student body, a relevant question for teacher preparation is “How can programs prepare teachers so they engage in quality teaching?” Formal teacher education includes specific elements such as a major or minor concentration; general education courses; foundation courses in history, philosophy, sociology, or psychology of education; teaching methods courses; and field experiences all aimed at producing high-quality teachers,

with many that aim to cultivate positive dispositions (Ladson-Billings, 2011). A traditional part of teacher education is the field experience (also called student teaching, internship, practicum, or clinical experience), during which candidates observe practicing teachers' dispositions (and knowledge and skills) and develop their own dispositions. Since traditional teacher preparation programs and teacher educators have the primary responsibility to prepare the best quality teachers (Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wang et al., 2010), and 88% of prospective teachers enroll in a traditional preparation program with field experiences, it is relevant to examine that element of teacher education (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Teacher preparation programs stress providing early and ongoing field experiences so candidates witness what teaching involves and requires. Early experiences provide a conceptual structure for candidates to organize and understand classroom dynamics and the theories they learn in their courses (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). Depending on the stage of teacher preparation and each program's course of study, field experiences are systematic classroom-based times during which the prospective teacher may observe a classroom for a few days, teach a lesson to small or large groups, co-teach a group-planned lesson, conduct research, assist the teacher, or tutor students (Capraro et al., 2010). The purpose of the culminating, long-term field experience, typically done during the final year of school, is for teacher candidates to assume primary responsibility for teaching and to bridge the theory-practice gap that can exist in teacher education. The field experience is an opportunity for teacher candidates to become familiar with the myriad of classroom and school demands, learn skills as they observe a highly skilled cooperating teacher, and learn to navigate the highly complex profession that is teaching. Under the watchful eye of an assumed expert, prospective teachers learn new practical skills while enacting the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that

they have learned by applying them to classroom situations.

With pressure to demonstrate the relevance of preparation programs and deliver empirical evidence (Wineburg, 2006), university educators are researching questions about the outcomes of different teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2000a; Howey & Zimpher, 1989). Candidates and teacher educators alike cite the field experience as the most beneficial, authentic, or practical part of teacher preparation (Clarke, 2001; Goodlad, 1990), but “across the research base, there is considerable variation in the amount of evidence offered regarding what PSTs (preservice teachers) learn from student teaching experiences and what led to PSTs learning” (Anderson & Stillman, 2013, p. 47). The existing research on field experience ranges from studies that show growth in candidates to those that demonstrate a negative impact.

Field experience can have a *positive* influence on candidates. For example, some research demonstrates that field experiences contribute to the development of candidates’ dispositions toward inclusion (Taylor & Sobel, 2003) and student-centered teaching (Gallego, 2001). Other studies indicate that sustained interactions with students during early field experiences promoted shifts in the ways that candidates thought about students and learning, as they became more accepting of students’ ideas and more aware of students’ strengths (Clift & Brady, 2005). Field experiences that incorporate an inquiry-based research project increase participants’ self-perception of competence in knowledge, disposition, and performance as defined by InTASC standards (Capraro et al., 2010).

Clift and Brady’s (2005) review of recent research found that, depending on a variety of factors such as the learning environment, relationships with the cooperating teacher, personal biases or preconceptions, and interactions with children, field experiences resulted in *differential* change in prospective teachers’ ideas about students, learning, and teaching. Empirical research

directly compares the effects of different field experiences such as involving candidates in multiple placements, placing them in schools earlier in their program, and increasing the time of the experience. This research, however, is inconclusive, suggesting that candidate learning from field experiences is contextualized and uneven (Ritter, Powell, & Hawley, 2007; Shanahan, 2008; Téllez, 2008; Wilson et al., 2001). Other studies have also found contradicting outcomes. For example, Stachowski and Frey (2003) report positive changes in candidates' beliefs and attitudes with regard to culture while simultaneously reporting candidates' problematic treatments of culture, indicating a clash between beliefs and actions.

Finally, there are studies indicating the field experience can have a *negative* impact on candidate development. Rushton (2001) found a perpetuation of a deficit view towards students and communities evidenced by more rigid classrooms and comments that students are needy and lacking home and community stability. Some findings suggest that candidates have limited opportunities to observe, test, and receive feedback from cooperating teachers about teaching methods learned in campus courses (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Graham, 1997; Valencia et al., 2009; Zeichner, 2010). Opportunities to receive feedback regarding dispositions facilitate their acquisition, so candidates who do not receive feedback may experience minimal growth (Tishman et al., 1993). Evidence also suggests that working in the field can lead to disillusionment with students and teaching when candidates struggle to integrate propositional knowledge with practical knowledge (Clift & Brady, 2005). These findings about negative experiences suggest that the field experience quality is significant when determining the impact of the experience. The influence of the cooperating teacher could be one aspect of that quality.

Even with the considerable variation in research findings on the role that the clinical experience plays in the development of teachers and firsthand accounts of student teachers who

had unfavorable field experiences (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Graham, 1997; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002), the myth that all field experiences result in positive consequences persists (Shanahan, 2008). To combat the possibility of ineffective field experiences, researchers suggest field assignments align with the theoretical and evidence-based teaching practices taught in methods courses. There is also a need for more involvement from supervising teachers, restructured observations by university professors, and course assignments related to field experiences (Allsopp, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton, & Doone, 2006). In order to increase the potential that field experiences bridge the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching, Capraro et al. (2010) recommend that field-based practitioners understand the explicit purpose of the experience, programs alter the quantity and duration of the field experience to account for individual candidate differences, and schools and programs collaboratively identify and support exemplary field-based teacher educators. Finally, developing a better understanding of the factors that influence the quality of field experiences is warranted so the benefits can be maximized. A heightened focus on the role, preparation, and influence of cooperating teachers is one area that may contribute to these recommendations.

### **The Cooperating Teacher**

Teacher candidates have referred to their cooperating teachers, the field-based teacher educator responsible for supporting and mentoring candidates, as the most important part of their preparation (Clarke, 2001). Demographically, cooperating teachers are predominantly female (67%), white (96%), in their mid-40s, have master's degrees (50%), and have an average of 16 years of experience (Clarke, 2001). Cooperating teachers balance the work of teacher educators—answering questions, talking with, helping, and modeling for the student teacher, while also carrying out the responsibilities of classroom teaching. The motivations to become a

cooperating teacher include sharing knowledge, furthering personal professional development, increasing pay, and being invited by the principal (Sinclair, Dowson, & Thistleton-Martin, 2006). However, teachers in this dual role can find it exhausting (Bullough et al., 1999) and receive minimal, if any, compensation (Zeichner, 2010).

**Roles of the cooperating teacher.** Cooperating teacher roles are described in a variety of ways. One perspective is that cooperating teachers are teacher educators. In an extensive literature review, Clarke, Triggs, and Nielsen (2014) identified eleven categories describing how cooperating teachers participate in teacher education: as modelers of practice, providers of feedback, gatekeepers of the profession, supporters of reflection, gleaners of knowledge, purveyors of context, conveners of relation, agents of socialization, advocates of the practical, abiders of change, and teachers of children. Scholars agree that modeling practice and providing feedback largely define what cooperating teachers do (Dottin, 2006; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Valencia et al., 2009). By modeling, cooperating teachers can help bridge the gap between theory and practice. Teacher educators help candidates conceptualize the abilities needed for teaching, make connections between intentions and actions, and help transform teacher education from a collection of courses to a developmental growth process (Diez, 2007, p. 394). The dispositions modeled by cooperating teachers can become part of the curriculum, but without research describing cooperating teachers' dispositions, this part of the curriculum is unknown.

Providing feedback can give candidates an idea of their performance. Cooperating teachers use affective and cognitive coaching to accomplish this. Affective coaching includes the cooperating teacher treating the student teacher as a colleague, giving them respect that transfers to the students, and providing encouragement and support to experiment. Cognitive coaching includes giving direct instruction on teaching methods, providing feedback on student teacher



performance, modeling teaching, and explaining effective teaching practices (O'Brian et al., 2007). With the range of roles that the cooperating teacher plays and the dependence that candidates have on their mentor, the selection of the cooperating teacher can be important to the success of the field experience.

**Methods of selecting and pairing cooperating teachers.** Inherent in the pairing of a prospective teacher with a cooperating teacher is the assumption that the candidate is under the supervision of a highly qualified, expert teacher from whom the intern can learn a variety of teaching strategies. Universities recruit local K-12 schools as student teaching locations.<sup>2</sup> CAEP specifies that schools partnered with teacher preparation programs select high quality certified clinical educators to supervise and mentor candidates “who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates’ development and P-12 student learning and development” (p. 6) trained to work with and provide feedback to candidates. CAEP and the NEA suggest that school districts and schools work together to recruit, train, and support teachers who demonstrate effective teaching practices to serve as clinical educators and provide professional development to prepare them for their role (National Education Association, 2013). In Maryland, where I conducted my research, cooperating teachers must demonstrate knowledge of or training in adult learning and peer coaching, possess an advanced professional certificate, demonstrate knowledge to address the performance evaluation criteria and outcomes of candidates, and have a reference from a supervisor (Greenberg, Pomerance, & Walsh, 2011).

Universities try to honor the expertise and knowledge of cooperating teachers, but frequently P-12 schools and universities have different objectives (Wilson et al., 2001). This can

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<sup>2</sup> In Maryland, prospective teachers complete their field experience in a Professional Development School, “a collaboratively planned and implemented partnership for the academic and clinical preparation of interns and the continuous professional development of both school system and institution of higher education faculty” (Maryland State Department of Education, Revised 2011).

cause universities to struggle to maintain standards for placement quality and coordinate a good match for the candidate. Recommendations providing some consistency for cooperating teacher qualifications exist. The Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation says cooperating teachers should be “effective practitioners, skilled in differentiating instruction, proficient in using assessment to monitor learning and provide feedback, and persistent searchers for data to guide and adjust practice” (NCATE, 2010, p. 6). States outline specific requirements that can include having at least three years of experience, specific certifications, mentoring skills, and evidence of positively impacting student learning (Greenberg et al., 2011). However, cooperating teachers often serve recurringly during their careers, and some have as many as twenty candidates during their careers (Clarke, 2001). Once they have satisfied the qualification requirements, as long as there are no complaints about their performance, they continue to work with teacher candidates. This does not permit reevaluating their impact on student learning and assumes that once teachers have satisfied the requirements to be a cooperating teacher, they remain qualified. Just because cooperating teachers are experienced, does not mean their instructional practices or dispositions are constant and do not change with experiences and education.

Many cooperating teachers excel in their role, but there are accounts of faculty who have given up maintaining a professional disposition, do not spend enough time with candidates, and demonstrate cynicism (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). Additionally, the struggle to attract cooperating teachers and the needs of large universities to place hundreds of candidates can overshadow the desire to pair candidates with teachers who meet the CAEP requirements and whose concepts about students and instructional approaches are consistent with and reflective of program goals (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Lane, Lacefield-Parachini, & Isken, 2003; Sinclair et al., 2006).

Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2007) sum up discrepancies in cooperating teachers saying schools “are staffed by a variety of teachers—highly competent, outright incompetent, and every conceivable combination in between” and there is no assurance where a candidate’s cooperating teacher will fall on this continuum (p. 70).

The selection process to become a cooperating teacher varies by school and subject matter, and universities often are not actively involved in the selection (Graham, 1997). Schools and principals select people based on experience, expertise, willingness to mentor, ability to model best practices, reputation, recommendations of colleagues and former student teachers, connection to the university or faculty, and willingness to receive training (Conderman, Morin, & Stephens, 2005; O'Brian et al., 2007; Valencia et al., 2009). In some situations, such as subject specific placements like music, the principal’s recommendation is ignored and cooperating teachers are selected based on personal and professional relationships between K-12 educators and collegiate educators (Zemek, 2008). Teachers are not always motivated to accept a cooperating teacher position because they are too busy, feel student teachers are not prepared, or are not being asked (Sinclair et al., 2006). The different selection criteria and various motivations for accepting a position as a cooperating teacher can result in unwilling volunteers, a mismatch with the candidate’s personality and developmental needs that result in a strained relationship, or a discrepancy between the university mission and the cooperating teacher disposition (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002).

Once cooperating teachers are selected, scholars think an important consideration is the match between them, the program, and the candidate. However, student teacher placement is often outsourced to central administration offices or based on cooperating teacher availability rather than what is best for the novice teacher’s learning (Zeichner, 1996). The relationship

between preservice teachers and cooperating teachers is complex and significant to the development of candidates' knowledge and performance (O'Brian et al., 2007). The relationship can be a primary factor in success. Candidates claim that effective cooperating teachers are experienced, patient, flexible, organized, effective communicators, and knowledgeable about best practices (O'Brian et al., 2007). A cooperating teacher who demonstrates a variety of instructional methods, positive student relationships, and a dedication to the profession can be a powerful experience for a prospective teacher (O'Brian et al., 2007). Matching a student teacher to a cooperating teacher by considering both individuals' strengths, areas of need, content knowledge, teaching skills, and dispositions may reduce tension and increase the learning potential (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; O'Brian et al., 2007). However, a mentor who is not a good teacher, struggles in their job, or has become a mentor unwillingly can have a damaging impact on the prospective teacher (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002).

While CAEP endorses candidate dispositional assessments that are aligned to InTASC dispositional standards and some programs determine candidate dispositions at admission, there is not a recommendation that programs select cooperating teachers based on those principles. The process by which cooperating teachers are paired with candidates can result in mismatches. The processes by which cooperating teachers are chosen leave questions about cooperating teachers' qualifications and dispositions. This can result in cooperating teachers who may not be aware of or enact the mission of the teacher education program in knowledge, skills, and for the purposes of this research—dispositions. While this may not be the norm, it is relevant given the mixed findings on the effectiveness of field experiences and accounts of negative experiences.

The research indicates that once cooperating teachers are selected, they benefit from training to prepare them for their role (Glickman & Bey, 1990), and professional development on

peer coaching results in an increase in listening behavior and concern for the learners (Reiman & Peace, 2002). However, few receive significant professional development on supervision. What preparation does occur tends to include administrative topics on the university student teaching handbook, one-on-one or small group conferences with the university supervisor, and an occasional workshop conducted by university supervisors who are often former teachers, do not have full university positions, and may have received limited preparation themselves (Clarke, 2001; Meade, 1991; Valencia et al., 2009; Zemek, 2008). If teacher preparation programs develop relationships with professional development schools and assess candidates according to InTASC, then cooperating teachers need knowledge of those standards. If cooperating teachers do not receive direction from the preparation program about its aims, in this case desired dispositions, they may not offer feedback or model practice as envisioned by the program. Clarke (2001) suggests that institutions could offer more advanced courses for cooperating teachers with experience and promote the partnership between the school and university.

Scholars recommend teacher education faculty and field placement directors begin to view placements, where cooperating teachers embody program principles, as an experience to be created instead of a site to be found (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Potthoff & Alley, 1996). Asking how to create circumstances and more purposed pairings could support “better” student teaching experiences (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). Knowing more about cooperating teachers’ dispositions could facilitate these placements and contribute to a better understanding of the influences that dispositions have. However, a bigger question is whether cooperating teachers have any influence on teacher candidates in the first place.

### **Cooperating Teacher Influences on and Interactions with Teacher Candidates**

Prospective teachers draw on resources when learning to teach and during the field

experience. Cooperating teachers are a main resource since they spend the most time with the candidate and are the most available for advice. Just as there are disparate findings about field experiences, there is research that the cooperating teacher's support can positively or negatively affect the candidate's practice, including their knowledge, skills, and possibly dispositions (Cosgrove & Carpenter, 2012; O'Brian et al., 2007; Schussler et al., 2010). Regardless of cooperating teachers' myriad characteristics, their varied experiences with mentoring, their different teaching practices, and the ways they are selected, the cooperating teachers' values and behaviors still exert a dominant influence over candidates' learning of instructional strategies and teaching styles (Farrell, 2001; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Hewson et al., 1999; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012).

A significant part of preparing to enter classrooms and assume independent instructional roles is learning different instructional strategies and establishing a strong background in content knowledge. Cooperating teachers say the essential ideas that they convey to candidates are classroom management, preparation (lesson plans and instructional materials), relationships with children, and flexibility (Clarke, 2001). Secondary level cooperating teachers add teaching strategies as an essential idea that they convey to candidates (Clarke, 2001). While candidates learn instructional strategies in preparation programs, their teaching practices are heavily influenced through direct contact with the cooperating teacher (Randall, 1992). A review of the literature identified that cooperating teachers' beliefs and knowledge play a role in how student teachers think about and learn from the field experience (Wilson et al., 2001). A successful cooperating teacher can increase the confidence and improve the instructional practices of teacher candidates (Aiken & Day, 1999; O'Brian et al., 2007). Rozelle and Wilson (2012) found that early in the field experience candidates will mimic cooperating teachers, down to jokes and

personal stories, and candidates continued to reproduce practices throughout the year with varied success. In stressful situations, in particular, candidates tend to use the instructional styles of their cooperating teacher (Hewson et al., 1999).

Because of the tendency to mimic, candidates often develop instructional strategies similar to the cooperating teacher. While some cooperating teachers encourage candidates to develop a personal style of teaching (McNamara, 1995), others think candidates need to teach as they do (Griffin, 1989). Some student teachers feel pressured to teach or act the way their cooperating teacher does, causing similarities in instructional practices because student teachers acquiesce to the cooperating teacher and do not initiate potentially disagreeable conversations, even if they know a different way (Eisenhart et al., 1993; Schussler et al., 2010; Tabachnick, Popkewitz, & Zeichner, 1979). Some student teachers “perform an identity” so the relationship with their cooperating teacher remains positive. Candidates may fit their “identity” to their cooperating teachers’ expectation, hiding knowledge, beliefs, or pedagogical strategies learned in coursework (Valencia et al., 2009). Prospective teachers will even act against their beliefs in order to avoid conflict with cooperating teachers (Clift & Brady, 2005). Some novice teachers regress, becoming more rigid, custodial, bureaucratic, and conforming to school practices, procedures, and routine tasks (Beyer, 1984; Grisham, 2000; Grossman, 2005, Moore, 2003; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981).

Mimicking can be beneficial as candidates learn valuable skills and instructional practices, but if the cooperating teacher does not positively affect student learning, is not promoting best practices, or does not have dispositions for valuing diverse student abilities, fairness, and pedagogy, then mimicking may be detrimental. While cooperating teachers do have an influence on candidates, in at least one case, a new teacher who had completed her internship

with a more conservative cooperating teacher returned to her reform-oriented beliefs once she had her own classroom (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004). This is reassuring in a situation where a cooperating teacher may not be the exemplar of educators, but it also has implications for candidates who seem to develop reform-oriented beliefs during field experience, and may return to less student-oriented practices in their own classroom.

Even if practicing teachers positively affect their classroom, they might not be the right match for a teacher candidate. For some candidates pairing them with a similar cooperating teacher is beneficial (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002), but some student teachers learned more from cooperating teachers whose ideas and practices were different (Hollingsworth, 1989). In some cases, candidates implemented approaches advocated by the preparation program when placed with a cooperating teacher who was using more traditional approaches (Lane et al., 2003). Student teachers were more likely to examine and reconstruct their beliefs when they interacted with cooperating teachers whose beliefs were different (Kagan, 1992). Cooperating teachers focus on different aspects of teaching, including subject matter, principles of teaching, socializing the candidate into the status quo of the school, and enabling independence in new teachers (Wilson et al., 2001). Pairing candidates with cooperating teachers who focus on an identified weakness of the student teacher may help the candidate develop new strengths.

As candidates develop dispositions in preparation programs, and cooperating teachers influence instructional strategies, the question remains if cooperating teachers have any influence on dispositions (Cosgrove & Carpenter, 2012). Candidates attribute most of their dispositions and instructional practices to their cooperating teacher rather than to their university courses (Richardson-Koehler, 1988). There is limited empirical research regarding this question, but what does exist suggests that not just any cooperating teacher, but an engaged cooperating



teacher whose philosophies and dispositions espouse those of the preparation program can influence candidates' dispositions. Candidates' success in using equity-minded practices and feeling more prepared is associated with cooperating teachers whose philosophies and practices reflected equity-minded principles similar to the teacher education program's commitments (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Castro, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Sobel, French, & Filbin, 1998; Taylor & Sobel, 2003). Cooperating teachers have a limited role in the process of learning to teach, except when they took a more active role and participated with more conferences and extensive feedback (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). In one study, the complete absence of a cooperating teacher resulted in candidates experiencing challenges with content knowledge and classroom management and feeling overwhelmed by teaching (Hodges, 1982). The findings indicate that to be the most effective, cooperating teachers should reinforce the program goals and take an active role, but the absence of a cooperating teacher could be detrimental.

While these studies are not conclusive, they suggest that cooperating teachers have an influence beyond instructional strategies. If cooperating teachers influence teacher candidates' knowledge and instructional practice, a logical assumption is they also influence dispositions, the trend of a teacher's judgments, interpretations, and actions. If dispositions are integral to teacher preparation, if the field experience has a role in preparing candidates, and if cooperating teachers are responsible for preparing candidates during the field experience, then the cooperating teacher should have some familiarity with and enact the desired dispositions of the university, just as they are familiar with and enact instructional strategies and content knowledge. Murray (2007) suggests that if dispositions are included in teacher preparation, then programs have to identify the skills to teach candidates and ensure that candidates learn the skills. They also have to strengthen candidates' dispositions: the tendency to use the skills in the classroom. Koepfen and

Davison-Jenkins (2007) found that cooperating teachers agreed that teachers should have certain dispositions, but some research participants questioned if teachers realistically have time to enact all of the dispositions. Cooperating teachers can play a role in this development, but they will need to know and enact the program goals, which is not always the case.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I considered the current scholarly discussions about including dispositions in teacher preparation, the dispositions important for teacher candidates, and ways to develop and assess dispositions. In addition, I explicated the roles of the cooperating teacher and the ways cooperating teachers influence the development of teacher candidates. Research demonstrates that candidates feel cooperating teachers support their development of dispositions, but the findings show that the wrong influence could impede positive learning.

Teacher preparation programs attend to developing dispositions in candidates and preparing faculty to teach and evaluate those dispositions. Before cooperating teachers can support the development of candidate dispositions and universities can provide professional development to support cooperating teachers in their effort, there are questions that remain regarding cooperating teachers, including whether they know of these dispositions and if they enact the desired dispositions. If a clear understanding of how cooperating teachers think and participate in the student teaching experience is lacking, it is difficult to know how to support their efforts as they work with student teachers (Clarke et al., 2014). With this in mind, I studied the dispositions of a small group of cooperating teachers and their capacity to support teacher candidate dispositions. In the next chapter, I discuss my data collection and analysis methods.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Cooperating teachers are one influence on teacher candidates during teacher preparation. While cooperating teachers do not have the only, or even the most influential, role in teacher preparation, they are the teacher educator with whom the candidate traditionally spends the most individualized and the most classroom time. For example, in Maryland, candidates are required to complete one hundred days in field placements. During the student teacher's field experience, one responsibility the cooperating teacher has is modeling and assessing the dispositions that programs identify as important for candidates. Given the role that cooperating teachers have in preparing candidates and the minimal literature on cooperating teacher dispositions, it is relevant to conduct research on cooperating teacher dispositions. I approach my research with the intent to learn about cooperating teacher dispositions from a sample of cooperating teachers. In this chapter, I present my research questions and the objectives of each. I explain my rationale for pursuing a mixed methods study. In addition, I describe my initial survey tool and detail the methods of the multi-case studies, including the sources of data and the methods I employed to collect these data. Finally, I explain my data analysis process.

#### Research Questions

My research addresses these questions:

1. What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions?
  - a. What role do they think dispositions play in good teaching? How important do they think dispositions are?
  - b. How do they describe the development of their own dispositions?
2. What do cooperating teachers think their role is in preparing prospective teachers?
  - a. Do they include dispositional preparation in that role?
  - b. What knowledge do they have of various sources of dispositional standards (InTASC, university, district)?
  - c. What is their understanding of the way the university develops candidate dispositions?

3. What are the challenges cooperating teachers face concerning their role, especially as they relate to prospective teachers' dispositions?

My primary objective with these questions was to examine cooperating teachers' dispositions and cooperating teachers' knowledge about dispositions relevant to supporting prospective teachers. My first question aimed to identify the self-reported dispositions of cooperating teachers, whether those dispositions coincide with dispositions desired by teacher education programs, and the way those dispositions developed. My intent with the second research question was to learn what cooperating teachers know about dispositions, the role preparation programs have to develop and assess dispositions, and what cooperating teachers consider their role in developing candidate dispositions. My final research question tried to elucidate the challenges cooperating teachers face in their role.

### **Mixed Methods Research**

The research questions delve into what cooperating teachers know of dispositions, a construct in teacher education that, along with knowledge and skills, InTASC and CAEP have prioritized. To address my research questions, I conducted a two-phase sequential exploratory mixed methods study (See Table 2). Drawing from Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003), I understand mixed methods studies to be the collection or analysis of quantitative and qualitative data "in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages" (p. 212). I chose to employ a mixed methods design with priority to the qualitative data because no single method addressed my research questions adequately. The qualitative data have priority because of the exploratory nature of my questions and the goal for participants to explain their ideas. Qualitative and quantitative methods can answer different questions and answer the same question from different perspectives.

Table 2  
*Data Sources According to Research Questions*

Research Questions	Data Source	Data Collection Method
RQ 1: What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions? a. What role do they think dispositions play in good teaching? b. How important do they think dispositions are? How do they describe the development of their own dispositions?	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online, at beginning of study</li> <li>• Part 4: rank agreement with student-centered subscale questions 1-25 and professionalism, curriculum-centered subscale questions 26-47</li> <li>• Sample question: I believe all students can learn</li> </ul>
	Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial interview- questions 3, 4, 12</li> <li>• Second interview- questions 2-5, 17-18 (scenarios that can occur in schools)</li> <li>• Focus group interview- questions 3, 4</li> </ul>
RQ 2: What do cooperating teachers think their role is in preparing prospective teachers? a. Do they include dispositional preparation in that role? b. What knowledge do they have of various sources of dispositional standards (InTASC, university, district) c. What is their understanding of the way the university develops candidate dispositions?	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online, at beginning of study</li> <li>• Sample question: What do you think your primary role is in the dispositional preparation of new teachers?</li> </ul>
	Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial interview- questions 6-8</li> <li>• Second interview- questions 6-9</li> <li>• Focus group interview- questions 1, 5, 7, 8, 11</li> </ul>
RQ 3: What are the challenges cooperating teachers face concerning their role, especially as they relate to prospective teachers' dispositions?	Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial interview- question 11</li> <li>• Second interview- question 10</li> <li>• Focus group interview- questions 2, 8</li> </ul>

An advantage of mixed methods studies is that they can counterbalance limitations of a monomethod approach. By implementing a mixed methods study, researchers can incorporate more than one type of inquiry lens by using different kinds of data collection methods (Greene, 2001). My research design includes a preliminary quantitative survey followed by qualitative multi-case studies, which have (See Figure 2). In the first phase, I used the Teacher Disposition Index (TDI) (See Appendix B) to compile an initial description of the characteristic self-reported dispositions of cooperating teachers. I explain this survey tool in detail below. I aimed to begin to answer the first research question and gather preliminary information to enhance interview questions for the second phase. I also used the TDI to identify a potential sub-group of participants for the second and primary phase of the research, the multi-case studies. The survey is primarily a quantitative tool, but it included the option for participants to add comments

related to what they believe about student learning, teaching, or dispositions. The concurrent use of open- and closed-ended questions in a single survey is an example of intramethod mixing, a common technique in mixed methods studies (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

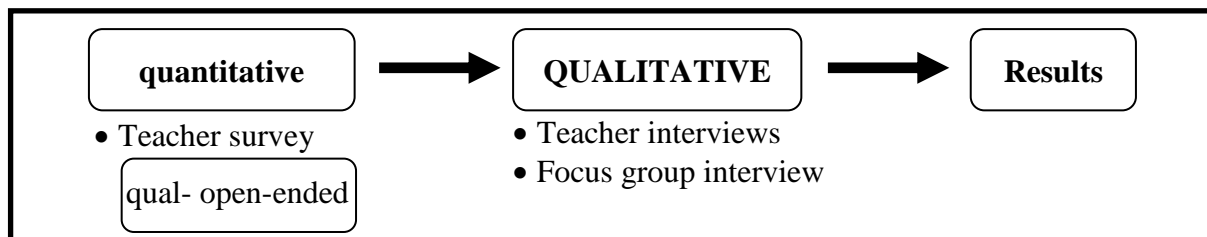


Figure 2: Sequential exploratory research design

Qualitative methods are useful for eliciting teacher explanations and providing participants opportunities to expand responses (Creswell et al., 2003). Therefore, in the second phase, I used interviews to collect data. I aimed to answer the research questions about cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions, cooperating teachers' familiarity with dispositions as they relate to teaching, cooperating teachers' understanding of their responsibility to develop dispositions in candidates, and cooperating teachers' challenges with their role.

A fundamental principle of mixed methods research is that “methods should be mixed in a way that has complementary strengths and nonoverlapping weaknesses” (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 299). Scholars agree balancing known biases and limitations is important. It is also essential to clearly identify the reasons for collecting different types of data and the advantages of each that can offset limitations of the other (Creswell et al., 2003; Greene, 2001). For example, quantitative data from the survey help describe the characteristics of a larger number of individuals than the multi-case studies and provide a broader view of cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003). A survey is a more appropriate, less cumbersome tool than interviews to determine teachers' agreement with lists of statements such as the InTASC dispositional standards. However, limitations of the survey are that teachers

cannot identify dispositions beyond those on the survey or explain the rationale behind answers.

The case studies provided teachers an opportunity to explain dispositions they feel are important for teaching and to explore certain self-identified dispositions in more depth. My research questions about cooperating teachers' role in developing candidate dispositions are more appropriately examined using qualitative methods that provide an opportunity for discussion. A limitation of case studies is the small number of participants and the time required to collect and analyze data. By considering the research questions from the viewpoints that the different methods provide, I was able to gather data to answer the questions more completely. The data also complement each other and produce a fuller picture, which might not have been the case if I had applied a single method (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003).

A characteristic of mixed methods studies is the integration of the quantitative and qualitative methods at some stage of the research. This integration can occur in the research questions, the data collection, the data analysis, and/or the interpretation (Creswell et al., 2003). I integrated methods at the data collection, the data analysis, and the interpretation stages. During data collection, I used survey responses and ideas that arose during my survey analysis to develop some interview questions. Interviews allowed participants to clarify or expand survey answers. I integrated methods during data analysis when I coded qualitative interviews and did frequency counts of the codes. I used this transformation of qualitative data to look for trends in concepts. Finally, during interpretation, I compared self-reported dispositions from the surveys and interviews to characterize cooperating teacher dispositions and determine if cooperating teachers possess and promote the dispositions that InTASC identifies and universities desire.

The inclusion of quantitative and qualitative data in mixed methods designs has a variety of purposes, including the two purposes in this research, triangulation and complementarity.

Triangulation is a means to integrate different perspectives of the same phenomenon (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003). However, scholars do not agree entirely what the outcome should be when using triangulation. Greene (2001) argues that mixed methods for the purpose of triangulation seeks convergence, corroboration, and correspondence of results across different methods that measure the same construct. Other scholars agree that convergence can be one outcome of triangulation when comparing qualitative and quantitative data, but since triangulation can produce a more complete depiction of the construct under study, the results may also diverge from or contradict each other (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003; Johnson & Turner, 2003).

In order to describe the self-identified dispositions of cooperating teachers, I used quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of triangulation. Teachers self-reported their dispositions in the survey, and during the interview, I asked teachers to describe dispositions important to good teaching and important to develop with student teachers. I examined these data sources for identified dispositions, those that teachers think they possess. I compared these data sources to look for convergent, complementary, or even divergent results. For example, a teacher disagreed that she facilitated learning for all students, and during the interview, she explained that she has times when not all the students learn so she did not accomplish that goal. These findings demonstrate convergence as she explains the reasoning behind her response. I explain the remainder of my results in Chapter 5.

I use quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of complementarity in order to determine patterns in the dispositions of cooperating teachers. Greene (2001) describes complementarity as using different methods to “measure overlapping, but distinct facets of the phenomena under investigation” (p. 253). The results are not intended to converge, but might elaborate, enhance, illustrate, or clarify each other. In this research, I used the survey to collect



data about the self-identified dispositions and the interviews to ask teachers to describe their dispositions. When I compared these data, interview responses contributed to the overall understanding of cooperating teachers' dispositions. For example, the lowest ranked disposition on the survey was *I actively seek out professional growth opportunities*, but the interview analysis indicated that a primary reason for this was teachers' lack of time. After I identified cooperating teacher dispositions with the survey, I sought to elaborate on the dispositions that cooperating teachers possess by asking them to discuss hypothetical classroom scenarios. The responses provided evidence about how participants would enact the internal construct of a disposition in the socially constructed context of the classroom. Below, I detail the different methods and the data analysis I used during the two phases of this mixed methods study.

### **Phase One: A Survey of Cooperating Teachers**

The first phase of my research is a survey. Surveys are an important research tool in the social sciences and are used extensively in mixed methods research about teacher education and dispositions. A strength of surveys is that they collect information that can describe characteristics of individuals or groups and elicit detailed responses to certain questions (Berends, 2006). I conducted a survey of a group of cooperating teachers in order to begin describing the dispositional characteristics of these teachers.

#### **Participant Recruitment**

I work in a high school in the Roosevelt District Public Schools, a large and diverse district in a mid-Atlantic state. I limited my participant selection to the district because my status as an employee facilitated obtaining district permission to conduct research. My position as a teacher eased my access to participants and increased the response rate. In order to recruit participants for the TDI, I worked with the Roosevelt Office of Research. The recruitment

method that the district suggested, required, and approved was for the district to post a notification (See Appendix D) in the weekly electronic bulletin on my behalf. Employees receive this bulletin on Friday afternoon via an email containing a link to the bulletin. They must log on to the intranet in order to read the bulletin, which contains notices for a variety of district employees, including teachers, administrators, and support personnel. The district posted the notification for my research for two consecutive weeks in May 2015. The notification provided a subsequent link to an informational flyer and invitation (See Appendix E). The invitation told potential participants that if they wanted to respond to the survey to contact me via email or telephone to obtain the survey link. The bulletin notification yielded 18 direct inquiries from Roosevelt employees. In addition, my co-workers requested the survey link and shared it with friends and relatives who work in the district.

Survey response rates can vary widely depending on time limitations of participants, access to technology, and survey format (Berends, 2006). In the case of this recruiting method, I do not know how many people opened the bulletin to read the notice asking for survey participants, and I do not know how many potential participants were initially available. A low response rate can bias results because the characteristics of non-respondents can differ from respondents (Berends, 2006). I implemented an online survey because participants are accustomed to completing them and I thought it would require fewer steps than returning a paper survey. The final response was 132 people. The low response rate from the electronic bulletin recruitment method could be due in part to the indirect delivery method and the multiple steps required to receive the survey link. The district denied my requests for more direct recruitment methods, including sending a districtwide email with the notification and providing the names of current and former cooperating teachers. I describe my participant selection criteria in Chapter 4.

## Survey Tool

Before selecting a disposition survey, I examined the range of existing tools (See Table 1) used by universities and researchers to assess candidate dispositions (Albee & Piveral, 2003; Almerico et al., 2011; Mansfield University; Notar et al., 2009; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Stony Brook University, 2012; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Tobias, Pietanza, & McDonald, 2011). The purposes of the tools vary and include assessing candidate performance in their program (Albee & Piveral, 2003; Almerico et al., 2011; Mansfield University; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000), asking candidates what dispositions they think are important (Serdyukov & Ferguson, 2011), and assessing candidate beliefs (Tobias et al., 2011) and feelings of preparedness (Capraro et al., 2010). Since one task of teacher education is the development and assessment of dispositions, many available tools are designed for teacher educators to document and measure candidate dispositions over the course of the preparation program and not for candidates to self-assess dispositions (Almerico et al., 2011; Singh & Stoloff, 2007). There are also limitations to existing tools that eliminated them as options for this research. Researchers state that some tools still need to be tested for validity and reliability (Albee & Piveral, 2003; Singh & Stoloff, 2007). Some assessments measure poise, appearance, and dependability, characteristics that do not align with the focus of this research (Notar et al., 2009). Finally, many of the self-reporting tools are not aligned to InTASC dispositional standards. Since teacher preparation programs use InTASC as a guide to assess candidates' dispositions, I wanted a tool aligned to InTASC principles. Considering these limitations, I selected a tool aligned to InTASC principles and that was designed for teachers to self-report dispositions.

For a number of reasons, I chose and obtained permission (See Appendix C) to use the Teacher Disposition Index (TDI) (See Appendix B) developed at the University of Nebraska at

Omaha. The TDI is a 45-item self-report survey using a 5-point Likert scale that “measures the dispositions of effective teachers as specified by the InTASC” (Schulte et al., 2004, p. 1). The self-reporting nature of the survey allows participants to identify dispositions instead of a researcher classifying their dispositions. The survey addresses two distinct dimensions, a student-centered (SC) dimension and a professionalism, curriculum-centered (PCC) dimension. The developers used factor loading to remove some survey items so each of the 45 items addresses only one of these dimensions and survey results can measure two unique constructs with independent scores (Schulte et al., 2004). The researchers did not find another quantitative instrument that measured InTASC dispositional standards, so they designed the TDI and aligned each item to the dispositional standards. This alignment facilitated my disaggregation of responses by specific dispositional standards. In addition, I used the InTASC standards for part of my coding scheme. By applying the dispositional standards to coding the qualitative data, it was possible to compare survey responses to interviews, as I explain in the data analysis section.

Another reason I selected the TDI is that during the item development phase, the researchers evaluated content validity with feedback from a content validity panel composed of thirteen people who had an average of 22.54 years of experience in the field of education (Schulte et al., 2004). The reviewers rated the appropriateness of the survey items to measure the dispositions specified by the InTASC principles. The developers removed or reworded items according to reviewer input. Researchers also distributed the survey to teacher education students in order to evaluate the reliability of the instrument. The consistency of the responses across certification level, age, and gender supported the reliability of the tool. Using Cronbach’s alpha, the student-centered subscale reliability estimate was .98. The reliability estimate for the professionalism, curriculum-centered subscale was .97. Reliability coefficients greater than .95

indicate that respondents were consistent in their responses and the TDI is a reliable instrument (Schulte et al., 2004). I used the PCC and SC subscales and individual survey items in my data analysis.

A final reason for selecting the TDI is that several studies beyond the University of Nebraska at Omaha have used it to study a range of topics (Alawiye & Williams, 2010; Frederiksen et al., 2011; Kirchner, 2011; Pottinger, 2009; Turkmen, 2009). Using the TDI, Frederiksen et al. (2011) found student teachers had significant decreases from spring to fall semester in six perceived dispositions, including *I believe all that all students can learn* and *I believe it is important to learn about students and their community*. There were also significant increases in three perceived dispositions, including *I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction*. Another study found significant differences between student teachers' espoused dispositions and the cooperating teachers' ratings of the student teachers' dispositions (Keiser, 2005). The student teachers rated themselves more positively. A similar study that used the TDI concluded that cooperating teachers self-report higher ratings of their dispositions than the dispositions observed and perceived by their students teachers (Pottinger, 2009). These two studies suggest that self-reported dispositions are rated higher than observed dispositions. Finally, a study using the TDI instrument found a positive relationship between student achievement in reading and teachers' dispositions toward curriculum and professionalism (Scrivner, 2009).

### **Goals of the Survey**

The first phase of my mixed methods research had a few goals. First, using self-reported disposition data, I analyzed responses before I began the case study and developed a preliminary description of cooperating teacher dispositions. The closed-ended questions use a Likert scale to

inquire about participants' degree of agreement with statements about student learning, the classroom environment, their personal characteristics as a teacher, and their behaviors in the classroom. I did not want to limit participant responses to a prescribed list of dispositions, so I included the option to expand answers to closed-ended questions. This gave participants an opportunity to explain any dispositions with which they identify and contribute ideas that I did not consider. I do not believe the modifications affected the reliability or validity since I did not change the original survey items. I piloted the survey with some co-workers to get feedback on question phrasing and to determine if answers would vary along the Likert scale, which they did. My co-workers suggested separating the original survey items *I demonstrate qualities of humor, empathy, and warmth with others* and *I communicate effectively with students, parents and colleagues*, each into three separate questions, which I did.

A second goal of the survey was to identify volunteers who fit the criteria for the multi-case studies. Therefore, I requested demographic data on teaching experience, subject area, and experience as a cooperating teacher. I began analyzing the survey data before I began multi-case studies. I used the survey responses to generate some targeted interview questions that directed conversations to topics that addressed the research questions or that answered questions I had when analyzing survey responses. In addition, the prevalent self-reported dispositions informed the dispositions I inquired about during interviews.

### **Phase Two: Observational Multi-case Studies**

The second phase of my mixed methods study was multi-case studies that incorporated interviews with participants. Because of my interest in each interviewee's personal ideas and dispositions, cases were bound at the individual level. Case study is an effective method for researchers to hear more from participants and to obtain the in-depth data needed to uncover and

document the complex interactions occurring in the classroom (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In this research, the qualitative methods have priority. The characteristics of qualitative research that enable it to capture the individual's point of view, examine the constraints of everyday life, and secure rich descriptions are the strengths behind this method and allow it to be used in socially constructed contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). I used the qualitative data to answer questions that the survey could not and to expand and clarify findings from the quantitative survey.

### **Rationale for Case Study**

The methods of case studies are appropriate when researchers want to examine contemporary events, but cannot or do not want to manipulate relevant behaviors (Yin, 2014), in this case, dispositions, a construct that involves attitudes and behaviors applied in classroom interactions. A strength of case study methods is that they provide in-depth understanding in real-life contexts (Desimone & Le Floch, 2004; Yin, 2006). Case studies are appropriate in research that "aims to produce a firsthand understanding of people and events" (Yin, 2006, p.112). Therefore, I interviewed teachers about their dispositions and ways they enact them in the classroom and promote them with student teachers. These firsthand data can capture intricacies of cooperating teacher dispositions since dispositions are complex internal constructs unique to individuals, their experiences, and their teaching context. Interviews can also counterbalance a limitation of self-reported data, people inadvertently answering in order to sound good, which can produce inaccurate results (Capraro et al., 2010).

There are different types and purposes of case studies. Yin (2014) differentiates between three types of case study research: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Exploratory cases are useful when trying to answer "what" and "how" questions. Researchers tend to use exploratory cases studies as initial research when looking for patterns in the data and developing

hypotheses to test in future research. Explanatory cases investigate causality, linking events with effects, and try to explain how or why something happens. Before the research begins, explanatory cases require a theory in order to help direct the data collection. Finally, descriptive cases illustrate events in specific contexts, trying to get specific information. Given the unknown nature of cooperating teacher dispositions and my “what” focused research questions, this research employed exploratory multi-case studies.

In a mixed methods study, qualitative methods can provide information about the reasons that people act in terms of the actors’ interpretations of situations (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003). Case studies are designed to elicit the details of those interpretations from the participants’ viewpoints by employing multiple data sources (Tellis, 1997). In one-on-one interviews and focus interviews, cooperating teachers had the opportunity to share their ideas about dispositions and classroom interactions. These data sources elaborated findings from the survey. For example, on the survey, I asked participants to rank their level of agreement with each disposition, and during interviews, participants explained their reasoning behind the rankings.

Educational researchers often employ multi-case studies (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Levin, Hammer, & Coffey, 2009; Monte-Sano, 2008; Samuel & Stephens, 2000). A single case can provide detailed understanding of a concept, but multiple cases can strengthen findings and “allow for greater opportunity to generalize across several representations of the phenomenon” (Borman, Clarke, Cotner, & Lee, 2006, p. 123). I analyzed individual cases and compared participants’ ideas. In some instances, data confirmed that dispositions were common across cases, such as recognizing that all the participants had the disposition for learning environments. In other situations, differences arose, such as identifying the disposition for assessment in only a few participants. I analyzed data from the different sources in order to compare dispositions



reported on the survey to dispositions discussed during interviews. I also compared teachers across the cases regarding their awareness of dispositions and the roles they play in developing candidate dispositions. Replications of findings in multiple cases can support identifying topics of interest and the making of inferences, what Yin (2006) calls analytic generalization. For example, most of the participants indicated that they were unfamiliar with the dispositional standards, so this may be an area for teacher education programs to direct some attention.

### **Participant Selection**

I could not anticipate the volunteer response I would receive from the survey, but I aimed for approximately eight teachers to participate in the case studies. I ultimately had ten participants. That number allowed for some variation as I describe in Chapter 5, but was a manageable number for conducting interviews. In addition, if some participants decided to leave the study, I would still have multiple cases. In Chapter 5, I explain my participant selection criteria in detail and briefly describe each participant.

### **Researcher Background**

Some considerations when conducting research are securing permission, obtaining access to participants, and deciding how to introduce oneself (Fontana & Frey, 2008). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) recommend that researchers “make [their] interests known and seek the cooperation of those [they] will study” (p. 84). My position as a classroom teacher and a co-worker was an asset to obtaining access, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. I introduced myself as a classroom teacher and explained that my research interest stems from my own experiences as a cooperating teacher. While the case study participants are my peers, I recognized that people could feel intimidated or view my study as critical or evaluative. With that in mind, I stressed that my goal as a doctoral student is to learn about ways to best prepare

future teachers. I aim to understand the roles of practicing teachers in teacher preparation and to give practicing teachers an opportunity to communicate their ideas regarding teacher education. I assured participants that our discussions were confidential, and I use pseudonyms in all reports. I was cognizant of potential discomfort and the way it could influence participants' forthrightness.

### **Multi-case Studies Data Collection Methods**

The data for the case studies originate from individual teacher interviews and focus group interviews (See Table 2). I collected these over a couple months. In Chapter 5, I use these data sources to answer the research questions about cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions, the way cooperating teachers describe the development of their own dispositions, the way cooperating teachers perceive their role in supporting the development of candidate dispositions, and the challenges that cooperating teachers experience in their role.

**Teacher interviews.** Interviews, frequently used in qualitative research, permit concurrent data collection and analysis. Fontana and Frey (2008) describe the interview as "one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans" and a way to "encompass the *hows* of people's lives" (p. 118-19). I conducted two semi-structured interviews with teachers. The semi-structured format of interviewing allows for more breadth, the freedom to ask follow-up questions, and the possibility for a variety of responses (Fontana & Frey, 2008). In the interviews, teachers shared their experiences as cooperating teachers and expanded on ideas they had when completing the survey. Interviews allow participants to explain what is important to them, express meaning in their own words, and bring up new topics (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Brenner, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The purpose of my interviews was to collect data on cooperating teachers' perspectives about supporting teacher candidates and about dispositions.

In order to prompt similar interviews and allow for comparing responses, I prepared some primary open-ended questions for each interview (See Appendix F). In response to my asking participants to describe their experiences as a cooperating teacher and the interactions they had with the teacher preparation program, teachers discussed interactions with candidates, communication with the university, and areas of success and frustration. I also asked follow-up questions, which varied depending on participant responses warranting further discussion and topics that I wanted to pursue based on survey responses.

I asked permission to audiotape the interviews. The recording helped me to maintain a conversational atmosphere, responding to participants' comments and clarifying potentially important topics during the interview; to recall ideas for future follow-up questions; and to select specific comments for further discussion or inquiry. A disadvantage to recording is that participants may be reluctant to share openly. Therefore, I shared my procedures for maintaining confidentiality, and I gave participants the opportunity to share without the recorder. Had participants not been comfortable with being recorded, then I would have asked permission to take notes and extended them immediately following the conversation.

While I use the term interviews in my writing, I initially described them as conversations when I spoke with teachers, since that term has a less formal and evaluative connotation. I asked teachers to discuss potentially sensitive topics, attitudes toward students and individual professionalism, so I needed to establish trust. I modeled my interviews and questions "after a conversation between two trusting parties rather than on a formal question-and-answer session between a researcher and a respondent" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 39).

The first interview functioned as part of my participant selection. During the initial conversation, I explained my research, shared the consent form, and confirmed participant

willingness to participate. Initially, I interviewed more than my desired case study number for a couple reasons. First, people have busy schedules; I wanted to conduct follow-up interviews and focus interviews even with possible attrition. Secondly, people may indicate that they are willing to participate in an interview, but then not have much to share or not fit the selection criteria, which was the case for three people. I ultimately selected teachers who shared information and met the criteria to be included in the case studies.

While it may seem out of sequence with my research questions, during the initial interview, I did not want to inquire too forcefully about participant dispositions. I first wanted to establish common ground and develop a connection, so I shared my history as a teacher and cooperating teacher. I asked about participants' backgrounds and experiences as cooperating teachers, including "What do you teach? What have your experiences been as a cooperating teacher?" Follow-up questions included "Are you familiar with the term disposition? Did you know teacher education programs have a responsibility to develop and assess candidate dispositions?"

As participants relaxed, I pursued questions of a more personal nature that could reveal their dispositions. I did not want my perceptions to obscure participant ideas. I wanted teachers to share their perspectives in their own words, so I did not name specific dispositions. Instead, I used open-ended questions in a particular sequence (See Appendix F), including "What dispositions do you think are important for teachers? What do you see as your strengths as a cooperating teacher?" While these queries are central to my research, if a teacher appeared reluctant to answer, I postponed questions. By delaying a potentially sensitive topic, I sought to build trust and help teachers feel comfortable, so I could have more in-depth and honest future conversations.

The purpose of the second interview was to inquire specifically about the InTASC dispositional standards and to explore further the participants' dispositions and experiences as cooperating teachers. Before I began the second interviews, I shared the InTASC critical dispositions and provided the Reiman and Johnson (2003) definition of disposition, so each participant was discussing dispositions from the same perspective. I asked teachers to talk about their impressions of the documents and their familiarity with the dispositions desired by the teacher education program of their student teacher. I guided the discussion by asking participants to point out dispositions they felt were important to stress with a student teacher and asking if they would add or remove any dispositions. In an attempt to have teachers identify and describe dispositions, I also asked cooperating teachers to consider the list and specify dispositions they felt they have or do not have, and I asked them how they might respond to a hypothetical classroom scenario, explaining their rationale behind actions, interactions, and reactions.

I analyzed the interview data as I proceeded, so when I engaged in second interviews, I had initial data from the surveys and the first interviews. I developed questions according to new ideas and emerging themes. By comparing survey responses to interview responses, I was able to start answering my questions about dispositions that cooperating teachers have and if they promote university-desired dispositions as outlined in the conceptual framework. In addition, I wrote unique follow-up questions for each participant (See Appendix F) in order to clarify survey responses or comments from the first interview. For example, I asked participants about why they agreed or disagreed with specific statements. InTASC asserts that teachers should have certain dispositions. Therefore, explanations specifically about survey responses in the *disagree* category are relevant to understanding cooperating teacher dispositions.

A limitation to interviews is that participants may not fully disclose their ideas during

interviews because they feel a need for self-protection or do not understand questions in the way the researcher intended (Schweisfurth, 2011). Even though I communicated that my study is non-evaluative and confidential, teachers may have still felt a need to curb interview responses. For example, some participants were careful not to identify teachers whom they criticized and others hinted at tensions with administration. While I did not sense any deception in the participants, teachers may have opinions that they would prefer not to share.

**Analytical notes.** I took analytical notes throughout the data collection process. During interviews, I noted specific nonverbal events (gestures or looks a teacher used to communicate) and whispered comments, so when I transcribed recordings, I could incorporate those details. As a supplement to the recordings, I took notes about what the participants were saying, but not so much that I could not maintain eye contact and a conversational atmosphere, which I assessed were more critical to gathering valuable data. I extended my notes after the visit, often in the parking lot before I left the school, heeding recommendations that notes are best taken without interruption between the fieldwork and note taking (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

My reflective notes included feelings about the interviews, reflections on data collection methods, questions for future interviews or about my study, possible breakthroughs to new ways of thinking, and topics for clarification (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Dispositions are the trend of interpretations, judgments, and actions. Interviews offered participants the opportunity to discuss those and to clarify my interpretations of survey responses and initial interviews. This clarification was particularly important when I interpreted a survey response or interview comment as negative, but the participant had not intended that. For example, one participant mentioned having lower expectations for certain students, but when I followed up on the comment in the next interview, she explained it from a perspective of being in tune with learner

development and not from a deficit perspective. Writing notes about questions for teachers, as well as asking the questions as soon as possible, helped avoid misinterpretation. The descriptions from my notes in conjunction with interviews provided data to compare to survey responses.

**Hypothetical teaching scenarios.** Many of the survey items are phrased as beliefs, views, and understandings, so teachers may *strongly agree* to a particular disposition, but their reaction to a scenario may demonstrate a different perspective. For example, teachers may agree that they respect the cultures of all students, but when presented with a scenario, teachers may respond in a way that indicates a lack of respect. In order to gather more data about cooperating teacher thinking and go beyond participants' levels of agreement, I asked participants to respond to two scenarios (See Appendix F) during the second interview. I selected them because of the tensions they presented to the teachers. The first prompt incorporated tensions between a student and the cooperating teacher and another teacher and the cooperating teacher. The second prompt incorporated tensions between parents and the cooperating teacher. The prompts gave me the opportunity to present situations that may elicit different dispositions than a survey and responses provided additional data about specific teacher thinking and behavior. This information was useful because there are dispositions that people do not mention, such as not criticizing other teachers' decisions that became evident in responses to situations.

**Focus group interviews.** I conducted one focus group interview with five case study participants. Focus group interviews are valuable because "group participants can stimulate each other to articulate their views or even to realize what their own views are" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 109). I scheduled this interview at the end of my research since it requires relational trust and familiarity with my participants. I also completed two iterations of coding before the focus group interview so I could incorporate member checking for the codes and themes I saw

emerging. The focus group questions (See Appendix F) aimed to confirm themes that emerged from the individual interviews. For example, I explained roles and challenges that I identified and asked participants, “Are there any you might add or qualify?” The focus interview provided an opportunity for the cooperating teachers to share the experiences they have had with student teachers and the interactions they have with the teacher preparation program. Participants heard each other’s opinions and in many cases, confirmed that thinking.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) caution that during a focus group some people may not share important experiences due to embarrassment. They also may not think of everything they want to say during the discussion or have an opportunity to share. One challenge during the focus interview was one participant dominating the conversation. In order to mitigate this, I asked teachers to add to the comments and I asked if they agreed with the ideas expressed. I also requested teachers to write down or email anything they were not able to or did not want to share in a large group. While the focus group interview was my last formal interview, I contacted participants personally to thank them and to ask if they had any further comments.

**Documents.** My primary source of data for the multi-case studies is the interviews, but, in order to help answer my second question, I also reviewed documents, such as the handbook and evaluation forms, that some of the cooperating teachers received. The purpose of reviewing the documents was to determine the dispositions desired by the teacher preparation program and to see if cooperating teachers were provided with that information. The conceptual framework that programs submit for accreditation includes a statement on dispositions that they often provide in student teaching materials, and the teacher candidate evaluation forms may include a section on dispositions.



## Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe analysis as the process of “working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns” (p. 159). There can be several phases of data analysis in mixed methods. In this section, I describe how I used data reduction, data display, data transformation, data correlation, and data comparison at various stages in my data analysis (See Table 3) (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003).

Table 3  
*Stages of Data Analysis*

<b>Data Reduction</b>	<b>Data Display</b>	<b>Data Transformation</b>	<b>Data Correlation</b>	<b>Data Comparison</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptive statistics with survey responses</li> <li>• Coding of interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table of survey items ranked by affirmation</li> <li>• Graphs of affirmation by InTASC standards and percent of participants highly affirming each standard</li> <li>• Chart of codes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitize codes from interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-identified dispositions-compare survey and qualitative interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-identified dispositions from survey vs. researcher identified dispositions from interviews</li> </ul>

### Survey Responses

The purposes of my survey were twofold: 1) to characterize a group of cooperating teachers’ dispositions and 2) to find participants for the case study. The survey is descriptive in nature, meant to gather information about a group, not to compare characteristics (Fink, 1995). I reduced the quantitative data in order to look for trends in the predetermined SC and PCC dimensions and the individual survey items. I explain the details behind the data reduction in Chapter 4. The initial analysis included descriptive statistics and frequency counts of individual survey items, which I display in data tables in Chapter 4. From the survey responses, I began to identify, categorize, and describe patterns in cooperating teachers’ dispositions. For example, I categorized some of the more highly ranked survey items into three dispositional categories: Professional Responsibility, Attending to Learning, and Effective Communication. Similarly, I

identified two dispositional categories for the lower ranked items: Collaboration and Pursuing Professional Development. I describe below how I also used the survey results to integrate the qualitative and quantitative data from this research.

### **Transcription of Interviews**

My primary sources of data for analysis are the case study interview transcripts. There were three reasons I transcribed the interviews immediately. First, I used my notes to annotate transcripts with details about nonverbal communication, and I was often able to supplement inaudible parts with personal recollections. The transcripts were also valuable for participants to verify their comments and clarify meaning as needed, providing the opportunity for important member checking. Finally, I developed some future interview questions from the initial interview transcripts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

### **Generating Categories and Coding the Data**

An essential skill for case study researchers is the ability to collect and analyze data simultaneously (Yin, 2006). Unexpected ideas can emerge, which can lead to more interview questions or asking a participant to expand on a comment. If researchers delay data analysis until the end of the research, they might miss these opportunities. For example, when participants introduced dispositions that seemed different from the InTASC standards, I wanted to pursue further questioning about the new idea. Therefore, I began analyzing interview transcripts for ideas and concepts immediately, and I used my initial findings to generate questions for future interviews. I reviewed transcripts several times and as I identified new ideas, I reviewed earlier interviews to apply new codes. The codes and themes I identified are important for answering questions about cooperating teachers' awareness of their responsibility and the role of dispositions in teacher education.

Initial coding helps identify themes, patterns, events, and actions that are relevant to the research and that help to organize data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). In the process of coding, numerous concepts can emerge that require organization into a manageable matrix of codes. Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe using lower-level concepts to describe higher-level concepts. Lower-level concepts help tell about a person, while higher-level concepts unite lower-level concepts and can be applied to other participants or data sources.

In my data analysis, the first stage of coding occurred during the transcription process. As I transcribed, if I noticed an interesting idea in the participant's comments or a similarity to another participant, I noted it in the margins. Once I transcribed the interviews, I analyzed the transcripts using an iterative process and reduced the data using several stages of coding (See Table 4). First, I used inductive coding and looked for key ideas and explanations in participant comments. The inductive coding process allowed me to identify both InTASC dispositions and those that are different from InTASC. I applied open coding to begin making sense of the interviews. Open coding is when the researcher breaks apart data and develops words or phrases to represent blocks of data, topics, or patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Open coding requires free thinking because a researcher wants to be receptive to all of the potentials and possibilities of meanings that are available in the text (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Table 4

*Stages of Data Coding*

<b>Step 1:</b> Initial inductive coding	Initial interview transcripts coded with basic identifiers
<b>Step 2:</b> Themes developed	Basic identifiers categorized by research questions and categories of self-reported dispositions identified
<b>Step 3:</b> Secondary coding	Second interviews coded with self-reported disposition categories.
<b>Step 4:</b> Solicit feedback	Self-reported disposition codes discussed with peers and reorganized into InTASC coding categories
<b>Step 5:</b> Deductive coding	Initial and second interview transcripts coded by InTASC dispositional standards
<b>Step 6:</b> Themes developed	Research question coding categories identified
<b>Step 7:</b> Tertiary coding	Initial and second interviews coded with research question categories
<b>Step 8:</b> Member check	Codes shared with participants and new codes generated
<b>Step 9:</b> Quaternary coding	All transcripts, including focus group interview, reread and coded, existing codes check for accuracy
<b>Step 10:</b> Comparison of coding	Codes organized into matrix to look for themes that transcend cases and that are unique to cases
<b>Step 11:</b> Data correlation	Self-identified dispositions analyzed for correlation with survey results

I read the initial interviews with the intent to pinpoint dispositions that participants specifically identified and dispositions that they alluded to in the course of conversation. In addition, I read for instances when teachers made comments that answered my research questions about the role of dispositions, the development of cooperating teacher dispositions, the roles cooperating teachers think they have, and the challenges that cooperating teachers have with that role. During open coding, I also identified *in vivo* codes, concepts that use the actual words of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As I read the initial interviews, I modified future interview questions and prepared interview questions specific to each participant. Throughout the coding process, I highlighted quotes to use in my writing.

During the first round of coding of the initial interviews, I identified many labels, a sample of which includes fairness, flexibility, relationships, mentor, professionalism, and student teacher skills. As I began looking at all of the codes, I decided my research questions provided a framework by which to organize and group the initial lower-level themes into related higher-level categories (See Appendix G). I organized the initial codes into a large coding matrix with a

column for each participant and a row for each research question and crosschecked my terms. I consolidated terms like “sensitivity” and “being sensitive,” so my codes were consistent for subsequent rounds of coding. Once I separated my codes by research question, I also arranged terms with similar themes into different categories of self-reported dispositions. For example, when I analyzed the organizational chart, I had applied the code “flexibility” with almost every teacher. I had also used the terms “student needs,” “accepting mistakes,” “accommodating,” “adaptive,” “change to fit students,” and “open mind.” These lower-level concepts are examples and explanations of the higher-level flexibility category. After an initial analysis of the disposition codes, I identified 13 self-reported disposition (SRD) categories (See Appendix H).

Remaining open to new codes, I deductively coded the second interviews with my new SRD categories. I identified some new codes, and I saw more similarities emerge across participants. After applying my SRD categories, I solicited feedback from a few colleagues about my codes and their relationship to the InTASC dispositional standards. Noticing that many of my SRD codes fit the InTASC standards, I decided to regroup the SRD codes into the InTASC standards and use the InTASC standards as my coding schema (See Appendix I). This transition from initial inductive coding to *a priori* coding served two purposes: 1) I would be able to compare survey data more directly with interview data and 2) I would be able to discuss my results with the same terminology that teacher preparation programs use.

Regrouping my codes according to the InTASC standards also clarified some of the ambiguity I had with certain codes. For example, I did not know how to categorize the different types of what I called “sensitivity.” I coded for teachers who were sensitive to student learning frustrations, which now fit in Standard 1: Learner Development, but I also noticed teachers who were sensitive to unspoken feelings and body language, which now fit in Standard 3: Learning

Environment. It is immediately noticeable in the combined coding schemas how many of my initial codes aligned with Standard 3: Learning Environment and Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, something I discuss in Chapter 5. Some of my initial codes did not fit the InTASC critical dispositions, including some that may be considered negative dispositions. I left these concepts separate and continued to use them in future coding iterations.

Using my newly organized coding schema, I recoded all of the interviews a second time. During this second coding iteration, I only read for dispositions so I was not distracted looking for other concepts. Keeping the fact that dispositions are *trends of behavior* at the forefront of my analysis and maintaining my focus on dispositions and not attitudes, I considered what the teachers were actually doing or saying they did in classrooms as I coded. I compared teachers' comments to the InTASC learning progressions in order to use the most accurate code for each incident or comment. Since I only applied the code if teachers described actions, there were comments that I coded during the first iteration that did not receive a code the second time. For example, one participant talked about his role in the classroom and went in-depth about breaking down content for students. I coded that Learner Development. In contrast, another participant said, "to be the facilitator, to help kids get the skill set on how to find information," but she did not describe her actions behind this statement, so I did not assign it a disposition code. There were also comments that I did not code the first time, but during the second iteration of coding, I recognized that they represented a disposition. For example, when participants talked about specifically volunteering to develop curriculum with other teachers, it was indicative of Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration.

After my second iteration of coding, during which I focused on teachers' self-reported dispositions, I analyzed my large coding matrix for lower-level themes that described ideas

related to my remaining research questions. From my initial organization by research question, I developed a coding schema. The set of codes included five higher-level categories: 1) the role of dispositions in good teaching (RID), 2) development of cooperating teacher dispositions (DEV), 3) cooperating teachers' role in preparing prospective teachers (CTR), 4) cooperating teachers' knowledge of dispositions (KD), and 5) cooperating teachers challenges with their role (CH). Within each of these categories are subcategories that describe a unique concept. For example, the development of cooperating teachers' dispositions includes the subcategories of evolution, innate/inherent, fluctuates, trial and error, positive or negative observation and emulation, resources, learn from experience, and positive or negative instruction. From this organization, I identified 34 categories and I reread and coded all of the interviews a third time using the lens of my research questions as a coding mechanism.

As I proceeded through analysis, my codes were flexible because I remained open to ideas and themes different from the survey and InTASC disposition standards. To that effect, the focus interview was an integral part of my data analysis. The participating teachers offered feedback on the codes I had identified. They confirmed my interpretation on concepts such as the role of informal evaluator, clarifying that they did not feel as if they had the role of formal evaluator with student teachers. They also suggested that I specifically identify time as a challenge. After the focus group interview, I reread all of the interviews one more time in order to apply suggestions that came from the cooperating teachers.

The coding of data presents an opportunity for data transformation. Transformation denotes the change of one form of data into another so that data collected by mixed methods research can be merged (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Throughout the coding process, I maintained a matrix of all of the participants and the coding categories. This provided a tool by

which I could conduct a cross-case analysis and look for concepts unique to each case and for those that transcend the cases (Yin, 2006). I transformed the data by conducting frequency counts of themes and quantitizing the codes (See Appendix J). The term *quantitizing* describes the process of transforming coded qualitative data into quantitative data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). I do not compare codes statistically because the aim of this research is to identify patterns in cooperating teachers' dispositions and their awareness of their role in developing candidate dispositions. I used the quantitized qualitative data from interviews to integrate the data analysis.

### **Data Integration**

Integrating data collection methods at the interpretation stage is a common approach in mixed methods studies (Creswell et al., 2003). Transformed data are useful for both data comparison and data correlation. One mixed methods research purpose that lends itself to comparing data from different tools is complementarity. Therefore, I compared the self-identified dispositions from the survey with the self-identified dispositions that I classified in interviews. Another opportunity to integrate and compare data was the analysis of whether the cooperating teachers' dispositions match the InTASC standards. I compared cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions to the InTASC standards in order to explain prominent dispositions and dispositions that cooperating teachers may enact less often.

Examining the data streams for correlations is appropriate when triangulation is a purpose of the research, such as identifying roles cooperating teachers feel they have in dispositional preparation. Therefore, I analyzed the survey responses that asked teachers to identify the role they feel they have and compared them with interview responses to questions such as "What do you see as your role in supporting the dispositional development of prospective teachers?" The integration of the qualitative and quantitative data in this mixed methods study is integral to



answering the question about cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions.

### **Conclusion**

Researchers use mixed methods research when a monomethod approach does not suffice to answer the research questions, which is the case with this research. The individuality of teachers and the way each person approaches teaching present profound challenges to researchers, practitioners, and instructors who are trying to find commonalities, trends, and causality. Rose (2013) suggests that more case studies on dispositions in action are welcome. The goal of this mixed methods study was to explore patterns of dispositions in a small group of cooperating teachers. In Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, I present the results of my data analysis from the quantitative and qualitative parts of this research.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **SURVEY FINDINGS**

In this chapter, I describe the analysis and subsequent findings from the Teacher Disposition Index (TDI). This quantitative instrument measures teacher dispositions according to two dimensions: a student-centered dimension and a professionalism, curriculum-centered dimension. First, I briefly describe the district in which I conducted this survey and the subsequent case study. Then I explain my findings from the TDI in order to begin to address the first part of my first research question: What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions? In Chapter 5, I describe the findings from the case study portion of my research as guided by my remaining research questions. I also compare the survey and case study findings.

#### **Context of Survey**

I conducted this research in the Roosevelt School District, a large suburban district of a mid-size city in a mid-Atlantic State. The cooperating teachers supported prospective teachers primarily from three universities. I describe Roosevelt School District and the universities below.

#### **Roosevelt School District**

The opportunity to participate in the TDI was available to all cooperating teachers in the Roosevelt School District. For the 2014-2015 school year, Roosevelt had a student population of approximately 110,000 students composed of 42.1% White, 38.8% Black/African American, 7.7% Hispanic/Latino, 6.7% Asian, 4.2% two or more races, 0.4% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander (citation removed for confidentiality). The district employs approximately 8,800 classroom teachers and has 15 schools that, in 2015, *The Washington Post* named among the top 11% of high schools in the nation. There are also 16 schools named on the 2015 "U.S. News & World Report's Best High Schools" list.

## **Universities that Place Student Teachers in the District**

There are at least seven universities with colleges of education placing teacher candidates in the Roosevelt District schools for student teaching. All seven universities were represented in the survey responses, but three universities were named most frequently. The colleges of education from these three universities place the majority of the student teachers in the district. Two of these are state universities. The first is the second largest public university in the state, enrolling 22,000 students. The college of education enrolls approximately 4,000 students in initial and advanced preparation programs, and it graduates the largest number of initial teacher certification candidates in the state. It offers degrees in 29 programs, including initial preparation in early childhood education through secondary education and master's degree programs for licensed teachers. The second state university enrolls approximately 14,000 students with 11,000 undergraduate students. Their department of education offers undergraduate and graduate teacher certification programs in early childhood, elementary and secondary education, and a graduate teacher certification program in ESOL education. The department does not offer a bachelor's degree in education; instead, students complete an academic major in addition to the certification program. The third institution placing a large number of student teachers in the district is a private university. There are approximately 6,000 students enrolled, including 4,000 undergraduate and almost 2,000 graduate students. Students can major in elementary education or minor in secondary or special education. The college also offers a combined Bachelor and Master of Arts in Teaching for students who want middle or high school level certification. The college of education comprises 5% of the total undergraduate enrollment. Its graduate enrollment is approximately 41% of the total graduate enrollment.

## Participant Selection

Before beginning the research, I established criteria for inclusion of survey responses in my data analysis. The potential participants for this part of the research were teachers who had served as cooperating teachers at least once since 2000, the year NCATE added dispositions to the standards. I excluded incomplete surveys, surveys that lacked consent, and surveys from participants who indicated they had never had a student teacher. With these criteria, I excluded six participants because they did not finish the survey, eight because they had not had a student teacher, and one because the person did not give consent to participate. After a preliminary data analysis, I also excluded one person who selected *strongly disagree* for all 49 items on the Likert scale. Of the 131 other participants, each responding to 49 items, there were 11 responses of *strongly disagree*. The selection of *strongly disagree* on all 49 items is inconsistent with the other respondents and may indicate respondent error, a rushed or careless response, or a disgruntled teacher. I excluded this respondent's survey from the final analysis because it is an outlier and appears to be inconsistent with the remainder of the set of data (Barnett & Lewis, 1994). Therefore, from the 132 survey responses, 116 responses qualified for data analysis.

The teachers who volunteered to take the survey included 81 (70%) women and 35 (30%) men. The Roosevelt District has 78% female teachers and 22% male teachers. The survey participants have an average of 15.8 years teaching experience. There are five teachers with 1-5 years of experience, 36 teachers with 6-10 years of experience, 25 teachers with 11-15 years of experience, 23 teachers with 16-20 years of experience, 17 teachers with 21-25 years of experience, five teachers with 26-30 years of experience, and six teachers with more than thirty years of experience. The cooperating teachers are more experienced, as a group, than the general population of teachers in the district, 28% of who have a standard professional certification,

indicating they have less than three years of experience (<http://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/>).

### **Survey Analysis**

I analyzed the 116 qualifying survey responses from four perspectives: 1) ranking of survey item affirmation, 2) ranking of affirmation as aligned to InTASC standards, 3) individual affirmation by InTASC standard, and 4) individual affirmation by student-centered (SC) and professionalism, curriculum-centered (PCC) dimensions. I define affirmation as the combined proportion of respondents who indicated *strongly agree* or *agree* for an item, and I use this definition for the remainder of this chapter. The survey analysis uses descriptive rather than inferential statistics, because I was gathering information about the group, not comparing characteristics of various sub-groups (Fink, 1995). Additionally, it is unknown if the small sample is representative of the district population, and it is not possible to determine what percentage of the cooperating teachers in the district read and responded to the survey request.

### **Participant Affirmation of Survey Items**

The first way in which I considered the data was to determine participant affirmation of each survey item. Table 5 displays a ranking from the highest to lowest affirmation of the 49 dispositional items with the SC and PCC dimensions represented by two shades. Predominantly, the cooperating teachers in this study indicated that they agree with the identified dispositions. However, there is a range of affirmation from 100% for the most highly affirmed principle to 79% for the least highly affirmed principle. I define highly affirmed as items that have more than 90% affirmation because that is the mean of the range of affirmations. The difference between the most highly affirmed principle and the least highly affirmed principle is more noteworthy when comparing the survey items by dimension. For the 27 SC items, 26 (96%) had 90% or more participant affirmation. The highest affirmation was 100% for the item *I honor my*

*commitments*. In contrast, for the 22 PCC items, only 12 (55%) had a 90% or more participant affirmation. Ten (45%) of the PCC items had lower than 90% affirmation. In a study of first-year teachers' dispositions, Kirchner (2011) also found that participants more highly affirmed the SC items than the PCC items. In my ranking, the lowest affirmed item was *I actively seek out professional growth opportunities* at 78.9%. This indicates that one in five cooperating teachers is not pursuing professional development and only receives the professional development deemed important by the school or district.

With further examination of the lowest affirmed items, only one of the eleven items with less than 90% affirmation is from the SC dimension- *I view teaching as a collaborative effort among educators*. This statement is similar to the item *I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction*, which the TDI designers included in the PCC dimension. *Cooperating with colleagues*, which is similar to *viewing teaching as collaborative*, has less than 90% affirmation. While the TDI designers identified *teaching as a collaborative effort* as part of the SC dimension, it could be argued that this statement fits the PCC dimension, placing all of the lower affirmed items in the professionalism and curriculum dimension.

Table 5:  
*Rank of Survey Items by Participant Affirmation*

Dispositions	% Affirmation
I honor my commitments	100.0%
I understand that students learn in many different ways	99.1%
I view teaching as an important profession	99.1%
I understand that teachers' expectations impact student learning	98.3%
I am punctual and reliable in my attendance	98.3%
I demonstrate qualities of humor with others	98.3%
I believe it is my job to create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of students' self-confidence and competence	98.3%
I uphold the laws and ethical codes governing the teaching profession	98.3%
I communicate effectively with students	98.3%
I believe a teacher must use a variety of instructional strategies to optimize student learning.	97.4%
I assume responsibility when working with others	97.4%
I communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings, ideas, and contributions of others	97.4%
I create connections to subject matter that are meaningful to students	97.4%
I believe it is important to involve all students in learning	96.6%
I believe the classroom environment a teacher creates greatly affects students' learning and development	96.6%
I maintain a professional appearance	96.6%
I treat students with dignity and respect at all times	96.6%
I am willing to receive feedback and assessment of my teaching	96.6%
I communicate with colleagues	96.6%
I demonstrate qualities of empathy with others	96.5%
I respect the cultures of all students	96.5%
I am open to adjusting and revising my plans to meet student needs	96.5%
I understand students have certain needs that must be met before learning can take place	95.7%
I communicate caring, concern, and a willingness to become involved with others	95.7%
I listen to colleagues' ideas and suggestions to improve instruction	95.7%
I value both long and short term planning	95.7%
I select material that is relevant for students	95.7%
I am sensitive to student differences	94.8%
I am committed to critical reflection for my professional growth	94.7%
I provide appropriate feedback to encourage students in their development	94.0%
I am patient when working with students	93.1%
I stimulate students' interests	93.0%
I believe that all students can learn	92.2%
I believe it is important to learn about students and their community	92.2%
I take initiative to promote ethical and responsible professional practice	92.2%
I am a thoughtful and responsive listener	92.2%
I accurately read the non-verbal communication of students	91.4%
I demonstrate qualities of warmth with others	90.5%
I view teaching as a collaborative effort among educators	89.6%
I stay current with the evolving nature of the teaching profession	89.6%
I communicate effectively with parents	88.8%
I am successful in facilitating learning for all students	87.1%
I engage in research-based teaching practices	85.3%
I work well with others in implementing a common curriculum	84.2%
I select material that is interesting for students	83.6%
I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction	83.5%
I engage in discussions about new ideas in the teaching profession	82.5%
I demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school	79.3%
I actively seek out professional growth opportunities	78.9%

*Note:* Student centered- shaded, professionalism, curriculum centered- unshaded

When I examined the most highly affirmed items, I found common themes in the 13 items with 97% or higher affirmation. I used these themes to identify three dispositional categories to which these highly affirmed items correspond: Professional Responsibility, Attending to Learning, and Effective Communication. I grouped *I honor my commitments, I am punctual and reliable in my attendance, I uphold the laws and ethical codes governing the teaching profession, and I assume responsibility when working with others* into the first category, Professional Responsibility. Teachers consider themselves responsible. Professional Responsibility is so important to cooperating teachers that some respondents made a point to comment that they felt they did not always live up to their own expectations. One person indicated that, “I would like to have better attendance in my position. It’s not that I am absent often, but I do have two children and commute from (another state) so there are times I have to be absent due to uncontrollable circumstances.” Another teacher made the point that, “while I try to always take into consideration the example I am setting, there are some days where I run late and/or am not as professionally dressed as I like to be.” The disposition for professionalism is beneficial to schools because there is less need for faculty disciplinary actions. The disposition for professionalism is beneficial to students because they have the opportunity to observe what it means to be professional. In addition, prompt, ethical, commitment-honoring teachers create a more stable classroom environment.

The second category I identified from the highly affirmed items is Attending to Learning. In this category, I included *I understand that students learn in many different ways, I understand that teachers’ expectations impact student learning, I believe it is my job to create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of students’ self-confidence and competence, I believe a teacher must use a variety of instructional strategies to optimize student learning, and I*



*create connections to subject matter that are meaningful to students.* The comments, “One must have knowledge of content, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes” and “Higher-level questioning and active student engagement are essential to affective learning,” illustrate that some cooperating teachers feel student learning is dependent on knowledge and application of certain teaching practices. Cooperating teachers also suggest that demonstrating subject relevance is integral to student learning. They say, “Relevant is difficult because sometimes that material is well above the student’s head. I do try to at least introduce some application of the mathematics we are studying in class,” “A teacher must realize that not all students share the same ‘enthusiasm’ for the subject being taught, but must still be able to get the students interested in learning,” and “Hooks to the real world make learning meaningful.” When teachers have the disposition to attend to student learning, they take responsibility for student learning and may provide students a variety of opportunities and options for success.

The final category I identified from the highly affirmed survey items is Effective Communication. This category includes *I demonstrate qualities of humor with others, I communicate effectively with students, and I communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings, ideas, and contributions of others.* Teaching is a profession that depends on effective communication, so it is logical that cooperating teachers indicate they have these dispositions. The comments that participants provided, “all students need to be treated with respect,” “one must also have an open mind-set and be flexible,” and “one must create an environment of respect and a culture for learning,” suggest that respect and tolerance are key factors for effective communication. In Chapter 5, I discuss the connection between Effective Communication and the theme of relationships that emerged from the case study.

When examining items with less than 90% affirmation, I identified two dispositional

categories, again based on themes in the items. The first category, Collaboration, includes *I view teaching as a collaborative effort among educators, I communicate effectively with parents, I work well with others in implementing a common curriculum, and I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction*. Participants' comments explained that the low affirmation for Collaboration was a result of time limitations or a lack of opportunities. For example, one participant said, "I wish my experience was more collaborative, but the county has all but cancelled all of the collaborative events that they had when I started teaching and my school is not the most friendly for collaboration unfortunately." Other participants said, "I believe we should collaborate, but we are not given the time to do so," "collaboration is important, but limited opportunity for this," "I wish there was more time provided for teachers to collaborate so that students could be better served in lessons and planning," and "collaborative/ planning space and time afforded to teachers is not plentiful enough to fulfill a teacher's expectations of themselves." What these comments seem to suggest is that teachers do not lack the disposition to collaborate; they lack the opportunity. This is encouraging because this is an area that the district can directly address without having to work to change teacher dispositions.

The second dispositional category I identified from lower affirmed items, Pursuing Professional Development, includes *I stay current with the evolving nature of the teaching profession, I engage in research-based teaching practices, I engage in discussions about new ideas in the teaching profession, and I actively seek out professional growth opportunities*. The comment, "My standards for curriculum implementation are often higher than some of my colleagues, so I have a difficult time working with other teachers in my content area," gives a glimpse into the rationale for one teacher. While this comment suggests that this person feels superior to his colleagues, this is not enough to assume that is the reason for all cooperating

teachers who do not pursue professional development. For example, another participant commented that, “We must always be open for new learning experiences and open for change. It is how we become great teachers.” This person is not averse to professional development, but his use of the word “open” suggests passivity. This could explain why *I actively seek out professional growth opportunities* had the lowest affirmation of all 49 survey items. There were only a few comments explaining the low ranked items but, similar to Collaboration, I extrapolate that time and opportunity are often factors for why teachers do not pursue professional development rather than teachers lacking the disposition to do so. I discuss the case study findings related to pursuing professional development in Chapter 5.

There are two individual items with less than 90% affirmation that raise concern for achieving successful teaching, teaching that yields learning. First, 16% of teachers did not affirm *I select material that is interesting for all students*. I explained above that teachers highly affirmed that they *create connections to subject matter that are meaningful to students*, but with the low affirmation of selecting interesting material, it seems they may have to create meaningful connections with uninspiring material. For example, they said, “I select when I can, we are dominated by the curriculum,” “curriculum dictates material, not much relevant,” “I do not always feel I have the flexibility to make choices on materials,” and “I am limited as to what I can teach and what is expected to be taught before the HSA.”<sup>3</sup> Another teacher commented, “There are times that what a student is supposed to learn in high school and what they plan to do with their lives are very disparate. Finding relevant and interesting material is not always possible.” These comments suggest that teachers feel restricted by curriculum requirements, mandatory testing, and district expectations when they try to select interesting material. These external factors dominate teachers’ natural dispositions to select relevant material and engage

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<sup>3</sup> The High School Assessment (HSA) is a state graduation requirement given in certain subjects

students using a more pedagogically appropriate manner. However, since teachers say they create meaningful connections, it seems they make the best of available materials and situations.

The second low ranked item of concern is *I am successful in facilitating learning for all students* with 13% of teachers not agreeing. If teachers do not think they facilitate learning for all students, it raises the question of how some students learn or if they are. Again, participants' comments provide insight into this low affirmation. In fact, this was one of the most frequently commented on survey items. I analyzed comments for themes and grouped them into three categories: 1) there are limits to what people can learn, 2) a lack of student learning is due to intrinsic factors and originates from student effort, and 3) a lack of student learning stem from external factors (See Table 6). Participants affirmed that *all students can learn* (92%), but their comments help explain why even though teachers make the *effort* to facilitate learning, not all of them affirmed that they *achieve* that facilitation. Comments about limits and external factors also reveal reasons they accept that learning may not happen for every student. The two low ranked items, a lack of interesting materials and the perceived inability to facilitate learning, may be related because a lack of engagement may cause a lack of motivation to participate and learn.

The analysis of the individual survey items and ranking by participants' affirmation provides insight into what cooperating teachers may be modeling for prospective teachers. For example, cooperating teachers experience limitations when trying to select interesting materials, but they attempt to overcome this challenge by connecting the material to relevant topics. They consider themselves professional and hold themselves to high standards. In addition, cooperating teachers say they attend to learning and communicate effectively. Collaboration and pursuing professional development are two areas that cooperating teachers may not be modeling or developing in student teachers.

Table 6

*Participant Comments Explaining Reasons Students do not Learn*

Reason for not learning	Participant comments
Limits to what people can learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do believe that all people have an eventual limit to their learning</li> <li>• All humans learn, it does not mean that they learn what the educator is teaching</li> <li>• All people can learn, but not all people can learn the same information</li> <li>• I believe that all children can learn, but I also believe that not all children learn at the same pace and that all children will end up at the same point. I look for progress with my students and not at whether they all ended up at the same point knowing the same exact skills</li> </ul>
Intrinsic factors and student effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must have some sort of intrinsic value to education</li> <li>• I believe all learning requires effort on the part of the learner</li> <li>• While I believe that all students CAN learn the issue is whether the student is READY to learn.</li> <li>• Students can only learn if they choose to learn</li> </ul>
External factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students can learn something, but not all students can learn to the highest level because of a multitude of various factors.</li> <li>• I think some kids have so much emotional baggage that they cannot be ready to learn, no matter how dedicated the teacher is.</li> <li>• I believe not every student is able to learn all of the time. For example, a student experiencing severe depression may not be able to learn a lot until his/her depression has been properly managed.</li> <li>• There are factors beyond a teacher's control (student, student's family) that cannot be overcome and in those situations if a teacher has done what they can to help a student it should not reflect negatively on the educator. The questions in this survey learn to that mindset when it is assumed that if you do these things all students will be engaging in learning in your classroom.</li> </ul>

The analysis of individual survey items is informative and contributes to describing the dispositions that cooperating teachers say they possess. However, colleges of education use the InTASC standards to guide their programs. Therefore, next I present an analysis of the data that focuses on the InTASC standards.

**Participant Affirmation of InTASC Standards**

The second way in which I analyzed the survey data was by calculating the participant affirmation by InTASC standard. In addition to developing the SC and PCC dimensions, the designers of the TDI aligned survey items to the dispositional standards of effective teachers set forth in the INTASC (1991) Model Standards. Since the publication of the original standards document, the numbers assigned to the standards have changed. In order to analyze survey items by the current InTASC standards, I compared the performances, essential knowledge, and critical

dispositions of the current InTASC (2013) Model Standards to the 1991 principles<sup>4</sup> and realigned each of the survey items to the current InTASC standard.

The TDI did not include items for Principles 4 (use a variety of instructional strategies), 8 (use assessment), and 10 (foster relationships). This is because the designers of the survey believed that items developed for Principles 1 and 2 related to Principle 4, items developed for Principles 2 and 3 related to Principle 8, and items developed for Principles 7 and 9 related to Principle 10 (Schulte et al., 2004). The original Principles 4, 8, and 10 are the current Standards 8: Instructional Strategies, 6: Assessment, and 10: Leadership and Collaboration, respectively, so those three standards are not represented in my analysis (See Table 7). Additionally, items from Principle 6 (use verbal, nonverbal, and media communication to foster inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction) are split into the current Standards 3: Learning Environments and 8: Instructional Strategies. I determined that the survey items originally aligned to Principle 6 most closely aligned with the current Standard 3, so I included them with the analysis of Standard 3. Finally, the current Standard 5: Application of Content was not one of the original standards, so it is not part of the survey items.

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<sup>4</sup> Standards were called principles in the original InTASC Model Standards document

Table 7

*Original InTASC Principles and Current InTASC Standards not Represented in TDI*

1992 InTASC Principle	2013 InTASC Standard
<b>Principle 4:</b> The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills	<b>Standard 8: Instructional Strategies:</b> The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to access and appropriately apply information.
<b>Principle 6:</b> The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom	<b>Standard 3: Learning Environments:</b> The teacher works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, encouraging positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. <b>Standard 8: Instructional Strategies:</b> The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to access and appropriately apply information.
<b>Principle 8:</b> The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner	<b>Standard 6: Assessment:</b> The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to document learner progress, and to guide the teacher's ongoing planning and instruction.
<b>Principle 10:</b> The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being	<b>Standard 10: Collaboration:</b> The teacher collaborates with students, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members to share responsibility for student growth and development, learning, and well-being.
No aligned principle	<b>Standard 5: Application of Content:</b> The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

When I group the survey items by the InTASC standard to which they align, each standard includes a combination of SC and PCC items. Therefore, this analysis is separate from the dimensional analysis described above. With the survey items grouped by standard, participant affirmation is more uniform than when items are analyzed individually (See Figure 3). Standard 1: Learner Development is the highest affirmed standard with a combined affirmation of 95.7% for the items that represent that standard. The least affirmed standard is Standard 7: Planning for Instruction, but 91.9% of respondents still affirmed the items that represent Standard 7. Using my earlier definition, all of the InTASC standards are highly affirmed with greater than 90% affirmation.

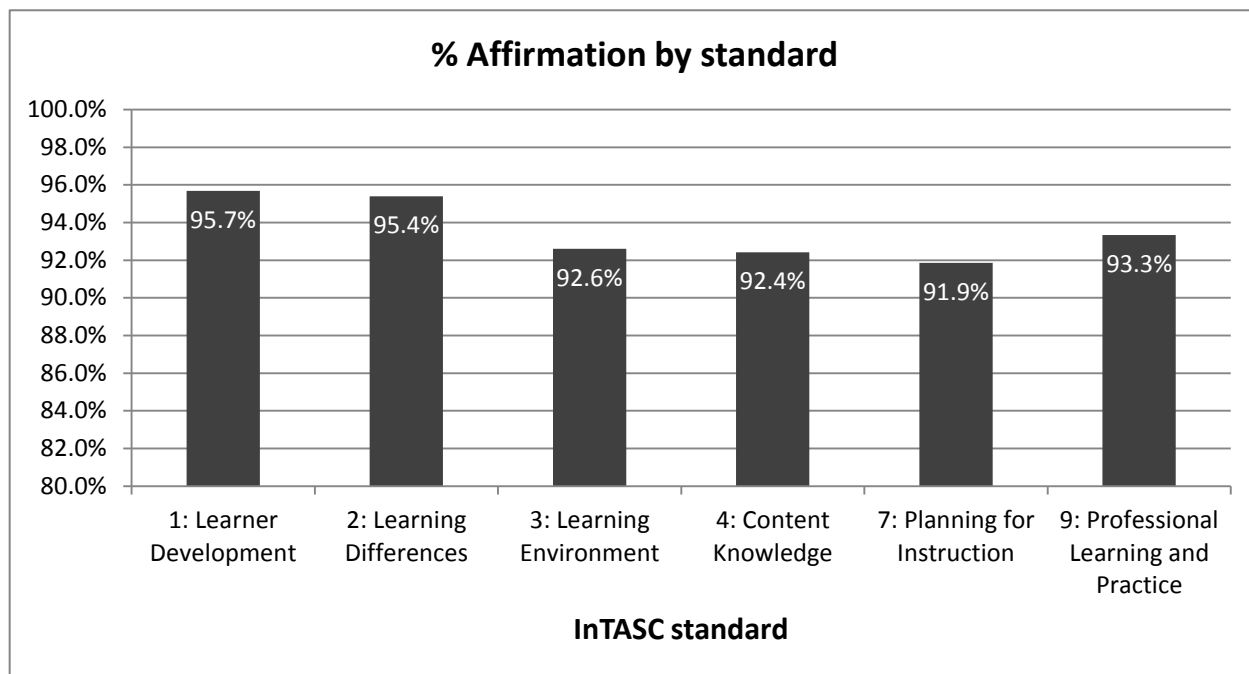


Figure 3: Level of affirmation by InTASC standard

This analysis demonstrates that even though the survey statements align to certain standards, the items with lower affirmation do not all align to one standard. Another interesting detail is that five items aligned to Standard 9 are in the 11 lowest affirmed survey items and only one item aligned to Standard 3 is in the lowest affirmed items. However, when I combine individual survey items to calculate the affirmation of the standards, Standards 9 and 3 have a similar level of affirmation. This indicates that teachers do not have low affirmation of the dispositional standard, but rather for individual survey items. In the InTASC Model Standards and the TDI, each standard is defined by multiple dispositions, so it is reasonable to assume that a teacher may strongly agree with one, while identify as neutral with another. For example, twenty-five participants selected *neutral*, *disagree*, or *strongly disagree* for *I demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school*, an item aligned to Standard 3. Of those same people, twenty-three selected *agree* or *strongly agree* for *I accurately read the non-verbal communication of students*, another item aligned to Standard 3. This difference in



affirmation is evident in responses to individual statements, but is lost when statements are combined to determine affirmation by standard.

The first two methods of data analysis provide a summary of all of the participant responses. The average affirmation for each survey item and for each InTASC standard indicates that participants had an overall affirmation of each item. However, this analysis does not provide information about individual participants. The next two methods analyze the data from the level of individual participants. This provides insight into how cooperating teachers differ from one another.

### **Individual Participant Affirmation by InTASC Standard**

The third way in which I analyzed the survey data was to calculate each participant's level of affirmation for the six InTASC standards represented in the survey. I regrouped the items by standard using the alignment described above, and I calculated affirmation for each individual for each standard. I used these calculations two different ways.

First, these calculations provided a way to examine differences between individual participants with regard to InTASC standards. Some participants' affirmation differed drastically between standards. For example, one participant had 100% affirmation for Standard 1: Learner Development and 0% affirmation for Standard 4: Content Knowledge. Other participants had generally low affirmations. For example, the participant whose highest affirmation was 63% for Standard 7: Planning for Instruction and lowest affirmation was 22% for Standard 3: Learning Environments. Finally, other participants had generally high affirmations, but did not have 100% affirmation for any standard. For example, one participant had 83%, 83%, 89%, 75%, 50%, and 81% affirmation for Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 9, respectively. When I analyzed the survey data by overall participant affirmation of the standards, as described above, I combined 131 responses

of *strongly agree* and *agree*, and some of the standards had lower affirmation. The difference when I analyze the data for individual participant affirmation by standard is that an individual participant responds to between four and sixteen items per standard. Therefore, for some standards, if a participant answers even one item below *agree*, they will have less than high affirmation. Even though some participants' affirmations varied between standards, 44 participants (38%) had 100% affirmation of all six InTASC standards, and 25 participants (21.5%) had 100% affirmation of all but one standard.

The second way I used the participant affirmation by InTASC standard was to calculate the percent of participants who highly affirmed each standard (See Figure 4). I used 90% affirmation again as an indication of high affirmation. When I analyze the survey in this way, differences emerge in the levels of affirmation between standards. For example, 80% or more of participants highly affirmed the learner development, learning differences, and content knowledge standards. However, only 64% and 66% of participants highly affirmed learning environment and planning for instruction, respectively.

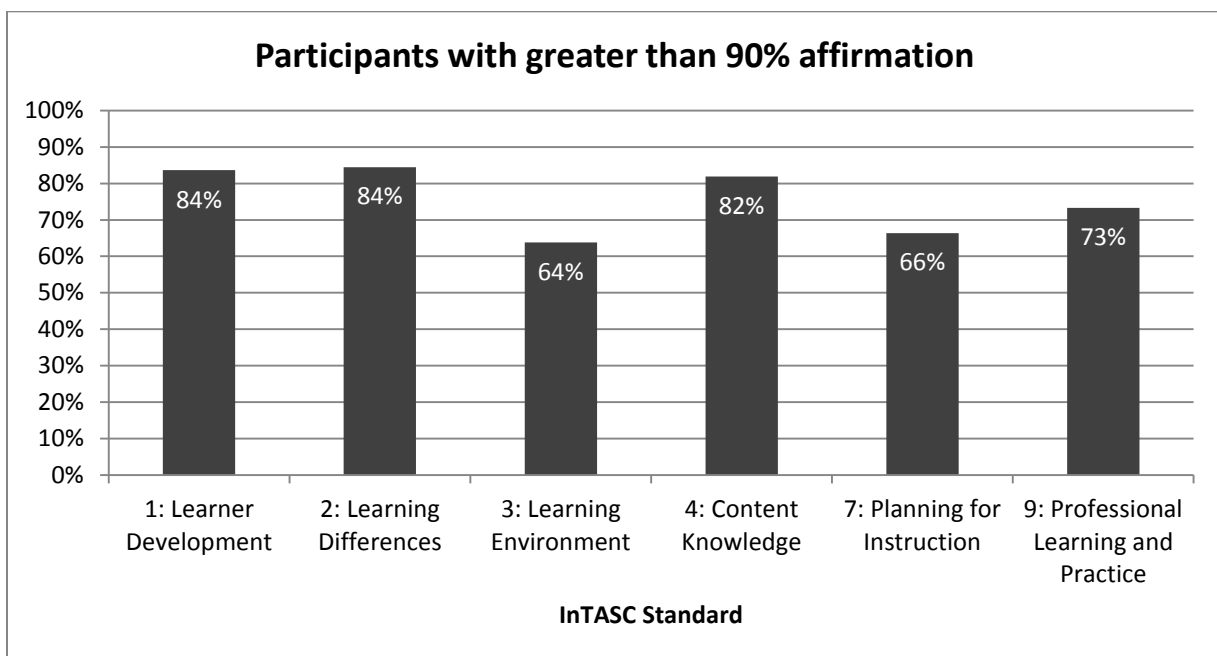


Figure 4: Percent of participants that highly affirm each InTASC standard

The high levels of affirmation are encouraging, but the two lower affirmed items, learning environment and planning for instruction, are important areas for future research. Teachers, schools, and colleges of education place an emphasis on creating a positive learning environment because scholars consider creating an encouraging classroom environment to be a contributing factor in student achievement (Berry, 2002; Goe, 2007). Therefore, the low affirmation for learning environment raises some concerns. However, further analysis demonstrates that the low affirmation rate is due primarily to one survey item- *I demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school*. This item was penultimate in the individual survey item ranking with 79.3% affirmation. When I excluded this item and recalculated the level of affirmation, 77% of participants highly affirmed Standard 3. This could indicate that *demonstrating and encouraging democratic interaction* is an outlier. In order to understand Standard 3: Learning Environment better, I questioned case study participants about the democratic interactions item, and I present their responses in Chapter 5. I also discuss the value participants place on the learning environment they create and why Standard 3 may have a low affirmation, even when cooperating teachers state that creating a positive learning environment is one of their strengths.

The other standard with a lower affirmation is Standard 7: Planning for Instruction. When I examined survey items for this particular standard, I noticed that I had previously grouped three of the eight items- *I view teaching as a collaborative effort among educators*, *I work well with others in implementing a common curriculum*, and *I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction*, into the dispositional category I called Collaboration. Therefore, it is important not to jump to the conclusion that teachers do not have the disposition to plan for instruction. Instead, as previously discussed, teachers struggle to find time for collaboration so they can plan together.

### Individual Participant Affirmation by SC and PCC Dimension

The final way in which I analyzed the survey data was to calculate each participant’s level of affirmation for the SC dimension and the PCC dimension, similar to the manner in which I analyzed individual participant responses by InTASC standard. In order to do this, I combined all of the affirmed items for each participant for each dimension and calculated the percent affirmation. I used 90% affirmation again to indicate a high affirmation of the dimension. I grouped the participants into four categories: high affirmation in both the SC and PCC dimensions, high affirmation in the SC dimension and lower affirmation in the PCC dimension, lower affirmation in the SC dimension and high affirmation in the PCC dimension, and lower affirmation in both the SC and PCC dimensions (See Figure 5).

	<b>PCC &gt; 90%</b>	<b>PCC &lt; 90%</b>
<b>SC &gt; 90%</b>	80 participants 69% of participants	22 participants 19% of participants
<b>SC &lt; 90%</b>	1 participant 1% of participants	13 participants 11% of participants

Figure 5: Participants’ level of affirmation of SC and PCC dimensions

When I analyzed the participant responses for level of affirmation for the SC and PCC dimensions, some differences emerge between participants. There were 69% of respondents who highly affirmed both dimensions. However, 31% of respondents had a lower affirmation in at least one of the dimensions. The PCC dimension had 30% of participants who indicated a lower affirmation, which is predictable given the overall lower ranking of the PCC dimension survey items. In contrast, 12% of respondents had a lower affirmation of the SC dimension. Finally, 11% of respondents self-report less than 90% affirmation in both the SC and PCC dimensions.

The number of people who self-report a lower affirmation for dispositional items could have implications for the types of practices that cooperating teachers model for student teachers. For example, the teachers who have a lower affirmation of the PCC dimension may neglect to encourage their student teachers to participate in professional development opportunities because they do not value their own experiences in professional development. The final method of data analysis was also the way in which I selected participants for the case study portion of my research, which I discuss in the next chapter.

### **The Roles of Cooperating Teachers**

After the participants completed the TDI, the final question on the survey asked, “What do you think your primary role is in the dispositional preparation of new teachers?” Participants could select as many as applied from seven choices: mentor and advisor; modeler; evaluator; none, that is the responsibility of the university; none, I expect them to have the correct dispositions; developing knowledge and skills is more important than dispositions; and developing dispositions is optional if there is time. Since participants could select more than one answer, there were 242 responses from the 116 survey participants. Figure 6 displays the results. The two primary roles that cooperating teachers think they have when working with student teachers are modeler (75.9%), and mentor and advisor (88.8%). The question of what role cooperating teachers have is one that I pursue more in-depth in Chapter 5 when I analyze the case study data.

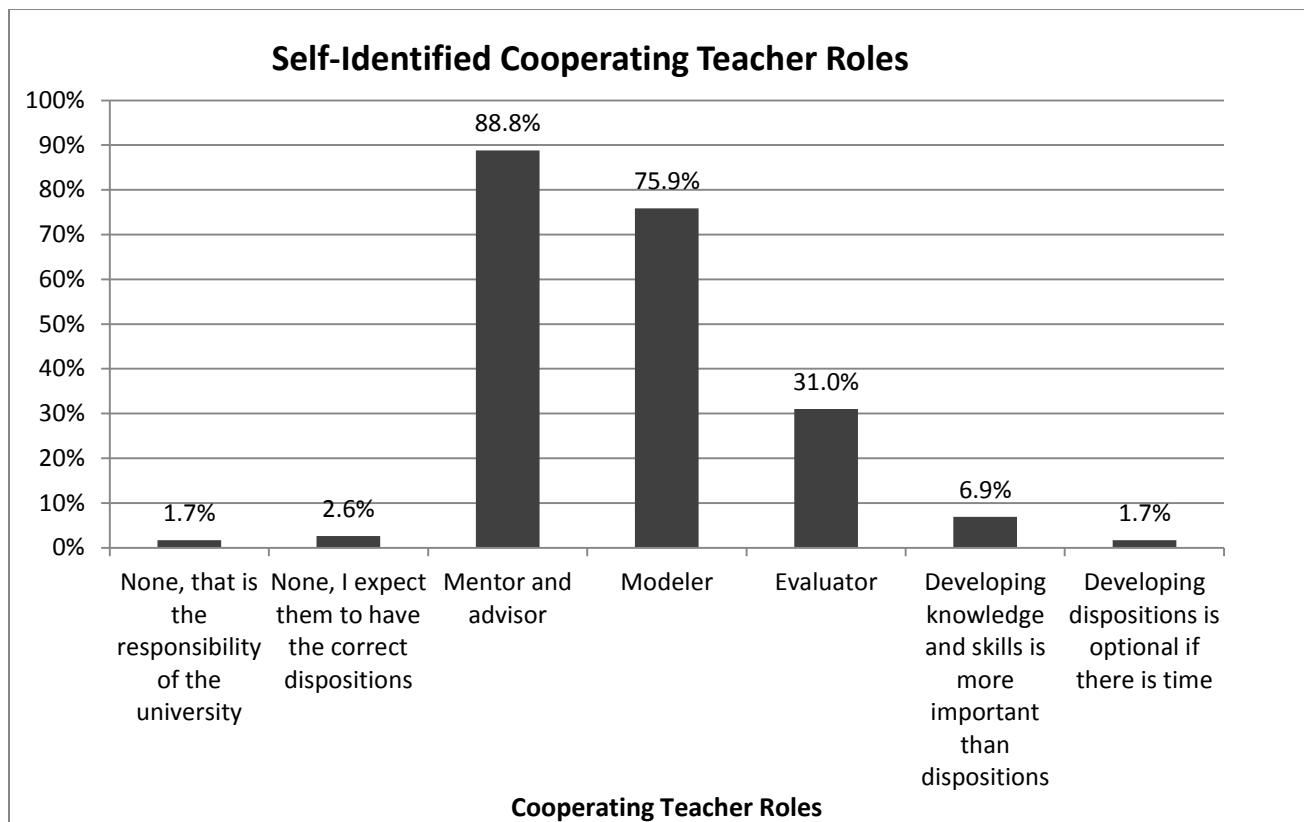


Figure 6: The roles of cooperating teachers identified by survey participants. (Participants could select more than one response)

## Conclusion

I used the TDI to begin to answer my first research question: What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions? After analyzing the data from four perspectives, some patterns began to emerge. When I analyzed the data by participant affirmation of survey items, cooperating teachers indicate that they are professionally responsible, attend to student learning, and are effective communicators. I was able to compare the survey results with the comments that teachers also made on the survey. Teachers' comments supported the survey data and helped to elucidate the thinking behind their survey responses.

The comments left by participating teachers are essential to understanding the two dispositional areas in which cooperating teachers rank themselves lower—Collaboration and Pursuing Professional Development. My research question asks what dispositions cooperating

teachers self-report, and when a survey shows low affirmation, a misinterpretation could be that cooperating teachers do not have those dispositions. The comments explained that teachers would collaborate if they had opportunities to do so. There were not many comments regarding pursuing professional development, but it is a significant topic of discussion in the case study interviews, so I address the reasons behind that low affirmed item in Chapter 5.

The analysis of individual survey items also revealed two low affirmed items: *I select material that is interesting for all students* and *I am successful in facilitating learning for all students*. Teachers experience limitations from curriculum, testing, and district expectations when they try to plan and select material for instruction. The sense that teachers do not always feel successful in facilitating learning for all students also emerged in case study interviews, so I discuss it in more detail in Chapter 5.

When I analyzed the data by InTASC standard, cooperating teachers self-reported over a 90% affirmation for each standard. These findings suggest that cooperating teachers, whether or not they know about the InTASC standards specifically, do embody the dispositions outlined by the standards. This is a relevant finding for colleges of education since they use the InTASC standards as they prepare prospective teachers for the classroom. Cooperating teachers self-report having the dispositions that colleges of education endeavor to develop in their candidates.

When I analyzed the survey responses by individual, it was evident that while most of the survey items and InTASC standards have an overall high affirmation, there are individual cooperating teachers who disagree with many of the InTASC standards or do not highly affirm the SC and PCC dimensions. While the overall survey results are positive, it is a concern that there are cooperating teachers such as the participant whose highest affirmed standard was 63% for Standard 7 or the other who had 0% affirmation for Content Knowledge. This is relevant for

the selection process of cooperating teachers because a cooperating teacher with low affirmation of certain InTASC standards may not embody desired dispositions, and therefore, may disregard or be incapable of developing those dispositions in student teachers. Cooperating teachers who have low affirmation in both the SC and PCC dimensions may lack the dispositions desired by the university and school systems. The findings from the individual responses have implications for the way in which colleges of education and schools select the teachers who fill the important role of cooperating teacher.

In the next chapter, I present the findings from the case study portion of my research and expand on findings that answer my first research question. In addition, I use the data from the case study to answer my remaining research questions.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CASE STUDY FINDINGS**

In this chapter, I describe the analysis and subsequent findings from the case study portion of my research, which comprised two individual interviews for each participant and one focus group interview. The purpose of the interviews was to inquire about cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions, determine what role cooperating teachers think they have with prospective teachers, and identify challenges that cooperating teachers have with their role. In this chapter, I explain the results of those interviews, but first, I detail my selection criteria and introduce the participants.

#### **Case Study Participant Selection**

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe the design of a case study as a funnel, with the researchers “casting a wide net” for possible participants (p. 59). Similar to the survey, I established criteria for inclusion of participants in the case study portion of my research. One purpose of the survey was to recruit potential participants for the case study. The survey inquired about the respondents' willingness to participate in further research, so people could self-select out of more time-intensive participation. Of the 116 qualified survey participants, 35 volunteered to continue to the case study; only people who volunteered were qualified. Another criteria for inclusion in the case study was that cooperating teachers had to have mentored a student teacher in the past three years. Cooperating teachers who have mentored more recently are more likely to recall the experience with more detail. Additionally, since accreditation and revision of the desired dispositions outlined in universities' conceptual frameworks occur on a seven-year cycle, I wanted participants to have worked with the most recent district and college of education professional development, preparation procedures, and documents.

A final inclusion condition was that participants had to teach high school. I included K-12 teachers in the survey in order to help answer my first research question: What are cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions? It is appropriate to narrow the case study participants to high school teachers in order to answer my question about cooperating teachers' role in preparing prospective teachers because that role can vary between elementary and secondary teachers. For example, high school teachers typically teach one content area, so cooperating teachers may not prioritize developing content knowledge because candidates should have a degree in their subject area. In contrast, an elementary teacher may think it is critical to help a student teacher develop the knowledge to teach reading or to reinforce science knowledge. The challenges that cooperating teachers experience could also vary between levels since teacher and student interactions differ in an elementary school versus a high school. For example, high school teachers need to help student teachers develop a level of professionalism that establishes the appropriate boundary between teacher and student, rather than friend and student.

When selecting participants for the case study, I planned to include participants from each of the four quadrants of the affirmation by SC and PCC dimensions. However, when I applied the inclusion criteria and identified survey respondents who taught high school and had mentored a student teacher in the past three years, the 13 qualified people were in two affirmation categories (See Figure 7). Eight individuals had a high affirmation of the SC and PCC dimensions. Five individuals had a high affirmation of the SC dimension and a lower affirmation of the PCC dimension. There were two individuals from the PCC < 90%/SC < 90% category who volunteered to participate, but they had not mentored a student teacher in the past three years. I prioritized having a student teacher in the past three years so recollections were more reliable. I contacted the 13 individuals about participating in the case study, and after an

initial conversation, ten people agreed to participate. The ten participants represent four district high schools and the three universities that provide the majority of student teachers to the district.

	<b>PCC &gt; 90%</b>	<b>PCC &lt; 90%</b>
<b>SC &gt; 90%</b>	8 volunteers- Ben, Helen, Jasmine, Jeanine, Natasha elected to participate	5 volunteers- Anne, Darlene, James, Kelly, Lisa elected to participate
<b>SC &lt; 90%</b>	No volunteers	2 volunteers- no recent student teacher

Figure 7: Case study participants by level of SC and PCC affirmation

### **Description of Participants**

In this section, I present a brief profile of each case study participant. I base these profiles on information from the participants’ surveys and interview responses. In addition, I make some judgments based on my interpretations of their personalities and the impression I had while talking to each person. In some cases, I also use my position as a co-worker and my personal working relationship to enrich their profile.

#### **High Affirmation of SC and PCC**

Five case study participants had a high affirmation for SC dimension and the PCC dimension. I describe these teachers below.

**Ben.** Ben has been teaching for 20 years and currently teaches all levels of chemistry at his alma mater. He took ten years to finish his teaching degree, simultaneously working to pay for school. Ben recognizes that teachers do not have “a great store of knowledge that is not otherwise available.” Therefore, he thinks his role is to interpret material. At times, Ben uses a more traditional, direct teaching approach because “I can tell ‘em to discover how to balance an oxidation/ reduction reaction, but the number of students that I have that can honestly do that is very, very, limited.” He admits he may not reach every student and not every student wants help. With this in mind, he tells students that if they want his help, he will give it; otherwise, he

respects their decision not to try.

Ben has mentored four student teachers. He became a cooperating teacher because the university needed a tenured chemistry teacher for a placement, and he was the only one in the area. He focuses on instruction, planning lessons, and organizing instructional units with his student teachers. Ben defines dispositions as:

How I look at life. How I look at my job. How I look at the way, things that I do. I like to think that I am understanding about the individual student and the fact that there are things that pop up in their lives that they don't have control over or that they might not yet have all of the ability to deal with. So, in terms of my disposition- I think that my outlook, my philosophy, the way I deal with day-to-day events.

He does not recall seeing dispositions stressed or actively taught with his student teachers, and says, "In terms of the dispositions, I don't know what they're [university] looking for. Whatever they're looking for, they're not getting it."

**Helen.** Helen has been teaching English for 14 years, but she was a professional development teacher at the time of her interviews. She was transitioning back to teaching at an alternative high school the following year. Helen became a teacher after she realized she was happier as a substitute than in her chosen profession, but she would not repeat the decision given the current "anti-teacher" climate. Helen knows about and supports many of the new (and often controversial) initiatives in the district, especially technology initiatives. She thinks the movement towards blended learning is the answer for students since it is student-centered and individualized. As a professional development teacher, she mentors other teachers in her building and she has been the instructor for different professional development classes in the district.

Helen's student teacher struggled with the content area due to a lack of course work and

confidence. The students in Helen's classes also did not accept the student teacher. Helen defines disposition as "your general outlook or your preconceived notion." She was familiar with university communicated dispositions and knew they were in the documents, explaining, "They have their own rubric tool, based on Danielson, but it's of course suited for student teachers."

**Jasmine.** Jasmine has been teaching for six years and currently teaches environmental science and chemistry. She wanted to be a teacher because of personal experiences with caring teachers. She changed her mind in college when she saw how much work it was, but revisited becoming a teacher after she left her graduate program. Jasmine talks about knowing her students, and she combines directness with humor and patience in order to reach some of her more difficult students. She admits she has frustrations with students and behavior, but she has the self-control not to vent with the kids.

The student teacher assigned to Jasmine had trouble in her first placement, but Jasmine worked with her to improve. For example, when the student teacher was "struggling with classroom management," Jasmine had different ideas for her "for every day of the week so she left with a few ideas that she really liked." Unfortunately, the student teacher was never able to assume the full teaching load due to some students' attitudes and their refusal to accept her as the teacher. Jasmine was unfamiliar with the term *disposition*, but when I showed her the InTASC standards in the second interview, she was familiar with the concepts.

**Jeanine.** Jeanine has been teaching for 14 years and currently teaches psychology. She wanted to be a teacher since childhood when she played school in her basement. Jeanine prioritizes establishing relationships with students and maintains that all students can eventually succeed, never writing off a student. She "really like(s) being with the students of this age group." She is very positive and works to stay that way. For example, when the climate at her

school was not good and she felt like she was moving away from always being “happy with teaching,” she took a class “in order to try to keep in check.” She looks for ways she can improve and pursues professional development and coursework.

Jeanine has had one student teacher, but “it was not the best experience.” She wanted more information about the student teacher and “would have benefitted from some suggestions of what to do.” In addition, Jeanine found the student teacher did not know how to plan lessons and did not use a variety of instructional techniques, preferring to lecture. Jeanine defined dispositions as “those things we believe in and act upon that I guess control a lot of our actions.” She credits her experience teaching psychology for providing a definition so similar to the Johnson and Reiman (2007) definition that I am using.

**Natasha.** Natasha has been teaching for 24 years. She always wanted to be a teacher and currently teaches health education to juniors and seniors. She values the importance of her subject and works to make real-life connections for her students. Natasha enjoys her content area and works to stay current on changing information. She is a direct person, and she is open about finding some students not very likeable. Natasha also says that some students do not make an effort, and she cannot make a student learn if the student does not want to learn. Nevertheless, she seems to connect the most to some of the most difficult kids and has hope for all of them.

Natasha has mentored about eight student teachers. She is in a unique situation compared to the other cooperating teachers. The health education coordinator at the university contacts her directly about having student teachers because there are few health education placements available. Natasha has had student teachers she deemed very successful and others who she did not think would make good teachers. When I asked Natasha what the word *disposition* meant, she said, “disposition has a lot to do, I guess, with personality, it’s your outward demeanor.”

## **High Affirmation of SC**

The other five case study participants highly affirmed the SC dimension, but had a lower affirmation for the PCC dimension. I provide a brief description of each teacher below.

**Anne.** Anne has been teaching for five years and currently teaches biology and environmental science. She became a teacher because she likes science, but wanted a more lucrative job than some other careers in science. Anne loves her subject, but recognizes that she is not able to reach all of her students, and some students have situations beyond her control. She does not expend energy on one student if that takes away from the needs of the majority. She says, “I’m good with the relationships with the students, but sometimes I feel like the kids, when they just decide not to learn, that sometimes I just let them not learn.” Anne’s young appearance and small size make it easy to mistake her for a student and this could affect classroom management. For that reason, she focuses on having a structured and positive classroom environment. She is very intelligent and acknowledges, “I was not the kind of kid that they are... I loved school; I took notes from National Geographic television shows.” By embracing and sharing differences, she minimizes their impact on her instruction “because at the end of the day we are both trying to ... have a job and a life that makes us comfortable.”

Anne has mentored two student teachers. The first was in her third year of teaching before she was tenured. One of her candidates was not successful and had to repeat student teaching. After repeating the field experience, the university passed him against the recommendations of all four of his cooperating teachers. Anne defines disposition as “your general tendency of how you deal with things, or your personality,” and thinks the “university needs to look MOSTLY at dispositions when they decide whether or not to pass someone.”

**Darlene.** Darlene has been teaching for 11 years and currently teaches geometry. She

always thought she would be a teacher, but she worked in an office (and hated it) before returning to earn her second undergraduate degree in mathematics education. For Darlene, teaching is “a good job for a second parent where I would have the same schedule as kids.” She believes that traditional teaching in math is still the best way because the subject does not allow for student discovery. She tries to incorporate some student-centered activities because she feels like she should, but she does not feel very confident doing them. She is reflective, willing to point out her weaknesses, and thinks about how she can improve saying, “I am always just a little critical of what I have done. And so it’s a natural instinct for me to sit back and evaluate what I have done- did I do it right or wrong?” Darlene also brings her role as a parent into the classroom and says, “Whatever they need, I try to deliver what I can.”

Darlene has mentored one student teacher and accepted the role to earn credits. She also considered it a way to give back since someone had mentored her. She described her student teacher as needing “more help on the interaction with co-workers and parent calls.” She “had thought it would all be about the lesson planning in the classroom, but there’s a huge element outside the classroom that is also critical.” Darlene’s student teacher continued to struggle with relationships after graduation and was not rehired after her first year teaching. Darlene describes dispositions as “sometimes it’s gonna be their mood, their attitude, their character.”

**James.** James has been teaching for 13 years and currently teaches history. He began teaching with Teach for America, thinking it would be a two-year experience before law school, but he fell in love with the job. He does not share his personal life with students or focus on knowing details about his students. He prefers to prioritize classroom behavior, quality instruction, and high expectations. However, his class is very popular, and the students enjoy his teaching.



James has mentored two student teachers, neither of whom completed the internship. One was extremely shy and lacked an authoritative personality. The other had erratic attendance and was unprepared for lessons. James is concerned that student teachers are not prepared to put in the time necessary to be a teacher. He describes dispositions as “your nature, your personality, your character.” Relative to education, his interpretation is “all of the things that go into how you come off professionally in the classroom, both by choice and by your own nature.” When we discussed the standards, James stressed that certain dispositions were especially important for **meaningful** learning, saying, “I just think that’s such a huge word in terms of education.”

**Kelly.** Kelly has been teaching for 15 years and currently teaches history. She always wanted to be a teacher and had a teacher who inspired her love of history. She wants to “reach as many kids as I can. I know I’m not gonna reach everybody and I know not everybody is gonna be open to learning, but I do the best that I can.” She is flexible with students and misbehavior, recognizing that she can solve most problems in her classroom. However, she sees a need for stricter rule enforcement and more support from administration. Kelly does not want or feel she needs professional development at this point in her career.

Kelly has mentored four student teachers and says she was begged to be a cooperating teacher. All four students finished the program, but only one is teaching. Kelly thinks this is due in part to a lack of preparedness and an inability to connect to the students. She wants to see incentives for cooperating teachers because of the extra work and time involved. Kelly describes dispositions as “a certain quality, personality,” and says, “Not everybody can teach. You have to have the patience. You have to have the skills set, the relationship with people.”

**Lisa.** Lisa has been teaching for ten years and currently teaches physics. She became a teacher because she liked physics and wanted “to make kids as excited as I was.” Her first years

teaching were difficult, and she almost quit until she found a teacher with whom to co-plan. She wants to collaborate, but she does not currently have a co-collaborator and feels that the district does not promote collaboration. Lisa admits she has not always been a positive teacher, but she shifted her approach when she realized, “It makes the kids want to try when you show them that you care and you have a good attitude, even when they come in with bad attitudes.” Lisa has connected to students by allowing them to use her PlayStation after school when they do not have anywhere to go, keeping her room open during lunch, and letting students braid her hair. She says her weakness is grading papers and assessing students in a timely manner.

Lisa has mentored one student teacher and she is the one cooperating teacher who talks about how prepared her student teacher was. She says, “I was very lucky, because Amy was very good and very prepared, way more prepared than I was as a student teacher. She was like me at year four.” She is not sure what she would have done if her student teacher needed more support and if she “would have been able to save them.” Lisa defined disposition as “a person’s general attitude towards a topic.”

These brief profiles begin to elucidate the individual qualities of the case study participants, while also describing some of their similarities. Each teacher has a different story about why they became a teacher, but each of them chose to remain in the profession and agreed to share their experiences with a prospective teacher. Additionally, many of these teachers had student teachers who struggled during the field experience, a circumstance that I discuss later. Now I turn to answering my research questions using the analysis of the individual participant interviews and the focus group interview.

### **Cooperating Teachers’ Self-Reported Dispositions**

My first research question is: What are cooperating teachers’ self-report dispositions?

Within the confines of that question, I also ask: What role do they think dispositions play in good teaching? How important do they think dispositions are? How do they describe the development of their own dispositions? In Chapter 4, I presented my findings on teachers' self-reported dispositions from the Teacher Disposition Index (TDI). In this section, I explain the case study findings regarding teachers' self-reported dispositions. Throughout this chapter, I edited teacher quotes to exclude "um," "like," "you know," and similar utterances in order to make the document more reader-friendly. At the end of this chapter, I compare the quantitative and qualitative data findings regarding teachers' self-reported dispositions.

### **Cooperating Teachers' Concepts of Disposition**

Before I discuss the dispositions that the cooperating teachers in this study describe themselves possessing, I present the participants' concepts of the term *disposition*. One of my first queries to each teacher was if they were familiar with the term *disposition*, and if so, what it meant to them. Nine of the ten participants were able to give a definition, and there were similarities in those definitions. Four participants, Ben, Helen, Darlene, and Lisa, used the word attitude or outlook in their definition. Four different people, Natasha, Anne, James, and Kelly, said that dispositions involve a person's personality. Finally, four people, Ben, Jeanine, Anne, and James (two who used personality and one who used attitude), say that dispositions necessitate some action on the part of the individual.

Once I established that cooperating teachers had some familiarity with the term *disposition*, I began to focus more on their self-identified dispositions. For the one teacher who was not familiar with the term, I postponed certain questions until the second interview. When I analyzed the interviews, all ten InTASC dispositions were present. Standard 3: Learning Environments, Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, and Standard 2: Learning

Differences emerged as dispositions that *all* the cooperating teachers in this study discussed and discussed more frequently (See Figure 8). In contrast, only half of the participants talked about Standard 6: Assessment, and there were fewer coding instances. I discuss cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions below.

<b>Learning Environments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing relationships and building trust</li> <li>- Being sensitive to emotional and learning circumstances</li> <li>- Being flexible with student circumstances</li> </ul>	<b>Professional Learning and Ethical Practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection and self-evaluation</li> <li>- Professionalism</li> <li>- Work ethic</li> <li>- Not pursuing professional development</li> </ul>	<b>Learning Differences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexibility with instruction</li> <li>- Adjusting classroom situations</li> <li>- Meeting the needs of diverse students</li> <li>- Trying to reach all students</li> </ul>
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Figure 8: Cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions and their characteristics

### Learning Environments

The InTASC definition for Standard 3: Learning Environments is “The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.” The cooperating teachers I interviewed prioritized creating this environment. In fact, there were 101 instances of the learning environment code (LEN), second (of all the codes) only to the professional learning code (PLE). I attribute the high incidence of the PLE code to cooperating teachers' talking about being professional, and not necessarily to them pursuing professional learning. It is not unexpected that teachers mentioned learning environments frequently since all of the case study participants have greater than 90% affirmation of the SC dimension on the survey. This dimension includes items such as *I believe it is my job to create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of students' self-confidence and competence; I communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings, ideas, and contributions of*

*others; and I believe the classroom environment a teacher creates greatly affects students' learning and development.*

All of the participants talked about learning environments in their interviews, but Anne, Natasha, Jeanine, and Lisa referred to it more frequently and specified that it was an essential disposition. In order to have the disposition for learning environments, it is critical not only to know the importance of the environment, but also to **act** to create that environment. Therefore, when I coded, I focused on participants describing their actions to create positive learning environments. From the ways the participants describe how they created supportive environments and encouraged positive social interaction, I identified three main themes: developing relationships and building trust, being sensitive to emotional and learning circumstances, and being flexible with student circumstances.

A theme in cooperating teachers' remarks about learning environments was the importance of developing relationships with students. Anne claims that the "foremost one [dispositions] would be the interpersonal skills, being able to develop that rapport with the students." She describes a student who was "terrible, terrible" in other classes, but Anne "never had a clue" because the student explained, "I'm bad in all my other classes, but Ms. H is so nice, I can't be bad in here." Helen explains how the rapport she had with students she taught for two consecutive years allowed the class to "pick on each other back and forth and it was very good-natured and accepted," but she had to warn her student teacher, "this is not how you can be with your class from day one." Natasha says, "Kids have to feel good. You don't want a student coming into your classroom being miserable and you set the tone on that." She works "hard to try to establish relationships with kids before they come into my classroom," and targets "certain students, particularly students that appear to have trouble behaviorally, socially, whatever the

case because if I can hit them before they get in the door, then my job is easier.”

Lisa surpasses what many teachers do to develop relationships. In her first school, students stayed after school because “They didn’t have anywhere to go, nobody was home. They didn’t have anything to do.” Lisa brought in her PlayStation and hosted “Guitar Hero Thursdays.” She stayed until five o’clock, “playing Guitar Hero with the kids and grading papers.” Lisa does not postulate that the after school relationships changed her classroom environment, but she says she understood her students better because of this time.

Teachers’ relationships go beyond joking with students and playing games. Helen had a student with a drug problem who was failing classes and was combative with teachers, including her. She tried to work with him, but only connected after his friend died of an overdose, which “opened the whole rapport” and helped him get on track to graduate. Helen knows talking with students about things outside of school is part of developing relationships and building trust, but also recognizes that she cannot force these connections. At least when teachers try to connect and fail, students know a relationship is available when they are ready.

Natasha also recounts two incidences with students whom others might “write off.” In one situation, a student sitting in the office after being expelled told Natasha that she was the only teacher who “said anything nice about me at all” and then hugged Natasha. Natasha explains that she is “working on not writing students off because it’s a tendency and sometimes it’s self-preservation.” In a second case, a student said her class was ridiculous, vandalized her room, and refused to take the papers she handed out. On the rare occasions when the young man participated, Natasha encouraged him and emailed his parents to share the positive interaction. This resulted in the student reverting to disengagement, but Natasha does not just *know* she should encourage all of her students and not “write them off,” she *acts* by engaging difficult

children, praising them, and keeping parents informed. This is the disposition to develop relationships.

James treats developing relationships and positive learning environments differently from some teachers. He explains,

On one hand, you have to be strict and legalistic, but I think you also have to know when to bend, and there's this artistry behind it that I've seen in excellent teachers, that they're just able to walk that line. You know, gaining trust and being friendly without being their friend, and being strict and kind of unemotional, while still being caring. (James)

He does not get to know students "in an official capacity" and later in the interview he says,

My theory is, if I'm all about business, it's easier to do my job. When you think about how people get to know each other, they never get to know each other playing stupid games and so on. They get to know each other through having shared experiences, and over time, I'll allow myself to open up just a little bit to them and just be able to build a relationship, but it's easier to do that when you've established the professionalism first.

While these quotes imply that James does not spend time establishing close relationships, his comment, "it goes back to the sensitivity, sensitivity of an individual student and their circumstances, so being sensitive to kids and the issues that they're going through," demonstrates that he does know his students. Regardless of the approach, playing games, not writing off a challenging student, or being all about business, cooperating teachers recognize the impact that relationships have on the learning environment.

Other ways cooperating teachers in this study create positive learning environments is with sensitivity to emotional and learning circumstances and flexibility with students. Teachers mention being aware of unspoken feelings, reading people, and giving and understanding non-

verbal cues. Jeanine explains, “I’m a big ‘no one’s allowed to sleep in my room’ kind of person,” but she enacts sensitivity when she offers sleepy students choices to go to the nurse, get a drink of water, or even do pushups to stay awake. Sometimes she gives kids food, admitting, “I’m probably not supposed to, but they’re hungry.” She enacts flexibility by having high expectations, but offering solutions to help students meet the expectations. The following quotes illustrate other teachers who balance high expectations with flexibility to student circumstances.

It could be something that happens in the community, something that happens in school.

That’s all it takes to possibly throw off a whole lesson and you just need to adapt and do what you have to do. You [referring to the researcher] walked in here the day that we had the discussions about the riots [due to police violence and prisoner abuse], and there was no stopping it or getting around it. (Kelly)

I’ve had kids come to me at the beginning of class and just be like ‘you know, my mom’s moving out. I had a really bad night, if I fall asleep or I’m not paying attention, that’s why.’ And I’m just like, ‘no problem.’ (Lisa)

Case study participants explained that the disposition to create and support a positive learning environment is important because of the impact on student learning. Jasmine summarizes how a learning environment based on relationships, sensitivity, and flexibility is the bridge to supporting student learning.

A lot of it is about building relationships, because when you’re gonna differentiate, when you’re going to teach or communicate or [do] classroom management, everything involved in teaching involves creating a relationship between you and the students.

(Jasmine)

Natasha also finds that developing relationships can “compensate for your shortcomings, if kids



are motivated to cooperate with you because they like you.” Anne points out, “some teachers who actually know a lot can’t teach it because the kids just right away are like, ‘I hate her, I’m not going to do her class’.” As teachers establish positive learning environments, another self-identified disposition is professionalism and ethical practice.

### **Professional Learning and Ethical Practice**

The cooperating teachers in this study report exhibiting InTASC Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. InTASC defines this standard as “The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.” The cooperating teachers I interviewed referred to the professional learning disposition more than any other disposition. However, it was often to emphasize the importance of professional behavior, such as timeliness or professional dress, for student teachers. When cooperating teachers talked about *their* disposition for professional learning and ethical practice, it was primarily in terms of reflection or self-evaluation. They discussed how they evaluate and adapt practice in order to achieve successful teaching. Teachers willingly and regularly evaluate their own performance, but they have mixed opinions about ongoing professional learning.

These cooperating teachers are self-evaluative. Throughout the interview conversations and in response to different questions about which dispositions are important and how they react to situations, the participants discuss how they evaluate, adapt, and improve practice through reflection. One way teachers reflect is by evaluating daily lessons, thinking about what they did and how they did it. The following excerpts illustrate teachers enacting the disposition for reflection in their day-to-day practice.

I think self-reflecting, that's the only way you're going to get better. When you sit down at the end of the day and you're like 'Alright, What went right? What went wrong? What can I do better tomorrow?' (Lisa)

I think that a teacher is always going to reflect at the end of a class or end of a day, 'That could've gone better or that went really well.' (Ben)

Reflective practitioner, yes, I'm ridiculous on that one. I beat myself up at the end of the day, all of the time. (Helen)

I'm pretty self-evaluative and I'm pretty critical, and so sometimes in the early stages when the interns are just here observing, I will say, 'I did a lousy job today, that wasn't one of my better lessons. I did this wrong, I did this wrong.' (Natasha)

A similarity with these teachers is their self-critical nature, and, except for Lisa, the lack of self-praise. Cooperating teachers seem to look for their daily mistakes so they can modify their practice to improve.

These teachers also reflect about making long-term improvements. For example, Darlene says, "you need to be able to change, change up what you're doing if it's not working. You need to be always improving and changing things to be more successful than the last time." Lisa's comment, "You know, I'm always trying to make it better, it's never perfect," also illustrates her long-term pursuit to improve. The following excerpts demonstrate that student engagement and learners' needs are focal points when teachers evaluate practice for long-term improvement.

I think as you evolve, you start throwing out the things where you lose 'em and keeping the things when you really get 'em. Cuz over a time it's a process of having the lessons be better and better. (James)

I can always get better. You know, not every single kid succeeded so I've still got a

mission to get better at what I'm doing. (Jeanine)

I mean instructional strategies need to change because you can do some lessons with some classes and not with others. You have to change it up. (Kelly)

When I initially coded interviews, I did not notice Kelly mentioning reflection. When I reread her interviews, I noticed that even though she did not directly reference reflection, her actions to change lessons based on knowledge of her classes and to individualize activities for struggling students are results of her reflection.

In some of the excerpts above, cooperating teachers are self-critical and realize their shortcomings. They also describe that one characteristic of the disposition for professional learning and self-evaluation is accepting criticism from others and admitting to mistakes. Helen specified that the disposition to be a reflective practitioner necessitates being able to accept criticism, saying, "If they [student teachers] are not receptive to receiving the feedback, then they're never going to be a reflective practitioner." Ben echoes the sentiment when he says, "If you have a student teacher who is unwilling to take criticism... then those are the kinds of things that... quite honestly can completely disqualify that student teacher as becoming a successful teacher." While these teachers are referring to the student teacher, Ben explains that it is almost inevitable that a teacher will be wrong at some point. Therefore, practicing teachers also have to accept criticism and admit to mistakes or not knowing an answer.

You say a lot of stuff when you're a teacher. If even one percent of it's wrong, you're still scoring 99, but you're still saying a lot of stuff that's wrong. So you've gotta be able to have someone tell you 'Hey, I don't think that's right' and be ok with that. (Ben)

The teachers realize that their mistakes are not always content related, and they can misstep with student relationships. For example, Natasha described a time she made a sarcastic comment to a

student and tried to pass it off as a joke. After reflecting, she realized she was wrong and she apologized. A teacher without the disposition for ethical practice might have recognized the comment was inappropriate, but would not have acted and apologized.

A final facet of the disposition for professional learning and ethical practice is the sense of professionalism and work ethic that teachers possess. James says professionalism is important because “somebody who is generally unprofessional is going to have a very difficult time to be effective in the classroom.” The cooperating teachers in this study include maintaining their position of authority, upholding boundaries, dressing appropriately, and being on time as parts of professionalism. These teachers’ work ethics are perceptible when they describe extra hours spent grading papers, planning on weekends, and holding after school coach classes. Jasmine initially did not go into teaching because she saw how hard a teacher she shadowed was working. While these cooperating teachers are clear about their work ethic, at the end of this chapter, I talk about the challenges they have with the work ethic that is sometimes missing in student teachers.

A characteristic of ethical practice emerged when I asked how teachers would respond to a scenario in which they approached a colleague for the name of a disrespectful student. Cooperating teachers do not talk about colleagues. While this is not an explicit disposition in the InTASC standards, respect for colleagues is indispensable for the success of Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice and Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration. Anne describes unprofessionalism as people who are “caddy and going to talk about coworkers or going to be negative about things.” Cooperating teachers respect the decisions of their colleagues. For example, Ben has “some relatively strong feelings about teachers who decide they would rather be friendly with their students than be the authority in the classroom, but [he] would try not to cast disparaging remarks about those teachers, certainly [not] in front of their

students.” Even though Darlene is a rule follower, she says it is “their classroom decision [to allow phones], I’m not going to meddle.” Teachers might not agree with the actions of other teachers, but they tend not to interfere.

Even though these cooperating teachers possess dispositions for reflection and self-evaluation, they have mixed feelings about the pursuing professional development aspect of the professional learning standard. I asked participants what they knew about the professional development that the district offered and what type of professional development they would want from the university. Many of them did not know there was a course for learning to work with student teachers or they did not pursue professional development because they did not have time. Teachers in this study also claim that professional development courses lack meaningful content, and there is a discrepancy between what teachers feel would be helpful and what is offered. Kelly explains, “If I’ve been teaching this long, I don’t need somebody who hasn’t been in a classroom in I don’t know how long to come in and teach me about classroom discipline.” She thinks professional development is useless and the university is “miles away from what’s really going on.” Anne explained that the professional development offered by her student teacher’s preparation program was not “particularly useful because I can read. I don’t really feel the need to have a meeting about something that I could read on my own.” Lisa has completed some professional development courses, but she also expressed that she gets “really upset when I feel like I’m not getting anything out of it.” This is a concern because if teachers have experienced what they perceive to be worthless professional development, they are unlikely to return for more, even if it could be beneficial.

When I compared the teachers who had higher incidences of the code for professional learning, Helen, James, Jeanine, and Natasha, three of the four, Helen, Jeanine, and Natasha, also

highly affirmed the PCC dimension in the survey. Four teachers, Helen, Jasmine, Jeanine, and Lisa, have pursued a professional development course in the past two years because they needed credits, wanted to improve in certain areas, or were preparing to write curriculum. Jeanine needed credits, but used that reason to take a class on the highly motivated teacher that she hoped would prevent her from “getting sucked into just not being happy.” Lisa described herself as normally not interested in the district professional development offerings, but she enrolled in a course about being a mentor teacher because it interested her. She hoped it would help her “get it right” if she had a student teacher in the future. In general, the case study participants are not interested in pursuing professional development because of time restraints and a lack of relevant offerings. When they do pursue professional development, they need a reason such as satisfying credit requirements or trying to “get it right.” An area that teachers want to get right is teaching diverse students and I discuss their disposition for learning differences next.

### **Learning Differences**

A third disposition the cooperating teachers in this study report possessing is InTASC Standard 2: Learning Differences. The InTASC definition is “The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.” Helen defined the learning difference disposition when she describes a requisite for teaching as the “ability to craft a lesson that considers where students are and considers their background and to create that learning, that little bit of discomfort that will actually lead to learning.” When I analyzed interviews, participants had different frequencies of comments related to learning differences, but all the participants discussed ways they considered student differences and used those to create the discomfort needed for learning. As I coded interviews, I identified ways that teachers described

enacting the disposition to “ensure inclusive learning environments,” including flexibility with instruction, adjusting classroom situations to meet the needs of diverse students, and trying to reach all students.

I have discussed cooperating teachers being flexible *with student circumstances* when they create positive learning environments. Flexibility is also a predominant characteristic of the learning differences disposition. Participants said flexibility *with instruction* is vital to working with students successfully. For example, Kelly adjusts lessons because “you can do some lessons with some classes and not with others.” Darlene specifies that flexibility does not include being lenient or lowering high standards.

There are times where I’m not flexible, where they’ve pushed it to the limit, and there’s no more flexibility in deadlines and due dates and the crutches they want. Is that flexible, is that inflexible? I think that’s getting them ready for college.

James also has high standards, saying, “What’s the difference between uncompromising and demanding? I think there is a difference.” Flexibility is not limited to instruction. Participants talked about flexibility with behavior expectations such as when students project their anger on the teacher. Instead of giving a consequence, Helen lets students go for a walk and talks to them later, and Jasmine understands “sometimes they need to cuss you out and they do come to the conclusion on their own [that it was wrong], but sometimes they have to let it out.” Finally, some teachers were flexible with assessment techniques. For example, Jasmine sometimes offers students a choice between completing a project and taking a test, and Anne offers options for ways students can do projects. The consideration of how students’ personal circumstances could inhibit their learning and the actions teachers take to accommodate those circumstances while maintaining high expectations is one way cooperating teachers show their disposition for

learning differences.

There is a connection between flexibility with student circumstances when creating learning environments and flexibility with instruction when considering learning differences. Jeanine and James, explain that sensitivity to student circumstances is also vital to the learning differences disposition. Jeanine considers factors that could threaten a lesson, including stress in students' lives, insufficient skills and strategies, and disabilities. To accommodate for those factors, she might offer a student food, allow them to take a walk, or "try to give kids perspective" about a situation. Demonstrating her disposition for learning differences, Jeanine explains, "A good lesson could build in that scaffolding to help them." When teaching, Jeanine says, "the big thing with differentiation is it can help everybody. I do a lot of those differentiated suggestions." Jeanine also has high expectations for students and believes "they all get there; sometimes it takes until they're 24, but they get there." James approaches flexibility for learning differences from a more reserved perspective. He explains,

In terms of individual differences, diverse cultures, 'Gee, what's your family life like? Where do you live? ... You know that kind of stuff. Do I spend a lot of time learning about the community? No, I don't even live here. I commute from 45 minutes away. I just don't really do much with this, at least not in an official capacity.

This is not an indication that James lacks the disposition for learning differences or sensitivity to student circumstances. James might not consider culture, but he is sensitive to student engagement and personal issues that may detract from learning. He distinguishes between sensitivity to individual circumstances that impact learning and just a blanket awareness of culture that can permeate professional development. Jeanine and James' descriptions exemplify that teachers' sensitivity is one part of their disposition for learning differences.



In my code analysis, I recognized that part of the learning differences disposition is teachers adjusting classroom situations as they teach. They try to meet the needs of diverse students using quality instruction. As the following excerpts illustrate, knowing the students is critical for teachers to adjust classrooms to meet their students' needs.

I know my students- to know humor with one, discipline with another, tapping a desk with a third [to account for students who learn differently]. (Darlene)

One thing I feel that I do really well is I take time to get to know my students and I keep a lot of records so I can understand their development, differentiate their lessons. (Jasmine)

I try to vary things, like I know I have a couple kids with IEPs and if they're struggling, I'll just highlight only the sections they need to do. I've been doing this long enough, that I have three to four, maybe five ways to do every content thing, so I can pull stuff [while teaching] and say 'Here, try this one instead.' (Kelly)

These teachers are enacting the disposition for learning differences by using what they know of their students to adjust the classroom. By using different approaches with students and thinking about interactions, Darlene does not just realize that the students are different; she *uses* different strategies to interact with them. Similarly, Jasmine and Kelly use student records to create lessons and adjust classroom situations to meet their students' diverse needs.

In order to account for learning differences, case study teachers use their knowledge of students and adjust classroom situations they create student work groups. Teachers vary groups depending on the lesson purpose and on what groupings will benefit a diverse class. For example, Darlene sometimes groups students according to grades so she does not "have one person carrying the other. They can equally contribute." Helen alters between homogeneous and heterogeneous student groups depending on the needs of the lesson or the needs of the students.

With heterogeneous groups, she explains, “Sometimes you need them to work in mixed ability groups because they have other strengths. This will allow them to really bring their strengths to the table.” Lisa’s thought process that leads to her enactment of varying student groups exemplifies her disposition for learning differences.

I think that there are certain situations where you should mix the groups and there are certain situations where you shouldn’t mix the groups. And I think you should do both. For example, if I were doing a seating arrangement, because I do a lot of practice problems in class, I would stagger them so that they are next to each other so that the higher ones can help the lower ones because helping somebody makes you even better. You can explain it to somebody else and that’s helping them. I think in a lot of lab situations, putting the good kids with the good kids and the not so good kid with the not so good kids is fair because the good kids will just do the lab for the not good kids. So then, they’re getting nothing out of it. So, you can ask some more advanced questions for the good kids and get them up a little bit higher. And then force the not so good kids to work with each other and figure it out and show them what they can do. They can do it.

Lisa applies her disposition for learning differences when she groups students by ability so she can spend more time helping students with learning rather than keeping students on task.

Teachers with the disposition for learning differences who adjust their classrooms to meet the needs of the diverse learners are one example of Helen’s lesson "crafting."

When teachers enact their flexibility and adjust their classrooms to meet the needs of diverse students, they are working towards the ultimate goal of the learning differences disposition, working to reach and help all students. Cooperating teachers in this study want to help all of their students, but they simultaneously recognize there are situations beyond their

control and they have minimal ability to fix social problems. Students may not be ready to learn and teachers may not be able to help or reach all of their students. The quotes in Table 8 illustrate the conflict that these teachers experience between their desire to help all students and their inability to do so.

Table 8  
*Cooperating teachers' comments regarding all students learning*

Teacher	Comments regarding student learning
Anne	I'm good with the relationships with the students, but sometimes I feel like when they just decide not to learn, that sometimes I just let them not learn. And I don't necessarily fight that battle all day, every day. And sometimes I'm like "well you have a choice," instead of not giving them a choice.
Ben	I'm supposed to be responsible for having kids have good attendance. I can assign detention for a kid who shows up to my class late consistently. I can tell him all of the different ways that I know for him to get to class, but until he decides that that's important for him, I can't control that.
Darlene	I actually think it's rarely my responsibility [for a student's failure]. I really think it's mostly the student's responsibility. But there's once in a while, I'm sure I could have done something different to help.
Helen	Until they're ready for help, you can't do anything for them. They have to be ready to hang onto the life preserver you're trying throw to them. They have to be emotionally ready and I think there's a lot to be learned through failure.
Jasmine	I give them every opportunity. I give them missing work. I call home, but a parent can only do so much as well. At this point in high school, it's really on the students. They have to step up. They have to care. And sometimes they don't care.
James	A kid who is dealing with god knows what at home who comes into your classroom and literally shuts down. And you've tried every single method possible, perhaps there's some magic person who can come into their life and change things around, but for teachers who have 100- 200 kids on the roster, [that's] just not always possible. I realize that goes against the orthodoxy.
Kelly	I want to reach as many kids as I can. I know I'm not gonna reach everybody and I know not everybody is gonna be open to learning, but I do the best that I can.
Natasha	I'm sure I'll get crucified for this, but not every student can learn because students actually have to want to learn. And if we can motivate them to do that, that's great, but there are some students, that no matter what you do, I could stand on my head, I could sing show tunes, I could do any number of things, and it's not gonna matter because they're not there. That's one of my educational pet peeves where we're constantly told, 'Every student can learn,' but that's not true. The students have to be open and able, and when you have students who are just behavioral difficulties or who choose not to come to class or who are extremely passive aggressive, they don't want to learn. I can't teach them, it doesn't matter what I do. Maybe if I had that student one on one, maybe, but that's not reality. That's not a student that's gonna stay for after school help, that's not a student who's gonna request that help. So I'm surprised actually that I didn't put strongly agree because I just don't believe that every child can learn. I think they have to be receptive to learning and at this age, some students are simply not.

A similarity in these quotes is that teachers assert that students need the disposition to learn, the intrinsic (or sometimes extrinsic) motivation to be ready and receptive to learning. It can appear that teachers have negative dispositions when they allow some students to fail or

accept that, even with effort, they may not be able to reach or help all students. Another perspective is that when the cooperating teachers talk about allowing students to fail, they often explain it is because they do not want other students to suffer. Kelly says, “You need to worry about the other twenty-nine that want to do well.” Anne agrees that if she constantly attends to a student who will not do the work and does not value education, then it takes away from other students. There are also students for whom teachers do not make an ongoing effort to help. Lisa describes a student who was attentive and very bright, but who did not do any work. When encouragement did not work, she resorted to being kind, asking him to do jobs for her, and allowing him to fail the class. Helen works to help all of her students, and she accepts responsibility for the success of a lesson. She also acknowledges her limits as a teacher and claims that failing affords students opportunities to learn.

Teachers in this study enact their disposition for learning differences at various levels. They consider individual students as they adjust their classrooms and offer flexible options for students. They consider the class as they think about student grouping. They weigh the good of the few with the good of the many when considering how to engage all students. Together with learning environment and professional learning, learning differences are core dispositions that cooperating teachers self-identify and prioritize. There are also some dispositions, such as assessment and collaboration that they say have less priority.

### **Assessment and Collaboration**

The InTASC standards include Standard 6: Assessment, which InTASC defines as “The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher’s and learner’s decision making.” The case study teachers did not spend much time talking about assessment and I coded for it the

least. Seven participants talked about assessment briefly and there were only 13 occurrences of the assessment code. Of the seven participants, five made a neutral or positive comment about assessment and five made a negative comment about assessment.

The negative comments from these teachers demonstrate that they do not have time to develop different assessments, grade with feedback, review assessment results with students, and use assessments for re-teaching opportunities. Kelly feels “you can assess student knowledge without constantly testing and constantly checking. It can be overkill.” This comment alludes to the increase of standardized testing in schools, not the classroom assessments that teachers use to monitor learner progress. She also describes the negative connotation that teachers associate with the word assessment. Teachers have a negative perspective of standardized testing and are frustrated with the amount of class time sacrificed for testing. These negative outlooks could influence cooperating teachers’ perspectives about valuable classroom assessment and teachers may group all assessment into a similar negative category. This has implications for the learning differences disposition, which I discuss in Chapter 6.

One reason teachers in this study do not pursue professional development is a lack of time. The teachers report that they struggle to enact the disposition for InTASC Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration for similar reasons. Some teachers express the desire to collaborate, but they do not have the time or partners. Lisa and Anne are examples of teachers who have the disposition to collaborate but they lack a colleague with whom to collaborate.

### **Antithetical and Undesirable Dispositions**

Finally, as the cooperating teachers describe their own dispositions and identify ones that may be weaker, they also describe dispositions that are antithetical to teaching. I found I could identify the dispositions cooperating teachers in this study consider important by analyzing what

they say about undesirable dispositions and dispositions that they felt were lacking in student teachers. I identified these cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions by examining their descriptions of interactions with students. Their comments may not indicate dispositions that cooperating teachers have, but they allude to ones that these cooperating teachers may try to avoid. The cooperating teachers identify antithetical dispositions as being uncompromising, uncaring, belligerent, narcissistic, unable to handle adversity, unprofessional, self-centered, demeaning to kids, sarcastic, irritable, gossipmongers, negative, and easily angered. Anne thinks, "The antithetical ones are actually more important to not have than it is to have necessarily very strong positive skills." This is logical because a disposition such as demeaning kids or being belligerent could cause lasting emotional trauma.

Cooperating teachers specified dispositions they found deficient in student teachers. For example, Natasha mentored a passive, unassertive teacher candidate who did not do "anything above and beyond what was expected and was just going through the motions." James describes student teachers who arrive with "virtually no preparation for a lesson" and no "presence in the classroom." These cooperating teachers possess a strong work ethic, so it is logical that student teachers who lack the initiative and commitment to work beyond the "required" school day in order to complete necessary teaching tasks alarm them. I discuss this and other concerns shortly. As I identified cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions, I also analyzed their comments for what role they thought dispositions play in teaching, and I turn to this now.

### **The Role of Dispositions in Teaching**

Two of my research questions are: "What role do cooperating teachers think dispositions play in good teaching?" and "How important do they think dispositions are?" During interviews, teachers did not always describe a specific role they thought dispositions play in good teaching,

but they did assert that dispositions are essential to a teacher's success in the profession. Helen says, "If you don't have the requisite dispositions, I think you're doomed in the occupation." Lisa is also emphatic, stating, "I don't think you'd be able to teach without them." Jeanine thinks it is necessary to have dispositions as a default because "it's just so complex to be a teacher." Cooperating teachers' descriptions concur that dispositions are necessary for successful teaching, the type of teaching that yields learning and that dispositions can be the bridge to successful teaching. More than one individual, including Natasha, Anne, and Darlene, made the distinction between teaching and what they describe as "good" teaching. Anne thinks that dispositions are "the majority of good teaching because anyone can gather materials and create a lesson, but the dispositions are what impact how you deliver it."

These cooperating teachers point to specific dispositions such as learning differences, learning environments, and the reflection piece of professional learning that contribute to successful teaching and are priorities for student teachers to possess or learn. When I analyzed interviews, I found that some teachers explicitly explain the role of some dispositions, specifically the role of learning differences, learner development, learning environment, and reflection. Not surprisingly, the dispositions these cooperating teachers prioritize for student teachers and for which they explain the role in good teaching are also the dispositions that they report having.

When analyzing transcripts, I found explanations about the role that learning differences play in successful teaching. Jeanine explains that student distractions, lack of sleep and nutrition, and a lack of skills are potential threats to a successful lesson. She posited that knowing student learning differences and developing scaffolded lessons to address those differences could play a role in pushing teaching to the level of successful teaching. Kelly adapts lessons by highlighting

required sections, thinking about groups who might struggle with an assignment, and providing alternative readings or assignments. By enacting her disposition for learning differences, she is accommodating students who would otherwise give up because a lesson is beyond their ability. Now her students have the opportunity to achieve learning at their level. The teachers know that attending to learning differences has a role in increasing the likelihood of student learning.

The case study participants also describe how having the disposition for learner development is vital for students to achieve learning and to learn at their own level. The teachers maintain that knowing where learners are in their development is important to successful teaching. The following excerpts explain the role that cooperating teachers think learner development has.

If a teacher does not understand where a child is, if they're one degree to the left or one degree to the right, in terms of knowing where their development stands when they enter the classroom, then the curriculum is gonna be either too difficult, and they're going to shut down or it's going to be too easy and they're going to shut down. (James)

If you know your students struggle with math and you're going to do a unit that involves math, you're gonna have to take it slow. You're gonna have to do a lot of scaffolding.

And you know that if they're extremely good in this particular area, you know that you can dive deeper into certain topics. (Jasmine)

If teachers do not develop "appropriate lessons that meet the kids where they are," (James) students are not going to engage in the learning process. James relates assessment with learner development and their role in student learning when he talks about "just constantly getting feedback- Are these kids getting it? Because they're getting a lot less than you realize." He explains that attending to learner development could be the difference between a teacher moving



to a new subject before a student is ready or re-teaching for understanding. James also contends that if students are going to take away anything meaningful, “there has to be a real deep context to what you do.” The act of getting feedback to develop deep contextual lessons suited to student abilities illustrates the disposition. The cooperating teachers do this because they think learner development has a role in increasing student engagement and eventually, student learning.

The learning environment was one disposition for which case study participants gave a clear description of its role. On a basic level, the learning environment is necessary for student compliance. Natasha explained, “So often, kids will do what I need them to do in order to make my job work and they’ll do it simply because it’s me asking, where if it was another teacher, they might not do it because they haven’t established that rapport.” Ben echoes this sentiment and says relationships with students are “required in order for you to actually deliver instruction.” Another role of the learning environment is to support student engagement. When teachers create student-centered lessons, they alleviate the chance that students get bored or distracted by something more engaging such as their phones or friends.

Helen expands the role of the learning environment beyond compliance and engagement, when she talks about developing a positive rapport with students and engaging “learners in their own growth.” That is to say that the learning environment supports student learning. For example, Jasmine finds her personal relationship with students and attitude of “we will conquer this new stuff whether you like it or not” helps with student buy-in, which can result in student learning. Lisa echoes this sentiment, saying, “It makes the kids want to try when you show them that you care and you have a good attitude, even when they come in with bad attitudes.” Anne acknowledges the learning environment is important, but it does not guarantee that students will learn. She asserts that the learning environment between the students is just as important as the

learning environment between the teacher and the students. She explains, “It’s really difficult to have students understand how to work together and the [lack of] positive social interaction aspect really interferes with their ability to learn.” These teachers realize that the learning environment can result in student engagement and learning.

Teachers in this study are clear that the role of reflection is improvement. The cooperating teachers are reflective professionals in their own right, and they feel reflection is a necessary disposition for student teachers to grow and learn. Lisa proposes that the only way a teacher is going to improve is through reflection. James explains,

Is this person actually absorbing what they’re doing wrong and where? Do they care enough to want to change what’s not going right? Do they even have the ability to measure whether a lesson is successful or not? I think without that component, probably the rest of these are not really relevant.

Darlene connects reflection to successful teaching when she describes the need for constant self-evaluation, questioning, “Is there a way I could get this across better?” Given cooperating teachers’ self-critical nature, it is logical that they expect their student teachers to develop the disposition to reflect and think it is necessary for growth. As cooperating teachers described the role that dispositions have in achieving successful teaching, they also explained ways their dispositions developed, which I discuss next.

### **The Development of Cooperating Teacher Dispositions**

Cooperating teachers in this study have dispositions that universities desire in their candidates. As universities work to develop desired dispositions, it is interesting to consider how practicing teachers describe their own dispositional development and if their experiences can inform university practice. The cooperating teachers say that they have innate dispositions *and*

that their dispositions have developed. The teachers I interviewed describe the development of their dispositions occurring primarily through two methods: 1) trial and error, and 2) observation and emulation. The two methods are dissimilar because it is difficult to construct learning situations for trial and error, while observation and emulation is more conducive to providing experienced teachers and hypothetical scenarios for observation and candidate reflection.

At least six of the case study participants specifically mentioned their dispositions developing through trial and error. Here are a few examples of cooperating teachers describing their development through trial and error:

I don't know that I learned most of it through any formal education, professional development, things like that, ongoing education. It's trial and error, you figure out what works. (Natasha)

The trial and error is seeing what the kids responded to. (James)

I would experiment with different strategies. (Jasmine)

While dispositions can develop through trial and error, it is not a consistent or reproducible method. Teaching is a unique profession because the newest people to the profession have the same independence as the most experienced. Novices have their own classroom from the first day on the job and it is likely they will make some mistakes. A teacher might learn from making mistakes and mistakes can be made at any time in a teacher's career, but too much trial and error early in the career might negatively affect students and their learning. If teacher education programs can provide purposeful times for candidates to make mistakes, they might mitigate serious mistakes in the future.

The other way these cooperating teachers say their dispositions developed is by observing and emulating other teachers, including their cooperating teachers or co-workers. If the observed

teachers are enacting desirable dispositions, this is a more effective method to promote in teacher preparation. Some participants talk about emulating their cooperating teachers. Anne adopted aspects of her cooperating teachers' classroom management style. Jeanine had some core dispositions, but recognized different strengths in her two cooperating teachers. Jeanine is one of the most positive teachers I have ever met. While some positivity may be innate, she credits one of her cooperating teachers who shared the importance of not being "sucked into the negativity of the faculty room" because "as a brand new teacher," she had "never thought about it."

Participants talk about emulating co-workers more than emulating their cooperating teacher. This suggests that, similar to trial and error, teachers learn more once they are actively teaching. Perhaps teachers find themselves observing more once they are independent because they no longer have a cooperating teacher to save them when a challenging situation arises. The following quote illustrates Darlene's reflective process after observing veteran teachers. "Why does he never have trouble in his classroom and why do I?' And then you start, over the years, analyzing the little bits and pieces [from veteran teachers] and slowly adapting them." A risk when emulating other teachers is they might not be the best role model. For example, James started his career with the impression that "good teaching was Dead Poet's Society." He thought "it was about being this dynamic person because we tend to emulate what we see and [his] experience was of teachers who were these gurus in their field and they got up and talked to you the whole time." Some participants attribute their dispositional development to their ability to accept criticism, an important part of the professional learning disposition. With what he called an "intervention" from administration, James has shifted his approach and says it "helped with a lot more of the student-centeredness" and "trying to make my imprint on the classroom as low profile as I possibly can." James shifted from a superior to humble attitude and from teacher-

centered to student-centered with his co-workers' support.

Some participants made the distinction that they developed dispositions by observing teachers who had dispositions that they did *not* want to emulate. Ben realized on his first day of student teaching that his cooperating teacher was not an ideal role model:

My cooperating teacher when I was a student teacher was a bitter woman. One of the first things that she said to me in reference to teaching was, 'Do you hate kids as much as I hate kids?' I saw the way that students reacted to that mentality, and she didn't have to say it to them. It was very obvious that the kids were perceptive enough to know that she just didn't like them. She didn't like being with them, teaching them, dealing with them at all. And I thought to myself, 'She's not having a good time. The kids aren't having a good time, what a horrible way to go through my career.' So, I think it started there with just the idea that I didn't want to be that teacher. I didn't want to be the teacher that turned kids off just by my attitude.

Anne's cooperating teacher was very strict, and students "did not have many nice things to say about her and were not really engaged in things because they were just afraid to get in trouble." Anne did not want to mimic her mentor's strictness that seemed to lead to disengagement. Anne has also had co-workers whom she does not want to emulate. Kelly remembers her experiences as a student, feeling her teachers "were so disconnected and didn't know how to reach their students." She aspired to be "a teacher to take a vested interest in my students and not talk down to them and just stand there and lecture the whole time." Even though teachers learned from some bad example, it is not advisable for teacher preparation programs to place student teachers with cooperating teachers who do not exemplify best teaching practices and dispositions. Since cooperating teachers reveal that they model their teaching style based on

observations of both desirable and undesirable practices, incorporating case studies on undesirable dispositions could provide an interesting perspective to a methods class and allow for guided discussions.

When I analyzed interviews for ways cooperating teachers' dispositions developed, they did not think *formal* professional development contributed to their dispositional development. They also talked about the lack of influence that their teacher preparation program had. They acknowledged that participating in informal conversations and working with other teachers to develop curriculum influenced their dispositional development. Lisa says that instead of reading a research paper, she would "rather just sit around with teachers and hear their strategies that they do. They're probably research based." At least four case study participants mention writing curriculum was a significant part of their development and learning process. Natasha credits her experiences writing curriculum for her improved collaboration abilities. Writing curriculum actually motivated Jeanine to pursue professional development. Lisa struggled in her first years of teaching, but thought writing curriculum was beneficial because she worked with "seasoned teachers" and "got to learn so much." She says, "all that experience with writing curriculum helped me lesson plan." Since cooperating teachers claim that they do not find value in formal professional development, then perhaps it would be valuable to invest energy into engaging teachers in developing curriculum and the informal conversations that they say are beneficial.

When discussing how their dispositions developed, cooperating teachers in this study had interesting insights about how dispositions can vary by teacher, situations, and time. Each person had dispositions that were important to him or her. For example, Jeanine focuses on building relationships and getting to know her students. In contrast, James focuses on instruction. More than one teacher talked about how dispositions can fluctuate depending on where and who you

teach, depending on the year, depending on the time of year, or even depending on the day. Kelly says, “I definitely have them all, but each year there’s change because of the students that I have. So, there might be some of these that are more important than others one year and the next year they vary.” Natasha recognizes “There are days when I haven’t had a good morning or there’s been a problem at home or I had some interaction prior to coming into that class. So, we’re not all on every day.” It is informative to examine how cooperating teachers describe the development of their dispositions. If cooperating teachers do not think their disposition developed during student teaching, they may not emphasize developing them with their student teachers. This is especially interesting as I turn to discussing the roles that cooperating teachers think they have when preparing prospective teachers and if they think dispositional development is one of those roles. In order to answer this, I consider my next research question.

### **Cooperating Teachers’ Self-Reported Role in Preparing Prospective Teachers**

My second research question is: “What do cooperating teachers think their role is in preparing prospective teachers?” This includes the sub questions: “Do they include dispositional preparation in that role?” “What knowledge do they have of various sources of dispositional standards?” and “What is their understanding of the way the university develops candidate dispositions?” Cooperating teachers describe a variety of roles they have to prepare new teachers to take over a classroom independently, including mediating between the students, parents, and university, sharing reality, and communicating with the university. The three primary roles they identify are modeler, informal evaluator, and mentor and advisor (See Figure 9).

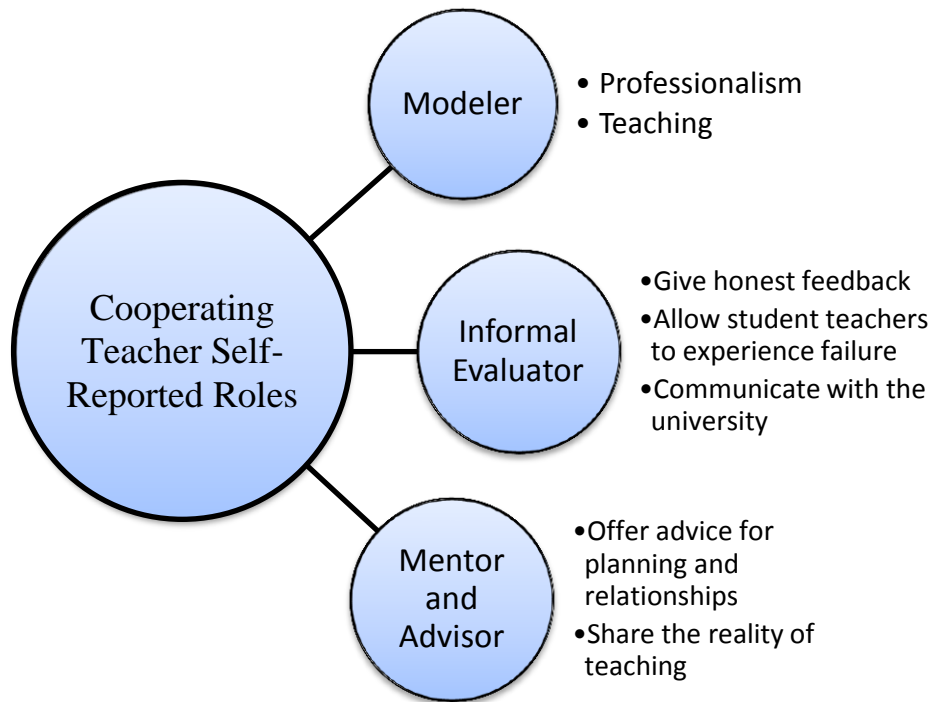


Figure 9: Cooperating teacher self-reported roles

### **Modeler**

The cooperating teachers identify modeling as one of their primary roles as evidenced by Natasha's quote: "I think as a mentor teacher, my job is to model." Teachers describe modeling two important things for student teachers: professionalism and teaching. Not all teachers talked about modeling professionalism, but when they did, it seemed to stem from an assessment of need in their student teacher. For example, Darlene explained, "Sometimes the important thing is not the mentoring of the teacher in the classroom but the mentor of an employee in the building. I know my student teacher needed more help on the interaction with co-workers and parent calls." Natasha recognizes that a big challenge "young teachers face is establishing credibility as the instructional leader, the disciplinarian when necessary, the authority figure, but also still keeping that communication to a point where the students feel empowered and have input." With needs recognized, these cooperating teachers acted to model appropriate dispositions.



Cooperating teachers in this study spend significant time modeling teaching, including dispositions from Standard 7: Planning for Instruction and Standard 8: Instructional Strategies. Participants describe three aspects of modeling teaching: planning the lesson, implementing the lesson, and reflecting on the lesson. The cooperating teachers focus on planning and going over lesson plans because “when you start, it takes 8 million years to make A lesson plan.” (Anne) James explains, “I’d even have them sit with me as I planned to show them the process, the mental process that I’d go through in creating a lesson.” Ben makes sure that his student teachers “walk out with a year’s worth of lessons and that they are not going to be overwhelmed with the production of lessons for two or three different classes on a daily basis.” He describes,

Before they leave me, they have experience not only in writing a lesson, not only in planning for a unit, but in actually taking the subject matter, breaking it down into units, taking the units and putting them into lessons and having a timeline, and having a framework and an example of the entire school year for a class.

He guides them through examining an assessment by asking what topics are covered and how to teach those topics. He scaffolds the experience saying, “I’ll do that with them a few times, they’ll watch me do it, and then we’ll do it together, and then they’ll do it and I’ll critique them, and then they’ll do it again and hopefully by the end, they’re doing it by themselves.” The critical aspect of this approach is that Ben’s goal is autonomy for the student teacher.

These cooperating teachers are constantly modeling lesson implementation, including thinking through lesson details, applying classroom management techniques, and establishing Standard 3: Learning Environments. Helen models walking through the instructional details of the lesson, asking her student teacher “Are they reading? How are they reading it? Are they doing this in groups? How are you gonna modify that?” because “they need these constant

questions when they're planning the lesson." Helen also encourages her student teacher to write down questions to ask during the lesson to help her cope with her nervousness. Jasmine modeled lesson implementation by giving her student teacher examples of how to scaffold lessons.

As part of lesson implementation, case study participants model creating learning environments and establishing relationships, including classroom management. The cooperating teachers are more conscientious of classroom management when a student teacher is in the room. At the end of a tiring day, Anne describes herself thinking, "Ok, fine, I'm gonna do what I'm supposed to do [make phone calls]" because the student teacher is watching. Jasmine has "a really big bag of tricks for classroom management" and getting "the flow of the class back on track" that she shared with her student teacher who struggled with classroom management. Natasha hopes she models "the correct disposition, the balance between being an authority figure and having a good relationship." Natasha explains the balance of modeling professionalism, establishing relationships, and managing a classroom:

You get these interns that are 21 and they're not quite sure how to respond because they're not comfortable yet being an authority figure. I think it's my job to model that you can be an authority figure. You don't have to be mean and overbearing, but you can still have a relationship with the students, just on a very professional level.

Finally, case study participants model reflection and Standard 9: Professional Learning Environment. Darlene does not tell her student teacher how to do things because she believes "we all have to find our own ways because we all have our own different styles and dispositions," but she shows "them how to evaluate themselves so they can improve." Helen uses data about how the student teacher moves around the room, the questioning of boys versus girls, and the type of feedback they give students as the springboard for reflective discussions. Her

methods demonstrate how the modeling role can overlap with the second role cooperating teachers fill, informal evaluator.

### **Informal Evaluator**

Cooperating teachers in this study do not feel they have a significant role in formal evaluations or a final say in whether the student teacher passes the field experience, but they do describe informally evaluating the student teacher. In order to evaluate, cooperating teachers ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of student teachers. Darlene says, “The role the mentor teacher must play is identifying what the student needs.” She explains that the cooperating teacher has to use any pre-existing information and “balance that with what you see yourself in that student teacher.” If a student teacher arrives to the placement with deficits in some areas, Helen thinks she has the responsibility to “make suggestions for next step growth.” Once cooperating teachers gauge student teachers’ abilities, other responsibilities of informal evaluation include giving honest feedback, allowing the student teacher to experience failure, and communicating with the university.

One opportunity for informal evaluation is during the reflection process. As the cooperating teacher models reflection, this is also a time to provide honest feedback on different lesson components. I explained how Ben scaffolds learning to plan lessons, but an integral part of this practice is his critique of the student teacher’s work. He gives “pointers on what needs to change and grow,” but as an informal evaluator, he cannot force them to accept the criticisms or acknowledge that they need to grow. Helen describes how she guides her student teacher through reflection by asking questions, but she also says that there are times the “intern just needed to be told, ‘this is unacceptable!’” She says, “You have to establish the expectations and the parameters of the job” and does not “think that you’re doing anyone any favors by making it too

easy on them, giving them too much of a crutch.” Jasmine is also honest, saying

I was very blunt with her. Why sugar coat this? You need to know what you’re getting yourself into! And when she did a terrible job, I told her she did a terrible job. But I never left her at terrible, ‘that was terrible, bye.’ I would open up with ‘Ok, that was bad, that was really bad. How are you going to fix it next time?’ It was never just ‘you’re awful’ and walk away. I always like to open up the floor to conversation. Let her get some ideas going and then present her with a few extra ideas.

Jasmine explains that, although this may sound harsh,

You can’t be afraid to be open and honest with your intern. If they’re not successful at something and you don’t tell them cuz you don’t want to hurt their feelings, how are they ever going to learn? You have to have that open honesty and be willing to say, ‘Look, this isn’t working out, so what could we do different?’

She incorporates honest feedback with reflection as she guides them on ways to improve. She is also incorporating her role of mentor and advisor, which I discuss shortly.

Another responsibility of informal evaluation is allowing student teachers to have some failures and then reflect on the experience. James describes, “There’s a little bit of ‘Well, let’s see. Let’s watch this totally fail and then we can discuss what you need to do to get it right’.” Kelly also thinks, “Sometimes you learn by going out there and bombing a lesson.” Darlene knows student teachers are “going to have to have their failures and successes and you’re going to have to show them how to evaluate themselves so they too can improve.” The cooperating teacher is not evaluating, but helping the student teacher learn how to self-evaluate. Darlene and Jasmine allow mistakes to occur and then interrupt a lesson to make corrections. They do this in order to clarify incorrect statements or to alleviate student confusion by reviewing a concept.

They do not give feedback in the moment, but they can signal a problem with the student teacher's instruction to discuss later. These cooperating teachers are letting their student teachers experience the trial and error that they identified as a way their dispositions developed. In these scenarios, trial and error has fewer risks because the student teachers are still under the supervision of a cooperating teacher who should prevent any situations that could cause the students harm. In fact, the cooperating teachers talk about one challenge that they have is allowing mistakes and not always jumping in to correct student teachers.

The case study participants also conduct informal evaluations when they communicate with the university. Helen explains, "It's our responsibility with whatever liaison there is at the university to say, 'I think there's definitely a skill gap here'." James agrees, saying, "There needs to be feedback between the teacher and the student teacher and the mentor teacher and the student teacher, and the mentor teacher and the supervision at the university." Natasha worked closely with the university and the university supervisor valued her verbal and written feedback indicating if there was a problem. Even though the participants are communicating with the university, this is still informal because the cooperating teachers' opinion does not carry influence when the program makes the decision to pass or not pass a student teacher.

While cooperating teachers in this study feel they do not have a formal evaluation role, they embrace their informal evaluator role. Ben thinks that "on a day to day basis, it's the informal feedback that you give your student teacher that's going to be most useful and most relevant." Lisa describes her role as similar to that of a department chair—someone who is your advocate, your support system, there to help you, and not there to criticize and judge you. Natasha sums up the role, saying, "I think it's just a lot of dialogue and even just from class to class, feedback. 'This is what you did well, for the next class what about trying something a

different way or using a different term?’ I felt like there was a LOT of dialogue, but the majority of it was informal.” Natasha is describing her role of informal evaluator and the final role that cooperating teachers identified, mentor and advisor.

### **Mentor and Advisor**

Cooperating teachers in this study identify the role of mentor and advisor, which is different from a modeler and an informal evaluator. As mentors and advisors, teachers offer emotional support by cheering on the student teacher, guiding them through self-evaluation, helping them relax, giving them confidence to discover for themselves, and allowing them autonomy. Lisa says, “I think it’s your role to make them better, more confident. My responsibility is to support and give advice.” The following quotes illustrate teachers discussing how they support the student teacher rather than evaluate:

The student teacher is learning and you’re a teacher of them as well, so you’re helping them learn. (Jeanine)

You have to let them know, certainly when you’re doing your observations, as they try and interact with students. You have to comment on those dispositions and how they develop the rapport with students, and the flexibility, and the tolerance, and the patience.

You have to let them know, because they don’t know what they don’t know. (Helen)

Here are my experiences. Ok you’re having trouble in this area. The students are not following you as you’re guiding them through this lesson. They’re confused. That’s because you need to scaffold your questions. Here are some examples of how you could scaffold your questions. (Jasmine)

These cooperating teachers share ideas and suggestions, which can overlap with modeling, but the emotional support that accompanies being a mentor and advisor is what sets it apart.

As mentors, the cooperating teachers integrate advice and suggestions for student teachers as they think through lessons, pointing out the subtleties of planning a lesson or interacting with students. Ben clarifies with his student teachers, “This is what I have to teach and this is how I’m going to teach it, but you can’t necessarily follow exactly what I do because you’re not the same person.” As the student teachers plan, cooperating teachers ask questions about how they will present ideas to the students and how they will group students. They give advice in the course of conversations or in response to a student teacher struggling, but they are not showing how to do anything or evaluating what the student teacher is doing.

One responsibility of mentoring and advising mentioned by every case study participant is sharing the reality of teaching with prospective teachers. This stemmed from their concern that student teachers do not seem to be aware of the work entailed in teaching, which I discuss more when I present the challenges cooperating teachers have. Student teachers arrive to their field placements and sometimes decide that they do not want to teach. These cooperating teachers want their student teachers to know what a classroom is like when they are on their own. Natasha thought it was her job “to give them the real picture, and do it in a way without scaring them away because sometimes the real picture makes them not want to do this.” Kelly thought it was beneficial to leave the intern alone “because the students do act differently than when [the cooperating teacher] is sitting in the room than when they’re [student teacher] by themselves.” Lisa wanted her student teacher to know that the first two years feel like “What the heck? Why am I not getting paid for two jobs? Cuz I’m working two jobs!” At the same time, Lisa tried to reassure her student teacher that it gets easier by sharing “the things that I thought that I did wrong, especially coming out of my student teaching and things that I learned over time.” Participants also take the responsibility to convey the positives of teaching. For example, Ben

shares that it is rewarding, refreshing, and very satisfying to have students return to thank him and “that’s the kind of thing that those student teachers need to hear. This is an opportunity for them to profoundly affect another human being.” Natasha thinks student teachers “should know there’s a lot of frustration in teaching and the rewards sometimes seem few and far between, but when they come, they stay and they stick with you.” These cooperating teachers are not trying to scare student teachers, but they want student teachers to know what teaching entails before they are independent and overwhelmed.

The cooperating teachers in this study define their roles as modelers, informal evaluators, and mentors and advisors. In these roles, these cooperating teachers give student teachers honest feedback, while trying to convey all the nuances of teaching, including planning lessons and managing a classroom. A relevant question for this study is whether they consider developing student teacher dispositions one of their responsibilities.

### **Role Regarding Dispositions**

When I talked to cooperating teachers about what they considered their role to be with prospective teachers, one of the immediate responses was “skills.” For example, Jeanine sees her job as developing “that skill of how to teach that knowledge to students.” James thinks people can improve on the “logistics of teaching, the planning, preparation, [and] organization to some extent.” Jasmine explains how she develops the disposition, the enactment, of those skills:

I should be focusing on the skills and when to apply the skills. She might have a little bit of knowledge of those skills and what they are, but our focus should be on the application. ‘Here’s the situation, this a real life situation now, go into your toolbox, what can we use?’

As cooperating teachers referred to the InTASC standards during our conversations, they



prioritized certain dispositions. The following excerpts illustrate a consensus among cooperating teachers that Standard 4: Content Knowledge is not the cooperating teacher's responsibility.

The content knowledge obviously has to be there, but if they're doing a Master's program in education, theoretically, their content knowledge is there (Anne)

There's a certain amount of expectation that the content knowledge for this level of teaching is solid. (Darlene)

You don't need to focus so much on the content knowledge because once you've gotten to the point that you are student teaching, you should already have the content knowledge. And if not, you should not be here yet. (Jasmine)

If my student teacher doesn't know the content area, that's a problem. (Jeanine)

The knowledge is not necessarily my responsibility. (Natasha)

I guess my gut reaction would say skills are more what I'm working on because they should have had years of studying the knowledge already. (James)

In order to become certified as a high school teacher, you need a degree in your content area. I don't feel like my job would be to teach my student teacher chemistry. (Ben)

Content knowledge is one of the critical dispositions, but case study participants expect student teachers to have the basic disposition for content knowledge. I do not include these comments to insinuate that these cooperating teachers are not addressing Standard 4: Content Knowledge or Standard 5: Application of Content. Ben says, "**How** to teach the chemistry is a knowledge that I think is part of my job. Being able to break down into smaller pieces for them, things like that I think I should deal with." Jasmine guides her student teacher through scaffolding questions so the class understands better. Anne explains, "They should be able to walk away saying 'I know how to make a lesson plan. I know how to implement the lesson plan' and look back on it and

say ‘what do I do next?’”

In contrast, the cooperating teachers think that Standard 3: Learning Environments is critical to develop with student teachers. Natasha explains, “Teaching them about a learning environment is extremely important because that’s kind of the foundation.” The learning environment sets the tone in the classroom. With learning environment at the forefront of their self-identified dispositions, it is logical that these cooperating teachers would emphasize it with their student teachers. Jasmine explains that she focuses on developing the learning environment with student teachers because “it’s very important to understand how to get to know your students, especially when you’re gonna be on your own.” Her comment illustrates that getting to know students is something people learn *how* to do, so cooperating teachers can support that development in prospective teachers.

The cooperating teachers in this study think student teachers should have some other dispositions, including professionalism, liking children, patience, and tolerance, before they begin their internship. Darlene claims that dispositions are “innate in any good teacher” and while some can be learned, “none of them are going to be foreign to the good teacher.” Kelly agrees, “You have some of them initially.” James proposes that universities screen candidates before they enter the classroom because he describes certain character dispositions, such as introversion and difficulty reading people that are “innate within us and immutable.” While looking at the InTASC standards, Lisa suggested that student teachers should have “at least an idea” of learner development, learning differences, learning environment, and content knowledge. The suggestion that student teachers arrive with some dispositions supports the entity perspective that some researchers have.

While these cooperating teachers think there are certain dispositions that student teachers

should have and consider other dispositions fixed, they do make the effort to correct and develop minor dispositions. Jeanine explains, “I really didn’t think it was my role necessarily to *teach* dispositions, it was my role to *model* dispositions and to help him maybe develop those that he had.” Jeanine supported her student teacher, but she clarified that she “didn’t think that was part of my job.” Jasmine recognized that the skills necessary for getting to know the students have to be developed and she supported her student teacher in that learning process. Helen tried to develop dispositions with her student teacher by giving feedback on dispositions she witnessed. As cooperating teachers try to develop certain dispositions, they also express concern that they cannot change student teacher dispositions in the time allotted for student teaching. James claims that certain dispositions are immutable, but “There are dispositions that can, over time, be molded.” Anne explains, “In the time that we have with them, we don’t have that much time to develop their dispositions other than to point out ones that are seriously detrimental.”

If time is a limiting factor, this could explain why cooperating teachers might prioritize certain dispositions to focus on with their student teacher. Sometimes they do this by appraising the student teachers’ strengths and weaknesses. Darlene chose to emphasize interactions with co-workers because her student teacher struggled with professional relationships. The cooperating teachers take an active role in developing certain dispositions that they deem important to teaching. James thinks that without reflection, the ability to measure the success of a lesson and to absorb “what they’re doing wrong and where,” then the rest of the dispositions “are not really relevant.” Cooperating teachers may also omit dispositions that they identify as innate, necessary to have before beginning, or that they think can develop later. Natasha thinks innovative applications of content and assessment can develop later so she does not emphasize those with student teachers. James does not think cross-disciplinary skills are “a starting point for a new

teacher.” A concern with omitting certain dispositions from consideration during the field experience is that a cooperating teacher might assume a student teacher has a certain disposition and then neglect trying to develop it when the student teacher needs that support.

### **Cooperating Teacher Knowledge of Dispositional Standards**

Using the InTASC standards as a reference, I have discussed the dispositions that cooperating teachers have and the roles that they have in developing student teachers’ dispositions. A relevant question is what cooperating teachers even know of various sources of dispositional standards (InTASC, university, district). Before I provided an explanation or examples of the InTASC documents, I specifically asked each teacher, “Are you familiar with the term *disposition*?” All but one of the case study participants was able to give at least a short description of the term. Their descriptions included a “tendency of actions,” “my outlook,” “my perspective,” “your philosophy,” and “beliefs that control actions.”

I also asked participants if they were aware that teacher education programs have the responsibility to develop and assess dispositions. The teachers thought it sounded like a good idea, but some of their responses show that they were unaware of the term as it related to education; they did not know about the InTASC standards, they were not aware that dispositions are a requirement, and they were uninformed that universities assess candidate dispositions.

I’ve never really experienced that that is something that is stressed or actively taught in terms of the students that I personally have taught or have come under my supervision as site coordinator. (Ben)

I did not know that. (Lisa)

I’ve not heard the term dispositions used in reference to education. (Natasha)

I can’t think of disposition ever being a factor [in candidate evaluations]. (James)

Some teachers recognized similarities between the InTASC standards and university documents. Jasmine did not know the term disposition in the first interview, but she noted similarities between the dispositional standards and items in the university's evaluation tools when I showed her the standards. She understood the importance of monitoring certain qualities in the student teachers, but she could not identify the term disposition. Anne was the only cooperating teacher aware of the dispositional standards because she had heard about them in her graduate studies, not because her student teacher's program had shared that dispositions were part of the evaluation. These cooperating teachers take seriously the responsibility for preparing candidates, but their knowledge and experience with dispositional standards and the way the university develops candidate dispositions are limited. I discuss the implications for cooperating teachers' lack of awareness in Chapter 6.

A question that a couple cooperating teachers had was how colleges of education could put dispositions into words and include them in an assessment tool for prospective teachers. This is also a concern of some researchers. Lisa questioned how universities could develop and assess dispositions. Natasha thought universities want "the passionate teacher, the flexible teacher, but I don't know how they're going about looking for those traits." It is interesting that James proposed screening students before they enter a classroom, but also thought, "They [universities] hesitate to put those kinds of things into words, onto a document." Natasha later asked a question: "What do you do when you get to a situation where you have this person that's fulfilled all their training and then are told 'You don't have the disposition?' For teaching? That's a pretty interesting quandary, don't you think?" That is a quandary, and one that researchers consider (Diez, 2007; Dottin, 2009). These comments speak to the cooperating teachers' understanding of the complexity involved in defining and assessing dispositions.

## Challenges Cooperating Teachers Face

My third and final research question is: What are the challenges cooperating teachers face, especially as they relate to prospective teachers' dispositions? In order to answer this, I directly asked cooperating teachers about their challenges, but I was also able to infer some of their challenges from our conversations. When I coded interviews, two primary challenges emerged: 1) the student teachers were lacking and 2) the cooperating teachers struggled with aspects of the evaluative role (See Figure 10). I explain these in more detail below, but first I discuss two of the less mentioned, but still significant challenges: 1) a lack of time and 2) letting go control.

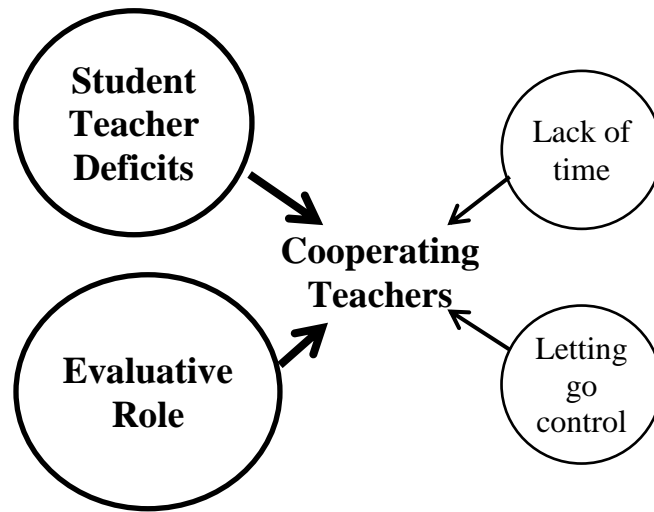


Figure 10: Challenges of cooperating teachers

Teachers struggle to find time to complete their necessary and ever-increasing number of tasks, including planning lessons, contacting parents, completing necessary paperwork, and grading papers. They often volunteer long hours beyond the contractual workday to accomplish all of their tasks. Cooperating teachers have additional layers of responsibility when mentoring a prospective teacher and they strain to find time for co-planning, reflecting, or just talking with

the student teacher. Anne explains,

I think the hardest part is making the time to plan with them and to go over their lesson plans and then to do the reflection. You know to sort of reflect on the lesson with them because it's just not always there in the day.

She says, "It's like having a whole other class to teach." Ben also feels a time crunch, saying, "There's not time for a teacher to do what they need to do without the addition of that mentee." James recommends, "Being a mentor teacher should be a full time job." Kelly talks about the lack of incentives and benefits to be a cooperating teacher because it takes a lot of time and she has not had a student teacher in two years because she was "burnt out." James sums up the problem, explaining, "There's not a very good understanding of just how much time it takes to deal with a student teacher and to do it properly." Making mentoring a student teacher a full time job could alleviate these feelings.

A shortage of time also limits opportunities to review university paperwork. All of the participants received paperwork explaining the field experience, the evaluation requirements, and the role of the cooperating teacher. However, some cooperating teachers never looked at the paperwork, or only looked at the parts related to the evaluation tools. Jeanine admits, "We probably got an insane amount of paperwork that I didn't really read." In fact, her student teacher's university provides a flash drive of information containing eight folders (general information, guiding principles, instructional resources, intern assessments, intern assignments and documentations, intern resource information, professional portfolio information, and responsibilities) with approximately 80 documents. Considering the number of documents, the perception that they are not all relevant to cooperating teachers, and the lack of guidance from the university, one can understand why Jeanine might not have read the paperwork.

Finally, these cooperating teachers assert that there is a lack of time to attend professional development. Ben says there is “plenty of help you can get if you’re willing to put in the time, but during the school year,” he does not “have time to deal with that kind of thing.” Darlene recalls invitations to professional development, but she “already had things going on and couldn’t attend them.” The district offers a class about teaching adult learners, but many of the cooperating teachers said they did not have time to take the class.

Another challenge the cooperating teachers in this study described was letting go of control. Natasha says,

My weakness is glaring, and it’s I’m a control freak. And it’s very, very hard for me to let go and let someone else take over my classroom and do things **their** way. I feel as though my interns have to be very willing to adapt to my way of doing things. I am without a doubt a control freak, and in some respects that’s good, and in some respects I feel like I’m inhibiting their personal growth because ultimately I’m responsible for the student teacher, the intern, but I’m still more responsible for these students. And if they don’t learn because of the transition that’s going on up in front of the room with the teacher versus the intern, then that reflects on me, and I’m crazy when it comes to that. I’m a control freak without a doubt.

Darlene also says that people perceive her as a control freak and she likes “to maintain control and have **my** room and **my** things and all of that.” This transfers to Darlene and others admitting to being a “little quick to jump in and try to make a correction” when they saw a problem with the student teacher’s instruction. Jasmine has trouble “just sitting back” and letting her students struggle because the student teacher “didn’t know how to scaffold questions or didn’t do well with classroom management.” The motivation behind these cooperating teachers not



relinquishing control is their concern for student learning. They hold their responsibility for student learning in higher regard than the student teachers' learning.

Another reason case study participants struggle to let go is because they are still accountable for their professional responsibilities such as required assessments and planning.

You don't want to leave those in the hands of your student teacher because that's on you.

(Kelly)

I wanted to get more input from the student teacher, but at the same time, you've got your responsibilities in grading papers and prepping for the next day and making copies and things like that. (Natasha)

Kelly was also concerned because the administrators "still expect you to do your evaluations, which makes it challenging if [the] intern has been teaching and all of a sudden throw me in there to teach a lesson." Finding time to complete all the work required of teaching and giving up control of the classroom are challenges experienced by these cooperating teachers, but participants were more outspoken about what they perceived as deficits in the student teachers and their concerns of fulfilling the evaluator role.

### **The Student Teacher is Lacking**

Cooperating teachers explain that one reason they struggle to relinquish control of their classroom is their concern for student learning. Another reason they do not allow student teachers complete autonomy is that they have concerns about their student teachers' abilities. Cooperating teachers understand that the student teaching experience is still a learning time for the prospective teacher, but they expect a certain level of teaching skills and professionalism on which to build. They are also mindful that the prospective teacher will be independent the following year, so the student teaching experience is the principal time to learn. One of the main

challenges that these cooperating teachers identify is the deficit that they see in the student teachers' professionalism, teaching skills, and ability to establish a learning environment.

**Professionalism.** When I coded interviews to identify the self-reported dispositions of cooperating teachers, professionalism and work ethic emerged as two of their prevalent dispositions. Additionally, I identified Professional Responsibility as a category of highly affirmed items in the TDI. Given their commitment to their own professionalism, it is logical that participants attend to professionalism with their student teachers. Cooperating teachers in this study express concern regarding student teachers' lack of basic professional behavior, including promptness, attendance, and familiarity with communicating professionally. James described one of his student teachers who "never showed up on time and by on time, I'm not talking about you should be here at 7:30 and he was here at 7:35. It was coming in at 10:00." Other teachers had candidates who would not show up to class and would fail to contact the cooperating teacher regarding the absence. Darlene's prospective teacher "needed more help on the interaction with co-workers" and she "had to talk to her several times about email protocol."

Student teachers did not just lack attendance and courteous, professional communication skills. They did not understand the work ethic needed to plan and teach lessons and they struggled to commit to the time for those tasks. The cooperating teachers lament the work ethic that is sometimes missing from the student teachers. Ben says,

The biggest challenge there is in terms of getting student teachers to be effective and competent teachers is a work ethic. I think a lot of students that we get are coming to us without a true understanding of what is required in order to be a teacher.

He explains, "The idea that you have to work until the work is done, not for a given amount of time is difficult for some of them (student teachers) to grasp and deal with." James described one

of his student teachers coming “in with very limited preparation for a lesson, I would almost go so far to say virtually no preparation” and that he was shocked “that somebody who’s preparing to do this job for the first time is working so little.” He reiterates, saying,

Even a lesson we’ve taught many times, we’re still putting a lot of work into it, so it was shocking to me that there was still a mentality somewhere that this is just kind of an easy job. Why it isn’t understood that this is a **really** hard job and you’re gonna be working a lot of hours, not even just to do it well, but just to survive.

Ben explains that a consequence of the disconnect between student teachers’ work ethic and the never-ending job requirements is “a number of students have shown up for a week or two weeks and come to the realization that teaching requires more work than they are willing to put in and just stop. They don’t come back.” James has experienced this first hand since both of his student teachers did not finish the program. Unfortunately, the student teaching experience is at the end of the degree program and the students have limited options when they exit the field experience.

Not all student teachers lack a work ethic. Some cooperating teachers describe their student teachers overworking in order to complete the basic tasks of teaching. This is another area that cooperating teachers assessed as a deficit in student teachers. I describe this difficulty to complete the basic tasks of teaching as a lack of the disposition for teaching skills.

**Skills.** The InTASC standards encompass knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The focus of this research is the dispositions described in those standards, so student teachers’ lack of skills may seem peripheral. However, cooperating teachers identified that student teachers lack the dispositions for teaching skills and completing tasks to prepare lessons as they are defined in Standard 7: Planning for Instruction, Standard 5: Application of Content, and Standard 8: Instructional Strategies.

Standard 7: Planning for Instruction includes using knowledge of students' diverse strengths and needs to plan effective instruction and being open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances. Jasmine's student teacher struggled to adjust content information to the level of the students by scaffolding questions. Anne describes her student teacher as "not detail oriented enough to create a lesson." He had completed two years of student teaching, but did not take the examples from his cooperating teachers and apply them to his own planning. The student teachers have three years of education courses that theoretically address the steps involved in writing lesson plans. In principle, they have the knowledge to construct a lesson, but they are not *applying* and *enacting* this knowledge in the practical setting. They lack the disposition.

Some cooperating teachers claim that student teachers are missing the dispositions for Standard 5: Application of Content and Standard 8: Instructional Strategies. Standard 5 includes valuing open and flexible learning environments, and Standard 8 includes using an understanding of learners when planning instruction. Helen says some student teachers "perceive education the way it used to be in the fifties" and think of teaching as "let me come in and lecture for a good 40 minutes and then we're finished." They need support on applying the interactive strategies they learn in education courses. Jeanine had a student teacher who "didn't seem to value any of the learner centered ways of teaching, which I would have expected from somebody just out of school to be a teacher." She says he "wanted to be your lecture, stand in front of the class, tell entertaining stories kind of person." Other student teachers arrive prepared to engage students in creative lessons, so it seems teacher education programs are not promoting lecture as an instructional strategy. This indicates that some student teachers lack the dispositions.

Due to the lack of skills, all but one case study participant was concerned that student

teachers could not handle a full teaching load at any point of their internship and they were not ready to have their own classroom the following year. Anne was the most emphatic in her concern, saying, “He should not be a teacher. He is not a teacher, He just IS NOT, never will be, like it is not within his personhood.” She was not the only person who thought her student teacher was not ready for teaching. Natasha recalls having “at least one student teacher that I believe I may have actually said to her supervisor ‘She knows her stuff, but I don’t see her being able to get up and effectively teach in a classroom setting’.” Overall, cooperating teachers feel as if “schools of education do very little to prepare students” and “they need to be in schools more” with “more experience in the classroom earlier.”

**Learning environment.** A final disposition the cooperating teachers explained the student teachers were lacking was Standard 3: Learning Environments. Cooperating teachers in this study universally agreed that it is crucial for student teachers to develop their dispositions for the learning environment because, as Natasha explained, “That’s kind of the foundation.” Participants describe situations in which the student teacher lacks certain personality characteristics and the student teacher does not interact in a positive manner with students. Some student teachers lack charisma, are overly critical, and do not understand the students. Darlene thought that her “student teacher’s tone tended to be negative and overly critical” so she would reflect with her afterward about what she could have done differently. Kelly explains that one of her student teachers was “extremely brilliant, planned really nice lessons, always had a smile on his face, but almost to the point where the kids thought he was fake and he couldn’t connect, and that was their biggest complaint; they couldn’t connect.”

Kelly is not the only cooperating teacher whose students did not accept the student teacher. Helen and Jasmine’s student teachers had a difficult time getting the students to accept

them. The cooperating teachers build trust as part of creating a learning environment, but Jasmine's student teacher struggled because the students "don't know her, they don't trust her, they don't have a relationship with her." She even had a class use profanity to tell the student teacher what they thought. Due to the lack of relationships with certain classes, Jasmine was never able to let the student teacher take responsibility for the full course load. Helen also describes how her student teacher "was terrified of [the students] and they hated her" because "they thought she was really not very good." This was intensified by the fact that Helen had a strong relationship with the students because she had taught them the previous year.

Without observations, it is unclear if the disposition for learning environment could have developed in these examples of student teachers. Regardless, student teachers who lack the disposition to create positive learning environments are a concern because, the following year, these individuals will have their own classroom. They will not have the advantage of the cooperating teachers' relationships and they will have to establish their own learning environment. In one school, during a six-year period, only nine of 45 student teachers, the majority of whom were from one university, completed their field experience. This statistic is a cause for alarm. Addressing the concerns cooperating teachers have regarding the quality of student teachers is a possible area for improving the completion rate of student teaching and providing classroom ready teachers to the profession.

### **The Evaluative Role**

Evaluation is an inherent part of identifying areas that student teachers need support. The second main challenge that case study participants described was satisfying the requirements of the evaluative role. While the cooperating teachers considered themselves informal evaluators, they serve in an evaluative capacity for the university. The participants struggled with using the

university evaluations, pre-assessing the student teachers, and giving feedback to the student teachers.

**University evaluations.** Cooperating teachers in this study expressed concerns about the university evaluations. They criticized that the evaluations were “remarkably verbose and unwieldy,” “asked a ton of questions,” and were “diluted with so many non-essential factors, that it was difficult to actually answer the core questions.” James felt assessing whether the student teacher had the disposition to teach was a priority, but it was not represented on the evaluation.

None of it had to do with anything that I thought was particularly relevant to “Can this person do the job?” So even a question like “does this person show up on time?” I think that’s an important part of the job that was never asked as part of the evaluation. Are they prepared? Do they have a lesson plan? Are they able to engage in higher-level questioning and so on? That might have been on there somewhere, but it wasn’t at the forefront.

Instead, he remembers questions about if the person considered community dynamics when they planned lessons and he did not know how to answer that.

These cooperating teachers thought the university evaluations were not relevant to the job or to what the school was doing. Kelly did not think the evaluations connected to what a teacher does and did not “match up to what our county’s expectations are.” She explains, “When you’re used to being evaluated as a teacher a certain way and then the university expects something different and uses different terminology and different expectations, just makes it a little frustrating and too time consuming.” Darlene “found that the demands that (the university) made on my student teacher were invasive.” She had to arrange for the student teacher to teach in other classrooms, but since other teachers had not agreed to have a student teacher, she felt she was

“calling in favors.”

Regardless of the cumbersome evaluations, the cooperating teachers were confident in their overall assessments of their student teachers. However, a final challenge with the university evaluation system was that even though some cooperating teachers thought their student teacher was not ready to teach, the university passed the student teacher. For example, Anne describes the situation with one of her student teachers and explains that even after he repeated his student teaching experience, the four cooperating teachers with whom he worked expressed that “he still can’t make a good lesson plan.” The university allowed him to graduate against the advice of the cooperating teachers, and he is struggling to find a job in part because none of the cooperating teachers are willing to write a letter of recommendation.

**Need of pre-evaluations.** In order to mitigate some of the challenges with student teacher skills, the cooperating teachers suggested that universities provide some form of pre-evaluation to the cooperating teacher. Universities could share information about the strengths and weaknesses of the student teacher or develop an evaluation for cooperating teachers to use. James and Jeanine said that they overestimated the ability of their student teachers and that an assessment of their prior knowledge might have been useful. Jeanine thought she “gave him too much independence” because she “had expectations that he would be at a certain point, so then it was having to go back and sort of teach him where he should have been.” Jasmine wanted communication with the cooperating teacher from the first school in her student teacher’s placement so that she knew strengths and weaknesses from another teacher. During the focus group interview, the participants agreed that having “some sort of idea about whether or not the prospective student teacher has those traits” would be helpful. If cooperating teachers had a description of the student teachers’ strengths and weaknesses, they might be able to develop



areas of weakness and begin to alleviate some of their concerns regarding the level of student teacher preparedness.

**Giving feedback.** A final area in which the cooperating teachers experienced some challenges was giving feedback to the student teacher. They have to balance constructive criticism with praise, and some cooperating teachers worried that being too honest would damage the working relationship. This approach could result in what James describes:

You see how much they're struggling so you want to be positive, but at the same time, in retrospect, I really don't think that being positive is particularly helpful to them. I waited too long to get supervisors involved and get them to see what the reality was of the classroom, how much of a disaster it was, it really was too late.

This does a disservice to the student teacher and the students. Other cooperating teachers agreed with Jasmine's comment, "If they're not successful at something and you don't tell them because you don't want to hurt their feelings, how are they ever going to learn?" Natasha says, "When something works, I tell them and when something doesn't work, I tell them, but I'm not mean when I tell them. I would much rather they heard an honest appraisal." A couple of teachers shared that student teachers interpreted their attempt at constructive criticism as mean and they caused their student teacher to cry. These cooperating teachers work to balance the necessity of providing honest feedback with supporting the student teachers confidence and growth.

### **Comparison and Integration of Survey and Case Study Data**

I used the case study interviews to expand the answers to my research questions, but a mixed methods study provides the researcher more than one type of data and allows for data integration. In this section, I discuss two areas in which the survey data and the case study data enhance my findings: 1) the role cooperating teachers have in supporting student teachers and 2)

cooperating teachers' self-reported dispositions. First, I compare the roles that teachers identified on the survey with the roles that teachers named and described during interviews. The roles identified in the interviews may corroborate or contradict those from the survey, making triangulation one purpose of this data comparison. In addition, this data comparison offers an opportunity for complementarity as teachers elaborate on the details of these roles.

Second, I compare the self-identified dispositions from the survey with the self-identified dispositions classified from the interviews for the purposes of triangulation and complementarity. My data provide opportunities for triangulation because I characterize prominent dispositions described in both the survey and interviews. I also compare levels of affirmation for the InTASC standards with the InTASC disposition code frequencies from the interviews. This is important for determining whether these cooperating teachers possess and promote the dispositions that InTASC identifies and universities desire. My data have the purpose of complementarity when I use the interviews to elaborate, enhance, and clarify the dispositions identified in the survey (Greene, 2001).

### **Cooperating Teacher Roles**

On the survey, I asked participants to select cooperating teacher roles from a list of predetermined options. Teachers said their main roles were modeler (75.9%), and mentor and advisor (88.8%) (See Figure 6). In addition, 31% of the participants said evaluator was a role of cooperating teachers. I asked teachers the open-ended questions, "What do you see as your role in supporting the development of dispositions in student teachers?" and "What do you think your role is in preparing prospective teachers with regard to these dispositions?" in the first and second interviews, respectively. Participants' interview answers corroborated the survey responses. The three primary roles of cooperating teachers described by case study participants

are mentor and advisor, modeler, and informal evaluator.

All ten case study participants identified being a mentor and advisor at least two times during their interview and I coded for it 47 different times. In the interviews, cooperating teachers gave examples of how they mentored and advised student teachers. The case study participants also identified modeling as a role of cooperating teachers. In the survey, participants could only select the generic term “modeler,” but during interviews, participants elaborated on what the role of modeling entailed. During my code development process, I recognized that teachers talked about modeling different things for student teachers. I separated the role of modeler into modeling professionalism and modeling teaching. When I analyzed the data, four of the ten participants said they modeled professionalism. In contrast, all ten participants said that their role was modeling teaching, and there were 37 coding instances.

The distinction between modeling professionalism and modeling teaching is indicative of the different dispositions that teachers model. Professionalism, with only nine coding instances, aligns to Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, another of the lower affirmed items on the TDI. Modeling teaching aligns to Standard 3: Learning Environments, Standard 7: Planning for Instruction, and Standard 8: Instructional Strategies. It is interesting that Learning Environments and Planning for Instruction were the two lowest affirmed standards on the survey, but teachers discussed them frequently in interviews. As I explained, even if teachers do not self-identify the disposition, it does not mean they neglect supporting its development in student teachers. This could be the case with Planning for Instruction. The cooperating teachers claim they have the role to model planning and they give evidence of this in their interviews, but they did not identify it as disposition. This could be because it was not a natural part of our discussions or that their disposition for planning is weaker than other dispositions.

Another role that participants identified for cooperating teachers is that of evaluator. On the survey 33% of participants said that evaluation was a role of cooperating teachers. In contrast, all ten of the case study participants claimed being an evaluator was a role. This seems to be an incongruence between the data sources, but when I inquired about the evaluator role, participant responses clarified the difference between being a formal evaluator versus an informal evaluator. As with the option of “modeler” on the survey, participants could only select the generic term “evaluator.” When I first started coding interviews, I noticed that teachers discussed evaluating the student teachers, but they did it in an informal manner. When I discussed this with participants in the focus group interview, they confirmed that they felt their evaluation role was often informal. Ben offers this analogy to a practicing teacher’s formal evaluation:

That [student teacher evaluation] is a large portion of the grade that the student receives, but it’s a very small portion of what we deal with on a day-to-day basis. I think it is very similar to the process that we have in terms of our formal evaluations. Our formal evaluations basically do not affect our day-to-day teaching. There are things that I know the administration looks for when they come in and I try to make sure those pieces are in place in my day-to-day teaching, but I don’t bring out the dogs and the ponies every day. That’s when the administration’s going to be in my room. So I think that on a day-to-day basis, it’s the informal feedback that you give your student teacher that’s going to be most useful and most relevant, although the formal part doesn’t have that much impact.

The discussions with teachers clarified how they interpret the role of evaluator. The cooperating teachers prioritized the daily informal feedback they gave to their student teachers over the one final written evaluation. The universities further validated the feeling that daily informal

feedback was more important than the formal evaluation cooperating teachers provided when universities ignored recommendations that certain student teachers should not continue in education. When cooperating teachers witnessed their formal evaluation not taken seriously, they assume they do not have a role as a formal evaluator and their role is informal evaluation. Cooperating teachers have a significant responsibility when they take on the job of mentoring a student teacher. The survey data and the interviews indicate that the primary roles of this job include mentoring and advising, modeling, and informally evaluating.

### **Self-identified Cooperating Teacher Dispositions**

The primary purpose of this research was to determine the self-identified dispositions of cooperating teachers. I pursued the answer to this question with both quantitative and qualitative methods that I now examine together. The TDI included items that aligned to Standard 1: Learner Development, Standard 2: Learning Differences, Standard 3: Learning Environment, Standard 4: Content Knowledge, Standard 7: Planning for Instruction, and Standard 9: Professional Learning and Practice, so I cannot directly compare data from the survey and the interviews for all ten InTASC dispositions. I can make some conclusions using the existing data.

In Figure 11, I overlay the percent of participants who affirmed each of the six standards with the overall number of coding instances and the number of participants who self-identified for each InTASC standard. While these numbers are not directly analogous, they offer an interesting joint display of the data and illustrate differences between the data. Even though participants indicated higher affirmations for Learner Development, Learning Differences, and Content Knowledge, they did not discuss them as much in interviews as two of the less affirmed dispositions, Learning Environment and Professional Learning. The joint display illustrates what seems to be a contradiction between the TDI results and the interview results for Standard 3:

Learning Environment. Before I adjusted the Learning Environment affirmation, it was the lowest affirmed disposition, and even after adjusting, Learning Environment was a lower affirmed disposition<sup>5</sup>. In contrast, the case study data demonstrate that not only do the cooperating teachers identify Standard 3: Learning Environment as a disposition they possess, they consider it one of the most important for their practice and to develop in student teachers. I discuss this in more detail shortly.

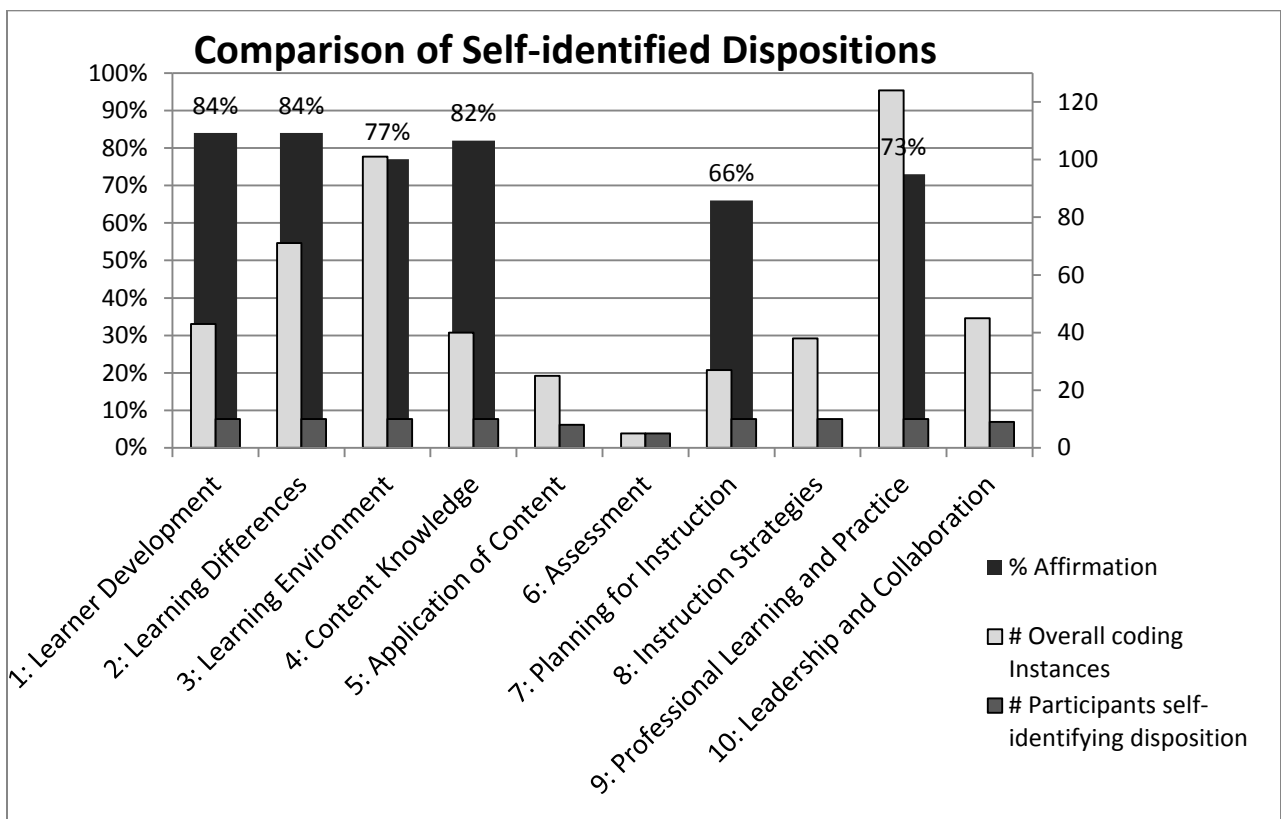


Figure 11: Levels of affirmation for InTASC standards compared to overall coding instances

Figure 11 provides a visual of the InTASC dispositions that teachers discussed with the most frequency, but it also illustrates the lesser mentioned dispositions. As I discussed earlier, cooperating teachers did not talk as much about Application of Content or Assessment compared

<sup>5</sup> I explained in Chapter 4 that I removed the item *I demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school* from my calculations because it was an outlier and significantly changed the Learning Environment affirmation.

to Learning Environment and Professional Learning. I now turn to a discussion about specific dispositions, including Professional Learning, Collaboration, Learning Environments, and Facilitating Learning. Comparing the survey data to the interview data helped clarify and elaborate the thinking behind the survey responses for these dispositions.

### **Professional Learning and Collaboration**

Some of the lowest affirmed items on the TDI were those related to Standard 9: Professional Learning. In fact, the item with the lowest affirmation of all of the survey items was *I actively seek out professional growth opportunities*. When I coded interviews, Professional Learning received the most codes, but that was due to cooperating teachers talking about the Ethical Practice part of the standard. In Chapter 4, I postulated that a lack of time and opportunity were reasons for why teachers do not pursue professional development. Cooperating teachers' comments from the interviews validate this explanation. Another significant factor for not pursuing professional development is that teachers feel many offerings are not relevant. This is especially true when they refer to the professional development that the university offers for cooperating teachers. Many case study participants also indicated that at this point in their career, they do not need or want professional development, especially if it is "not particularly useful." While the lower affirmation on the TDI tells researchers that teachers resist pursuing professional development, teachers' explanations from interviews provide information about ways to encourage teachers to pursue professional development, including offering release time and planning more relevant courses.

Standard 10: Collaboration was not a standard specifically assessed in the TDI, but when I recognized there were statements related to collaboration in the lowest affirmed items I identified the collaboration category (See Chapter 4). When I analyzed the interviews, I looked

for people explaining why they might not participate in collaboration and why they affirm *I work well with others in implementing a common curriculum* and *I cooperating with colleagues in planning instruction* less than other dispositions. Similar to why teachers do not pursue professional development, they lack the time and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues. Again, interview data provide explanations for teachers' affirmation of the TDI items. Without these explanations, I could misinterpret and assume cooperating teachers are unwilling to participate in professional development or collaborate with colleagues. Instead, I can analyze their ideas for suggestions to improve these lower affirmed dispositions. I discuss these in Chapter 6.

### **Learning Environment**

The TDI results show Standard 3: Learning Environment is a less highly affirmed standard. In contrast, Learning Environment was the most prominent disposition for cooperating teachers in case study interviews. They described numerous accounts of enacting the disposition for positive learning environments in their classrooms. They explained the role that learning environments have in successful teaching. Finally, they prioritized its development with student teachers. If I had only analyzed the TDI data, I could conclude that cooperating teachers do not value creating positive learning environments. However, the lower affirmation of this disposition could be due to the wording of the items. For example, the democratic interaction item had a low affirmation because teachers explained that they do not consider the classroom a democracy, even if they offer choices to students. Teachers also ranked *I accurately read the non-verbal communication of my students* lower than other items. In interviews, participants discuss reading their students non-verbal cues, but the word *accurately* might have prompted less agreement.

Another reason for the dissimilar results about Learning Environment could be the



InTASC standards to which the survey items are aligned. A theme of learning environments that emerged from interview data was developing relationships. A category I named from the highly affirmed survey items is Effective Communication. It includes the item *I demonstrate qualities of humor with others*, which is aligned to Standard 3. It also includes *I communicate effectively with students*, and *I communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings, ideas, and contributions of others*, which are both aligned to Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. Communicating in ways that demonstrate respect is part of developing relationships and both are important to the learning environment disposition. However, the survey items that might have resulted in a higher affirmation for Standard 3 are aligned to Standard 9. With careful analysis of the case study interviews, I was able to clarify and provide evidence that the cooperating teachers do have the disposition for learning environments.

### **Facilitating Learning for All**

A final area in which I compare the survey data and interview data is the question of whether cooperating teachers in this study believe all students can learn and facilitate learning for all. The item *I believe that all students can learn* had 92% affirmation, and the item *I am successful in facilitating learning for all students* had 87% affirmation. When I analyze just the case study participants' survey responses, there are only two teachers who disagreed with one item and one teacher who was neutral with one item (See Table 9). This suggests these cooperating teachers affirm these statements.

Table 9

*Case Study Participants Rank of All Students Can Learn and I Am Successful in Facilitating Learning for All Students*

	<b>I believe that all students can learn.</b>	<b>I am successful in facilitating learning for all students.</b>
<b>Jasmine</b>	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
<b>Jeanine</b>	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
<b>Helen</b>	Strongly agree	Agree
<b>Lisa</b>	Strongly agree	Agree
<b>James</b>	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>Kelly</b>	Agree	Agree
<b>Ben</b>	Agree	Agree
<b>Anne</b>	Agree	Neutral
<b>Natasha</b>	Disagree	Agree
<b>Darlene</b>	Agree	Disagree

The interview data provide an interesting perspective about teachers' ideas behind the belief that all students can learn and they are successful in facilitating learning for *all* students (See Table 8). They qualify the statements with comments like these examples:

Until they're ready for help, you can't do anything for them. (Helen)

It's really on the students. They have to step up. (Jasmine)

Sometimes I just let them not learn. (Anne)

I know not everybody is gonna be open to learning. (Kelly)

They have to be receptive to learning. (Natasha)

If these cooperating teachers *strongly agree* and *agree* that they believe all students can learn and they facilitate learning for all students, but they qualify with comments like these, then it is possible they do not have those dispositions. This indicates a contradiction between the survey and case study data. I discuss the implications of these findings in Chapter 6.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented my findings from the analysis of the qualitative case study

interviews and the comparison of the TDI data and interview data. In the process, I explained that cooperating teachers in this study have the dispositions for most of the InTASC standards, but they need support in enacting some of them to a fuller extent. The cooperating teachers fill the roles of modeler, informal evaluator, and mentor and advisor when they work with student teachers. They experience some significant challenges as cooperating teachers, but they also suggest ways to mitigate these challenges. I recognize that there is further research needed regarding cooperating teachers and their role in the student teaching experience. I also ascertain that there are some recommendations for districts and teacher preparation programs regarding cooperating teachers and their responsibilities. I discuss the implications of my research and suggestions for action in Chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 6

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Initially, I pursued this research because of my experience as a cooperating teacher. The purpose of this study was to learn about cooperating teachers' experiences and contribute information that could support teacher preparation programs as they enhance the student teaching experience for both the cooperating teachers and the student teachers. My research questions focused on three topics: 1) identifying the self-reported dispositions of cooperating teachers, 2) determining the roles that cooperating teachers think they have in preparing prospective teachers, and 3) explaining the challenges that cooperating teachers have when preparing prospective teachers. In this chapter, I discuss my research findings and their relation to the literature. Using these findings, I consider the implications of this work for teacher preparation and the field experience. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this study and the next steps for research.

#### **Discussion of Findings**

As I analyzed my data, I focused on answering my research questions, finding evidence to support my conclusions, and comparing my findings to existing research. The cooperating teachers in this study identified certain dispositions, explained the roles they took when supporting prospective teachers, and describe challenges they had when mentoring student teachers. I discuss these findings here.

#### **Cooperating Teacher Dispositions—Findings from a Mixed Methods Study**

In Chapter 2, I distinguish between teacher quality, teaching quality, and teacher effectiveness. Teaching quality consists of classroom actions, and teacher quality involves teachers applying their knowledge to those actions (Goe, 2007). Dispositions are trends of teachers' actions (Johnson & Reiman, 2007); therefore, the dispositions cooperating teachers

possess or do not possess have a direct effect on teacher and teaching quality. Using a mixed methods approach, I categorized a sample of cooperating teachers' self-identified dispositions as well as some dispositions with which they did not strongly associate. I discuss below the relation of these findings to the literature.

**The dispositions that cooperating teachers identify.** InTASC identifies and defines ten Model Core Teaching Standards that outline what teachers should know and be able to do with regard to their knowledge, skills, and dispositions. A primary reason for pursuing this research is that there were few scholarly articles discussing the dispositions of cooperating teachers. There is literature explaining that pairing student teachers and cooperating teachers based on strengths, areas of need, content knowledge, teaching skills, and dispositions may reduce tension and increase learning potential (LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; O'Brian et al., 2007), that candidates think effective cooperating teachers are experienced, flexible, and organized (O'Brian et al., 2007), and that mentors who are not good teachers can have a damaging impact on prospective teachers (Anderson & Stillman, 2010).

My research addresses a gap in that literature: research about the dispositions of cooperating teachers themselves. The cooperating teachers in this study report that their primary dispositions are those found in InTASC Standard 3: Learning Environments, Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, and Standard 2: Learning Differences. It is relevant to consider the influence these dispositions have on student learning and methods to promote them in the field experience.

The case study participants prioritize Standard 3, which describes how they both build relationships and establish a positive learning environment. Research suggests that the relationships between teachers and students can predict aspects of school success, with nurturing

environments predicting gains in academic achievement (Harme & Pianta, 2001; Hughes et al., 2008). In other words, establishing quality teacher and student relationships, a critical component of learning environments, influences student outcomes (Stipek & Miles, 2008). Since the cooperating teachers in this study prioritize the disposition for learning environments, they may be promoting that disposition in prospective teachers and, ultimately, affecting student achievement.

The participants also stress the importance of Standard 9: Professionalism and indicate that they value a strong work ethic. Initially, it seems it would be difficult to determine the effect work ethic has on student learning. However, when we consider certain instructional approaches that require significant teacher work and how those approaches affect student learning, it is possible to link work ethic to student achievement. For example, teachers produce positive achievement outcomes when they aim for higher levels of learning (McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Palardy & Rumberger, 2008), design courses with intensive practice and active learning (Freeman et al., 2014; Haak et al., 2011), and use cooperative learning with individual accountability (Slavin, 1983). Preparing an active learning or a cooperative learning lesson requires considerable planning and preparation. If cooperating teachers model these instructional methods for their student teachers, then the candidates may begin to internalize how much work quality teaching entails and develop that disposition.

Case study participants indicated that Standard 2, the disposition for learning differences is also one they enact. With increasingly diverse student populations that include students who speak a language other than English, students whose families do not have stable financial situations, and students with academic learning differences, it is critical that practicing and prospective teachers alike possess a disposition for learning differences. Researchers have found

that treating students equally with high expectations across ethnic groups can influence student outcomes (McKown & Weinstein, 2008). To avoid being overwhelmed when they enter their own classroom, it is particularly important that prospective teachers observe the disposition for learning differences and how to plan for and manage the variety of students they may teach during their careers.

With a nascent understanding of cooperating teachers' dispositions, universities and schools can select cooperating teachers based on their qualifications and their enactment of specific dispositions. Since the selection process to serve as cooperating teachers is not uniform between schools, subject matter, or universities, information about dispositions might help to organize the process. If teacher preparation programs select cooperating teachers with dispositions that influence student learning and purposefully pair cooperating teachers with student teachers who need more support with certain dispositions, then prospective teachers may enter the classroom with experience to better support all their students.

**The dispositions that cooperating teachers do not strongly identify.** It is important to know the dispositions that cooperating teachers possess, but it is equally relevant to reflect on the dispositions that cooperating teachers do not self-identify. The case study participants in my research do not discuss certain dispositions as often as others. The less discussed dispositions include Standard 5: Applications of Content, Standard 6: Assessment, and Standard 7: Planning for Instruction. These results do not indicate that cooperating teachers lack these dispositions, only that they did not discuss them during their interviews. Other dispositions that cooperating teachers do not self-identify are Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration and pursuing professional development described in Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. Cooperating teachers explained that they do not have the time or the opportunity, even when they

want to pursue these activities. If teachers do not possess the dispositions described above, then teaching quality, which includes the tasks of teaching, could suffer because dispositions are components of those tasks. I discuss the implications for these findings shortly. My findings indicate there are dispositions that teachers do not self-identify, but further research is needed to determine if cooperating teachers do enact the dispositions. When teacher preparation programs know the dispositions of cooperating teachers, they can better support the teachers in their roles, which I now discuss.

### **The Roles of Cooperating Teachers in Preparing Prospective Teachers**

Scholars define modeling practice and providing feedback as significant activities of cooperating teachers (Dottin, 2006; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Valencia et al., 2009). The cooperating teachers in this study prioritize lesson planning, developing relationships, and classroom management when they work with their student teachers, corroborating previous findings that cooperating teachers convey certain essential ideas, including classroom management, lesson planning, relationships, and flexibility (Clarke, 2001). The results from the Teacher Disposition Index (TDI) and the case study analysis confirm that the study participants identify modeling, mentoring and advising, and informally evaluating as their chief roles. In addition, the case study participants include sharing the reality of teaching in the essential ideas they communicate to student teachers. A question that remains is whether these are the roles the university expects of cooperating teachers.

The cooperating teachers who participated in the case study portion of this research describe providing feedback as part of mentoring and advising and informally evaluating student teachers. Researchers explain that providing feedback to candidates can occur through a combination of affective and cognitive coaching. Affective coaching includes collegiality,



respect, and emotional support. With cognitive coaching, teachers give direct instruction in teaching methods, provide feedback on candidate performance, model teaching, and explain effective teaching practices (O'Brian et al., 2007). The case study participants describe the actions they take with student teachers as primarily cognitive coaching strategies. When the participants use affective coaching, they incorporate emotional support as part of mentoring and advising. Some teachers in this study began the field experience treating their student teachers as colleagues. However, despite research that indicates student teachers prefer an environment in which they are treated as equals and with collegiality (Glenn, 2006), the cooperating teachers in this study did not think many of the student teachers were ready for this level of responsibility. In the future, they believed that they would treat the prospective teacher more as a student. Lisa is the only cooperating teacher who was able to treat her student teacher as a colleague due to her student teacher's high level of preparation and skills for teaching.

### **Challenges of Cooperating Teachers as They Prepare Prospective Teachers**

The case study participants identify two primary challenges in their role as cooperating teachers: 1) the student teachers are lacking teaching abilities, and 2) the cooperating teachers struggle with their evaluative role. The student teaching experience is a time of significant learning and growth for prospective teachers, but the participants claim there is a need for better quality student teachers. They specify that student teachers need more preparation with teaching skills and more awareness of the responsibilities of teaching before they begin the field experience. Due to these concerns, Ben has talked with the university about "what we can do to make sure those interns are fully aware of what is entailed in teaching before they invest three or four years of their life into it." The cooperating teachers in this study suggest that universities screen prospective teachers to determine preparedness before they begin their internship. This

could facilitate universities determining if student teachers are prepared for the field experience, and it could provide cooperating teachers with critical information to support the student teachers in identified areas of need. The challenge with pre-assessment tools, as I explain in Chapter 2, is that they may screen out qualified candidates or use biased measures, so universities need to incorporate a variety of assessments.

The other challenge that the case study participants identify is enacting their evaluative role. Three of their complaints are that the evaluation tools provided by the university are disconnected from the reality of teaching, do not assess characteristics important to actual teaching, and are too long. I discuss the mismatch that exists between school evaluations and university evaluations shortly. The case study participants also mention the difficulty they had providing feedback without jeopardizing their working relationships. In order to support cooperating teachers, teacher preparation programs could collaborate with cooperating teachers to design evaluations that are more relevant and to develop relevant professional development.

### **Implications for Teacher Preparation and the Field Experience**

Throughout my research and data analysis, I consider what my findings mean for teacher preparation; I have identified four critical areas. First, cooperating teachers are unaware of some aspects of teacher preparation, including the InTASC standards and their responsibility to develop dispositions. Second, although they may not be aware of it, cooperating teachers model certain dispositions, but they do not model other critical dispositions. Third, teacher preparation programs can apply cooperating teachers' descriptions about their dispositional development and apply that to refining preparation programs. Fourth, there is a mismatch between what teacher preparation programs expect and what cooperating teachers do when preparing student teachers. Finally, my findings suggest that the teacher preparation policy regarding professional

development schools (PDS) may not be enacted in the intended manner.

### **When Cooperating Teachers “Don’t Know What They Don’t Know”**

One of the goals of my research was to identify the challenges that cooperating teachers experience in their role; I discussed those above. I also found during my data analysis that I could identify challenges that cooperating teachers face but may not know they face. For example, teachers are unaware of the InTASC standards and their role in developing the dispositional standards with student teachers. Cooperating teachers may not specifically know about dispositional standards, but the following quotes illustrate that once they see the standards, they are familiar with the concepts, and it makes sense to them to develop these concepts.

It’s never been given to me like these are the things that teachers need to do. I mean the ideas are familiar, but not this list. Some of the ideas might have been included in how we were supposed to evaluate the student teacher and we did receive a lot of materials that I didn’t really look at very closely, so not to my recollection, but it’s possible they were there somewhere. (Jeanine)

I remember the InTASC principles being taught [in graduate school]. I remember referring to those as soon as you said InTASC. I don’t know that I’ve seen these specifically, but I know I’ve been taught some of the information that exists. I am 90% certain that there were references to InTASC principles [in the university materials]. That might be why it’s so familiar recently because in some of my dealings with Dr. White, she may have brought some of those things up. (Natasha)

Some of this language looks familiar. Mostly from the..., I’m trying to think if it was InTASC, similar type of program that I used to evaluate. Some of this language looks familiar. (James)

This familiarity suggests that, with some communication about the standards, cooperating teachers would be more effective in developing dispositions with student teachers.

If teachers agree that standards are logical, but they do not know they are responsible for supporting their development in student teachers, then the question arises: How do you teach something to the fullest extent when you do not know you are supposed to teach it? This is equivalent to any teaching situation. Biology teachers know their subject area, but without a curriculum guide or knowledge of the standards, they do not know which topics from the vast content knowledge base to teach and in what detail. Teaching prospective teachers is similar. Cooperating teachers know how to teach and the general areas on which they should focus with student teachers. However, teaching is complex, and even veteran teachers are constantly improving their practice. In addition, as exemplified by the quotes below, the majority of the cooperating teachers in this study do not know that the university has the responsibility to develop and assess dispositions according to specific standards.

Do I recall seeing any of these? Uh, no. I didn't go to any trainings. I had some paperwork tossed my way. I don't know how much of it I looked at. It could have been in the paperwork. I don't want to say that [the university] didn't provide any; however, I was not aware of it. (Darlene)

I wouldn't say that I was guided by these particular standards. I think there's probably an innate feel for some of these, but I wouldn't say I was checking off each of these as my student teacher was doing his job. (James)

Two of the participants are aware of the dispositions desired by their student teacher's university. Both Helen and Anne indicate that the university paperwork communicates the dispositions, and Helen explained that they were based on the Danielson Framework for

Teaching. At the time that I interviewed Helen, she was in a staff development position at her school. She was actively involved in planning professional development for the staff and attended regular district meetings during which the Danielson Framework for Teaching was a discussion topic. Anne had recently completed her graduate degree, and her program addressed dispositions. These two teachers know about dispositions, but teacher preparation programs cannot depend on cooperating teachers to bring their prior knowledge of dispositions to their role. Teacher preparation programs need to consider ways to ensure that *all* cooperating teachers know about dispositions.

An interesting contrast to Helen's awareness is Jeanine's lack of awareness. These two teachers work in the same school and had student teachers from the same university. Jeanine talks about the Danielson Framework for Teaching in her interview, but she does not recall being aware of the university's responsibility to assess dispositions. She remembers attending one meeting, receiving "an insane amount of paperwork" that she did not read, and hearing the university's expectations for professionalism. She says, "I know how we were to evaluate him at the end and I don't really feel like it had much about disposition in it, because I had issues with the student teacher." Jeanine's definition of disposition almost matched the one I am using for this research, so her lack of awareness does not appear to stem from a lack of understanding.

The discrepancy between these two teachers in almost identical contexts suggests that the lack of uniformity originates at the university level. This could be due to vague communication or a dearth of informative professional development. The participants' comments about professional development that I discuss in Chapter 5 support this postulation. If cooperating teachers are familiar with the concepts represented in the InTASC standards but are not specifically aware that the standards exist, then a logical solution is to provide professional

development to convey this information. Cooperating teachers do not want professional development on how to teach classroom management or scaffold planning. On the other hand, they cannot develop or evaluate dispositions according to the InTASC standards if they are uninformed of their role in doing so. Professional development could support their efforts and provide some uniformity to the cooperating teacher role.

### **Implications of Cooperating Teachers Modeling or Not Modeling Dispositions**

Cooperating teachers consider themselves modelers, so it is relevant to consider the implications of both the desirable and undesirable dispositions that they model. In past research, cooperating teachers say that the essential ideas they convey are classroom management, preparation, relationships with children, and flexibility (Clarke, 2001). My findings support this research. Cooperating teachers in this study have aspects of the dispositions for Standard 3: Learning Environment, Standard 2: Learning Differences, and Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The research indicates that student teachers mimic and use the instructional styles of their cooperating teachers (Hewson et al., 1999; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012). This tendency could transfer to student teachers mimicking cooperating teachers' dispositions and eventually adopting these as their own. This includes desirable dispositions, but also some dispositions that teacher preparation programs might not want promoted.

When cooperating teachers model establishing learning environments and building relationships and reflect with the student teachers afterwards, they could be supporting the development of the learning environment disposition in student teachers, an area in which student teachers struggle. However, Helen cautions, when student teachers mimic their cooperating teachers' relationships, they may assume they have the same rapport and appear insincere to the students. For example, Helen joked with her students after two years of teaching

the same class, but she warned her student teacher that she could not act the same way without building those relationships first.

Another disposition cooperating teachers in this study model is learning differences, specifically flexibility in providing learning options and adjusting classroom situations. Student teachers have opportunities to observe ways in which they can offer students different ways to learn or demonstrate their learning. Cooperating teachers attempt to help as many students as they can in the available time and environment, but they are not always able to help every student. They accept this as part of their reality, so cooperating teachers may not be modeling the disposition that all students can learn. It is important to ask if it is acceptable for a student teacher to witness a mentor not trying to help all the students. Could this be setting an example for student teachers that they may misinterpret or take as permission not to try?

The quotes in Table 8 indicate a defeatist attitude towards helping all students learn. Teachers use phrases such as “no matter what,” “can’t,” and “not possible.” Yet, some teachers do think that failures are opportunities to learn. While people can learn from their failures, it is difficult to gauge what level of failure is going to help students and what level might lead to long-term damage. Teachers’ language and allowance of failure is worrisome because, if teachers are convinced they cannot help all students learn, they might not be trying to engage students in the classroom. They might not have the disposition for learning differences.

In my experience, when teachers say they cannot help every student, they are talking about worst-case scenarios. They often make that decision after investing significant time trying to help a student and with substantial background knowledge. For example, I taught a student who had committed multiple criminal offenses, including armed robbery, breaking and entering, and assault. He had failed Biology twice—once with me and once with another teacher, and he

was in my class for the third attempt. The first time I taught him, I tried to help him pass, but he missed too many days due to his distance from school and his supposed work responsibilities. Since then, he had been expelled at least twice due to drug-related offenses. When he was enrolled in my freshman Biology class, at the age of 20, I was concerned for the safety and learning of my other students. I was prepared to give him the work and allow him to stay in class if he was not disruptive, but I was not prepared to help him at the expense of my other students. This is an extreme case, but without the prior knowledge, a student teacher might interpret my actions or those of other cooperating teachers in similar situations as permission to write off *any* student who appears to have a less than desirable background or causes disruptions in the class. Cooperating teachers need to be mindful of how they express who they “can’t” help and how they arrive at those decisions so student teachers do not mimic those dispositions.

While the cooperating teachers in this study identified certain dispositions, another interesting finding is that cooperating teachers model dispositions that they do not necessarily self-identify. For example, the participants do not talk often about their dispositions for instructional strategies or planning, but they do talk about how they model these dispositions for their student teachers. This suggests that even if cooperating teachers do not self-identify a disposition, they may still have that disposition. This has positive implications for student-teacher learning. Cooperating teachers are not necessarily aware of the dispositional standards, and they do not talk about their own dispositions for teaching, but they do model and work to develop some of these dispositions with their student teachers.

Another critical area to consider is the dispositions cooperating teachers are not modeling, including assessment, pursuing professional development, and collaboration. With the current conversations about assessment and high stakes testing, teachers do not have a positive



outlook about assessment, and this attitude could influence student teachers' perspectives. It is critical for student teachers to develop the disposition for assessment because classroom assessments of student progress and learning are valuable tools to determine learner development and learner differences. When the participants talk about student differences, they mention using different assessment methods, but they do not indicate if they are modeling assessments for student teachers. Supervision by a qualified teacher who exemplifies ideal practices such as classroom assessment can help candidates obtain the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be effective (Darling-Hammond, 2010). If cooperating teachers do not enact the disposition for assessment, candidates might miss critical experiences and might not fully develop their understanding. It is also possible that prospective teachers could adopt the negativity expressed by the cooperating teachers, perpetuating a negative outlook on assessment. In addition, if the negativity extends to classroom assessment, is that due to a negative connotation of the word rather than because teachers do not enact assessment? Further research is needed to determine if this negativity for assessment is only for standardized testing or for all assessment.

The case study participants are clear that they have a strong work ethic and sense of professionalism, but they may not be modeling the pursuing professional development aspect of Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. Cooperating teachers say they do not pursue professional development due to a lack of time, a lack of relevance to their situation, and a perception that they do not need professional development. While these reasons are valid, they suggest a larger problem. Even the most experienced teacher can learn something new, but if the sentiment is that professional development is not beneficial, then perhaps professional development opportunities need to be redesigned. Another challenge with the negative attitude towards professional development is that cooperating teachers model this with student teachers.

However, student teachers and novice teachers absolutely can benefit from support and professional development in the first few years of teaching to help them perfect their methods.

Cooperating teachers in this study were also not inclined to collaborate, not because they did not want to, but they did not have time, so they are not modeling different collaboration methods. Student teachers may complete their field experience without ever having an opportunity to see the benefits of collaboration. This could have a negative impact on classrooms since teachers who are not inclined to work collaboratively are more likely to be teacher-centered in their instruction (Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). Studies have found that stronger value-added gains for students are supported by teachers who work together as teams and by higher levels of collaboration that focused on school improvement (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2011). Districts need to consider ways to support teachers who want to collaborate and participate in professional development, but who do not because of time constraints. One recommendation is that schools arrange teaching schedules to incorporate common planning time for teachers who teach the same subject. This would not necessitate funding, and since teachers already use some of their non-teaching time to plan, they would be able to collaborate with colleagues during the school day.

Research ultimately suggests that a cooperating teacher whose philosophies and dispositions espouse those of the preparation program can influence prospective teachers' dispositions (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Castro, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). In addition, research indicates that the cooperating teacher's support can positively or negatively affect candidates' practices (Cosgrove & Carpenter, 2012; O'Brian et al., 2007; Schussler et al., 2010). Therefore, my findings require further research with more observations in order to determine if cooperating teachers are helping to develop dispositions that they self-identify and those that

they do not identify. If teacher preparation programs and districts know what cooperating teachers do and enact in the classroom, they could collaborate to match student teachers with cooperating teachers who provide optimal interactions. Another area for research is to determine if student teachers have the dispositions for assessment, pursuing professional development, and collaboration in spite of being paired with cooperating teachers who do not model these dispositions. Finally, student teachers have the benefit of learning the most current research-based teaching practices. Research indicates that cooperating teachers can influence the practices of student teachers. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that if student teachers arrive at their student teaching placements highly prepared, then cooperating teachers can benefit from new ideas and approaches that student teachers share.

### **How Cooperating Teachers' Dispositional Development Can Inform University Practice**

As preparation programs consider the dispositions modeled by cooperating teachers, another area that could inform practice cooperating teachers' descriptions of their dispositional development. Scholars disagree on whether dispositions are a fixed "entity" or "incremental" (Damon, 2007; Diez, 2007; Oja & Reiman, 2007), but analyzing how practicing teachers describe their development could enhance our understanding. The case study participants describe dispositional development from both perspectives. From the entity perspective, they describe dispositions they feel would be disadvantageous in the teaching profession and that they could not change in a student teacher, including extreme introversion, belligerence, easily angered, passivity, egocentrism, difficulty reading people, rigidity in situations, and a lack of work ethic. Jeanine says she "came in with some core dispositions that were good for teaching." James also explains that there are certain "immutable" character dispositions, but with regard to teaching, he thinks, "People generally can improve upon the logistics of teaching, the planning,

preparation, [and] organization to some extent.” James’ distinction between “character dispositions” and dispositions found in the InTASC standards echoes the distinctions made by scholars. Sockett (2006) identified dispositions of character, intellect, and care. Misco and Shiveley (2007) distinguished personal virtues and educational values. Ruitenberg categorized general personal values and beliefs, and professional commitments and actions. However, the existing dilemma is how to assess candidates’ professional actions (Flowers, 2006) without scrutinizing personal beliefs and characteristics (Ruitenberg, 2011). For example, Anne recounted how she overcame her shyness and being “terrified of speaking to people.” Anne might have been counseled out of teaching if her preparation program only applied the entity perspective, but she was given the opportunity to develop into a high quality teacher.

The incremental perspective of dispositional development is where cooperating teachers’ experiences can inform university practice as programs develop curricula for prospective teachers. Participants identify two primary ways in which their dispositions developed: 1) trial and error and 2) observation and emulation. As I explain in Chapter 5, it is difficult to construct learning situations for trial and error, and it is unknown if student learning could suffer because of errors. Participants describe how observations of positive *and* negative examples of teaching were integral to their dispositional development. Some participants observed these examples during their student teaching. Alternatively, Jeanine says, “You definitely learn from your mentor teachers,” but many of the participants claim their field experience was not integral to their dispositional development. With input from experienced teachers, James evolved into a “learning facilitator” and changed his classroom into a more student-centered environment once he started teaching. Other cooperating teachers also found they learned more once they were teaching. I discuss the implications these findings have for the field experience below.

## **Mismatch Between Colleges of Education and Cooperating Teachers**

Another finding that emerged from my research is the mismatch that seems to exist between teacher preparation programs and cooperating teachers regarding dispositional development, professional development, and evaluation tools. Cooperating teachers assert that student teachers should have certain dispositions when they arrive at their field placement, the entity perspective. On the other hand, cooperating teachers agree with the incremental perspective that certain dispositions are developable. If universities do not communicate the dispositions they expect student teachers to develop during student teaching and cooperating teachers expect student teachers have dispositions that are already developed, then dispositional development may be a neglected area. Universities may be assuming that cooperating teachers know about dispositions and the InTASC standards, but my research indicates that this is not the case for the teachers in this study.

Another area of disconnect between universities and cooperating teachers is regarding the professional development provided by the teacher preparation program. The accounts from the cooperating teachers in this study about their preparation corroborate other research. Teacher preparation programs provide cooperating teachers information about administrative topics such as the evaluation tool and timelines, but they neglect valuable professional development on peer coaching and adult supervision (Clarke, 2001; Valencia et al., 2009; Zemek, 2008). The teachers from my case study did not consider the meetings they attended to be professional development, and they were often frustrated with meetings that they thought were a waste of their time. Teacher preparation programs could collaborate with experienced cooperating teachers to develop meaningful professional development that support teachers as they work with prospective teachers.

Finally, the district in which I conducted this research and the teacher preparation programs use different tools for evaluation. The InTASC standards include learning progressions for all teachers. Even though a group composed of representatives from different teaching professional groups wrote these standards, many districts, including Roosevelt, are implementing evaluations based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The case study participants were frustrated with the differences between their teacher evaluations and the terminology and expectations of the university. To compound the frustration, teachers across the state do not understand their evaluation tool. One teacher commented, “Last year, I was evaluated on Danielson and didn’t even understand what those domains were... For the majority of the teachers... they can’t tell you what the domains are” (Slotnik et al., 2015, p. 22). So while teacher preparation programs use evaluations based on InTASC standards, student teachers work with practicing teachers who are evaluated with the Danielson Framework for Teaching, and, when they graduate, they enter systems that use the Framework for Teaching. Clearly, there is a mismatch between evaluation methods, and the lack of a common tool is not helping to prepare teachers for their future evaluations.

To account for the mismatch between evaluation tools and cooperating teachers’ criticisms that university evaluations are verbose, diluted with non-essential factors, and not relevant to the job of teaching, I suggest that universities work with cooperating teachers to review existing evaluation tools in order to revise some items and place greater emphasis on other items. For example, the case study participants expressed that they had difficulty evaluating certain items. James explained that he did not know how to assess the internal construct of whether his student teachers took into account community dynamics when they planned lessons. It would be advisable to review the evaluations for similar items that are

difficult to assess and collaborate on how to work items so they are observable. The case study participants also felt there was not enough emphasis on characteristics such as building relationships, timeliness, and professional interpersonal skills.

In addition, while the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the InTASC standards are similar, without professional development to prepare cooperating teachers to use the different tools, they may not use the tools fully. Using standards-based evaluation processes have been found to be predictive of student learning gains and productive for teacher learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2011). If teacher preparation programs can support cooperating teachers' use of standards-based evaluations, student teachers may have more impact on student learning earlier in their careers.

### **Implications for Teacher Education Policy**

In 1995, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) adopted the *Redesign of Teacher Education*. The Redesign called for a “systemic approach to improving teaching and learning in schools”, including an extensive clinical internship in a professional development school (Maryland Higher Education Commission, 1995). The Professional Development School Implementation Manual explains different ways colleges of education can develop partnerships with schools (Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004). The manual describes the partnership that should exist between the colleges of education and the PDS in such a way that it would be an obvious relationship, but the teachers in this study do not mention interactions with the university beyond supervisor visits and a couple information meetings.

The manual suggests that universities offer on-site preservice mentor training or coursework on topics such as intern expectations, mastery of InTASC standards, and methods of assessment could support practicing teachers' professional development (Maryland Partnership

for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004). Professional development offerings should be based on faculty needs assessments to address school improvement goals. When I talked to the case study participants about the types of professional development that they received, they did not feel the meetings they attended qualified as professional development and they did not have input regarding their needs. Additionally, the manual indicates schools have a Coordinating Council that serves as the organizing body for the development and implementation of all aspects of the PDS, including planning professional development. The council should consist of a variety of stakeholders, including school administrators, cooperating teachers, parents, student teachers, teachers not serving as cooperating teachers, higher education faculty, students, and community members. I did not specifically ask the case study participants if their schools had a Coordinating Council, but in my experience as a cooperating teacher, I know that if there was a council, it did not include those stakeholders.

Cooperating teachers discussed the challenges they had with time and the lack of compensation they receive for the significant additional time they dedicate to mentoring a student teacher. According to the PDS implementation manual, providing adequate rewards and release time to practitioners is part of sustaining a successful PDS. In order to find time for discussions that are so often cut short by the daily requirements of teaching, it may be necessary to align school and university calendars, create innovative school schedules, and design unorthodox job descriptions (Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, 2004). Providing release time and additional compensation is particularly appropriate for the site coordinator who has extensive responsibilities. Ben was the site coordinator at his school and he explained that his principal expected him to accept the role without providing any compensation or time to prepare reports or monitor the student teachers in the school.



While the PDS implementation manual describes what colleges of education and schools should be doing to develop mutually beneficial relationships in order to enhance the education of all children, my findings indicate that many of the recommendations are not enacted. In Maryland, colleges of education must satisfy five criteria for accreditation, including providing an extensive internship in a PDS (Maryland State Department of Education, Revised 2011). If schools where student teachers are completing their field experience do not have the relationships with colleges of education that define a PDS, then it raises the question of how teacher education programs continue to maintain their accreditation.

Another question for further study is whether my findings indicate a policy failure or if they are reflective of competing interests between the different stakeholders. For example, schools prioritize student learning so student teachers may not be given the opportunity to practice if they are placed in a classroom with students who have a high-stakes test to pass. Teacher education programs are under pressure to provide student teachers with more experiences, but they may not have the financial support to implement programs. Finally, cooperating teachers have to balance their responsibility to prepare prospective teachers with their responsibility to maximize learning opportunities for their students. In addition, many teachers are under pressure to demonstrate student learning and satisfy evaluation requirements. My findings warrant further study about whether colleges of education are providing the requisite student teaching experience outlined in policy documents.

### **Modifications to the Field Experience**

Based on these findings, I suggest ways that teacher preparation programs might modify the field experience. Scholars suggest that field-based practitioners understand the explicit purpose of the experience, programs alter the quantity and duration of the field experience, and

schools and programs collaboratively identify exemplary field based teacher educators (Capraro et al., 2010). These three recommendations are linked and my research provides evidence that they should be a priority for teacher preparation programs.

I explain that cooperating teachers do not know what they do not know. Therefore, teacher preparation programs need to concentrate on communicating the explicit purpose of the field experience and what is expected of the cooperating teacher. For instance, programs use the InTASC standards to develop their programs of study, but cooperating teachers are unaware of these standards. In addition, cooperating teachers prioritize certain dispositions, and teacher preparation programs might want to prioritize other dispositions. The preparation programs might also know that certain student teachers would benefit from specific experiences, and that needs to be conveyed to the cooperating teachers.

The ways cooperating teachers describe their dispositional development has implications for how teacher preparation programs might consider modifying the field experience. For example, trial and error is one way in which the case study participants describe their own dispositional development. When student learning is at stake, instructional mistakes can be a dangerous path. On the other hand, learning from mistakes is a valuable instructional tool, especially if someone is there to guide reflection on the mistakes. Teacher preparation programs could incorporate more opportunities for prospective teachers to practice supervised teaching and communicate with cooperating teachers about how to allow and correct mistakes. Student teachers would experience the benefit of trial and error with an experienced teacher monitoring and correcting potentially detrimental mistakes.

It is also important to attend to the claim that the teachers say their dispositions developed from observing and emulating teachers primarily after they were teaching, rather than

with their cooperating teacher. This indicates that altering the quantity and duration of the field experience is warranted. Student teachers could benefit from increased time to observe and expansion of the pool of identified exemplary teachers for them to observe. This could occur with earlier integration of prospective teachers into classrooms and other instructional contexts. Increasing the field experience induction period and arranging for prospective teachers to observe more than their assigned cooperating teacher provides more opportunities for observation and possible emulation of high quality teaching. Therefore, a longer internship with more responsibility that mimics an independent classroom might support dispositional development.

Teacher preparation programs also need to attend to the claim that current cooperating teachers do not think their dispositions developed during the field experience. If the cooperating teachers in this study do not think their field experience helped them with dispositional development and they were unaware of their responsibility to develop certain dispositions, then they may not emphasize dispositions with student teachers. This perpetuates a cycle of certain dispositions not developing and the field experience not fulfilling the intended purpose.

The existing literature is informative, but it is important to listen to the suggestions of current cooperating teachers. The teachers in this study made constructive recommendations for ways in which the field experience could be more effective or the role of the cooperating teacher could be supported. Moreover, the participants indicated that they wanted more information about their student teachers and noted that many student teachers were not prepared to enter a classroom. In order to mitigate these concerns, cooperating teachers suggest that teacher preparation programs provide a pre-evaluation tool, the results of such a tool, or a biographical statement about the student teacher so cooperating teachers can adapt their mentoring approach

to fit their student teacher better. Cooperating teachers advocate for prescreening candidates to assess their preparedness for the field experience. The 2010 Blue Ribbon Report on Clinical Preparation calls for strengthening candidate selection and placement by establishing clear criteria for admission to clinical preparation programs and setting up promotional gates that enable students to progress after they meet rigorous criteria (NCATE, 2010). The concerns the case study participants have regarding their student teachers indicate that some universities still need to work towards implementing the Blue Ribbon suggestions.

The case study participants did not explicitly suggest this, but I recommend that teacher preparation programs work to support cooperating teachers in their role of evaluator. The first way in which programs can do this is developing professional development on topics such as teaching the adult learner and providing constructive, informative feedback without jeopardizing working relationships that must exist between cooperating teachers and student teachers. At the same time, teacher preparation programs must prepare student teachers to hear constructive criticism. Student teachers have to understand that one purpose of the field experience is to correct mistakes before they enter their classroom as independent teachers: cooperating teachers have to provide feedback, and it may not always be positive. Finally, teacher preparation programs need to work to validate cooperating teachers' concerns about prospective teachers who are not prepared to enter the teaching profession. In addition to enhancing prescreening tools, this can occur with more involvement of the university supervising teachers (Allsopp et al., 2006) and by giving weight to the cooperating teachers' evaluations in the formal evaluation and the ultimate decision of whether a prospective teacher can handle a classroom independently.

### **Limitations of the Study**

In addition to the implications of this study, there are a few limitations to the

generalizability of the findings. One limitation to this study is the sample size of both the survey and the case study. In a district of 8857 teachers, while the 131 survey responses represent a subset of cooperating teachers, they may not represent the population accurately. For example, only two men participated in the case study portion of the research, and there were not any representatives from music, art, physical education, or world languages. In addition, the fact that many of the case study participants suggested that they became cooperating teachers because there was no one else to take on the responsibility may be relevant to my findings. If teachers are not voluntarily accepting the mentoring role, they could begin the experience with negative perceptions that may cloud their assessment of the student teacher. I also do not have a way to calculate the survey response rate because the district does not have data on how many teachers were cooperating teachers. In addition, I conducted this research in only one district in a Mid-Atlantic state, and I only recruited high school teachers for the case study. The contextual differences of other locations and between grade levels prevent generalizing my findings elsewhere. Nevertheless, even though there is a limit to the generalizability of my findings, the findings are informative for researchers and educators in similar settings and provide information from which future research can expand. In the future, should the district want more information regarding the dispositions of cooperating teachers, it would need to disseminate the survey in a manner that elicited both more responses and a broader range of teacher characteristics.

Another limitation of both the survey and the case study results is that the participants may have some bias or a personal interest in the research topic that prompted them to volunteer.. A benefit to having participants who volunteer to participate in research is they do not feel coerced, so their answers might be more forthcoming than people who do not volunteer. When a researcher cannot select the participant sample, it could mean that the sample is not

representative of the population. In the case of my research, the cooperating teachers who pursued reading the recruitment bulletin, emailing for the survey link and, finally, submitting a survey may represent those teachers who had a more positive or negative experience than other teachers. The participants could have been cooperating teachers who were frustrated with the experience because of their student teachers' lack of skills. They may have been willing to complete the survey because they felt they had something critical to share and needed to contribute to the conversation. Therefore, future studies should try to include more participants to account for participants whose motivations to participate are rooted in their personal experiences.

There are limitations to this study that stem from the survey tool. First, confusion with disposition definitions and distinguishing knowledge and skills from dispositions could result in congruence of answers if participants did not make the distinction when rating themselves. For example, teachers may know *students learn in many different ways and it is important to involve all students in learning* and respond affirmatively to those statements. However, they may not differentiate between knowing and taking action with those items in their classroom. This confusion is compounded by the question of whether the dispositional statements on the survey are so obviously socially desirable that participants will agree with the statements regardless of their true dispositions. Similar to other studies that employed the TDI as the data collection tool (Frederiksen et al., 2011; Kirchner, 2011; Pottinger, 2009), the survey participants highly affirmed survey items and there were few disagree or strongly disagree responses. The TDI may not be an effective tool to identify teachers who lack certain dispositions. This is supported by research in which people self-reported higher ratings of their dispositions than the ratings of dispositions that others observed (Keiser, 2005; Pottinger, 2009). Even with limitations due to

confusion with disposition definitions and the high positive response rate, there were differences in responses and I considered the extreme responses in my survey analysis. I was also able to incorporate questions regarding those outliers in the case study interviews and I considered those responses in my case study analysis.

A final limitation is that this study did not include any classroom observations due to the complexity of receiving IRB approval from the district. I analyzed the teachers' personal descriptions of their actions in order to identify their dispositions, but I could not corroborate their comments with examples of enactment. One of the critical aspects of dispositions is enactment. Therefore, future research could be enhanced with classroom observations. Despite the limitations of my study, there are several recommendations for further research based on the findings from this study.

### **Next Steps**

Now that I have documented the dispositions of a group of cooperating teachers, identified the roles they assume, and characterized the challenges they experience, there are questions for future research. The first steps are to determine whether other cooperating teachers working with different institutions have similar dispositions and experiences, whether institutions provide different types of professional development to inform cooperating teachers of their roles in developing dispositions, and whether these opportunities result in different cooperating teacher dispositions. In order to compare the characteristics of cooperating teachers between universities and the types of professional development provided by the universities, I recommend case study research that uses the university as the case. Another area for study is determining how important the dispositions of cooperating teachers are to developing the dispositions of student teachers. This requires quantitative research methods that determine the

dispositions of the cooperating teacher/student teacher pairs while accounting for other variables, a difficult task. I also suggest interviews and classroom observations that focus on the dispositions of cooperating teachers and the development of dispositions in student teachers. By comparing student teachers' dispositions throughout the field experience, researchers may be able to establish some relationship to cooperating teachers' dispositions. My research is an initial step in these future investigations.

Research that involves classroom observations is time intensive, but it is critical to a more in-depth understanding of cooperating teacher dispositions. It is difficult to determine if teachers have certain InTASC dispositions without observations, specifically Standard 3: Learning Environments and Standard 8: Instructional Strategies. Assessment is another disposition that requires more investigation and observations to determine if teachers are implementing classroom assessment. The question remains whether teachers self-identify as lacking the assessment disposition because they have negative associations with the word even when they are enacting the disposition for assessment in their classrooms. Districts and teacher preparation programs alike would benefit from research that investigates whether the negative attitude towards standardized assessment transfers to classroom assessment: assessment is a critical way to know the students and account for learning differences, engage all students in learning, and implement appropriate instructional practices. In addition to classroom observations, researchers need to pursue talking to teachers about their attitudes towards assessment and assessing attitudes with a Likert scale survey tool.

With the dilemma about entity and incremental dispositions, another area where more research is needed is learning how to assess dispositions that may be immutable or antithetical, while still allowing candidates to develop desirable dispositions. One way this could be achieved



is through earlier and more frequent field experiences. If student teachers spend more time in classrooms and there is more evidence collected to document their classroom and professional interactions, then it might be easier to identify people who will not be a good fit for teaching before their final field experience. My research demonstrates that a mixed methods approach can provide a more rich description when trying to identify teacher dispositions. With that in mind, researchers need to design studies that span the entire teacher preparation period and incorporate multiple surveys to gauge changes in student teacher dispositions and compare that data with observational records and cooperating teacher evaluations.

A final area for future research is to determine if cooperating teachers would be more purposeful in their mentoring of candidates if they were more aware of dispositions. Cooperating teachers are not aware of the dispositions to the extent to which they should be in order to support dispositional development in prospective teachers. Teacher preparation programs need to prepare relevant and useful professional development to make sure cooperating teachers know about the InTASC standards and feel prepared to work with adult learners. In addition to providing professional development, programs need to request feedback that they can analyze in order to improve the support they offer cooperating teachers.

### **Conclusion**

My goal with this study, beyond my research questions, was to give voice to a minimally heard group of teacher educators, the cooperating teachers. In Chapter 5, I discussed a quote from James in which he talks about doing the job of cooperating teacher “properly.” James’ desire to do the job properly is indicative of how seriously cooperating teachers take their responsibility to prepare prospective teachers. They want to prepare teachers who will contribute to the field and enter a classroom ready to teach and able to create positive learning

environments that lead to student learning. They are committed. It is up to the districts and universities to find ways to support the teacher educators who may be the most important part of teacher education. This research is a contribution in providing information to support those efforts.

## Appendix A

### InTASC Model Teaching Standards and the Critical Dispositions

**1: Learner Development: The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.**

- a) The teacher respects students' differing strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to further each student's development.
- b) The teacher is committed to using students' strengths as a basis for growth, and their misconceptions as opportunities for learning.
- c) The teacher takes responsibility for promoting students' growth and development.
- d) The teacher values the input and contributions of families, colleagues and other professionals in understanding each student's development.

**2: Learning Differences: The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.**

- a) The teacher believes that all children can learn at high levels and persists in helping all children reach their full potential.
- b) The teacher respects students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.
- c) The teacher makes students feel valued and helps them learn to value each other.
- d) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning.

**3: Learning Environments: The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.**

- a) The teacher is committed to working with students to establish positive and supportive learning environments.
- b) The teacher values the role of students in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
- c) The teacher is committed to supporting students as they participate in decision-making, engage in exploration and invention, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning.
- d) The teacher appreciates the cultural dimensions of communication and seeks to foster respectful communication and multiple perspectives among all members of the learning community.
- e) The teacher is a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.

**4: Content Knowledge: The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.**

- a) The teacher realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.
- b) The teacher appreciates multiple perspectives within the discipline and facilitates students' critical analysis of these perspectives.
- c) The teacher recognizes the potential of bias in his/her representation of the discipline and seeks to appropriately address problems of bias.
- d) The teacher is committed to work toward each learner's mastery of disciplinary content and skills.

**5: Applications of Content: The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.**

- a) The teacher is constantly exploring how to use disciplinary knowledge as a lens to address local and global issues.
- b) The teacher values knowledge outside his/her own discipline and how such knowledge enhances student learning.
- c) The teacher values open and flexible learning environments that encourage student exploration, discovery, expression, and collaboration across content areas.

**6: Assessment: The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.**

- a) The teacher is committed to engaging students actively in assessment processes and in reviewing their own progress and learning.
- b) The teacher takes professional responsibility for aligning learning goals with instruction and assessment.
- c) The teacher is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to students on their progress.
- d) The teacher is committed to using multiple types of assessment processes to support and document learning.
- e) The teacher is committed to modifying assessments and testing conditions for English language learners and students with exceptional learning needs.
- f) The teacher is committed to the ethical use of various assessments and assessment data to identify student strengths and needs to promote student growth.

**7: Planning for Instruction: The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.**

- a) The teacher respects students' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction.
- b) The teacher values curriculum planning as a collegial activity that takes into consideration the input of students, colleagues, families, and the larger community.
- c) The teacher takes professional responsibility to use long and short-term planning as a means of assuring student learning.
- d) The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances.

**8: Instructional Strategies: The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.**

- a) The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.
- b) The teacher values the variety of ways people communicate and encourages students to develop and use multiple forms of communication.
- c) The teacher is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.
- d) The teacher values flexibility and reciprocity in the teaching process as necessary for adapting instruction to student responses, ideas, and needs.

**9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice: The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.**

- a) The teacher takes ethical responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.
- b) The teacher is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with students and their families.
- c) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.
- d) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.

**10: Leadership and Collaboration: The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.**

- a) The teacher takes responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her school as one of advocacy for learners and accountability for their success.
- b) The teacher respects families' norms and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with students and families in setting and meeting challenging goals.
- c) The teacher takes responsibility to grow and develop with colleagues through interactions that enhance practice and support student learning.
- d) The teacher takes responsibility for contributing to and advancing the profession.
- e) The teacher embraces all the challenge of continuous improvement and change.

## Appendix B

### Teacher Disposition Index

#### *Teacher Questionnaire*

##### **Part 1: Survey Information and Consent**

Thank you so much for participating in my survey! I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland conducting a study for research purposes only that seeks to understand the dispositions of mentor teachers. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes. Please read the consent form below and indicate whether you agree to participate or not. If you choose not to participate, you will be taken to the end of the survey. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

All answers will be kept confidential. Please contact me (drivera613@gmail.com) if you have any questions!

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Cooperating Teacher Dispositions: What Are They and What Do Teachers Know about Them?</b>
<b>Purpose of the Study</b>	This research is being conducted by <b>Danielle Rivera</b> at the University of Maryland, College Park. You are invited to participate in this research project because you are or have been a mentor teacher in Baltimore County Public Schools. The purpose of this research project is to describe the dispositions toward teaching of mentor teachers: how teachers think about them and enact them in their classrooms. I will also try to determine what participants know of the dispositions desired by teacher education programs and how they view their role in supporting teacher candidates.
<b>Procedures</b>	<p>I invite you to participate in an online confidential survey. The survey will be confidential in that responses will only be reported in aggregate and sharing your name is optional. This survey will collect background data from you about your dispositions and your experience as a mentor teacher. This consent form is the first part of the online survey. You must select the option to “consent to participate” in order to proceed. This survey is anticipated to take approximately 20 minutes, depending on the length of your answers.</p> <p>Sample questions from the survey include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How did you become a mentor teacher?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are some dispositions you think are important to teaching?</i></li> </ul> <p>You are encouraged to submit questions to the researcher throughout the study. You may withdraw from the study and survey at any time without penalty and your answers will be discarded.</p> <p>The end of the survey will ask if you are willing to be contacted for possible participation in a more in-depth optional study. You will receive more detailed information regarding the case study at the end of the survey. From the positive responses, I will use your self-reported data to select possible participants for the case study. I will extend an email invitation to you in which I will explain the case study. The in-depth case study will include an initial meeting or phone conversation, scheduled at your convenience, to introduce myself and to address any questions or concerns you have. At this meeting, I will give you a paper version of this consent form to sign and schedule a private interview at a time convenient to you.</p>
<b>Potential Risks and Discomforts</b>	There is minimal risk that you may experience some level of stress through your participation and involvement in this study (i.e. the time to complete the survey), but the stress is not greater than that ordinarily encountered in daily life. Enrollment in this study will, in no way, affect your position or evaluation at your current school and no individual information will be shared with the school, university, or school district. There is a potential risk for the loss or breach of confidentiality, but measures will be taken to ensure security. You are encouraged to ask the researcher questions throughout the duration of the study and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You do not have to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable.

<b>Potential Benefits</b>	There are no direct benefits for participation in this research. You will have the opportunity to share your personal experiences, which will be compiled into a paper that will be accessible to schools, universities, and school districts. I hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of teacher education programs and the dispositions of mentor teachers.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<p>Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by the following measures. All teacher data from the survey will be collected and stored by code number, not by teacher name, where applicable. All coding information, including a cross-listing of codes with teacher names, will be kept secure in a locked location and may only be accessed by the researcher. You will not be contacted by anyone other than the researcher, as listed above. Your identity will be preserved in all reports and presentations, where coding schema will be utilized as outlined above. All materials generated as a result of this study will only be accessible by Danielle Rivera or Dr. Linda Valli for a period of no more than five years, at which time all materials will be destroyed. All computer data (survey responses) will be stored on a password protected computer.</p> <p>If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible through the use of a coding schema, the use of pseudonyms, and vague descriptions of schools. Possible exceptions to confidentiality include cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. If there is reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, we are required by law to report this suspicion to the proper authorities.</p>
<b>Right to Withdraw and Questions</b>	<p>Your participation in this research survey is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. You are encouraged to ask the researchers questions throughout the duration of the study and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.</p> <p>If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the principal student investigator, <b>Danielle Rivera at: 108 Hilton Ave, Catonsville, MD 21228; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:drivera613@gmail.com">drivera613@gmail.com</a>; (telephone) 989-415-8968</b> or her advisor <b>Dr. Linda Valli at: 2311 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, Department of Teaching &amp; Learning, Policy &amp; Leadership, College Park, MD 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:LRV@umd.edu">LRV@umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-8157.</b></p>
<b>Participant Rights</b>	<p>If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact, <b>Danielle Rivera, Dept. of Teaching &amp; Learning, Policy &amp; Leadership, at the University of Maryland, College Park, at: 108 Hilton Ave, Catonsville, MD 21228; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:drivera613@gmail.com">drivera613@gmail.com</a>; (telephone) 989-415-8968</b></p> <p>If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>University of Maryland College Park Institutional Review Board Office 1204 Marie Mount Hall College Park, Maryland, 20742 E-mail: <a href="mailto:irb@umd.edu">irb@umd.edu</a> Telephone: 301-405-0678</b></p> <p>You are encouraged to ask the researchers questions throughout the duration of the study and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.</p> <p>This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</p>
<b>Statement of Consent</b>	Your selection of "I consent to participate" indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you voluntarily agree to participate in the survey of this research study. You may print a copy of this consent form.

At the end of the survey, please also indicate whether you would be willing to participate in a more in-depth study on the topics in the survey and your experience as a mentor teacher.

Consent \* Required

Do you consent to participate in the survey? \* Your information will be kept completely confidential. The full consent form can be read and printed at ( ).

( ) Yes, I consent to participate (the survey will go to Part 2)

( ) No, I do not consent to participate (the survey will go to Part 7) \*\*\* Note for IRB:

Participants who say “No” do not have to return the survey. They will not see any of the survey questions and will be taken to the thank you page of the survey

Please answer the questions below.

**Part 2: Participant Information**

First Name: _____	
Phone number (Optional): _____	Email (optional): _____
Gender: ___ M ___ F	Number of years teaching: _____
Age: ___ 20-24 ___ 25-30 ___ 31-40 ___ 41-50 ___ 50+	Subject area(s): _____
Number of times as a mentor teacher: _____	Current grade level taught: _____
Year you were last a mentor teacher: _____	Current school: _____

**Part 3: Experience as a mentor teacher**

1. How did you become a mentor teacher?
2. Please list the universities of your student teachers. This information will be used to analyze if responses differ between teacher preparation programs.
3. Please describe the information or training that you received from the university to be a mentor teacher.

**Part 4: Teacher Survey**

<i>Student-Centered Subscale</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
	Please rank your level of agreement with each of these statements as they relate to you.				
1. I believe a teacher must use a variety of instructional strategies to optimize student learning.					
2. I understand that students learn in a many different ways.					
3. I demonstrate qualities of humor, empathy, and warmth with others.					
4. I am a thoughtful and responsive listener.					
5. I assume responsibility when working with others.					
6. I believe that all students can learn.					

7. I believe it is important to involve all students in learning.					
8. I believe the classroom environment a teacher creates greatly affects students' learning and development.					
9. I view teaching as an important profession.					
10. I understand that teachers' expectations impact student learning.					
11. I view teaching as a collaborative effort among educators.					
12. I understand students have certain needs that must be met before learning can take place.					
13. I am sensitive to student differences.					
14. I communicate caring, concern, and a willingness to become involved with others.					
15. I am punctual and reliable in my attendance.					
16. I maintain a professional appearance.					
17. I believe it is my job to create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of students' self-confidence and competence.					
18. I respect the cultures of all students.					
19. I honor my commitments.					
20. I treat students with dignity and respect at all times.					
21. I am willing to receive feedback and assessment of my teaching.					
22. I am patient when working with students.					
23. I am open to adjusting and revising my plans to meet student needs.					
24. I communicate in ways that demonstrate respect for the feelings, ideas, and contributions of others.					
25. I believe it is important to learn about students and their community.					

1. Please add any additional comments related to what you believe about student learning or teaching.

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1. I am committed to critical reflection for my professional growth.					
2. I cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction.					
3. I actively seek out professional growth opportunities.					
4. I uphold the laws and ethical codes governing the teaching profession.					



	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
5. I stimulate students' interests.					
6. I value both long term and short term planning.					
7. I stay current with the evolving nature of the teaching profession.					
8. I select material that is relevant for students.					
9. I am successful in facilitating learning for all students.					
10. I demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school.					
11. I accurately read the non-verbal communication of students.					
12. I engage in discussions about new ideas in the teaching profession.					
13. I select material that is interesting for students.					
14. I provide appropriate feedback to encourage students in their development.					
15. I engage in research-based teaching practices.					
16. I create connections to subject matter that are meaningful to students.					
17. I listen to colleagues' ideas and suggestions to improve instruction.					
18. I take initiative to promote ethical and responsible professional practice.					
19. I communicate effectively with students.					
20. I communicate effectively with parents.					
21. I communicate effectively with colleagues.					
22. I work well with others in implementing a common curriculum.					

1. What do you think your primary role is in the dispositional preparation of new teachers?

(select as many as apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ Mentor and advisor

\_\_\_\_\_ None, that is the responsibility of the university

\_\_\_\_\_ Modeler

\_\_\_\_\_ None, I expect them to have the correct dispositions

\_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator

\_\_\_\_\_ Developing knowledge and skills is more important than dispositions

\_\_\_\_\_ Developing dispositions is optional if there is time

**Part 5: Would you be willing to participate in a more in-depth research study?**

\* Not everyone will be selected.

The in-depth case study will include an initial meeting or phone conversation, scheduled at your convenience, to introduce myself and to address any questions or concerns you have. At the initial meeting, you will receive a paper version of the consent form to sign and a copy to keep for your records.

If you choose to participate beyond the initial meeting, I will conduct a multi-case study using interview data. The data collection will take approximately 2-3 hours per individual as shown.

Procedure	Time
Initial interview- introduction and consent	20 minutes
1 <sup>st</sup> interview- about disposition development and the role of mentor teachers	30-45 minutes
Possible follow-up 2 <sup>nd</sup> interview- about questions from the first interview	30-45 minutes
Group interview (optional)	30-45 minutes

The time for interviews will be approximately 2.5 hours, depending on length of interview and the possibility for follow-up questions. The interviews will take place in a room of the school with the door closed to ensure privacy or another location as identified by you. The interviews will be scheduled at a time convenient for you after school and will not interfere with your established schedule and you may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. I really appreciate your help!

Yes (the survey will take you to part 6, next page)

No (the survey will take you to part 7)

**Part 6: Your experiences as a mentor teacher?**

Those selected for brief interviews will be contacted via email (or telephone if you prefer) to set up a time that is convenient to you. Please enter your contact information below.

If you have changed your mind and do not want to participate in an interview, simply enter an X for your name and email address. If you have any questions please email me at

[drivera613@gmail.com](mailto:drivera613@gmail.com).

Name (you only need to enter your first name): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address or preferred method of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (not required): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Questions: Do you have any comments or questions about the survey? Is there a good time to reach you?

**Part 7: Thanks for your input!**

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

If you chose not to participate in the survey and you change your mind, or if you did participate and have any other questions regarding this survey, please email me at [drivera613@gmail.com](mailto:drivera613@gmail.com).

Do you have any comments about the survey?

Teacher questionnaire adapted from:

Schulte, L., Edick, N., Edwards, S., & Mackiel, D. (2004). The development and validation of the Teacher Dispositions Index. *Essays in Education*, 12.

## Appendix C

### Permission to use Teacher Disposition Index

Gmail \*Danielle Rivera <drivera613@gmail.com>\*

\*Teacher Disposition Index\*

\*Laura Schulte \* <lschulte@unomaha.edu> Sun, Sep 7, 2014 at 9:02 PM

To: Danielle Rivera <drivera613@gmail.com>

Cc: Nancy Edick <nedick@unomaha.edu>, Sarah Edwards

<skedwards@unomaha.edu>, Kay Keiser <kkeiser@unomaha.edu>

Dear Danielle,

You have our permission to use the Teacher Dispositions Index for your dissertation research. You may want to contact Dr. Kay Keiser (kkeiser@unomaha.edu <mailto:kkeiser@unomaha.edu>) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha whose dissertation involved the use of the Teacher Dispositions Index with cooperating teachers. Best wishes with your research.

Sincerely,

Laura Schulte

## Appendix D

### Bulletin Notification

#### **Research Opportunity for Mentor Teachers**

The following research project has been approved by the Office of Research. This study targets general or special education teachers who have mentored teacher interns and involves a 20-minute online survey about your experiences. The researcher is a current Roosevelt District teacher and a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park. This study is part of her doctoral dissertation.

There are no direct benefits for participation in this research. Any participation is strictly voluntary. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise qualify. Interested participants can see the attached flyer for more information regarding the study and to contact the researcher directly.

# Have you ever had a teacher intern???

## If so, I would like you to take my survey!

If you are a general or special education teacher who has mentored teacher interns, I am interested in hearing from you.

I am a teacher with Baltimore County Public Schools and a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am doing research about the experiences of mentor teachers- **YOU!**

If you are interested in participating, please contact me directly and I will send you the link to my survey.

Danielle Rivera

[drivera613@gmail.com](mailto:drivera613@gmail.com)

989-415-8968

The survey will take about 20 minutes. All answers will be completely confidential and your participation is voluntary.



## Appendix F

### Interview Questions<sup>6</sup>

#### Introductory Interview

I asked these questions, but when unexpected topics arose, I pursued follow-up questions

1. Tell me, briefly, about your school and what you teach.
2. Tell me about why and how you became a teacher.
  - a. What was it about teaching that drew you to this career choice?
  - b. What do you view as your role in the classroom?
  - c. What part of teaching do you look forward to the most? Least?
3. Are you familiar with the term disposition? What does it mean to you? What are some dispositions you think are important to teaching? What role do dispositions play in good teaching? How important do you think dispositions are?
4. How did your dispositions develop? Can you remember your dispositions changing over the course of your preparation or during your career?
5. Have you been a cooperating teacher? How did you become a cooperating teacher?
6. Did you know that teacher education programs have a responsibility to develop and assess candidate dispositions? Has the university communicated the dispositions it wants to see in student teachers? What are they?
7. What do you see as your role in supporting the development of dispositions in student teachers?
8. Please describe the professional development you received from either your district or the teacher preparation program to be a cooperating teacher. Did this training address dispositions?
9. What do you see as your strengths in working as a cooperating teacher? Weaknesses?
10. What do you consider as the most important part of being a cooperating teacher?
11. What challenges do you face with regard to your role as a cooperating teacher, especially as it relates to candidate dispositions?
12. Do you ever feel like you have an incorrect disposition or demonstrate an incorrect disposition?

#### Second Interview

1. These are the InTASC dispositional standards....Have you seen these before? Considering the university documents to which you have access, what are the dispositions the university wants you to promote? Are the InTASC standards present in the evaluation tools of the university?
2. What role do you think these dispositions play in good teaching?
3. How important do you think these dispositions are?
4. When you think of dispositions for yourself- would you describe yourself as having these? Are there any you feel you are stronger or weaker in?
5. Considering these dispositions- how have they developed, if they have in the course of your career?
6. When you think of dispositions, especially for student teachers, are these what you would try to develop?

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<sup>6</sup> Some questions were derived from the Eckert dissertation  
Some questions from Bellarmine University

7. What is your responsibility in developing dispositions in prospective teachers? Do you have a responsibility to develop them?
8. What do you think your role is in preparing prospective teachers with regard to these dispositions?
9. How does that relate to your role when you think about your role in developing knowledge and skills?
10. When you think about dispositions, what are the challenges you face with your role as a cooperating teacher?
11. In the first interview, you mentioned (see individual lists) as dispositions important to teaching, are those dispositions you feel you have? Now you have the list that universities consider- do you ever find yourself not exhibiting these? Are there any that you think are less important or unrealistic? Are there others that you would add?
  - a. **Natasha**- flexibility, sense of humor, communication, listening passion, compassion, care about students authority and relationships
  - b. **Ben**- understanding, pleasant, get along with kids, forgiving (not hold a grudge), not take things personally (laugh at self, tough-skin?), organized, follow through, no ego (humble), self-esteem, able to be wrong (humble, not have all answers), resourceful
  - c. **James**- #1- sensitivity (do you mean to their feelings or you described it as being sensitive to when they are bored- do you mean awareness?), nurturing, demanding, organized, professional, well spoken, supportive, humble (not necessarily know everything), learn together, authoritative, improving, Antithetical- uncompromising, uncaring, belligerent, narcissistic, not able to handle adversity, unprofessional
  - d. **Darlene**- positivity, being accommodating, being flexible, self-improving, and being self-evaluative
  - e. **Kelly**- patience, understanding, continuing learning, vested interest
  - f. **Jasmine**- caring, helpful, hard-working, self-control, humor, aware of student feelings
  - g. **Helen**- like children, flexible, responsive, tolerance, patience
  - h. **Jeanine**- enthusiasm, ongoing learning, helping people, belief in students, open-minded, work ethic, tolerant, aware of diversity, create a classroom environment, self-improvement, reflection, establish relationships, positive, forgiving
  - i. **Anne**- interpersonal skills, relationships, rapport, authority, professionalism, communication, intelligence, trust, flexibility, student engagement, organization, high expectations, calm, Antithetical- caddy, gossipers, negativity, overreaction, temper,
  - j. **Lisa**- content relevance, enthusiasm for subject, flexible, self-reflective, handle adversity, positive attitude, caring, accepting, self-improvement, collaboration, admit wrongs, pursue PD
12. On the survey, you indicated (see below), would you explain your thinking behind that answer?
  - a. **Natasha**- mostly agree responses, strongly agree with use a variety of instructional strategies to optimize student learning, disagree with believe all students can learn
  - b. **Ben**- disagree in demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school, last year lower- neutral in assume responsibility when working with others, communicate caring, concern and willingness to become involved with others, seek out professional growth opportunities, stay current with evolving nature of teaching profession, successful in facilitating learning for all students, create connections to

subject matter that are meaningful to students, this year lower- agree in respect the cultures of all students

- c. **James**- neutral in cooperating with colleagues in planning, actively seeking out professional growth opportunities, engaging in discussions about new ideas in teaching, and listening to colleagues ideas and suggestions to improve instruction, disagree in demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school- which I found interesting since you also talked about having a classroom that is self-sufficient and getting kids to do the talking as oppose to a “top-down” approach
  - d. **Darlene**- disagree- facilitate learning for all students
  - e. **Kelly**- 4 neutral items- more about collaboration with colleagues- why do you think that?
  - f. **Jasmine**- mostly strongly agree, agree with humor, sensitive to student differences, cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction
  - g. **Helen**- fairly balance, 13 agrees, 1 neutral- communicate effectively with parents
  - h. **Jeanine**- all strongly agree, except for 1 agree- demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction in the classroom and school
  - i. **Anne**- Can you talk more about the comment you made in the survey? Neutral- classroom environment affects student learning, successful in facilitating learning for all students, demonstrate and encourage democratic interaction, work well with others implementing a common curriculum
  - j. **Lisa**- neutral- take initiative to promote ethical and responsible professional practice, engage in research-based teaching practices, cooperate with colleagues in planning instruction, disagree- provide appropriate feedback to encourage students in development
13. Considering your experience as a mentor teacher, is there anything you wish the university did to support you? If the university were to offer PD, what would you want it to cover?
  14. Have you participated in the district professional development for mentor teachers? Did you even know it existed?
  15. What do you think is the main threat to a successful lesson?
    - a. What do you think are threats to a student learning or not learning?
    - b. To what extent do you believe teachers can overcome the challenges faced by many students, such as poverty or a difficult home environment?
    - c. Can the teacher be a threat?
  16. Have you ever experienced a situation in which differences in culture between you and your students or between students caused a conflict? Can you describe your reaction?
  17. The school has a rule about using electronic devices during the school day. You see a student in the hall with their earphones in and texting on their phone. You ask the student to put it away and they tell you to “f- off”. You do not know the student so you follow them to their classroom and ask the teacher for the student’s name. The teacher gives you the name, but tells you that it is alright for the student to use those devices in the classroom so you should just let it go. What is your response?
  18. Your class has about ten reasonably bright students, who are doing well in the class and who hang out together. The class also has ten other students who hang out together. These students, however, are all having difficulty in the course. The parents of the first group keep asking you—and your supervisor—to group their children together and give them more advanced work, while the parents of the second group are insisting that their children be placed in heterogeneous groups



and not grouped together in the “dumb” group. Each of the parents of the second group is saying that another child in the group is a “bad influence” on the others. How do you deal with classroom instruction, student grouping, and assignments? How do you deal with the parents?

Ben-

1. In the first interview, you mentioned that student teachers are not getting dispositions- so is it your role as a cooperating teacher to remedy that? (p.7)
2. Compare survey from last year to survey from this year

Natasha

1. Do you care about all of your students?
2. I feel like you and I are very similar in our outspokenness and honesty and sometimes this can be perceived as negative. The other day in the faculty room, you were venting and mentioned... And I agree and I think many teachers do. Do we not have the right dispositions?
3. In the first interview, you mentioned that your job is to prepare prospective teachers for some of the negatives they are going to see and to give them the real picture without scaring them away. How do you balance that with dispositions such as believing all children can learn at high levels, respecting students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds, and continually drawing on current education policy and research to improve practice?

James

1. In describing your own development- you described it as a process. And you also mentioned that the university might assume that the student teacher has dispositions for teaching. Do you find that to be true? And then, what is your role in preparing student teachers with regard to dispositions? What role can you play to help develop student teacher dispositions? What responsibility or how much responsibility do you have in that role?
2. In our discussion of the dispositions that the university considers in the evaluation documents, you mentioned there were questions about if the student teacher takes into account community dynamics in lesson planning and you weren't sure if you consider community dynamics or culture when planning. And in the survey, you indicated that you respect the cultures of students and it is important to learn about students and their community, but do you consider those things when you plan lessons? Is it important to consider those things?

Darlene

1. You described your student teacher as being negative and overly critical and that you tried to work with her on that. Did you see a change? Or is that something that maybe mentor teachers can't change?

Kelly

1. In your interview, you mentioned that you are not going to reach everybody and not everybody is going to be open to learning, but in the survey, you agreed that you are successful in facilitating learning for all. Is there a difference in facilitating learning and actually having students learn?
2. One of my research questions is to determine the challenges that CTs have in their role and in the first interview you mentioned some things that I thought might be challenges, but I wanted to see what you thought- no benefit to CT, STs who are connected with the kids and kids won't accept the ST, non-relevant evaluations, not user-friendly evaluations, the supervisor has more say than CT, burn out from mentoring. Is there any solution to these?
3. In your first interview you said behavior issues were your least favorite part of teaching. What do you think should be done of can be done?

Helen

1. In the first interview you mentioned that without the requisite dispositions, you are doomed in the occupation. First, can you tell me what some of the requisite dispositions are (using InTASC or personal ideas)? Why do you think these are so critical? What difference does it make in the classroom?
2. You talked about your student teacher struggling to accept criticism, is that a disposition? Should they be prepared for criticism when they get to you? Do you see her carrying that behavior over into a student being mean?
3. Why do you think your students did not like your student teacher? Do you think it had anything to do with dispositions? As a cooperating teacher how much is it your responsibility and role to mitigate that?

Jasmine

1. How did you dispositions develop? (skipped first interview because of unfamiliarity with word)

Jeanine

1. In the first interview, you mentioned that you don't like the pressure and the feeling that people are out to get you, which may create a climate not conducive to learning. Do you share that with the student teacher in the spirit of honesty and sharing the good, bad, and ugly? Or should a CT keep that to themselves?
2. You mentioned at a previous school you taught students from a more disadvantaged background and that they needed a stable adult more than they needed to learn history. Do you think you had different learning expectations when you were at your previous school compared to your current school? To someone who doesn't know you that could sound like you had lower expectations for those students?
3. You said you think dispositions are really important. Why do you think that? What would happen in a classroom if dispositions were missing?

Anne

1. You said that you were a calm person, and you even added it on the survey as a disposition important to teaching, but not all teachers are calm. How does that effect their classroom? What are some specific dispositions that you think a teacher has to have to be effective?
2. Can you talk a bit about the comment you wrote on the survey- about the assumption that when you do all the things on the survey, all students will be engaged in learning in your classroom.
3. What do you do in those situations? With those students? Are there kids who can't learn? Who you can't reach?

Lisa

1. In your first interview, you mentioned that you were going to work with another teacher on the Space curriculum this year, but in the survey you indicated you were neutral about cooperating with colleagues in planning instruction. Why do you think that is?

### **Focus Group Interview**

In the focus group interview, I asked participants about my initial interview analysis and to clarify ideas they expressed in their individual interviews. I tried to participate as little as possible during this interview, only interjecting to keep the discussion on topic, to ask a new question, or to clarify a comment.

1. As I read interviews, the roles I found people saying they had with a student teacher include

modeling professionalism, modeling teaching, being a mentor and advisor, informally evaluating, mediating between ST and parents, students, or university, and sharing reality. Are there any you might add or qualify when you see the definitions? In terms of informal evaluator, do you ever feel you are a formal evaluator or is that a small part of your role?

2. Challenges people said they had include- student teacher professionalism, student teacher skills, student teacher learner environments and relationships, releasing control of the classroom, information from the university, professional development from the university, being valued by the university, pre-evaluations, university evaluations, and giving feedback. Are there any you might add or qualify?
3. People said their dispositions developed with trial and error, observation and emulation (of both good and bad examples), from resources, from experience, and from instruction. Which of these do you feel is the most influential for you personally?
4. Thinking about the role of dispositions in good teaching is difficult to describe, but people say that it is critical for effective teaching. What is effective teaching? How do dispositions relate to the classroom learning environment and good teaching?
5. When thinking about paperwork from the university that some people said was long or not relevant to the job, would knowing why things are in evaluations help you as a cooperating teacher?
6. Many of you mentioned not being able to help all students, is there any relation between a teacher's disposition and the success (or lack of success) of students?
7. What do you see as the role of the university in preparing you?
8. One of the things many of you talked about was the fact that your student teacher was not prepared (and I had the same experience)- with teaching skills, professionalism, for the reality of the classroom. As a prospective teacher, what level of preparedness should they have to be in a good place for student teaching? What more does the university need to do? Or are do we as cooperating teachers not have the skills necessary to bring these kids to where they need to be and we need more guidance?
9. One of the questions I asked last time was if you were aware of university dispositions and many people said no, but how much do you know of the knowledge and skills the university wants?
10. How has the university supported your role as a cooperating teacher? How has the school district supported your role as a cooperating teacher?
11. Do you ever find yourself expressing opinions that may not match these dispositions?
12. Are there other characteristics or attitudes other than those in the survey that you feel are important to being a teacher?

## Appendix G

### Coding Schema by Research Question Themes

<b>DEV- evolution</b> DEV-EVO	Includes continual development, process, learn along the way, process of improving, developing, shift from teacher centered to student centered, from superior to humble, self-discovery, can be learned, with time, become more natural- grow into role
<b>DEV- innate/inherent</b> DEV-INN	had some core dispositions, inherent for veteran, stayed the same, a feel, intuitive, who I am, art of teaching
<b>DEV- fluctuates</b> DEV- FLU	vary depending on environment, depends on mood, varies by day, fluctuates by year and time of year, each person has different important dispositions
<b>DEV- trial and error</b> DEV-TRI	find what works for me, test ideas, figure it out, observe kids reactions and saw difference in kids, students influence practice, self-evaluation, tried and true methods, self-reflection, avoid negativity, self-improvement
<b>DEV- +/-observation and emulation</b> DEV- OBS	learned what not to do, bad example of mentor, saw unsuccessful teachers, mentor teacher, other teachers, from mentor strengths, working with experienced teachers, put self in teacher's place
<b>DEV- resources</b> DEV- RES	with teaching materials, technology, reading, collaboration, changing evaluation system, pursued help
<b>DEV- learn from experience</b> DEV- EXP	lab school, maturity, with age, gain life experience, writing curriculum, learn by doing, camp, parenting, confidence grew, learn to let things go, learn student situations, content relevance
<b>DEV- +/-taught</b> DEV- TAU	intervention by administrators, shown ideas, education course, professional development, not from PD, teacher preparation, mentor, or coursework
DEV	Some changes mentioned include from enlightener to co-learner, being less positive at the start of career, identity shifting from likeability to authority, lost enthusiasm
<b>KD- know</b>	can give examples or definition of disposition
<b>KD- unaware</b>	can include not knowing or unsure, not paying attention to paperwork, or lost in shuffle of paperwork and responsibilities
<b>KD- source</b>	Learned from grad school, PD, experience
KD	All but one teacher could give some definition for disposition, but only two could relate it to university requirements Words used to describe dispositions- tendency of actions, outlook, philosophy, perspective, mood, attitude, character, nature, personality, traits, beliefs that control actions, a quality, demeanor, where you are in relation to a subject
<b>CTR- modeler professionalism</b> CTR- MPRO	demonstrate professionalism, professional relationships, boundaries, relationship balance, professional conversations with peers and parents, not teaching skills
<b>CTR- modeler teaching</b> CTR- MTEA	Process of modeling some part of teaching- sharing and showing how of instructional ideas, innovative applications of content, assessment, skills (moving kids, grouping, etc), and self-reflection, learning environment, time management. Cultivate instruction by collaborating to organize and plan lessons for the content that considers learner differences and learner development

<b>CTR- mentor and advisor</b> CTR- MEN	Explaining things, offering feedback or advice such as thinking through lesson planning and talking about lessons after, sharing and discussing personal experiences and ideas, observing and pointing out things including collecting data (# girls vs boys, etc). Also includes cheering on the student teacher, guiding them through self-evaluation, helping them relax and giving them confidence to discover for themselves and allow them autonomy in the classroom
<b>CTR- informal evaluator</b> CTR- INF	monitor ST and ensure ST has tools and competencies for success, verbal coaching with criticize and praise, honesty, balance criticism with smile, reassurance, bluntness, improve ST performance, mold, get them to a place to teach
<b>CTR- mediator students, parents or university</b> CTR- MEDS, MEDP, MEDU	Mediate with students or not mediate with students- let learn, alleviate parent concerns, defend the ST, filter information
<b>CTR- reality</b> CTR- REA	Cooperating teacher shares reality of teaching, including that it is hard and there can be negatives, but not scare the ST and also share the rewards. The CT shows an intern a real classroom and provides the experience to apply coursework and teach different subjects, breaking in the ST.
CTR- disposition	Range of ideas about cooperating teachers' role with regard to dispositions- includes some or most dispositions cannot be taught, but the cooperating teacher can develop some dispositions while also correcting bad dispositions. Some CTs indicate that they do not have time to develop dispositions or it is not their primary goal or even the responsibility of the cooperating teacher.
CTR- communicate with university	When thinking about the university- some CTs communicate with the university and feel they share responsibility with the university. Some CTs opinions are valued by the university and treated as equal. Other CTs feel they are more important than the university since this is the application piece and are independent from the university Disagreement about if CTs are teacher, co-teacher or not a teacher, but most consider not a peer to ST
<b>CH- ST professionalism (PLE)</b> CH- STPLE	Student teacher lacks professionalism. This includes low work ethic evident in attendance, a lack of dedication and commitment, a lack of desire to impress, or manipulation. Also includes student teacher maturity (or insecurity), dishonesty, and a lack of professional interaction and interpersonal skills such as an unwillingness to talk to the CTs and not understanding chain of command.
<b>CH- ST skills</b> CH- STSKI	Student teacher is not prepared in terms of classroom teaching skills. This includes not having content knowledge, struggling to write a lesson plan, organization, technology abilities, and classroom management. The student teacher struggles to handle the cooperating teacher's full teaching load. Student teacher has difficulty with time management, scaffolding, language skills, indecisiveness, or using traditional teaching methods.
<b>CH- ST learner environment and relationships</b> CH- STLEN	Students do not accept the student teacher and sometimes perceiving the ST as a substitute. The student teacher does not "get" kids and does not connect with students. Student teacher does not maintain professional boundaries and act more as a friend or are overly critical of students.
<b>CH- releasing control and responsibility (not being control freak)</b>	Allowing the student teacher autonomy and releasing control of classes and instruction. Student teachers may make mistakes and CTs have to watch students struggle or not learn, but CTs still have to get instruction done and teach the curriculum, balancing teaching the ST with teaching students. They do not want to inhibit growth of the ST, but it was

CH- CON	difficult to watch unsuccessful lessons and students still need to learn.
<b>CH- University Communication- information</b> CH- INF	Cooperating teacher either has too much information and not enough time to read it, they need more information, or information came from the ST. Teachers want clarification of their role as a mentor, including a protocol of teaching strategies, format for the student teaching experience, and teaching priorities from the university. Cooperating teachers may not feel prepared or are unsure of their role. CTs would like information about the other field experience (if more than one) and more involvement of the university in the student teaching experience.
<b>CH- University Communication- Professional Development</b> CH-PD	Cooperating teachers feel PD has little value because it is not relevant to the reality of teaching and disconnected from current teaching situations or the PD was not engaging and did not address useful topics. The partnership that is supposed to exist is not useful. CT indicates there was little PD offered and finding time for PD as challenges.
<b>CH- value by university</b> CH- VAL	CT was not equal to the university with regards to ST evaluations. CT felt they would not recommend the student teacher for full time teaching, but the university approved the ST for teaching. The CT also has no say in selecting the student teachers.
<b>CH- pre-evaluations-</b> CH- PEVL	CT wants to know more about the ability of the ST and a way to identify the needs of the ST. Indication that they assumed the ST knew things that they did not.
<b>CH- evaluations</b> CH-EVAL	unwieldy, amount and complexity of university documents, long, a lot of paperwork, university requirements not fitting into school, incorporating initial teacher prep assignments, time, not connected to reality- can't evaluate, not aligned to county (Danielson), not relevant, not user friendly, too many dispositions, too many requirements
<b>CH- feedback</b> CH- FDBK	CTs work to balance direct, constructive criticism without negativity and giving praise to ST. Recognition of need a long-term relationship and the need to be considerate of student teacher feelings. Some student teachers were very sensitive to criticism and even cried. Other student teachers did not accept the comments as valid (DW)
<b>CH- time</b>	Finding time to do normal work, time to conference with student teacher, go through paperwork, time for co-planning
<b>RID- necessary for effective teaching</b> RID- NEED	critical, important for effective teaching, makes effective teachers, can't teach without, essential, doomed without dispositions, impacts engagement and enjoyment and effort, can impact delivery and classroom effectiveness, profound impact, ability to measure lesson success, if missing then traditional teaching, <b>meaningful</b> learning
<b>RID- creates learning environment</b> RID- CLEN	learning environment can motivate learning, know students, relationships help student cooperation, kids are perceptive, relationship can be difference between learning and not, raises energy, people's attitudes affect others, lasting influence
<b>RID- learner development and differences</b> RID- LDVF	know learner development to plan correct level, legality, meet student needs, pushing kids
<b>RID- not fixed</b> RID-CHA	depends on the type of teacher what is important, depends on who and where you teach, don't need to know cultures- not part of instruction, need to understand culture to teach, strive for all the time
<b>RID- separate from knowledge and skills</b> RID- SEP	dispositions most important for ST passing, base layer of teaching- matter the most, different than creating lesson, can't think about everything so need programming for automatic actions, ST have skills- but not disposition, ST have knowledge- but not disposition, have to communicate and execute lesson, not everyone can teach, not evaluated
RID	levels of importance- some have priority, need basics before innovation, cross-disciplinary less important, collaboration important for younger, reflection

## Appendix H

### Initial Self-reported Disposition (SRD) Coding Categories

- SRD- Passion- teaching-** excitement to be a teacher, desire to be a teacher, love of job
- SRD- Passion- subject-** includes teacher saying love subject, relevance of subject, enthusiasm for subject
- SRD- Passion- students-** or is this part of relationships?
- SRD- Community awareness-** includes familiarity with community, know school demographics, awareness of neighborhoods
- SRD- flexibility-** student needs, accepting mistakes, accommodating, adaptive, change to fit students, open mind, forgiveness, not holding a grudge
- SRD- professional-** appearance, dress, attendance, organized, meet deadlines, commitment to responsibilities, work ethic, follow policies for teachers and students
- SRD- relationships-** create classroom environment, establish rapport, build trust, enjoy students, get along with kids, empathy, connect with students, humor???, connect by admitting differences, knowing your students, learning environment
- SRD- sensitivity** (Could this be student awareness? Academic and emotional?)- the idea of being aware of unspoken feelings by reading body language, facial expressions, understanding adolescent development, to emotions, to student frustrations or struggles, to student understanding (or is this different?- aware of ability?) (How do sensitivity, relationships, and flexibility relate to learning environment- are these separate codes or all under one- learning environment? And what about communication?)
- SRD- high expectations-** push kids, demanding,
- SRD- student centered-** good activities- stimulate student interest, engage students
- SRD- communication- V or NV-** talking and listening, interpersonal skills, give and understand non-vocal cues, skills, articulation, honesty- here or in relationships
- SRD- communication- with students, with co-workers?** Or does this go in professional?
- SRD- knowledge-** intelligence, content knowledge

## Appendix I

### InTASC Critical Dispositions and Self-reported Disposition Coding Schema

<p><b>1: Learner Development: The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.</b></p> <p>a) The teacher respects students' differing strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to further each student's development.</p> <p>b) The teacher is committed to using students' strengths as a basis for growth, and their misconceptions as opportunities for learning.</p> <p>c) The teacher takes responsibility for promoting students' growth and development.</p> <p>d) The teacher values the input and contributions of families, colleagues and other professionals in understanding each student's development.</p>	<p><b>SRD- sensitivity-</b> understanding adolescent development, to student frustrations or struggles, to student understanding, aware of ability</p> <p>Adjusts to students, sense of responsibility for student learning, scaffolding</p>
<p><b>2: Learning Differences: The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.</b></p> <p>a) The teacher believes that all children can learn at high levels and persists in helping all children reach their full potential.</p> <p>b) The teacher respects students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.</p> <p>c) The teacher makes students feel valued and helps them learn to value each other.</p> <p>d) The teacher values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning.</p>	<p><b>SRD- high expectations-</b> push kids, demanding, motivator</p> <p><b>Flexibility-</b> for learning options</p> <p>Aware of learning differences, aware of diversity, expectations based on skill level, helping, every student can learn, try to reach all kids, believing in students, understanding diversity, community awareness, familiarity with community, know school demographics, culture, meet needs of diverse students, supportive</p>
<p><b>3: Learning Environments: The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.</b></p> <p>a) The teacher is committed to working with students to establish positive and supportive learning environments.</p> <p>b) The teacher values the role of students in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.</p> <p>c) The teacher is committed to supporting students as they participate in decision-making, engage in exploration and invention, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning.</p> <p>d) The teacher appreciates the cultural dimensions of communication and seeks to foster respectful communication and multiple perspectives among all members of the learning community.</p> <p>e) The teacher is a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.</p>	<p><b>SRD- sensitivity-</b> aware of unspoken feelings, read people-body language, facial expressions, to emotions, give and understand non-vocal cues</p> <p><b>SRD- relationships-</b> create classroom environment, get along with kids, build trust, establish rapport, empathy, enjoy students, connect with students, humor, know students, connect by admitting differences, sensitive to situations that might affect learning</p> <p>Tolerance, forgiveness, honesty, patience, not take things personally, accept student misbehavior/mistakes</p> <p><b>SRD- flexibility-</b> student needs, accommodating, open mind, change to fit students, adaptive, to student behaviors</p> <p>Authority figure, not a friend, not too strict</p> <p>Expectations- consistent, not use fear or intimidation, aware student feelings, not upset students, respectful, approachable, social interactions, positive attitude</p>
<p><b>4: Content Knowledge: The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.</b></p>	<p><b>SRD- Passion- subject-</b> includes teacher saying love subject, relevance of subject, enthusiasm for subject</p> <p><b>SRD- knowledge-</b> intelligence, content knowledge,</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The teacher realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.</li> <li>b) The teacher appreciates multiple perspectives within the discipline and facilitates students' critical analysis of these perspectives.</li> <li>c) The teacher recognizes the potential of bias in his/her representation of the discipline and seeks to appropriately address problems of bias.</li> <li>d) The teacher is committed to work toward each learner's mastery of disciplinary content and skills.</li> </ul>	<p>Improving teaching materials, content relevance- apply to real life (I think this is #5 but explanation in standards is #4)</p>
<p><b>5: Application of Content: The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking and creativity and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.</b></p>	<p><b>SRD- student centered-</b> good activities- stimulate student interest, engage students  Aware of student interest  Not top down, not impose will  cross-disciplinary</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The teacher is constantly exploring how to use disciplinary knowledge as a lens to address local and global issues.</li> <li>b) The teacher values knowledge outside his/her own discipline and how such knowledge enhances student learning.</li> <li>c) The teacher values open and flexible learning environments that encourage student exploration, discovery, expression, and collaboration across content areas.</li> </ul>	<p>aware student ability- assessment  data conscious  address student needs  not all students gifted- leveling appropriate</p>
<p><b>6: Assessment: The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The teacher is committed to engaging students actively in assessment processes and in reviewing their own progress and learning.</li> <li>b) The teacher takes professional responsibility for aligning learning goals with instruction and assessment.</li> <li>c) The teacher is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to students on their progress.</li> <li>d) The teacher is committed to using multiple types of assessment processes to support and document learning.</li> <li>e) The teacher is committed to modifying assessments and testing conditions for English language learners and students with exceptional learning needs.</li> <li>f) The teacher is committed to the ethical use of various assessments and assessment data to identify student strengths and needs to promote student growth.</li> </ul>	<p>aware student ability and levels,  planning  routines and guidelines  creativity</p>
<p><b>7: Planning for Instruction: The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The teacher respects students' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction.</li> <li>b) The teacher values curriculum planning as a collegial activity that takes into consideration the input of students, colleagues, families, and the larger community.</li> <li>c) The teacher takes professional responsibility to use long and short-term planning as a means of assuring student learning.</li> <li>d) The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances.</li> </ul>	<p>student centered, skills- questioning  give information</p>
<p><b>8: Instructional Strategies: The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.</li> <li>b) The teacher values the variety of ways people communicate and encourages students to develop and use multiple forms of communication.</li> <li>c) The teacher is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.</li> <li>d) The teacher values flexibility and reciprocity in the teaching process as necessary for adapting instruction to student responses, ideas, and needs.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice: The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.</b></p> <p>a) The teacher takes ethical responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.</p> <p>b) The teacher is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with students and their families.</p> <p>c) The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.</p> <p>d) The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.</p>	<p><b>SRD- professional-</b> appearance, dress, attendance, organized, meet deadlines, commitment to responsibilities, work ethic, follow-through, follow policies for teachers and students, confident, have presence</p> <p>Ok with PD, willing to hear ideas, pursue PD and professional knowledge, ongoing learning, continual improvement, Ethical behavior, moral character</p> <p>Accept criticism, admits wrong-doing or being wrong, apology, self-reflection, find what works for you, self-evaluative, self-motivated, self-improvement, handle adversity, seek colleague help, self-control- not allow feelings to become actions, boundaries, humble, goal setting, resourceful, put bad day behind</p>
<p><b>10: Leadership and Collaboration: The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to talk responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth and to advance the profession.</b></p> <p>a) The teacher takes responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her school as one of advocacy for learners and accountability for their success.</p> <p>b) The teacher respects families' norms and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with students and families in setting and meeting challenging goals.</p> <p>c) The teacher takes responsibility to grow and develop with colleagues through interactions that enhance practice and support student learning.</p> <p>d) The teacher takes responsibility for contributing to and advancing the profession.</p> <p>e) The teacher embraces all the challenge of continuous improvement and change.</p>	<p><b>SRD- communication- V or NV-</b> talking and listening, interpersonal skills, skills, articulation</p> <p><b>SRD- communication- with students, with co-workers</b></p> <p>Collaboration with parents, professional conversations want to improve profession</p> <p>standing ground with parents, interact with co-workers</p> <p>instructional leader, not extreme introvert</p> <p>Curriculum writing</p>

<p>Negative SRD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult to manage all behavior issues traditional teaching</li> <li>• rights of majority over right of one</li> <li>• collaboration when it works/time,</li> <li>• ok for kids to fail if not working, can't change apathy</li> <li>• not all students going to learn- not open to learning- student responsibility for success</li> <li>• not using assessment for instruction- time,</li> <li>• negative difference between ability levels, lower expectations for diverse students?,</li> <li>• dislike students, sarcasm,</li> <li>• frustration- need consequences</li> <li>• can't help everyone all the time, can't fix social problems, not helping all students, difference between not willing to help and not being able to help need to impress</li> </ul>	<p>Other SRDs- maybe not fit in InTASC?</p> <p>Caring, too many dispositions, relationships- but not with all student- unrealistic, not always easy, stubborn?, not democracy</p> <p>not have negative ones, dedication, here for you, kindness, efficiency, calm demeanor, problem solving, enjoy job, student ethical behavior,</p> <p>like/love students, available, accept students can be smarter, non-confrontational, charisma, nurturing,</p> <p>have vested interest, compassion, attention to certain kids, Enthusiasm, stability, time management, dedicate time</p> <p><b>SRD- Passion</b> (too strong a word? Enthusiasm better?)- <b>teaching-</b> excitement to be a teacher, desire to be a teacher, love of job</p>
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## Appendix J

### Matrix of Interview Code Frequency

		Anne	Ben	Darlene	Helen	James	Jasmine	Jeanine	Kelly	Lisa	Natasha
<b>DEV- Evolution</b> DEV-EVO	8/10 12		2		2	3	1	1	1	1	1
<b>DEV- innate/inherent</b> DEV-INN	6/10 10		2	2	1	2		1	2		
<b>DEV- fluctuates</b> DEV- FLU	6/10 9		1	1				1	4	1	1
<b>DEV- trial and error</b> DEV-TRI	6/10 14		1	2		5	1			1	4
<b>DEV- +observation and emulation</b> DEV- +OBS	8/10 10	1	1	2	1	1		2		1	1
<b>DEV- -observation and emulation</b> DEV- -OBS	5/10 7	3	1			1			1	1	
<b>DEV- resources</b> DEV- RES	7/10 15	1	3		3	1	1	2		4	
<b>DEV- learn from experience</b> DEV- EXP	10/10 34	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	2	7	4
<b>DEV- +taught</b> DEV- +TAU	8/10 9	1	1		1	1	1	2		1	1
<b>DEV- -taught</b> DEV- -TAU	7/10 10		1		1	1	1		2	1	3
<b>KD- know</b>	5/10	Aware 1	aware		aware			aware			1
<b>KD- unaware</b>	8/10		2	2		2	1	1	1	2, unaware meaning	2
<b>KD- source</b>		Grad school, univ docs			Univ (2)						courses

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<b>CTR- modeler professionalism</b> CTR- MPRO	4/10 9		1	2				1			5
<b>CTR- modeler teaching</b> CTR- MTEA	10/10 37	7	5	2	2	2	3	5	1	3	7
<b>CTR- mentor and advisor</b> CTR- MEN	10/10 47	5	2	3	4	6	6	2	2	12	5
<b>CTR- informal evaluator</b> CTR- INFE	10/10 30	6	2	4	3	3	2	1	1	5	3
<b>CTR- mediator students</b> MEDS	3/10 4	2			1				1		
<b>CTR- mediator parents</b> MEDP	2/10 2		1						1		
<b>CTR- mediator university</b> MEDU	2/10 2			1			1				
<b>CTR- reality</b> CTR- +/-REA	10/10 26	2	3 1+	1	3	3	1	1	3	2	6
CTR- disposition		1?									
<b>CH- ST professionalism (PLE)</b> CH- STPLE	5/10 15	2	4	3	1	5					
<b>CH- ST skills</b> CH- STSKI	9/10 25	2	2	1	8	1	3	5	1		2
<b>CH- ST learner environment and relationships</b> CH- STLEN	5/10 12		1	4	2		2		3		
<b>CH- releasing control and responsibility</b> CH- CON	6/10 10			2		1	2		1	2	2
<b>CH- University Communication-information</b> CH- INFO	7/10 18	2, 1 info on eval	1	1	2		2	5		5	

## COOPERATING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

<b>CH- University Communication- Professional Development CH-PD</b>	8/10 14	2		1	1	2	2	2	3		1
<b>CH- value by university CH- VAL</b>	4/10 5	1			1+			1	2		1, 2+
<b>CH- pre-evaluations- CH- PEVL</b>	4/10 5			1	1		1	2			
<b>CH- evaluations CH-EVAL</b>	7/10 15	2, 1 info on eval	1	1		2	1		6	2	
<b>CH- feedback CH- FDBK</b>	6/10 9	1	1	1	3	1					2
<b>CH- Time</b>	5/10 6	1, 1 (extra work)	1	1		1		2			
<b>CH- PREP</b>											
<b>RID- necessary for effective teaching RID- NEED</b>	7/10 18	2	2	1	4	7		1			1
<b>RID- creates learning environment RID- CLEN</b>	10/10 32	6	1	1	4	3	2	2	2	4	7
<b>RID- learner development and differences RID- LDVF</b>	10/10 27	1	1	2	4	5	3	3	2	4	2
<b>RID- not fixed RID-CHA</b>	3/10 5					3		1	1		
<b>RID- separate from knowledge and skills RID- SEP</b>	6/10 12	4			2	1		1	1		3
<b>SRD- LDV- Learner development</b>	10/10 43	2	3	6	7	4	6	4	2	4	5
<b>SRD- LDF Learning differences</b>	10/10 71	3	4	6	9	6	8	12	7	7	11
<b>SRD- LEN- Learning environment</b>	10/10 101	20	5	4	8	7	8	13	9	12	15

## COOPERATING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

SRD- CK- Content Knowledge	10/10 40	3	3	5	1	4	4	3	3	6	8
SRD- AC- Applications of Content	8/10 25	2	1	1	4	7		2		2	6
SRD- AMT- Assessment	5/10 5		1	1	1	1	1				
SRD- PI- Planning for Instruction	10/10 27	3	1	2	3	5	2	3	1	4	3
SRD- IS- Instructional strategies	10/10 38	5	3	3	6	4	4	2	3	6	2
SRD- PLE- Professional learning Environment	10/10 124	2	9	13	17	18	8	17	4	15	21
SRD- LC- Leadership and Collaboration	9/10 45	4	5		8	2	4	6	4	6	6
Negative SRD		LDF- culture (2), allow failure, not all want to learn, can't change student minds (2), can't help all (3), PLE- PD not useful, LC- not a focus & lack of like-minded peers, can't fix social problems (2), LEN- not essential for all to learn, won't help some	LDF- don't address dif't student needs not all students want to learn (2), can't change student minds (2) behavior, allow failure, AMT- time, IS- traditional	can't help all (2), student apathy AMT- habitual, AC- content difficult to connect, math, IS- traditional	LDF- patience, can't fix social, not all ready to learn, can't help all, allow failure, LDF- generaliza tions, AMT- standardiz ed, LC- let a teacher fail	LDF (3)- culture, not important , not all students want to learn, can't help all (3), can't fix social problems LC- time & usefulness , PLE- PD not useful	LDF- not all have ability, can't help all- ability, can't fix social problems PLE- dislike students, can't change student minds or make care LC- not like peers ideas,	can't fix social problems LDV- need to improve	LDF- important depends on school, LDF- too much culture, not all want to learn (2), can't reach all (2), can't fix social problems (2), can't change student mind or make care, LEN- time, PLE- don't need some PD, PLE- pick battles & need consequence university doesn't know reality, AMT- too much, LC- time, time for all	LDF- allow apathy, allow failure (2), misunderstand, not all want to learn (2), LDF- some special ed not relevant, AMT- time (2), PLE- PD not useful, gossip PLE & LC- frustrated w/ county, LC- frustration w/ system, PLE- not preferred approach, AMT- no feedback, PLE- pick battles, not enforce rules	Neg- not all want to learn (3), can't help/reac h all (4) AC- difficult, IS- weaker, PLE- choose battles

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