LEA ANN MEYER ARNAU
The Perspectives of Veteran High School Teachers Participating in a Voluntary Peer
   Coaching Program
(under the direction of Dr. JO BLASE)

   The purpose of this study was to describe the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program at one suburban high school. A grounded theory approach was used to determine the motivations these teachers had for participating in the voluntary peer coaching program as well as to determine the meanings that peer coaching had for them. Face-to-face interviews were conducted, audio tapes were transcribed, codes were noted, and categories were established, all guided by the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism. Constant comparative analysis was used to move the researcher from descriptive findings toward theoretical discussion grounded in the data. Implications for staff developers were drawn in order to add to the field with regard to adult learning.

   Findings of this study indicated that studied teachers were motivated to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program because they wanted to learn and to gain meaningful feedback. Other motivations included their desire for choice and their dissatisfaction with traditional observation. Peer coaching, for the teachers, meant meaningful feedback, which consisted of idea sharing and affirmation, a desire to direct their learning, greater trust and morale among coaching teachers, and justification for more work. For staff developers, the implication is that peer coaching, presented as a voluntary professional growth program and guided by adult learning principles, served to increase teachers' perceptions of their own professional skills as well as respect and morale among teachers.

INDEX WORDS: Veteran Teacher, Peer Coaching, Mentoring, Professional Growth,

       Staff Development

THE PERSPECTIVES OF VETERAN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS PARTICIPATING

IN A VOLUNTARY PEER COACHING PROGRAM

by

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DEDICATION

When a person decides to take the road that leads to a doctorate, she knows that years of work are ahead of her. What she might not know is how drastically her life will change. Once she is finished, she will never again take a sunny, Saturday afternoon of working in the garden for granted. She will watch each golden butterfly as it lights on the flowers, pull weeds with pleasure, and appreciate her aching back that comes from planting trees instead of working at a keyboard.

My joy in completing this major accomplishment in my life would not be as great if it were not for the even greater accomplishments I managed to produce. How is it I am blessed with two young adults who are smart, kind, fun, and willing to work for the joys they want out of life? I am so very proud of both of you.

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I.O.U. one giant shopping spree and about a million home-cooked meals!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Often as one engages in professional conversation or in reading professional literature, there is mention of the impending teacher shortage.

> Some 2.2 million new teachers will be needed in the next decade to keep up with expected enrollment increases and retirements, estimates the US Department of Education. At the same time, about 40 percent of those who graduate from college qualified to teach will never set foot in a classroom, and a third of those who do will leave within the first five years. (Chaddock, 1999, p.1)

Billingsley (1993) suggested that due to changing roles for women, societal views of teaching, and the opportunities for trained educators outside of education, teacher candidate pools are becoming smaller. "The ability to attract and retain good teachers is a concern of school administrators" (Broucek, 2001, p. 14).

Though large numbers of new teachers are entering the field, many more teachers are reaching retirement age (Pipho, 1998). In order to combat this shortage of teachers, many school systems have focused their energies on hiring new teachers and on working to support and maintain their employment through intensive mentoring programs. While much emphasis has been placed on teacher training programs in the hopes of attracting new teachers and on mentoring programs directed toward retaining teachers, less attention has been paid to the professional needs of experienced, veteran teachers who are reaching retirement age. What would motivate these teachers to remain actively engaged in their own professional growth?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program at one suburban high school in Northeastern Georgia. In order to meet the professional growth needs of veteran teachers, staff developers must plan learning opportunities that meet the needs of these mature teachers (Danielson, 2001). This study examined the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program including their motivation for participating and the meanings they had of the peer coaching program.

Background of the Study

Adult learning theory encourages staff developers to reach veteran teachers in ways that differ from the direct staff development given to new teachers (Glickman, 1983; 1985). Adults learn more when they feel emotionally secure and when they receive reinforcement during their learning (Fisher, 1997). Oja (1990) supported efforts schools make with veteran teachers, finding that teachers must be treated professionally and that they must participate actively, developing their own professional growth opportunities, based on their stages of development. Raywid (1993) suggested that collaboration time for teachers was of utmost importance when the hoped-for result is continuous school improvement. One research study stated that "Teachers learn from one another while planning instruction, developing support materials, watching one another work with students, and thinking together about the impact of their behavior on their students' learning" (Showers & Joyce, 1996, p. 14).

Blase and Blase (1998) stated that "there is a compelling need for practicing and aspiring administrators and supervisors to search for ways to encourage collegiality and to significantly improve instructional supervision in today's changing schools" (p. 4). Billingsley and Cross (1992) encouraged administrators to be supportive, an important aspect for a satisfied, committed staff of teachers. A voluntary peer coaching program is one means by which staff developers may reach these veteran teachers. Veteran teachers yearn to be renewed within

their field; they wish to work with their colleagues and to gain satisfaction from sharing their expertise (Collinson, Sherrill, & Hohenbrink, 1994). Veteran teachers who have a framework of continuous learning are willing to take risks in order to learn. Research exists to support the notion that there is reciprocal gain on the part of veteran teachers who participate in a mentoring partnership with a novice teacher (Joyce & Showers, 1995), but little research exists that addresses the experiences of veteran teachers who mentor fellow veteran teachers while participating in a voluntary peer coaching program. In order to facilitate school improvement and renewal and to satisfy the needs of veteran teachers, peer coaching as a form of mentoring can help to revitalize veteran teachers while improving teaching and learning.

Theoretically, research has indicated that adults learn differently from children, that adults move through a continuum of stages based on their developmental levels and life cycles, and that staff development opportunities must be tailored to meet teachers in their varying and individual stages of learning and development in order to be beneficial to the teacher.

Research Questions

The broad question investigated in this study was: What were the perspectives of veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program? The researcher sought to discover more specifically why veteran teachers were participating in a voluntary peer coaching program and what meanings the peer coaching program had for these teachers.

Theoretical Significance

Adult learning theory was the guiding contextual theoretical framework for this study, the main theory to which this research extended. "Based on the research on teacher career development, administrators or supervisors should provide different types of supervisory assistance and vary their supervisory strategies when working with teachers at different developmental levels" (Burden, 1982, p. 4), one study found. Research has shown that adults need to be provided opportunities for learning different from those provided to them as children. Adults generally are voluntary learners, self-directed and self-motivated. They want a

voice in what they will learn and how they will learn, and they need to apply immediately what they have learned. It was this researcher's intent to add to this body of knowledge by examining the perspectives of veteran teachers who were participating in a voluntary peer coaching program.

The findings of this study can provide researchers with a working knowledge of the perspectives that veteran teachers found to be compelling enough to motivate them to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program. By determining why these teachers participated and what meanings peer coaching had for them, this study will provide staff developers with the knowledge needed to formulate and promote programs that seek to meet teachers' needs at varying levels of career development. The practical implication of this study also includes the contribution of new information on the perspectives of veteran teachers in a voluntary peer coaching program. Knowledge of this type can assist supervisors in providing the experiences veteran teachers need in order for them to continue growing professionally.

<div align="center">Theoretical Framework</div>

The methodological theoretical framework that guided the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data in this study was symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969). Blumer stated that symbolic interactionism "sees meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people" (1969, p. 4). Blumer also suggested that scholars must be close enough to situations to know whether or not they might be missing anything in their research; therefore, this study was conducted in a high school where a peer coaching program had been instituted and one in which veteran teachers were coaching each other. Because this research studied human group life and human interactions, symbolic interactionism was appropriate (Blumer, 1969).

<div align="center">Assumptions</div>

Throughout the study, it was assumed that: 1.) the opinions expressed to the researcher were the teachers' own, honest opinions; 2.) the teachers fully participated in the

peer coaching program; 3.) the teachers attended the orientation session; and 4.) peer coaches completed a cycle which included a pre conference, an extended observation, and a post-conference meeting as suggested by Costa and Garmston (1994).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, Becker's 1961 definition of "perspective" was utilized: a coordinated set of ideas and actions a person uses in dealing with some problematic situation; a person's ordinary way of thinking and feeling about and acting in such a situation. These thoughts and actions are coordinated in the sense that the actions flow reasonably from the actor's perspective from the ideas contained in the perspective. Similarly, the ideas can be seen by an observer to be one of the possible sets of ideas which might form the underlying rationale for the person's actions and are seen by the actor as providing a justification for acting as he does. (p. 34)

"Peer coaching" named an approach in which teachers worked together in order to improve instruction, moving through a process which included an orientation to the program, then a cycle of pre conferencing, observing, and post conferencing for each teacher (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 1995). The term "veteran teachers" referred to teachers with 20 or more years of teaching experience.

Because beginning teachers are simply trying to survive (Veenman, 1984), the experiences of veteran teachers served as the target population for this study. The study focused on the experiences of veteran teachers involved in a voluntary peer coaching program in one high school (grades 9-12). The study was also limited by the small number of teachers studied (N=14).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provided the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, definitions of terms, and significance for studying the experiences of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. The literature on veteran

teachers, mentoring, and peer coaching was reviewed in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the data

collection and analysis procedures were discussed. Findings from the data were presented in a

Chapter 4, and a discussion of the findings with conclusions and implications was provided in

Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Veteran teachers learn differently from children because, as adults, they move through a continuum of developmental stages based on their personalized needs. Veteran teachers could benefit from staff development tailored to address these personalized needs through participation in a voluntary peer coaching program. The context for this study included a review of the literature on veteran teachers, mentoring, and peer coaching. This background supported the research about veteran high school teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program in a high school in Northeastern Georgia.

Adult Learners

Adults learn in ways different from those of children (Knowles, 1970). "Andragogy," as defined by Knowles, is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 38).

> Andragogy is premised on at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners on which traditional pedagogy is premised. These assumptions are that, as a person matures, 1.) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being; 2.) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning; 3.) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles; and 4.) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness. (Knowles, 1970, p. 39)

Self-concept changes as learners mature from children into adult learners and as they become less dependent and more responsible for their own learning. As teachers progress through career stages, this concept of adult learning is evident. Beginning teachers prefer and profit from a more direct approach in supervision than do mature teachers, who benefit from directing their own professional growth and development. Mature adult learners see themselves as having responsibility for their learning and actions. They wish to be treated with respect, and they wish to share their expertise though they sometimes do not know how to direct their own learning, having rarely been exposed to that opportunity (Knowles, 1970). As Broucek has noted, "Factors of adult learning need to be taken into account in designing staff development offerings" (2001, p. 3).

Knowles (1970) suggested that adults have expectations that are different from those of children with respect to the learning climate, diagnosing of needs, planning processes, conducting of learning experiences, and evaluating learning experiences. The learning climate for adult learners should be conducive to discussion, not chairs or desks in rigid rows, possibly reminding adult learners of their experiences as child learners. The atmosphere should be one of mutual exchange. Therefore, the behavior of the instructor is a great influence on the learning environment. Knowles suggested that the instructor know the names of the learners, striving to make learning appropriate to that person rather than merely attempting to cover curriculum without regard to the needs of each learner.

Adult learners are motivated to learn those things for which they see a need to learn, based on the range of experiences they have had up until that point in time. Knowles (1970) suggested that adults themselves might suggest what it is they want and need to learn, instead of being told what it is they will learn by their instructor. This self-diagnosis of learning moves adult learners naturally into the planning phase.

In the planning phase, Knowles (1970) suggested that adults want responsibility for what they are going to learn and how they are going to learn it. This realization again correlates with teacher developmental stages as teachers become more self-supervisory as they mature.

In traditional pedagogy, the adult teacher tells the student what he or she will learn and how. However, with regard to adult learning, the instructor and adult learner work together to facilitate the furthered education of the adult learner. They share responsibility for the learning process. Knowles (1970) noted that "small groups, planning committees, learning-teaching teams, consultation groups, (and) project task forces" (p. 43) might be ways in which this goal may be met.

Finally, teachers should evaluate their own learning experiences, and these evaluations should be nonjudgmental in nature, merely progress checks for the teacher, who, as an adult learner, is enhanced by the opportunity to self-assess, diagnose, and plan for further learning as needed. Additionally, Knowles (1970) noted that the adult instructor must be open to the evaluation of the adult learners for which he is responsible, working to promote the reciprocity of the open learning experience.

Knowles' second assumption regarding adult learners was concerned with the experience that the adult learner brings to the learning situation (1970). When children learn, their experiences are limited, whereas adult learners have had the opportunity to experience much in life. Adults see themselves as a result of the experiences in which they have participated up until the point of new learning. Although these adults have more to contribute to the learning opportunity and more experiences upon which to draw, they also have formed "habits and patterns of thought" (p. 44) which may prevent them from being open minded about learning.

Knowles' third assumption was that adults' readiness to learn is based upon their need to know (1970). Adults at varying developmental stages learn what they choose to learn. In his fourth assumption, Knowles suggested that adults have a desire and need for immediate application of learning (1970). Adult learners want to be able to walk out of the learning

situation and implement the instruction they have noted a need for, planned, and worked together with an instructor to gain. In 1984, Knowles added a fifth assumption that adult learning was intrinsically motivated. Motivation for adults is generally internal because most adult learning is voluntary.

Fullan (1991) supported Knowles' theory that adults' learning should be linked to prior experiences. In addition, Fullan suggested that adult learners should have enough time to gradually implement learned information into their repertoire of teaching skills. Fullan suggested that districts that "bombard" their teachers with innovation after innovation are doing a disservice to the adult learners within their schools.

As the literature suggests, new teachers and mature teachers are at differing stages as adult learners, based on developmental and career stages (Sternberg, 1985, 1990). Therefore, staff developers must individually assess the learning capacity for each teacher as an individual (Broucek, 2001). Teachers, as adult learners, must collaborate, reflect, and develop critical thinking in a continuous cycle in order to benefit from learning opportunities and to continue to grow (Brookfield, 1986).

Brookfield (1986) suggested that there are six principles which are central in facilitating adult learning effectively. They include voluntary participation, participant respect for each other, collaboration between teachers and instructors as to objectives and evaluation, an atmosphere of critical reflection, and a goal on the part of the facilitator for the program to be empowering for the adult learner while providing self-directed, proactive learning opportunities.

According to Glickman, et al (1995), individualizing of teacher staff development rarely occurs in schools. Though teachers as adult learners have needs that vary from person to person, based upon the teacher's developmental stage, most schools tend to persist in the practice of providing the same staff development
opportunities for every person without regard to teacher input in need diagnosis, planning, or evaluation processes.

Theories of Adult and Teacher Development

Various theorists have studied adult development. Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory (1955), Hunt's Conceptual Development Theory (1978), Kohlberg and Armon's Moral Development Theory (1984), and Ego Development Theory (Levine, 1989; Loevinger, 1976), will be briefly discussed. Stages of teacher development as suggested by Fuller's Stages of Concern (1969), Burden (1982) and Glickman, et al (1995) follow in this portion of the literature review.

Piaget's theory of cognitive development includes four stages which are sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operations, and formal operations. The stages of concrete and formal operations have ramifications for adult learning. Learners at the concrete operations stage are able to perform operations as needed, while at the formal stage, they are able to not only reason with regard to what is currently happening, they are also able to project into the future, abstracting and hypothesizing (1955).

Hunt determined that an adult's conceptual level can be placed on a continuum, moving from the most concrete, or lowest level of abstraction, to the highest conceptual level, which is more abstract (1978).

Kohlberg and Armon (1984) discussed morality, identifying three categories which included the preconventional level, the conventional level, and the postconventional level. As a person moves from the first to the third of the three levels, his reasoning shifts to include a focus that is less self-centered and more centered on others. As teachers move from Stage I to Stage III, they become less authoritative with their students, not less directive. Teachers at Kohlberg's and Armon's highest stage of moral development are more likely to consider students' ideas, involving students in decision making. Adults at this level of high moral development display characteristics of adult learners who desire a voice in their own learning. Levine (1989) and Loevinger (1976) found that adults progress on a continuum that ranges from fearful, through conforming, to autonomous. Adults at the high end of the continuum are those with the most

mature egos, and they are able to perform better when addressed individually and with autonomy.

Fuller (1969) identified three different levels of concerns of teachers, developmentally. Teachers of any age might find themselves at any stage in this developmental model, and generally remain at that stage for a period of extended time. Teachers in the Survival Stage, Fuller found, are mainly concerned with getting from one situation to the next. They ask themselves how things are going, if others are satisfied with their performance, and wonder if they will make it through the current year of teaching. These teachers seek approval from peers, administrators, parents, students, as well as from their mentors. Their validation is generally external.

Teachers at stage two of Fuller's developmental stages find themselves in the Task Stage, focusing on completing tasks and on managing time. These teachers are overwhelmed by the paperwork and other demands of their profession, often wondering if they will ever again have time for themselves. Creating lesson plans, tests, coaching, extracurricular activities, and constant paperwork are some of the challenges that teachers at stage two experience.

Teachers in the Impact Stage are concerned with meeting the academic and emotional needs of their students. They are seeking new ways to solve their problems and anticipate opportunities for growth and development. They no longer wonder 'how' they might get things done, but 'when' they might get things done.

Most veteran teachers have the skills of teachers in the Impact Stage, in addition to years of experience in prioritizing and time management, and coping skills to deal with numerous demands. These teachers question themselves as to how they can best meet the needs of their students, challenging them academically, while providing learning opportunities that are meaningful. Students who are successful and engaged in their own learning are an indicator of success for these Impact Stage teachers.

Fuller found that life changes could cause even seasoned teachers to move from the higher, Impact Stage, to the lower, Survival Stage. These changes might include death of a loved one, divorce, or other life-changing events.

Burden (1982) determined that teachers display different developmental characteristics, depending upon the stage at which they find themselves. These stages include the Survival Stage of first year teachers, the Adjustment Stage for teachers in their second, third or fourth years, and the Mature Stage where teachers in their fifth year or beyond will find themselves. Burden suggests that staff developers adjust teachers' learning opportunities to suit the varying stages of these teachers, becoming less directive as a teacher matures and is able to assume more responsibility with regard to his or her own supervision in professional growth.

Glickman, et al (1995) stated that teacher learning occurs when the developmental stage of the teacher is considered and that:

One implication for supervision is that experienced teachers are more likely to understand and utilize curricular and instructional innovations if the innovations can be linked to their past teaching experience and current expertise. Another is that beginning teachers can benefit from successful experienced teachers sharing with novices their experiences, accumulated knowledge, and insight about students and teaching. (p. 48)

Supporting Veteran Teachers

Experienced teachers prefer supervisory behaviors that are collaborative in nature (Glickman, 1983). "Effective teachers think about what they are currently doing, assess the results of their practice, explore with each other new possibilities for teaching students, and are able to consider students' perspectives" (Glickman, et al 1995, p. 72). Glickman, et al further proposed that:

1) Effective supervision responds to the principles of adult learning;

2) Effective supervision responds to and fosters teachers' stage development;

3) Effective supervision recognizes and supports different phases within teachers' life cycles;

4) Effective supervision helps teachers to understand, navigate, and learn from life transition events;

5) Effective supervision recognizes and accommodates teachers' various roles; and,

6) Effective administration and supervision foster teacher motivation. (pp. 77-78)

Phillips and Glickman (1991) claimed that teacher growth at higher developmental levels is possible. "Teachers with high abstraction and high commitment are predicted to be best matched with a supervisor using a non-directive style" (Glickman, 1983, p. 6).

Little (1982) found that teachers' lives in a school were transformed when they had time to talk about what practices they were employing in their classrooms and worked together to find solutions for common problems. Little (1982), Pajak and Glickman (1987), and Rosenholtz (1985) have reported in their research that a component of effective schools is when the talk within the school is centered around teaching and learning. If effective schools require informed teachers discussing teaching and learning, then administrators must strive to provide veteran teachers the opportunity for collegial, professional discussion as suggested by Brundage (1996).

In order to provide the open, caring atmosphere that veteran teachers need for continued renewal and growth, staff development must include opportunities for these teachers to work together, to learn and grow together, and to share their years of expertise with each other (Burke, 2000). Corabi (1995) stated that "school districts that enjoy a positive reputation for the quality of their professional staffs also demonstrated that they employed a cadre of teachers willing to become involved in developmental activities" (p. 8). Thies-Sprinthall (1984) noted that there are five conditions needed in order for psychological/cognitive growth to occur:

1. Role-taking experiences;

2. Careful and continuous guided reflection;

3. Balance between real experience and discussion/reflection;

4. Both personal support and challenge; and,

5. Continuity (programs should be at least six months in length with meetings at regular intervals). (p. 54)

Thies-Sprinthall (1987) reported that veteran teachers become bored with the repetitive nature of teaching, and the solution, according to her research, is to provide opportunities for these experienced teachers to increase responsibility through varying learning opportunities and to include thoughtful reflection and role-taking experiences. Darling-Hammond (1998) supported the notion that veteran teachers need to reflect on their practice, to analyze their practice and that of others by serving as mentors and by assuming teachers leadership roles. Broucek (2001) noted that, "with the right conditions, veteran teachers are the ones who are most capable of examining their own practices and designing and implementing programs that make a difference in their own professional development" (p. 20). Nolan and Hillkirk (1991) hypothesized that veteran teachers who participated in professional growth and development programs that include coaching and reflection will think significantly more about their teaching, and they are more likely to make changes in their teaching than veteran teachers who did not participate in such activities. However, Nolan and Hillkirk (1991) found that in order for veteran teachers to adapt their practices, four or five cycles of coaching had to be sustained over an extended period of time.

Brundage (1996) encouraged professional dialogue aimed at assisting veteran teachers' growth. In an earlier study conducted by Bureau (1993), it was reported that:

The qualities of supervisory processes that facilitate change in a veteran teacher's beliefs, shown in this research, confirm what those who understand an expansive view of supervision already know. Supportive supervision not only is typified by but nurtures:

-- mutual trust, collegiality and the freedom to take risks

-- understanding that leaves ownership of the direction of change with the teacher

-- a climate in which a teacher can express her comfort and discomfort with

changes in her teaching, classroom, and beliefs, as well as her intuitive feelings

about accepting or rejecting change

-- engagement of both teacher and supervisor in co-learning and co-reflection

-- listening to a teacher's reflective language for evidence of reflection on and

changes in beliefs. (p. 54)

Mentoring

Often veteran teachers are offered growth opportunities by participating as mentors for

new teachers. Within the scope of the literature on mentoring, there is much discussion about

the fact that little agreement exists about the definition of mentoring (Merriam, 1983; Odell,

1986). Phillips-Jones (1983) found that a range of roles are assumed by mentor teachers. The

proliferation of mentoring programs during the reform of education in the 1980s served as a

precursor to the development of the roles of teacher leaders. However, no single definition has

emerged that encompasses all of the capacities, roles, and functions of mentors (Odell, 1990a).

Focus of Mentoring Programs

Levinson (1978) found that mentoring is one of the most developmentally important

components of an adult's life. New teachers, it was found, often felt they had to meet the same

expectations as the veteran teachers within the building (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986). Fuller

(1969) and Fuller and Brown (1975) noted that beginning teachers are most concerned with

being evaluated, with maintaining control in their classrooms, and with having their students like

them. Research has determined that new teachers' needs are often in areas such as classroom

management/discipline, instructional strategies, routines, teaching to individual differences, and

motivation (Veenman, 1984). Mentoring has evolved as a vital component of teacher induction

programs (Kram, 1983; Odell, 1986; Veenman, 1984).

Early mentoring programs tended to focus on the basic developmental needs of new

teachers. Programs provided answers to "where, what, and when" types of questions, satisfying

the needs of new teachers with regard to technical concerns, crisis situations, and personal

support (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1996). Grant and Zeichner (1981) concluded that mentoring

programs need to focus on the individual needs of teachers. In 1982, Fagan and Walter

determined that mentors should guide and befriend their protégés, and that emotional support,

particularly on the part of the administration, was crucial to new teachers.

Bova-Phillips (1984), in discussing mentoring programs, provided an extensive list of

skills needed by new teachers including the ability to take risks. Huling-Austin (1990) identified

five goals of mentoring programs:

1. To improve teaching performance;

2. To increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years;

3. To promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers by
   improving teachers' attitudes toward themselves and the profession;

4. To satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification; and,

5. To transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers. (p. 539)

As educational reform movements grew, the view of mentoring changed to include not

only the technical aspects that were important, but also the actual art of

conversation with new teachers with regard to the instruction that goes on within their

classrooms.

Huffman and Leak's (1986) research indicated that 67% of the responding new

teachers in their study found informal conversation to be the single most beneficial factor in their

mentoring relationships. Gehrke and Kay (1984) suggested that conversation be informal and

open. Pajak (1993) and Acheson and Gall (1997) supported this need for talking about

teaching. In 1987, Bullough suggested that mentoring programs should focus on instructional

strategies for teachers. Because mentoring programs have produced positive feelings of efficacy

on the part of new teachers, support of these programs seems not only justified, but vital.

Within the fields of supervision, talk, reflection, collaboration and problem solving have prevailed in the literature as topics related to effective instructional leadership (Blase & Blase, 1998; Glickman, et al, 1995; Pajak, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). Odell (1990b) suggested that new teachers should become proficient as to be "automentors," a term she coined with regard to automatically mentoring self after the end of a period of structured mentoring.

Joyce and Showers (1982) suggested that peer coaching should be a component of programs to enhance the skills of teachers, providing them the opportunity to not only learn a new skill or instructional technique, but also the opportunity to make that skill a part of their teaching repertoire through supervised coaching/practice sessions. Mentoring programs within schools continue to address the needs of new teachers, and the programs continue to change based on research findings. Borrowing from the fields of mentoring, Zepeda, Wood, and O'Hair (1996) and then Blase and Blase (1998) called for a form of autosupervision. Zepeda, et al (1996) defined autosupervision as the ability of teachers to supervise themselves, analyzing their goals and progress through reflection while working at a developmental level that is high enough to support themselves with regard to their own personal growth and supervision.

<div align="center">Administrative Support for Mentoring</div>

Administratively, support for mentoring programs has a research base in the literature (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Phillips-Jones, 1983). Administrators can support mentoring programs by allowing time for mentors and new teachers to meet, to socialize, to talk, and to share (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1996). The social arena provided by administrators gives new teachers an opportunity to establish contacts and to become 'at home' within the school family.

The mentor's main function should be supervision, as opposed to basic information dissemination. Furthermore, it is not beneficial to place the mentor of a new teacher in the role of being the protégé's evaluator as well (Bullough, 1987; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986).

Trust is a vital factor in the mentoring relationship. Because new teachers often feel that they are expected to perform as capably as veteran teachers, adding the extra strain of having

their mentor as their evaluator is problematic. Age and gender considerations are within the administrator's realm of influence and should be considered (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Levinson, 1978). Gray and Gray (1985) stated that mentoring should be voluntary. Zey (1984) determined that the ability to work together and to develop chemistry is advantageous for a successful mentoring program. Huffman and Leak (1986) indicated that the new teachers and their mentors should have similar content area concerns, as well as opportunities for ongoing conversation.

Fostering the culture necessary, the administrator can empower teachers to work together as collaborative, reflective teams, using action research, and problem-solving together in order to promote a learning community for students and teachers alike. To meet these goals, the administrator must provide professional growth opportunities for mentors and for new teachers. Mentors will benefit from communication skills, conferencing strategies (Hunter, 1980), instructional techniques (Bullough, 1987), adult learning theory (Coppenhaver & Schaper, 1999), and training in collegial supervisory skills (McGreal, 1983).

Administratively supported staff development in these areas will enhance the feelings of efficacy among new teachers and lead to greater job satisfaction. Zepeda and Ponticell (1996) suggested that often a new teacher is not aware of the true nature of his/her problems. The "scaffolding effect" suggests that problems at the foundation level of instruction will, in turn, cause other problems, such as classroom management, which are often more apparent, to occur. Zepeda and Ponticell (1996) also noted that the most difficult arena for a new teacher to understand is the political arena within the school. It is confusing for a new teacher to try and understand who really has the power within a school and to understand the levels of power within the school organization. Mentors are able to assist new teachers in navigating this difficult course.

Benefits for Mentors

Further research indicated that both new teachers and the mentor teachers can benefit from mentoring programs (Kram, 1983; Krupp, 1984; Schmidt & Wolfe, 1980). The benefit for veteran teachers centered on their opportunity to reassess their skills and contributions and to pass their knowledge on to the next generation. This "generativity vs. stagnation" was developed by Erikson in 1950. Erikson stated that adults have a need to pass their knowledge on to the next generation and that failure to do so will result in a "pervading sense of individual stagnation" on their part (p. 231).

Educational reform, which calls for veteran teacher renewal, has been achieved through successful mentoring programs (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Kram (1983) noted that mentors themselves may feel stimulated, motivated, and creative when given an opportunity to share with new teachers. Hoffmann and Feldlaufer (1992) reported from their research that more than 80% of the mentors in their study felt that serving as a mentor enhanced their own abilities in the classroom, renewed their enthusiasm for teaching, and they reported experiencing an overall positive professional result from being involved in the program.

Ganser (1999) stated that because of many new teachers, more students in public schools, and the great numbers of teachers who will be retiring, mentoring programs will be expanding in the next decade. Schools will need to address the learning of the professionals as well as that of their students, and a mentoring program might be one vehicle by which that goal is achieved (Ganser, 1999).

Mentor teachers have the opportunity to examine their own practices, taking time to reflect on their own teaching as they engage in conversation with their protégés. Ganser (1999) saw this "connection" as a mainstay in establishing schools as learning communities. He noted that mentors should be trained in peer coaching or cognitive coaching in order to facilitate this professional growth (Ganser, 1997). Earlier, Healy and Welchert (1990) found that the benefits mentors received were more accidental than purposeful.

Merriam (1983) strongly advocated mentoring programs as a means of intervening with adults in the roles of both mentor and protégé. Serving as a mentor improves the teaching of the mentor (Odell, 1986). Ganser (1995) asserted that both beginning teachers and their mentors benefit from exchanging ideas within the mentoring relationship. Ganser (1992) noted nine benefits experienced by mentors:

1. An opportunity to make an important contribution to their profession

2. Personal satisfaction

3. Professional satisfaction

4. Increased skills as a teacher

5. Heightened sensitivity to beginning teachers and their first year of work

6. Learning about teaching, learning, and students from the beginning teachers they mentored

7. Serving an important role in the professional development of a beginning teacher

8. Becoming a more valuable employee of their school and district

9. Looking at the work of teaching in a different light. (p. 15)

A search of dissertations written on the topic of mentoring and teachers since 1995 revealed 190 results. A sampling of 20 of those most recent studies revealed that 6 focused on the new teacher, 10 focused on program design, and 3 targeted perceptions of persons other than the new teacher. Of those three studies, two were focused on the behaviors and perceptions of university personnel, and one on the perceptions of principals. Only one study was found that focused on teachers, other than the new teacher, to any degree.

That study focused on the reasons that teachers participated in voluntary staff development activities (Corley, 2000). Corley found that teachers prefer certain types of staff development opportunities, including mentoring and other "hands-on" types of activities. Additionally, teacher interest level, scheduling, ability to implement new material, and the

reputation of the organizer of the staff development impacted whether or not teachers participated voluntarily.

<div align="center">Peer Coaching</div>

If mentoring is beneficial for both the new teacher and for the mentor as the research suggests, then peer coaching as a form of mentoring can enhance teachers' skills as well. Peer coaching, the concept of teachers coaching teachers in order to improve teaching and learning, was developed by Joyce and Showers' early research in 1982. The model developed by Joyce and Showers has five major functions which include: 1) providing companionship, 2) feedback, 3) analyzing application, 4) adapting to students, and, 5) personalizing facilitation. Showers (1985) indicated one of the purposes of peer coaching was "to build communities of teachers who continually engage in the study of their craft, an interactive, reciprocal relationship among professionals" (p. 4).

Glickman, et al (1995) noted that the terms "peer coaching" and "peer supervision" have become synonymous in the literature. The responsibility for setting a climate that is favorable to peer coaching falls to the principal, the instructional leader within the school:

> The success of peer consulting seems to be dependent on the health of the immediate culture and the shared meaning within the group. Administrators were most functional when they were able to help teachers come to some common understanding of what was going on and to support teachers in their pursuit of the goals they (the teachers) defined. (Acheson & Gall, 1997, p. 221)

Peer coaching, as suggested by Joyce and Showers (1982), included teachers coaching each other in order to add new teaching techniques to their repertoire. To this end, when a new instructional strategy is learned, it should be observed, practiced, and coached in order to become part of the teacher's skill bank. A teacher needs between 15-20 coaching sessions to gain the skills needed for transfer of learning.

Joyce and Showers (1982) indicated that coaching, as it applied to teaching, was an ongoing process, much like the training athletes continue to pursue even though a skill may already be learned. Teachers are taught the skills they need during their course work in college and then sent out to perform, often without any support or feedback about their performance. Athletes spend hours with a coach, not only learning new skills, but also asking for and receiving feedback about their performances, as well as perfecting skills that are already in their repertoire. Joyce and Showers contended that teachers at all levels benefit from coaching from their peers.

According to Garmston (1993), cognitive coaching is "a process during which teachers explore the thinking behind their practices" (p. 57). Cognitive coaching utilizes a three-step process which includes a pre conference, an observation, and a post conference. The goal of cognitive coaching is for the teacher to become adept at self-monitoring, analysis, and evaluation (Garmston, 1993). Teachers are encouraged to work together, spend time in conversation that is focused on discussion of professional practice, and to internalize the benefits of gathering data, questioning, probing, and paraphrasing with their peers (Garmston, 1993). Earlier, Garmston (1987) discussed technical coaching, which is closely aligned with Joyce and Showers' (1982) original coaching model. Collegial coaching is designed to enhance collegiality through discussion and improvement of teaching techniques.

Ackland (1991) stated that programs in which teachers coach one another are commonly referred to as "peer coaching programs." Ackland further noted that Joyce and Showers were the first to link coaching to staff development. School reform which encourages a more collaborative atmosphere among teaching professionals can be supported by the use of coaching, which compels teachers to think about what they are doing within their professional practice. Reflecting on classroom practices with other teachers leads to improvements within classrooms with regard to teaching and student learning (da Costa, Marshall, & Riordan, 1998).

Justification for Peer Coaching

Research has shown that peer coaching is advantageous to teachers as well as to the climate of the school (Bowman & McCormick, 2000). Not only is transfer of training enhanced, but also schools that embrace peer coaching also find that the sense of collegiality and the freedom to experiment are further enhanced (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Showers, 1985). "Regular, structured interaction between or among peers over substantive content is one of the hallmarks of a profession and is viewed by other professionals as essential professional nourishment rather than a threat to autonomy" (Joyce & Showers, 1995, p. 115). Once teachers begin working in teams, it is likely that casual conversation will gravitate toward educational techniques and methods, helping teachers to modify their teaching (Christen & Murphy, 1987; Glatthorn, 1997). Coaching encourages teachers to have a common language and to understand techniques that will encourage students to acquire new skills.

Teachers often work in isolation (Glickman, et al, 1995). In peer coaching, pairs or teams work together to enhance a teacher's professional development. Teachers that are involved in peer coaching are trained not only in any new instructional technique they plan to pass on to their students but also in the techniques for peer coaching as well. Once a new instructional technique or theory has been taught, observed, and practiced, coaches are able to observe each other during teaching and provide each other with technical feedback (Joyce & Showers, 1982).

Peer coaching is distinct from evaluation. Peer coaches are able to make adaptations for individual students, the aforementioned "playing field" of the classroom. Students must learn how to respond to the new techniques the teacher is attempting to impart (Joyce & Showers, 1982). Finally, peer coaches have the responsibility for supporting those on their team, encouraging them when things go awry, and to work toward gaining new skills. The transfer in teaching, like the transfer in athletic skills, requires knowledge, observation, practice, feedback, and the opportunity to refine newly learned skills.

Glickman (1985) asserted that "successful teachers are thoughtful teachers" (p. 6), and they "must be challenged to discuss the whys and hows of what they do " (p.11). Socially and intellectually, teachers are enhanced by talking with their peers, enhancing their own sense of self-esteem and their feelings about their choice of profession .

Peer Coaching as Supervision

Mentoring and peer coaching are major departures from the traditional means of teacher supervision (Showers & Joyce, 1996). These departures require an increase in knowledge and more effort by the administrator as well as by the faculty. Some teachers prefer isolation and will be resistant to having teachers come regularly into their classrooms. Hosak-Curlin (1993) suggested that peer coaching will decrease teacher isolation while providing ongoing supervision and increased collaboration.

Improved professional communities, including a reduction in teacher isolation, are encouraged by having teachers plan together, teach together, and talk about what they are doing (Lieberman, 1995). Little (1990) contended that when teachers are working together, their sense of interdependence is strengthened, and they see their work as a "joint enterprise." Joyce and Showers (1995) stated, "The primary activity of peer-coaching study teams is the collaborative planning and development of curriculum and instruction in pursuit of their shared goals" (p. 121). Kinsella (1995) suggested that peer coaching involves faculty who are trained and voluntarily work with each other in an atmosphere of trusting critique. Professional development might be further strengthened by encouraging teachers to engage in study groups, to develop learning standards, and collectively to assess student work as well as peer coach (Darling-Hammond, 1998). Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) stated that this professional development must be ongoing and sustained over time, as well as a component of overall school improvement agendas:

Teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting (just as students do); by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what

they see. This kind of learning enables teachers to make the leap from theory to accomplished practice. In addition to a powerful base of theoretical knowledge, such learning requires settings that support teacher inquiry and collaboration and strategies grounded in teachers' questions and concerns. To understand deeply, teachers must learn about, see, and experience successful learning-centered and learner-centered teaching practices. (p. 599)

The literature and research on veteran teachers, mentoring, and peer coaching suggested that in order for veteran teachers to be professionally challenged and fulfilled, a program of staff development that includes mentoring and peer coaching opportunities is appropriate, particularly with regard to the development of veteran teachers.

A search of dissertations since 1995 on the topics of peer coaching and cognitive coaching revealed 64 and 17 results, respectively. Of the 64 dissertations focused on peer coaching, a sampling of 20 of those most recent dissertations revealed 10 studies focused on peer coaching with regard to a program implementation such as direct instruction. Three studies centered on pre-service teachers, two centered on peer evaluation, one on efficacy, and one on gender bias. Three studies reported on collegiality as a result of peer coaching (Capobianco, 1999; Rey, 1999; Soper, 1999).

Of the 17 studies found on cognitive coaching, 5 discussed cognitive coaching as it related to program implementation such as brain-based research, and 7 reported on the effects of cognitive coaching with regard to persons other than veteran teachers such as in-service or new teachers, evaluators, principals, or university personnel. Five studies discussed cognitive coaching with regard to impacts on teachers demonstrated by behaviors such as reflection. One study discussed years of teaching experience along with the relationship to cognitive coaching. A search utilizing the terms cognitive coaching, teachers, and veteran for the years 1990-2001 yielded no results.

Literature in the areas of veteran teachers, mentoring, and peer coaching has been reviewed. This knowledge has guided the researcher while exploring the experiences of veteran high school teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program. The study examined why the teachers chose to participate in the program and what meanings the peer coaching program had for these teachers.

This chapter contains a discussion of the research design and questions, the context of the study, data sources, data collection and analysis procedures (grounded theory and constant comparative analysis), and issues of reliability, validity, control of bias, and subjectivity.

The overall question of this research explored the perspectives of veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program. The literature discussed in the previous chapter on veteran teachers, mentoring, and peer coaching guided the formulation of this study.

Research Design and Questions

Interaction is a component of social behavior (Mead, 1934). According to Mead, individuals acting together come to similar ideas about a given object through a process of continuous adjusting and readjusting within each individual's self. This adjustment makes participants in social interaction conscious of how their attitudes are similar to or different from the attitudes and behaviors of others and allows for adjustment in light of that attitude (Mead, 1934). In referring to the study of human groups and human contact, Blumer coined the term "symbolic interactionism" (Blumer, 1969). Symbolic interactionism is the theoretical framework that was used to guide the research design with regard to the experiences of the veteran high

school teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. Blumer (1969) discussed three major premises of symbolic interactionism:

> The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters. (p. 2)

Based on the meaning that things have for them, humans act. These things include everything in our world. For instance, a stick of wood, an inch in diameter and 24 inches long, might be acted upon as a weapon, as a tool, or as a musical instrument, based on the meaning that a human has for that stick.

Meaning, according to Blumer (1969) is based on the social interactions experienced with regard to that thing. Blumer's second premise is what differentiates symbolic interactionism from other approaches. Blumer believed that because of social interactions, people derive meanings from objects which might otherwise be devoid of meaning, and further elaborated:

> If one declares that the given kinds of behavior are the result of the particular factors regarded as producing them, there is no need to concern oneself with the meaning of the thing toward which human beings act; one merely identifies the initiating factors and the resulting behavior. (p. 3)

Symbolic interactionism compels us to note that humans act, not because of outside stimuli, but because of meanings that are held, having been defined through social interactions. Blumer disagreed with traditional ways of accounting for meaning based on a thing's intrinsic meaning (Blumer, 1969). The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of veteran high school teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. The data gathered informed the researcher about the meanings that the teachers had based on the interactions that they had with others in a peer coaching experience.

Blumer believed that, by interpreting and modifying meanings, people deal with the things they encounter. Blumer (1969) described the process of interpretation in two steps:

First, the actor indicates to himself the things toward which he is acting; he has to point out to himself the things that have meaning. The making of such indications is an internalized social process in that the actor is interacting with himself. This interaction with himself is something other than an interplay of psychological elements; it is an instance of the person engaging in the process of communication with himself. Second, by virtue of this process of communicating with himself, interpretation becomes a matter of handling meanings. The actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action. (p. 5)

Teachers who participated in the voluntary peer coaching program were referred to as the "actors." These teachers attended their first peer coaching orientation session with ideas about peer coaching, meanings that held value for themselves. Based on the experiences in coaching situations in which these teachers found themselves, their meanings of peer coaching may or may not have changed as a result of their interpretation of the experiences.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982), in reviewing symbolic interactionism, stated that:

People in a given situation often develop common definitions since they regularly interact and share experiences, problems, and background; but consensus is not inevitable. While some take "shared definitions" to indicate "truth," meaning is always subject to negotiation. It can be influenced by people who see things differently. (p. 33)

As a result of participating in the voluntary peer coaching program, teachers interacted and shared experiences. However, these teachers had varying meanings for peer coaching based on their perspectives.

What were the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program? In accordance with the framework of symbolic interactionism, this study

analyzed the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program, including their motivations for participation and the meanings these teachers had for peer coaching.

Experiences that led these teachers to participate, coming as they did to this point in time with different social interactions and meanings they gave to peer coaching varied. The meanings that these teachers had, as a group, continue to impact the meanings that individuals perceive via social interactions (Blumer, 1969).

Context of the Study

The study took place in a suburban high school, about twenty miles east of a large city in Northeastern Georgia. The district was one of the largest in the country, serving over 116,000 students. There were approximately 2100 students in the school, which included grades nine through twelve. Approximately 70% of the student body were white, 25% were African-American, with the remaining 5% of students being from cultures all around the world. Parental support of students and their education was high. Generally, the fall schedule pickup evening event hosted more than 3000 parents and students. Most parents willingly contributed toward supplies and materials to enhance their students' education.

At the time of the research, there were approximately 135 professionals within the school. Six held doctorates, and a majority held either Specialist's or Master's degrees. Seven were enrolled in doctoral programs, and six were enrolled in other advanced degree programs. Within the time period from 2001-2002, four doctoral dissertations were completed or in the process of being written based on research gathered at the site, with the principal's and faculty's support.

The principal, in his sixth year at the research site, supported lifelong learning, believing strongly in the goals set by the district with regard to professional development. The principal had recently been recognized as Principal of the Year in Georgia by a nationally known

professional organization for his efforts, which included his support of innovation and professional growth.

The principal of the school supported professional growth and staff development in a variety of ways. During the school year 2000-2001, the principal spent approximately $20,000 on professional growth opportunities for his staff, far exceeding the funds allotted to him by the district. The principal's money, raised via vending machines and concession sales, was used primarily to send teachers to professional conferences, paying for their registration, lodging, if necessary, and for their substitute. Participants who chose to participate in the peer coaching program were provided one half of a substitute day to use as they desired.

The $6000 allotted by the district was spent on stipends, paying teachers who chose to participate in 10 or more sessions of local staff development activities on their own time. Many more teachers chose to participate in fewer than 10 activities and were not compensated monetarily for their time. A local staff development committee determined the activities that were offered to the staff based on surveys and interviews with the staff. Teachers within the school volunteered to share their expertise by teaching the classes their peers requested.

In addition to conference opportunities and local staff development opportunities, the regular faculty meetings at the school were centered on professional study and conversation. Faculty led book study groups consumed most of the time allocated for faculty meetings. Furthermore, all teachers in the school conferenced individually with the researcher in the fall and in the spring to set and review instructional and professional goals. The principal and the rest of the administrative team supported this effort by providing coverage so that the researcher had uninterrupted opportunity to conference with the teachers.

The school was selected because it had a peer coaching program which ended its second year in the spring of 2001. The peer coaching program was voluntary and available to all professionals within the school, begun by the researcher, along with three teachers who were in graduate school. The study of peer coaching began in the year 1999-2000. Twenty-six

teachers participated in year one, and 59 teachers participated in year two of the program, the year this research was conducted. Two teachers did not complete the program in 2000-2001, one due to her death and the other due to extensive family illness. It is important to note that participation in the program more than doubled for the second year and that participation was voluntary.

The high school where the research was conducted was considered to be in a middle class area. The median price for homes in the area was $106,000. There was a low level of transience, with most students remaining at the school for their entire high school education. More than 84% of the students attended college after graduating with a college prep diploma. Although the school had enjoyed a long-standing history of excellence, including being named a School of Excellence in the state, efforts to improve were constantly under way. Students were held to high academic standards. The school and the district surpassed state averages in all areas of state testing.

In order to focus more on teaching and learning, the school researched and studied a move to alternative scheduling for students. The faculty voted, and with the community's support moved from a traditional six-period day to a 4 x 4 block schedule. Along with the change in the utilization of time, the school determined to change its instructional practices. Because teachers enjoyed a 90-minute block of time for planning along with the move to block, the principal determined that staff development and supervision needed to change as well in order to better meet the needs of the professional staff. Teachers, having undergone massive staff development while researching the move to block, were encouraged to continue their work, including the development of pacing guides, the practice of incorporating various instructional strategies within a 90-minute block of time, the strategies themselves, and transition activities for use on the block. The school had a reputation for focusing on teaching and learning, asking itself what was best for students within its practices and decision making processes.

Along with the move to block schedule, the school also had to make decisions regarding the structure of classes they would offer. It was determined that Advanced Placement classes would be offered as year long courses. In the first year after the block, passing scores of 3, 4, and 5 on the Advanced Placement Tests increased. Additionally, students were encouraged to use the extra units, made available via block, for furthered elective academic courses such as advanced math and science courses, elective social studies classes, and additional years of foreign languages. Therefore, the percentage of students taking additional math, science, and foreign language classes was the highest in the county. Furthermore, students had the opportunity to take a prep class for the Scholastic Aptitude Test during their regular school day, thus enhancing the school's SAT scores. As state standards with regard to the required number of academic classes increased, and many schools struggled to keep their arts' programs alive, Hope was able to meet the needs and wants of these students of the arts while providing an academic program that was rigorous and challenging for students.

The administrative team at Hope High School included a principal, an associate principal, four assistant principals, a part-time administrative assistant, the athletic director, and the director of the community school. Of these nine administrators, two had recently completed their Specialists degrees in Educational Leadership, and three others, including the researcher, were enrolled in doctoral programs in Educational Leadership. The principal supported this advanced education of his leadership team with his encouragement and his flexibility regarding scheduling of university courses. The principal publicly praised his administrative team for their efforts toward continued education on several opportunities.

Public praise for teachers seeking advanced degrees was part of the culture of the school as well. Teachers were presented with tee shirts at the initial faculty meeting each fall and asked to tell the faculty where they were in school and what degree they were working toward. Additionally, teachers involved in the peer coaching program and the mentoring program were honored in a similar public ceremony. Teachers within the school were provided opportunities

to attend staff development events of their choice within the school, the county, the state, or in neighboring states. The peer coaching program was just one of numerous staff development opportunities available to the faculty of Hope High School.

The district's mission statement stated a goal of meeting and exceeding world class standards. The culture of the district included high stakes testing for students, intensive county wide focus on academic knowledge and skills, site-based management for schools, and numerous professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Professional growth opportunities within the county included staff development courses focused on curriculum, instruction, and technology. Courses were offered year-round, and teachers were usually paid a stipend for their time as well as given the opportunity to earn staff development units for re-certification. The county considered itself to be proactive in the area of staff development. County meetings for administrators included public recognition of district employees who had finished an advanced degree, presented at a state or national conference, or published. Several state and national professional organizations had recently been served by district members in the capacity of officers or board members, including the Georgia Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development and the National Staff Development Council. Several county administrators also served local universities, including the University of Georgia, in the role of adjunct professor. These efforts were recognized and applauded by the county.

Furthermore, the county continued educating its administrators annually at a summer conference. The conference was held in a neighboring county, freeing administrators from the demands of phones and administrative responsibilities for two and a half days so that the focus could be on teaching, learning, and improving. Each conference was planned by a group of professionals chosen from various schools and centers within the district. Great attention was given to the search for guest speakers of national reputation that had meaningful information to add to the county's efforts to improve. Breakout sessions at the conference included teaching

strategies that administrators could take back to their staffs, staff development programs they might have chosen to explore with their own faculties, as well as numerous other offerings. Between 450-500 administrators and county office personnel attended the conference each June. There was also team planning time built into the conference so that schools could focus on their own goals and initiatives for teaching and learning.

Data Sources

Peer coaching participants who volunteered for this study were interviewed. They were all veteran teachers with twenty or more years of teaching experience. Some were in their first year of participation and some in their second year. The sample size for the study was determined as data were collected and analyzed. Eighteen teachers with 20 or more years of experience consented to participate in this research. Fourteen of the 18 were interviewed at the site of their choice and at the time of their choice. Four additional teachers who consented to be interviewed were unavailable during the months the researcher was in the field. As the researcher analyzed her data, she determined that she had reached a point of theoretical saturation and deemed it unnecessary to pursue the interviews with the other four participants of the program who were willing to be interviewed later on in the fall.

Veteran teachers at the research site who participated in peer coaching were asked to participate in the interview process. Demographic and professional information about the participants may be found in Figures 1 and 2.

Participant	Gender	Race	Highest Degree	Area
Rose Vickers	Female	White	Masters	ESOL
Deb Ingles	Female	White	Masters	Special Ed.
Elaine Overstreet	Female	White	Masters	Foreign Lang.
Lee Collins	Male	African-American	Masters	Science
Pat Howell	Female	White	Masters	Science
Olivia Robinson	Female	White	Masters	Counseling
Vick Young	Male	White	Bachelors	Social Studies
Jane Overton	Female	White	Masters	Social Studies
Donna Martin	Female	White	Masters	Math
Paula Reese	Female	White	Specialist	Special Ed.
Nancy Dixon	Female	White	Masters	Language Arts
Rita Jones	Female	White	Specialist	Language Arts
Nita Johnson	Female	African-American	Masters	Business
Nate Underwood	Male	White	Specialist	Fine Arts

Figure 1. Demographic Information

Name	Years of Experience	Years at Hope High	Years in Program
Rose Vickers	25	3	1
Deb Ingles	21	17	2
Elaine Overstreet	22	12	1
Lee Collins	37	6	1
Pat Howell	22	5	2
Olivia Robinson	28	16	1
Vick Young	23	2	1
Jane Overton	32	17	2
Donna Martin	23	11	2
Paula Reese	24	13	2
Nancy Dixon	26	14	2
Rita Jones	30	16	1
Nita Johnson	25	6	1
Nate Underwood	28	6	2

Figure 2. Professional Information

Three of the 14 teachers interviewed were male and 11 were female. Two participants were African American and the remainder were white. The teachers' years of experience ranged from 21 to 37 years. Four were serving as department heads, and two were former department heads. One participant was a former administrator. All planned to return to the peer coaching program in year three.

Interview sites included the participants' homes, the researcher's home, restaurants, the summer school site, and the research site. Six participants chose to be interviewed in their own homes, several giving the researcher a tour of their home before or after the interview process. One participant asked to come to the researcher's home. Two asked to meet at a local restaurant and interview over lunch. Two participants, Nita Johnson and Lee Collins, were teaching summer school during the months of data collection and asked the researcher to come to the summer school site for their interviews. Finally, three participants were interviewed at the research site school during the summer months, as they had requested.

Interviews were conducted between June and August, 2001. Teachers were presented with the consent form (Appendix E) and assured of confidentiality throughout the study. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym that was used throughout the reporting of the research. Documents which aided the researcher, such as peer coaching observation forms and program surveys, were utilized as well (Appendices F & G) (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). There were no sampling problems.

<center>Data Collection and Analysis Procedures</center>

Before beginning any interviews, the researcher met with all eligible participants to explain the purpose of the study and the general methods of data collection. On the last day of school, in May of the year 2001, the researcher, as an administrator in the school, asked all teachers who had participated in peer coaching to meet briefly for an announcement. This meeting was held immediately following a luncheon and was a stand-up meeting, lasting approximately five minutes.

Teachers were gathered in a corner of the commons area of the school and told that during the upcoming summer, two researchers from the University of Georgia would be gathering data on the peer coaching program at Hope High School. They were not told at this point in time that one researcher was an assistant principal at their school. They were simply asked to let the administrator know if they would prefer *not* to be contacted by any researchers. They were told that this desire not to participate could be stated at that point or at any other time.

One of the researchers was an administrator in the research site school. This information was disclosed after teachers had volunteered to participate in order to avoid any feelings of pressure to participate on their part. Additionally, any teachers who did not wish to participate after the researchers were identified were, again, given the option *not* to be interviewed. None declined.

Once the school year ended, the researcher gained consent from the Internal Review Board of the university to conduct her research. Participants willing to be interviewed were contacted by phone, and arrangements for the interview sessions were made. The researcher informed the participants that the interviews would last approximately one hour and meeting arrangements were finalized.

Upon arriving at the interview site, the researcher thanked the participant for volunteering, exchanged some casual conversation, and proceeded to explain the informed consent form to the participant (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The subject and the researcher were then seated, according to the preferences of the subject, and the interview began with the introduction and explanation of the research topic and of the audio recorder. No participants were opposed to being recorded.

Once volunteers had given informed consent to participate, data were initially collected utilizing an interview guide which included two guiding questions:

- What motivated you to participate in peer coaching?

- What meanings does peer coaching have for you?

Tape recordings of interviews were made to ensure accuracy in data reporting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). In addition, fieldnotes, "the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 74), were kept by the researcher. Fieldnotes were descriptive in nature, discussing the setting, the activities, the behaviors throughout the interview, noting personal information regarding the subject of the interview, including mood and facial expressions, for example.

When the researcher left each interview site, she proceeded directly home, if possible, and noted her reflective comments regarding the interview. She noted whether or not the interview seemed relaxed or awkward. She noted the mood of the subject and any odd things that happened during the interview. For example, in one interview at a subject's home, the dog demanded attention from the subject and was removed to another part of the house, thus causing the interview to be interrupted for several minutes.

Additionally, fieldnotes, as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), provided the researcher with an opportunity to be reflective as the data were collected. The researcher found it useful to work on fieldnotes and memos together, in journal fashion. The researcher noted questions that produced meaningful, rich data, as well as those which did not seem to be as effective for use in framing questions for subsequent interviews and for follow-up interviews. The researcher noted comments that the subject introduced and which led to new questions for subsequent interviews.

For instance, one early interviewee suggested that time was an issue for her in peer coaching. As this interview was held early on in the data collection process, the researcher was unable to determine at that point if time was an issue, a theme, or a category that was of great import to the group as a whole. She found, eventually, that it was not. However, her data analysis following each interview, as well as her fieldnotes and memos regarding the findings of

those interviews, led her to an awareness of a possibly important point of data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

These fieldnotes and tapes were marked with pseudonyms, kept at the researcher's home, and were destroyed within a timely manner once the research had been completed. The researcher wrote fieldnotes as soon after each interview as possible, prior to any other activities which might have altered impressions following interviews. Eventually, fieldnotes and memos worked by the researcher numbered over 80 pages.

Using an interview guide allowed the interview to take shape toward concepts as they emerged from the data. Bogdan and Biklen stated that an interview is "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people (but sometimes involving more) that is directed by one in order to get information" (1982, p. 135). Denzin (1994) asserted that an interview is similar to a conversation between two people, with both participating. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) believed that an interview should result in descriptive rich data describing how participants interpret meaning within the context of the study.

Teachers were interviewed individually, for time periods that ranged from twenty minutes to one hour per sitting, at the place of their choice, as mentioned earlier. Rapport was easily established as the researcher had known each of the participants for a time period ranging from 10 months to 20 years. Initially, interviews were a bit stiff and awkward, with straightforward questions and answers that included little elaboration. However, as the researcher gained experience and began with familiar, easily answered questions regarding demographics, the participants relaxed, spoke freely, and even joked and laughed throughout the interview process.

Some participants were more inclined to speak freely and at greater length than others. Elaine Overstreet, for example, preferred to give straight and direct answers to questions, and then waited for the interviewer to ask her further questions. Pat Howell and Deb Ingles, on the other hand, spoke freely, and needed very little prompting from the researcher. The researcher

found that, generally speaking, initial interviews were greater in length. As data collection progressed, and questions were more focused, interviews became more efficient. At this later point in the data collection process, the researcher had an understanding of the topics that were important to teachers, the ideas upon which she needed to focus, and had learned to more expertly shape the interview to gain the information she needed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested that, "the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 135). Bogdan and Biklen suggested that the interview begin with small-talk in order that the researcher may establish rapport and put the interviewee at ease. The interviewer should search for commonalties in order to establish a relationship with the interviewee. The researcher, again, found that rapport was easily established, and that subjects were generally willing to talk at length without prompting of any sort.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) further suggested that in order to avoid losing the qualitative component of the research, the interviewer should not control the flow of conversation. A successful interview is one in which the interviewee is able to speak freely, sharing points of view. Often participants need encouragement to elaborate on their comments. The interviewer should question the interviewee to clarify, not to challenge. Finally, Bogdan and Biklen suggested that the successful interviewer displays patience with his interviewee. Silence between questions is sometimes appropriate. The interviewer must also remember that he or she is not to instruct, but to listen to the perspectives of the interviewee. Allowing a pause to linger while giving a respondent more time to formulate an answer was initially, quite challenging for the researcher, but in the end, this technique encouraged participants to reflect, answer questions, and to greatly expand on their answers with little or no prodding from the researcher, thus allowing for more free-flowing, rich, and descriptive data.

Participants often provided more information to the researcher if the researcher simply restated what the participant had said (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Interviews were comfortable for both parties, with the participants often asking, "Is that all there is to it?" once the interview was completed. The interviews were free flowing and sounded much like a conversation between two friends. At times, participants asked the interviewer a question, thus illustrating the comfort the participants felt during the interview process. Many participants expressed thanks that the conversation had occurred, noting that the program was enjoyable to them and that they liked being asked about what they had done throughout the process.

The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was employed, woven throughout the tasks of collecting, coding, and analyzing the data. The data were constantly compared, reviewed, and analyzed throughout and after the collection process. Through transcribing the audio tapes, the researcher found that codes were readily apparent and was able to become more adept and more efficient at the interviewing process. For instance, when transcribing the first interview, with Rose Vickers, 29 codes were noted. These codes, unabbreviated, included the following:

Second set of eyes

Active

Comfortable

Commitment

Confirmation

Conversation

Different

Emotion

Focus

Gains

Give and Take

Involvement

Idea Sharing

Listening

Meaningful

Management

Not an administrator

Not in conversation

Negative toward alternative observation

Observing

Passive

Planning

Peer's strength

Reflection

Scratched the surface

Suggestion

Support

Talk

The researcher has listed these initial codes as an indication to the reader that codes were

noted, analyzed, collapsed, combined, and regrouped throughout the interviews. For instance,

"talk" and "conversation" were determined to be similar enough to be called simply "talk." In

addition, new interviews introduced new codes, and those were compared again and again, as

they emerged, with the original list. Thus there was ongoing constant comparative analysis,

simply stated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In addition, as the researcher got deeper into the field, a review of the methodological

literature was found to be meaningful and helpful, providing insight and prompting the

researcher to memo as new thoughts occurred. The ability to read and understand the literature

was helpful to the researcher. Until one determined and noted an emerging code, for instance, reading about coding in a textbook was not as relevant. A coding chart was used to compare participants' information (Appendix A).

As a second example, as the researcher was rereading ideas about moving description toward theory, the author suggested the researcher draw a diagram of what she had learned (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This was done (Appendix B). It is important for the reader to note that this diagram was an attempt at understanding and that it was designed partway through the data analysis process. Therefore, the descriptive chart is not a final product, but a tool used to move analytic thinking forward. Strauss and Corbin (1978) also suggested that an analytic story might be written in order to move the researcher toward greater understanding. An example of the researcher's analytic story, thoughts which the researcher had during the data analysis process, may be found in Appendix C. Again, these were thoughts the researcher experienced during the analytical process, and are presented as examples of the thought processes the researcher explored.

These tools, the coding list and the analytic story, were utilized in order to aid in moving the researcher forward from data collection, through analysis, and eventually toward grounded theory. In addition, Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested the researcher write a descriptive story of the data gathered and analyzed. This descriptive analysis (Appendix D), in the suggested story form, helped move the research to greater understanding of the perspectives of veteran teachers involved in a voluntary peer coaching program.

Descriptive charts, analytic stories, and descriptive stories, memos, and fieldnotes done through a journaling process provided the researcher an opportunity to reflect on what had been learned and to question the ways pieces were fitting together (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Memos included points that needed to be explored in the future, gaps in

the research, and comments on teachers' perceptions. Writing memos was a part of data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Data analysis was an ongoing process for the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Although its components may be discussed individually, it is important to note that the process of analyzing data was cyclical as was discussed above. Data emerged, and the researcher was constantly comparing new data to data which she had already accessed. This occurred from the time of the first interview up through the writing of the findings, and even through several drafts. New insights were often gained as the researcher reread the transcripts, reworked the codes and categories, and worked toward theory, checking and rechecking the data. Data analysis is never completed, but is committed to paper at some point in time. Glaser stated:

> The analyst who feels that he cannot finish writing because he can never begin to tell what he knows, should just accept this fact and finish as sorted and planned. He can never outstrip his own constant growing, no matter how much he writes. His writing will always span growth and yield more to say. (1978, p. 141)

Once categories emerged, an anonymous member check was employed by reviewing results of the year end survey of peer coaching that participants had completed at the end of the 2000-2001 school year, artifacts which were available at the site (Appendix G). Additionally, as the researcher worked with her professors toward the theoretical formulations in her research, she was given input which caused her, again, to reflect, to review, and to revise, when necessary, her analysis of her data. For example, after review of an initial draft, theoretical discussion, which will be presented later in greater detail was once again visited and reviewed. Ideas were reworked in order to present a clearer picture of the perspectives of veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) referred to coding as a "fluid process" (p. 101): "Broadly speaking, during open coding, data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, and

compared for similarities and differences" (p. 102). Items that are similar are then regrouped more generally into categories. "Grouping concepts into categories is important because it enables the analyst to reduce the number of units with which he or she is working" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 112). Initial coding produced 79 codes which were reworked, reviewed, and collapsed numerous times (see Appendix A). Once codes were analyzed and grouped, categories began to emerge.

Once the two categories of motivations and meanings had been established, the researcher had fewer units with which to work and proceeded to examine information while referencing those categories. Sub-categories were then established (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For example, as the researcher noted the category of motivations, it was determined that subcategories included teachers who were motivated because they wanted to learn, teachers who had experienced informal peer coaching, a desire for meaningful feedback, a preference for choice, and a dissatisfaction with the traditional observation alternative.

The researcher then related that category of motivations to the category of meanings and worked to highlight connections as they existed. This "linking takes place not descriptively but rather at a conceptual level" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 125). The researcher continued to examine how one category related to the other. For example, motivation for participation was easily noted. It was, after all, an initial question asked of the participants. As the researcher collected and analyzed data, it was discovered that the participants received outcomes as a result of the processes they had experienced. Meaningful feedback, which had often been mentioned as a motivator for participation, was named by numerous participants as a meaning they held for peer coaching. Thus, a new category emerged: that of meanings.

Selective coding is "the process of integrating and refining the theory," according to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 143). Using the categories derived from the data, the researcher attempted to form a theoretical explanation of the data obtained from the veteran teachers in this study. This process was continuous and overlapping, as are the explanations of the

processes in this chapter. One does not stand separate from another, but all processes overlap and work together toward grounding theory.

Moving data toward theory is difficult, time consuming, and magical (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher found that often, after reading for hours, an idea would occur and she would be drawn back into the data in order to confirm the idea. When rethinking transcriptions in her mind, some comment a teacher made that had seemed normal and ordinary would slip into place, and ideas would congeal, making more sense as they were explored and grounded by going, once again, back through the data. The magical aspect of moving data toward theory often kept the researcher at her desk through the late hours, working diligently as ideas flowed freely. Data analysis was cyclical, an ever evolving task, and one which the researcher found to be exciting, much to her surprise.

<div style="text-align:center">Grounded Theory</div>

Grounded theory (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to generate theory to explain the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. Grounded theory is "theory derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12). Theory arises from the data within which it is grounded. The emerging data guides the researcher in collecting, analyzing, and verifying. "Analysis is the interplay between researchers and data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 13).

The researcher found that descriptive components of her research were easily apparent (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). However, moving away from the descriptive and toward the theoretical compelled the researcher to think on a new level. Linear thinking had to be disregarded in order to reach assertions of theory in the research. For example, once the researcher developed the descriptive chart that displayed teachers' movements, beginning at a state of readiness and moving through motivations, processes and outcomes, the researcher had to work hard to think beyond that visual illustration of descriptive analysis (see Appendix B).

The researcher eventually noted, through analysis, that readiness was a part of motivation and processes and outcomes were parts of the meanings that teachers held for peer coaching.

As Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested, the researcher had to move from descriptive explanations of what had happened toward theoretical explanations of why those things had happened, theoretical propositions which were grounded in the data. It must be remembered that the processes of data collection and data analysis are cyclical and ongoing (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). However, in an attempt to greatly simplify and illustrate the steps taken throughout the research procedures, a review of data collection and analysis steps is presented in Figure 3.

Data Collection	Data Analysis
Participant consent gained	Cyclical review of transcripts ongoing with later interviews and follow-up interviews
Face-to-face interviews	Coding of transcripts
Follow-up interviews	Review of fieldnotes/memos
Writing of fieldnotes/memos	Emergence of categories
Review of artifacts including peer coaching forms and years end surveys	Collapsing of codes
Theoretical saturation	Descriptive illustration emerged
	Theoretical sampling
	Theoretical saturation
	Theoretical discussion/assertions developed

Figure 3. Review of Data Collection and Analysis

Constant Comparative Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research includes constant comparison of the data, allowing the researcher to code and form categories as they emerge from the data, both during and after data collection (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Emerging categories will prevent the researcher from designating categories. Patton (1990) suggested that data be useful, meaningful, and answer research questions. As teachers were initially interviewed, the researcher listened, interjecting as little as possible, in order to allow the interview to shape itself to the meanings that the participants had for the voluntary peer coaching program.

Simultaneously comparing all incidents observed and all data collected is referred to as constant comparative analysis (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative method involves looking at the incidents, making comparisons as needed, defining any categories which might emerge, and working towards theory (Glaser, 1978). Each stage evolves into the next.

For example, the researcher structured all first round interviews in the same format, noting codes from the very first interview, and allowing categories to emerge only after numerous participants were interviewed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Although codes were readily apparent, categories came together more slowly, stabilizing about half way through the research process, and then reworked in the final stages of analysis. As reported previously, the category of motivation was easily determined as motivation for participating was one of the initial questions asked of participants. Utilizing this format, the researcher formulated more specific questions for use in later interviews and in follow-up interviews, constantly comparing and analyzing, in order to refine categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Initially, all participants were asked the same guiding questions. Participants had the opportunity to shape the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Some spoke at a surface level about the peer coaching process, and some spoke more philosophically regarding

the processes through which they were working. As participants shaped the interviews, the researcher refined questions in order to obtain necessary information.

For example, one participant mentioned time as an issue with regard to the coaching process and to her job in general. She explained to the researcher that during the year on which the research was based, she not only participated in the voluntary peer coaching program, but she was attending graduate school seeking an additional certification, and she suffered serious health complications which caused her to miss more school than she normally would have missed. Therefore, time was a primary issue for her. She agonized about the time she and her partner needed to complete their peer coaching, and she determined that she had enjoyed the program more during her first year, when time had not been so limited for her. Consequently, the researcher became sensitized to the value teachers placed on time with regard to the peer coaching program. Time became a point of reference for subsequent interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Determination was made as to whether meanings were the same for all participants. Did all participants have the same meanings for time? Data show that they did not. Aside from that single incident of time being noted as limited and as less than enough, time was not mentioned in a negative context by any other participant.

Categories emerged from the data. Emerging theories were presented to several participants who were then asked to validate the findings in order to minimize distortions on the part of the researcher (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). For example, once all data had been collected, analyzed, reviewed, and worked toward theory, the researcher spoke informally with several participants in the program, asking for their ideas based on the conclusions she had reached. Those participants indicated to the researcher that her findings appeared valid in their opinions. The presentation of suggestions made by participants regarding the peer coaching process was made to the entire peer coaching group as a whole in the fall of 2001. Those suggestions were well received based on comments made to the researcher following the

presentation as well as based on the number of people who took handouts explaining the new and expanded choices they had with regard to the third year of the peer coaching program, suggestions that had come about as a result of the data collection in which many had participated.

Theoretical sensitivity is the ability on the part of the researcher to ascertain, within the course of the interview and data analysis, that which is meaningful to the research and that which is not. "Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 145). It is the professional judgment of the researcher that aides him/her in making this sensitivity decision: "Sensitivity usually grows throughout the research project and enables the researcher to decide what concepts to look for and where he or she might find indicators of them" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 206). "Theoretical sensitivity is an ability to generate concepts from data and to relate them according to the normal models of theory in general" (Glaser, 1992, p. 27).

The researcher must give meaning to the data based on his insight (Glaser, 1978). Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that the researcher should use his own insights in order to promulgate theory. This researcher's professional experiences, both as a teacher and as an administrator, provided insights throughout the research process. As the researcher interviewed teachers with regard to their participation in the voluntary peer coaching program, she was sensitive to data that were relevant to adult learning, supervision, staff development, peer coaching, and mentoring, and discarded data that were irrelevant but which may have been revealed in the conversation or through other data sources. For example, throughout the interview process, participants discussed items that had no bearing on the research at hand. One participant, in discussing teaching strategies, began to tell the researcher about his preference for the block schedule employed by the research site school. Although this

information was interesting and useful to the researcher as an assistant principal in the school, it had no bearing on the current research project (Glaser, 1978).

Theoretical sampling allows the researcher to develop concepts when collecting data and to compare new data with data already collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Theoretical sampling, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998), "is driven by concepts derived from the evolving theory and based on the concept of 'making comparisons,' that will maximize opportunities to discover variations among concepts and to identify categories in terms of their properties and dimensions" (p. 201). Data gathered throughout the interviews was collected and analyzed, and the researcher began to see categories and patterns emerge, moving the researcher toward the development of theory. According to Glaser (1998), "the data must control the emerging theory" (p. 18). The researcher asked herself questions about what she had found, reflected on the data, and tried, or sampled various theories, to see if they fit the data collected, or to determine a lack of fit. For example, in establishing a core variable, that component which is common to all the findings, the researcher debated between motivation, empowerment, and risk-taking, among other things, settling at last, on adult learning theory.

Where did the researcher obtain information? How did the researcher proceed? How did the researcher know when enough had been done with regard to information gathering? As a researcher, one must determine the site for the research, the types of data to be used, how long the research will take place, and the number and length of interviews or other data gathering techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Though the researcher had a guide of research questions available, once data collection began, those initial guides gave way to new information as concepts emerged from the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In this study, the site for the research was a school that had a voluntary peer coaching program that had just ended its second year. The researcher continued to interview until no more new information was revealed by the participants. The researcher found herself in the position of mentally predicting what the participants would say in response to her questions

toward the end of the interviews. For example, when the researcher asked participants why they would choose to participate in peer coaching when it involved more work on their part, she could anticipate that their answer would include acknowledgment that, yes, it was more work, but that the work was worth it because of the gains they anticipated receiving. Finally, as no new data were apparent, the researcher knew that she had reached theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

When no more data can be found to develop properties of the categories, the sampling is said to be theoretically saturated. This situation means:

until (a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212)

For example, when an administrator in a school is conducting an investigation into a disciplinary matter, he/she may begin by interviewing one student. That one interview may lead that administrator to interview three or five other students. Eventually, when the interviewer begins to hear the same information over and over again, from a variety of students, he/she knows that there is no need to interview any further. The administrator has probably solved the problem he/she was investigating. The theory is said to be saturated (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Theoretical pacing, according to Glaser (1978), includes the two processes of input and saturation. Reviewing and absorbing data for coding purposes should consume two to four hours a day. In order for the researcher to be fresh and working under optimum conditions, coding was done at a time when the researcher was at her best. The researcher found that pacing was important in that categories, and then theory, stayed in her mind much longer than she sat at her desk. The data needed to be left in order to solidify in her mind. Once input failed to produce new insights, saturation existed.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is the expectation that two different researchers, working independently, and studying the same setting or subject, will have similar conclusions. As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) noted, "Qualitative researchers tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations" (p. 44). Setting forth a clear, concise method of data collection and analysis procedures would in all probability enable a future researcher to work independently and report similar conclusions.

Janesick observed that "Validity in qualitative research has to do with description and explanation, and whether or nor a given explanation fits a given description" (1994, p. 217). Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that "triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, do not contradict it" (p. 234). Denzin (1994) described triangulation as the process of bringing multiple kinds of data to bear on a single problem or issue. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) described the process as one that includes multiple data sources and multiple collection and analysis methods. This study was enhanced by the use of open-ended questions, anonymous member checks based on a year end survey, and informal member checks after interviews had been transcribed and analyzed. Teachers' peer coaching observation forms were reviewed as well.

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) addressed internal validity by suggesting that the conclusions of the study are presented to the participants who are then asked to consider the findings of the research with regard to internal validity. This is an effort to control for observer effects or distortions on the part of the researcher and was employed in this study. This was accomplished as the researcher, as noted above, presented findings to several participants for feedback. These attempts to establish validity were particularly important in this study as it occurred in the researcher's place of employment, and bias had to be controlled.

Control of Bias

In order to confirm or disconfirm information received and interpreted by the researcher, multiple sources of information were used. Anonymous surveys were used by the researcher as a means of confirming the findings. Additionally, participants were asked to verbally comment on the findings of the researcher after categories had been established and once assertions were determined. The personal biases of the researcher were then limited (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Subjectivity Statement

The researcher was employed as an administrator within the school, in her twelfth year at the school during the research period, where she had served as a teacher, as a department head, as an Assistant Principal, and was, during the research, the Director of the Community School, a community educational outreach facility housed within the school. "A network or an institution does not function automatically because of some inner dynamics or system requirements; it functions because people at different points do something, and what they do is a result of how they define the situation in which they are called on to act" (Blumer, 1969, p. 19).

As an administrator in the school that was the research site, the researcher took precautions to ensure that the participants in the study were comfortable in sharing information with someone who, realistically, had power over them. Initially, their participation was voluntary, prior to their knowing who the researcher was. In addition, interviews were set up to occur at the time and place convenient to the participant, often occurring at participants' homes, which provided even more comfort on their part. Moreover, the researcher had an earned relationship of trust with the participants, established over time, and maintained throughout years in many cases. It was this researcher's opinion that the directness of comments received during her time in the field, and which will be discussed at length in Chapters 4 and 5, served as an indicator that participants were forthright in their responses.

Blase and Kirby (1992) stated that "power is not necessarily a finite resource. Our teachers disclosed that effective principals believe their power actually expands when it is shared" (p. 41). Blase and Kirby further stated that leaders who want the support of teachers regarding programs and policies should solicit input from those teachers early in the decision making process. The peer coaching program at the research site was formed based on teacher input, and amended after year one based on teacher survey information. Teachers provided the orientation to interested persons at the beginning of year two. Additionally, many participants commented, throughout the interview process, stating their suggestions for modifying the program for year three. These suggestions were readily forthcoming, which indicated to the researcher that the teachers were comfortable in sharing their ideas with her.

The staff development program at the school was determined by teachers, developed by teachers with teachers' interests in mind, and was merely facilitated by the researcher. The researcher had made a conscious effort, at every opportunity, to empower teachers, to facilitate their professional growth, to encourage their reflection in informal conferences and in goal setting conferences, and to encourage them to take risks in order to grow. The researcher had attempted to establish a reputation as a "do for" person as opposed to a "do to" person with regard to working with teachers. The researcher had attempted to step back and encourage teachers to lead their professional growth opportunities, helping them as needed. It was this researcher's belief that she shared power with her teachers, as opposed to having power over them, and that the expertise of the teachers within the school was the base of that true power.

The participants, all tenured teachers, chose to participate in this voluntary, non-evaluative peer coaching program. All that volunteered to participate in year one chose to return in year two. All indicated they would participate in year three, and did so. Teachers in the school had a choice between a formal observation, also non-evaluative, by an administrator, or participation in the voluntary peer coaching program. The researcher knew all of the teachers

professionally, with the length of professional relationships ranging from ten months to twenty years. All of these teachers had tenure within the school system.

Personal biases of the researcher included a strong belief in the peer coaching program. The researcher and three teachers initiated the program in 1999. Additionally, the researcher believed that teachers participated because they liked having peers observe them as opposed to supervisors. The researcher believed that the participants wanted choice in their professional growth opportunities, and that teachers chose peer coaching because it was more meaningful to them than the traditional model of observation. The researcher further believed that the program was meaningful to the teachers because it gave them an opportunity to talk about their practices with a respected colleague of their own choosing.

Bogdan and Biklen asserted that the researcher must be aware of his or her own biases, noting that "Qualitative researchers are concerned with the effect their own subjectivity may have on the data they produce" (1982, p. 42). This attempt to identify the biases of the researcher served as a means of recognizing those biases in order to reduce subjectivity.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to describe the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. This research was conducted in order to answer the following research questions: What motivated these veteran teachers to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program? What meanings did peer coaching have for them?

This chapter presents findings and reports them as data from the individual participants, and as common themes. Each of these levels of findings will be discussed as it relates to the motivations teachers had for participating in a voluntary peer coaching program as well as to the meanings that peer coaching had for them. Data revealed by individual participants will be discussed first with regard to motivations and then with regard to meanings. By way of introduction, information on each participant will be presented.

Individual Participants

Rose Vickers

Ms. Vickers was a teacher of English Speakers of Other Languages. She had been at Hope High School for 3 of her 25 years of teaching. Ms. Vickers began the peer coaching program in the fall of 2000, working with the science department head, Ms. Howell, another veteran teacher. Ms. Vickers asked Ms. Howell to observe her class and offer suggestions on classroom management because she was concerned about the number of students off task during instruction. Ms. Vickers found herself in the position of having nine students in her ESOL class speaking Spanish to each other during her instruction, a language she does not speak.

Eight themes, noted in Figure 4, arose from the interview with Ms. Vickers. Five themes addressed motivation and three themes addressed meanings that Ms. Vickers held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because of her experiences with informal peer coaching.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	
She was motivated because she was dissatisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 4: Rose Vickers' Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Vickers noted that she was motivated to participate in peer coaching because she wanted her partner's "input, her ideas." She noted that she and other teachers talked from time to time about issues regarding their teaching. She felt that the state model of observation was a "passive" experience, and that being observed by an administrator made her feel as though she was "on an examining block," whereas peer coaching was "much more meaningful," giving her a chance to "work with a peer from another department." She expressed an interest in wanting to work with "somebody who is coaching, who is trying to help" in order to gain "feedback and suggestions."   Ms. Vickers was "looking for ideas" and an "interactive" process as opposed to the "passive" state observation.

Ms. Vickers especially appreciated the level of trust and comfort that was found by working with a chosen peer, noting that she was able to benefit because the observation was targeted toward an area of self-assessed need on her part. Ms. Vickers said:

> After the two visits, we sat down together and talked about what we had seen and done and gave thoughts to each other and confirmed what we were doing. It was much more comfortable because it was a peer. I knew what I was looking for, she knew what she was looking for and it really was more an adventure.

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching had for her, Ms. Vickers noted the affirmation she received.

> What I had done, that she saw evidence of, was on the right track. She confirmed that what I was doing was basically what she would have done, and that there were personalities involved in the problem, and that, in her opinion, I was doing the best that could be done in that particular situation.

Ms. Vickers referred to the peer coaching program as a "good eye opening experience" and noted, "I keep using the word 'confirmed' because that's the way I felt." For her, the peer coaching program entailed a "level of excitement" where she and her partner "got out of it what we wanted." When asking to direct her learning, she mentioned that it would be

> kind of interesting if the relationship continued so that you have occasion and comfort level for further discussion about what was going on. These conversations, had they continued, might have evolved more into philosophy as opposed to one specific item we were looking for.

Finally, Rose Vickers believed that peer coaching was worth the extra work. She stated that

> I knew what I was looking for and she knew what she was looking for and it really was more an adventure. I don't think of it as additional work. The forms that we filled out before and after were very simple and took very little time to do.

<u>Deb Ingles</u>

Ms. Ingles taught in the Special Education department of Hope High School where she was, eleven years ago, chair of the department. She had voluntarily stepped down from chairing but remained in the department. She had been at the school for 17 of her 21 years of teaching.

Ms. Ingles was enrolled in a certification program so that she could teach English Speakers of Other Languages. In addition to that course work, Ms. Ingles suffered extensive health problems in the second year she participated in the peer coaching program. Her comments regarding a general feeling of "not enough time" were made within the context of these two great demands on her time, and she acknowledged this to the researcher during the interview. Ms. Ingles also acknowledged to the researcher that she indicated on her anonymous survey that she was "not sure" if she would participate the next year, because of the "extra time involved." During the interview process, however, Ms. Ingles reported to the researcher that she had since changed her mind and did intend to continue the coaching process.

Seven themes, noted in Figure 5, arose from the interview with Ms. Ingles. Three addressed motivation and four addressed meanings that peer coaching had for Ms. Ingles.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	She noted greater trust among peer coaches.
	She noted greater morale among peer coaches.

Figure 5: Deb Ingles' Motivations and Meanings

When discussing motivations, Ms. Ingles noted that she peer coached because she wanted to "go deeper into my experience as a teacher," and she was willing to work in order to do that. She was motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback, and said, "I wanted someone who could see with fresh eyes. You just get someone to help you in areas you'd like to blossom in." She was motivated by her ability to choose her partner and the focus of the

work they did together. Finally, Ms. Ingles was motivated because, "I don't think a 15 minute observation tells you anything."

With regard to her choice of a trusted colleague and a focus for their work together, Ms. Ingles told the researcher, "We probably talked for three hours and we covered lots and lots of things. We solved some problems right there at dinner. We found some focus areas that you couldn't solve by just talking." Ms. Ingles and her partner, a veteran teacher in the Business Department who had since transferred to a neighboring school, had known each other for over a decade. However, they found that in the peer coaching relationship, "you have to open yourself up and share your weaknesses and your faults. You have to trust the other person by supporting each other."

Ms. Ingles expressed to the researcher that the choice of partner option in the program was important, and said, "I think it's something they [participants] need to choose, and I don't think it should be mandated." With regard to the focus of the coach's observation, Ms. Ingles reported, "I think the opportunity for guidance needs to be there." Ms. Ingles noted to the researcher that, because she feels very competent in the classroom, she had difficulty coming up with a target area she would like for her peer to observe and comment on in their post conference. She said:

> Sometimes it's hard for me to think of something I want someone to help me with . . . . because, in the classroom, I'm good. It's the behind-the-scenes stuff where I'm not, and sometimes it's even hard to pinpoint that because I feel like I have so much to do, how can anybody make this go better?

When Ms. Ingles discussed the meanings that peer coaching had for her, she focused on the meaningful feedback she received, her desire to direct her learning, and noted greater trust among peer coaches and greater morale among peer coaches. She noted that peer coaching was, "very enriching" and that she and her partner, "exchanged ideas a lot." She stated that, "I could use my expertise and help her solve an area [with which she was having difficulty]."

When she asked to direct her learning, she suggested to the researcher that an orientation session which included time for the participants to discuss opportunities for observation focus would be helpful to many participants. She said, with regard to the increased trust she perceived, "I feel good about what I do because I feel successful and effective. I'm more open." Finally, Ms. Ingles noted that she perceived an increase in morale because, "Observation is entirely different when somebody's helping you to work on something."

<u>Elaine Overstreet</u>

Ms. Overstreet was a 22-year veteran teacher, having taught at Hope for 12 of those years. She had completed one year in the peer coaching program, deciding to become involved after discussing peer coaching with a colleague, and said, "One of my peers wanted a partner, and she had participated last year and thought it was a good idea and beneficial, and I decided, upon her recommendation, to go with it." Ms. Overstreet and her partner were both members of the Foreign Language Department, and each chose to have the other observe questioning and answering techniques, an area they both wanted to improve or at least validate.

Seven themes, noted in Figure 6, emerged from the interview with Ms. Overstreet. Four addressed motivation and three addressed meanings.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because of experiences with informal peer coaching.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observations.	

Figure 6: Elaine Overstreet's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Overstreet was motivated because she wanted to learn. She had experience with informal peer coaching and was comfortable when talking with other teachers. She was willing to do the extra work required by peer coaching, and was motivated by the choices offered to her. Furthermore, she felt the traditional observation "never tells you too much about specifics."

Ms. Overstreet knew what she wanted and was able to find it in peer coaching. She said, "You actually get to meet with a peer and figure out a plan that you want, to observe and try to tackle a problem." Ms. Overstreet and her partner, though they talked frequently, having experienced informal peer coaching ("about 75% of our conversations are about teaching and learning"), found the choices offered throughout the peer coaching process attractive. "I like the fact that you can choose. I think interdisciplinary may be something I do next year or in the future." They discussed how important it was for them to be proficient at questioning and answering as so much of foreign language instruction is verbal. Finally, Ms. Overstreet stated her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. Because the majority of her instruction is in Spanish, Ms. Overstreet had long-standing concerns about being observed by persons who did not speak Spanish, noting, "it's always been a fear of mine."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching had for her, Ms. Overstreet discussed the meaningful feedback she received as well as her thoughts about directing her learning. When discussing meaningful feedback, Ms. Overstreet noted that, in addition to the fact that her chosen partner spoke Spanish, the language she was teaching, she found the peer coaching process to be "more relaxed," and noted, "You're on the same level with your peers." She continued and said, "She's a good sounding board. At least she understands where I'm coming from." In relating her post observation conference experience, Ms. Overstreet felt a sense of affirmation and said:

> After we finished, we met and discussed the results, and sort of tallied percentages of different things we found out. We did find that actually we were pretty fair with what we did. We found that we really were doing an adequate job. So I think in that way it was beneficial. After we met, and after we looked at the data, it sort of reinforced the fact that we were pretty much on the right track and doing it the right way.

Ms. Overstreet noted that peer coaching "helps to pick up on those little things, and see how we can improve." When discussing her preferences regarding her own learning, Ms. Overstreet stated, "Maybe you could set us on a time line." She was willing to do the work associated with peer coaching because of the gains she anticipated, and noted that she and her partner chose an area for coaching that directly impacted students' grades.

Lee Collins

Mr. Collins was the most veteran teacher on staff at the research site, having completed 37 years in education, including service as an administrator in a neighboring state. Mr. Collins had full retirement benefits from that state, yet said, "I thought about retiring and just leaving it at that, but I've always loved working with children and with young people and that's the reason I'm in teaching in the first place." Mr. Collins had been at Hope High School for six years and had participated in peer coaching for one year, choosing to work with a fellow teacher in his department, science.

Eight themes arose from the interview with Mr. Collins, as noted in Figure 7. Five themes addressed motivation and three themes addressed meanings that Mr. Collins held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
He was motivated because he wanted to learn.	He received meaningful feedback.
He was motivated because of his experiences with informal peer coaching.	He wanted to direct his learning.
He was motivated by a desire for meaningful feedback.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
He was motivated because he found the choices attractive.	
He was motivated because he was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 7: Lee Collins' Motivations and Meanings

Mr. Collins was motivated because he could "get with someone who was, perhaps, doing things a bit differently than me." He noted that he had experience with informal peer coaching and said, "Learning from others is the best way to continue to increase your ideas, or to get fresh ideas." He was motivated because he wanted to "get the other person's ideas," and felt his choice to abide by the rules was important. "You should have a clear understanding as to how you're going to go about it [peer coaching]." Finally, he was motivated by his dissatisfaction with the traditional observation and said, "You feel more comfortable because you know you're not being graded."

When he discussed the meanings that peer coaching held for him, Mr. Collins referenced the meaningful feedback he received, including new ideas and affirmation, and his desire to direct his learning. Mr. Collins noted that he enjoyed the "back and forth communication with the person observing." In addition to the ideas he gained from the

coaching experience, Mr. Collins enjoyed the relationship that evolved, saying, "the relationship was very valuable." Once that relationship was established, Mr. Collins found that instructional practices were discussed between the two partners, and noted:

> Even the methods that we were doing in a particular content, one teacher may do it different from another. Then after talking, I would go back and change something in my methods and maybe even change the extent of content that we were covering in a particular subject or area as a result of having done the peer coaching beforehand.

Mr. Collins, in spending time with his peer, not only learned and gained from ideas and feedback, but he found value in being able to share his expertise. "I learned I got something from her picking up on what I had to offer, and I thought, 'Gee, I was able to offer this teacher something.'" He noted that his learning "refreshes" him and "is the best way to continue to increase your ideas, or to get fresh ideas," saying that peer coaching gave him the opportunity to work with others which was beneficial to him because "they have something I don't."

Mr. Collins noted the value of continuing peer coaching, but intended to direct that learning, to "change partners for next year mainly because, again, these will be different ideas, these will be different methods, and I feel that I can get something new." In addition, Mr. Collins felt that staying with a science person was "important as far as content is concerned, but as far as methods or procedures, I think it will be good to observe other disciplines, just to see." Furthermore, Mr. Collins expressed a desire to visit other teachers' classrooms.

> I mean, to be able to go when I hear about a particular teacher, not particularly in science, that's doing this particular method or project, then I would like to go see that in action and I think it would be good to do that. We didn't call it peer coaching, but in a sense I guess it could be because I've asked other teachers if I may come into their classroom to observe them teaching in different areas, and it was, although we had not prearranged things like you do, it was sort of an informal drop into a teacher's classroom.

He found the extra work associated with peer coaching to be worth the effort because he was "forever trying to learn, wanting to gain new ideas."

Pat Howell

Ms. Howell was the Science Department chair at the research site, having served in that capacity for three years. She was a 22 year veteran, in her fifth year at Hope, and in her second year of peer coaching. Ms. Howell, as a department head, had taken it upon herself to share the benefits she had received via peer coaching at her department meetings. Consequently, several more teachers in her department chose to participate in the second year of the program. In her role as department head, Ms. Howell was expected to serve as one of numerous evaluators for teachers within the school who were required to participate in the state evaluation due to their lack of tenure, as well as a non-evaluative observer for teachers within the school who opted for the traditional method of observation as opposed to peer coaching. Ms. Howell worked with someone outside of her department, Ms. Vickers, the ESOL teacher. Ms. Howell was particularly interested in gaining Ms. Vickers' input regarding student behavior during lab time in science.

Five themes, as noted in Figure 8, emerged from the interview with Ms. Howell. Three themes addressed motivation and two themes addressed meanings that Ms. Howell held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 8: Pat Howell's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Howell was motivated because she wanted to learn. She was motivated by the attractive choice to visit other teachers, "to see some other classes I wouldn't normally get to see." She stated that, "It was neat to go in and see what the other teacher does." Finally, she was motivated by her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation.

In remembering her experiences as a teacher, Ms. Howell noted that experience and confidence are necessary in order for a teacher to feel comfortable about asking for help and even for a teacher to be able to identify the areas in which she needs help.

Sometimes when you start, you don't even know what you're doing, some of your weaknesses, you hadn't seen them at first. You don't know what to look for, you don't know what you're doing wrong and maybe after you've been teaching a while, and maybe after you've had the opportunity to observe other teachers, you may start to see some of your weaknesses. Maybe when you're in that middle stage, you may start to see things that you want people to look at.

Although Ms. Howell was motivated to because she wanted to learn, she had some anxiety about being observed, which, through the talk, resolved itself.

Isn't that funny? I know you're talking to people that are over 20 years, but you know, she and I were raised in the 'be seen but not heard' generation of being perfect, and you know, I don't think that some of us raised in that way have as much self-confidence as some of the young teachers have. It's taken us a while to build up that self-confidence and I think that thinking that somebody's going to come and make you feel inadequate in any way is a little threatening. [With peer coaching], you get a peer's viewpoint. They're still in the same place that you are because they know what it's like to be in the classroom. And after having two friends come in, I think I'm getting over the worry about making a booboo. In a way, if I made a booboo, it'd be okay, you know what I mean? I don't know if peer coaching is helping me with this, but I think maybe talking it out, you know, having somebody come in, having a peer come in, and like I say, that's right there with you and talking out the situation and seeing some things

that are going on, I think I'm getting over the actual worrying about messing up. I think

maybe peer coaching's helped me with that.

Ms. Howell, in addition to being motivated because she wanted to learn, found the choices

offered throughout the program with regard to partners, logistics of the observation, and

suggested rules of observation and feedback to be attractive. Finally, Ms. Howell was

motivated to participate due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. She said,

"There is no feedback with [the traditional observation]. I didn't feel like it was very effective."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Howell noted the

meaningful feedback she received, including idea sharing and affirmation of her skills, as well as

the desire to direct her learning.

When she discussed meaningful feedback, Ms. Howell said she enjoyed the "non-

threatening observation" that was a component of the peer coaching process, noting that she

and her partner "said some things of encouragement to each other, you know, and again, we

tried not to advise, we just talked about, you know, sort of gave feedback." She and her peer

were able to report, factually, on what they had observed, providing each other with

affirmation.

> Yes, it was very much fun and very interesting and you have the kids' attention and you
>
> have the kids on task and you know if you have a problem with a kid sometimes, with
>
> them being off task and not paying attention, so does Monica, so does Susan, so do all
>
> those teachers.

As for her peer, Ms. Howell reported:

> I could really, instead of just walking in and saying, 'Oh, you're every bit as good as
>
> they are,' I knew first hand that she was. She was very interesting, she was very good,
>
> she was very patient and when they didn't understand, she would go over it again and
>
> again.

With regard to directing her learning, Ms. Howell stated, "If things are just rocking along, and everything's going well, [I'd] just let somebody come in, and just open ended see if they see any ways [I] could improve."

Olivia Robinson

Olivia was a veteran Guidance Counselor at Hope that participated in the program. Prior to being a counselor, Ms. Robinson taught Spanish at Hope High School for several years. She had 28 years of educational experience, including 16 at the research site. She had been involved in the peer coaching program for one year. Olivia chose to work with another guidance counselor who had fewer than twenty years of experience. Olivia particularly asked her coach to observe her as she taught an after-school study skills class to "unmotivated" ninth graders, a class she had never before taught.

Five of Ms. Robinson's themes, as noted in Figure 9, addressed motivation and three themes addressed meanings.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because of her experiences with informal peer coaching.	She noted greater morale among peer coaches.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	
She was motived because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 9: Olivia Robinson's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Robinson was motivated because she wanted to learn, and stated, "I asked her to come see that [lesson] because that was the place I needed some help or suggestions." She

continued, explaining her experiences with informal peer coaching, "In counseling, we do discuss. You go find another peer and talk to them." She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback and due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. She said, "I thought I would probably get better feedback from peer coaching than from [the traditional observation]."

Ms. Robinson, being a veteran teacher, wanted "feedback from peer coaching" from someone whose opinion she valued, noting that what her partner had to say, "was more appropriate since she knows counseling." Furthermore, she believed that, "I could trust what she told me, and I respect her counseling techniques, just her overall knowledge in the field." Ms. Robinson chose to work with her partner because "there was some good honesty there." The trusting relationship that existed between the two

partners enabled Ms. Robinson to ask for help where she felt like it was needed, regardless of the fact that the need was in an untested area for her:

> It was kind of bold of me to ask her to come in to watch something I'd never done before so that was good. She watched something I had never done before which was a study skills group with unmotivated children after school (laughter). It was like trying to walk standing on your own shoestrings, but that's what we did. We met afterwards, and then we talked about what we felt needed improvement, what didn't, and where we did well, and I thought it was beneficial.

As she discussed the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Robinson noted the meaningful feedback she received. In addition, she noted an increased morale among participants. Ms. Robinson commented on the feedback she received as the *observer*.

> I like to observe someone who does something well, to pick up pointers on how to do something better, you know, to be able to tell her, 'Well, have you tried this?' even though she was very well prepared and it was a good session to watch, being

observed. I guess I'm getting older; it helps you do things like that. It was good. She

came up with some suggestions for me that were applicable.

Ms. Robinson gained as a result of sharing her skills and expertise. She said, "What's the use of having wisdom if people are spitting in your eye implying you don't know anything anyway?" She thought the extra work was worth the effort, and said, "We would rather do something meaningful even though it might be harder."

Vick Young

Mr. Young was in his second year at Hope High School, having taught 23 years in total. He had experienced one year of the peer coaching program. He was in the Social Studies Department and was the boys' head basketball coach. He was one of three athletic coaches in the school participating in peer coaching. Mr. Young coached with a younger male social studies teacher he knew well through the department as well as through mutual coaching obligations. Though participation in the peer coaching program was voluntary, when asked by the researcher how he and his partner came to work together, Mr. Young responded, "I just told him it was something he needed to do and that I had signed him up for it." When discussing his mentor, his high school basketball coach, and the man who first hired him, Mr. Young said:

> He was a real good teacher, a real good coach. He made a point to me when he first
> hired me. He said, "I've had coaches that have been in my department and they've
> been great coaches, but they spent more time working on plays and doing stuff during
> class. Remember this one thing and you'll get through. Remember that the majority of
> your paycheck's going to come from what you do during the day, not what you do
> after school." I've tried to always remember that, and I'd say that's been the biggest
> emphasis to the job I do in the classroom. You just try to do the very best all the time.
> It's almost in your personality. If you do a pretty good job one place, you're going to

do a pretty job everywhere else. So I guess Randy is the guy that got me on the right

track.

Five themes, as noted in Figure 10, emerged in the interview with Mr. Young. Three

themes addressed motivation and two themes addressed meanings that Mr. Young held for

peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
He was motivated because of his experiences with informal peer coaching.	He received meaningful feedback.
He was motivated because he wanted meaningful feedback.	He wanted to direct his learning.
He was motivated because he was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 10: Vick Young's Motivations and Meanings

Mr. Young was motivated to participate because of his experiences with informal peer

coaching, his desire for meaningful feedback, and his dissatisfaction with the traditional

observation. He noted that, "You get more out of it," and spoke about the times he and

colleagues had discussed teaching as opposed to the discussions that came about as a result of

the traditional observation. "You get more out of that than just having somebody come in there

and sit for thirty minutes."

Mr. Young, in discussing what he gained from peer coaching, focused on the benefits

he received regarding his own teaching skills, the feedback he received, saying that "The main

thing I got was reemphasizing to myself that I felt like I was doing a pretty good job." The

areas in which he felt especially skilled and which were areas in which his partner asked for

help were organization and keeping students on task. Because Mr. Young's office was attached

to his partner's classroom, Mr. Young had the opportunity to sit at his desk, during his planning, and listen to his partner teach on a daily basis:

> He and I kind of walked in and out of each other's classes a bunch of times so we could always make little comments or little suggestions on what we were doing. You kind of got more out of it than just having somebody coming in there and sit for thirty minutes.

Mr. Young, in asking to direct his learning, noted, "I usually leave the door open and don't shut it and if anybody wants to come in there, stick their head in there, I feel comfortable enough with what I'm doing. I don't care who sees." Comfortable with visitors, Mr. Young expressed his desire to have more opportunities to see other teachers teach:

> I found where I would, during my planning periods, I'd kind of walk around the halls and just watch what other people were doing and not necessarily stick my head in, but if the person was like me, I'd just kind of stand there and kind of listen, you know. I just got to where I'd kind of walk around and watch what other people were doing which, had John and I not been doing this [peer coaching], I might not have done that.

Jane Overton

Jane, a 32-year veteran, had been at Hope since it opened, with the exception of one year. During her 17 years at the research site, the peer coaching program had been offered for two years. She had participated both years. She served as Social Studies Department chair for nine years prior to the year she was not at the school. Ms. Overton viewed her peer coaching experience as an opportunity to incorporate new technology into her teaching repertoire. She partnered with one of the media specialists who had strong skills in technology. As noted in Figure 11, Ms. Overton noted motivations and meanings.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She noted greater trust among peer coaches.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 11: Jane Overton's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Overton was motivated to participate in the peer coaching program because she wanted to learn. She was motivated, despite the extra work involved, because of the gains she anticipated. She was motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback which included idea sharing. She was motivated because she found the choices offered throughout the program, including her choice of what she wanted to gain, to be attractive. Finally, she was motivated due to her great dissatisfaction with the traditional observation.

Because Ms. Overton was motivated to participate due to a particular skill she wanted to gain, she based her choice of coaching partners on the goal that she had in mind. Her goal of incorporating new technology was supported by the peer coaching process.

The peer coaching allows you to do some things and, you know, kind of work as you go through it and check some goals and do some different things. I just was thrilled to have her help me because she knows a lot about the technology and the computers and she's wonderful about finding sources. She knows exactly what to do and where to go and that's what I'd like to be able to learn.

When discussing meaningful feedback, Ms. Overton mentioned that she and the media specialist had goals for peer coaching that were linked. While she wanted to acquire the technological skills to go with her subject area presentations, the media specialist was looking

for subject area expertise to enhance her technological presentations. They found the opportunity to choose what they wanted to learn attractive. Finally, Ms. Overton, motivated by her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation, said, "I don't think [the traditional observation] is a very good way to measure the worth of a teacher. You're not going to learn anything from it, in my opinion."

As she discussed the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Overton mentioned the meaningful feedback she received including idea sharing, and affirmation of her skills and expertise. She also noted greater trust among teachers who participated in the program. When discussing the technology ideas she and her partner shared, Ms. Overton noted, "It was wonderful. It was great. It is something I plan to use next year. I like technology, but you could do any area." Ms. Overton noted, "From her side, she was getting more from what the students were hearing me say because I was giving them historical background and knowledge, and so it was just great." Ms. Overton stated that she and her partner shared trust, saying that, "She's always been so helpful. You would have to be good friends and understand." Ms. Overton was not discouraged by the extra work required of her in the peer coaching process, and said, "I really want to prove to her that I can learn something. It's a quest!"

Donna Martin

Ms. Martin was a math teacher at Hope High School and enjoyed her part-time status after 22 years of teaching full time. She had been at Hope 11 years and had participated in peer coaching both of the years the program had been offered. Ms. Martin chose a fellow math teacher as her partner. The two shared a classroom, and had numerous opportunities to observe each other teach as both their desks and computer stations were in the same classroom. Ms. Martin used the phrase "professionally useful camaraderie" when discussing her perception of peer coaching. She was both insightful and creative when discussing the program.

Four of Ms. Martin's themes addressed motivation and five themes addressed meanings that Ms. Martin held for peer coaching. These are noted in Figure 12.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because of her experience with informal peer coaching.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	She noted greater trust among peer coaches.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	She noted greater morale among peer coaches.
	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Figure 12: Donna Martin's Motivations and Meanings

Initially, Ms. Martin was motivated to participate in peer coaching because she was comfortable working with her peers She had experience with informal peer coaching and reported that she and her colleagues engaged in conversations about teaching and learning on a regular basis, most often within the department itself. She said:

It helps a lot of times, when you're frustrated or stuck on something, it helps to kind of blow on somebody and they go, 'Okay, your actual problem is this little piece right here, you know.' Yes, it helps tremendously and it makes us happier teachers.

She was motivated because peer coaching "seemed like it would be useful. It had the potential, to me, to actually be helpful and constructive." She noted that she was motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback, and said, "Feedback from people who are not classroom teachers is, in general, kind of disregarded or lightly considered." She continued, "The month you left the classroom, your credibility with suggestions decreased." In light of this, Ms. Martin found the choices offered throughout the program to be attractive, including the idea of working with a chosen peer. "I think, to [coach with] somebody that I admired, professionally and personally, had the appeal of coming out to be some fun too." Finally, Ms. Martin was motivated to participate due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. She

mentioned, "There's always a little bit of nervousness when your [traditional observer] comes in."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Martin noted the meaningful feedback she received and her desire to direct her learning. Finally, she noted greater trust and greater morale among peer coaches. When discussing meaningful feedback, Ms. Martin said she enjoyed a sense of affirmation when working with her partner as well as an enjoyment of the process. "It made me feel good to be observing and recommending to someone else who wanted to know what I thought. I can't think of anything bad about [peer coaching]! (laughter) I've been trying!" She continued:

> To talk to a person who's asking me for help makes me feel like my 23 years have
> been worth something. I do feel valued and sometimes we don't feel very valued, so it
> helps morale, frankly, and it helps to feel like there are so many people that I can ask
> questions to that will give me helpful information.

As a veteran teacher, Ms. Martin noted her desire to direct her learning, and stated that she was "comfortable with any classroom teacher just coming in and observing me because they may see something I might not know." Her trust in the people participating in the program was strong enough for her to say:

> When you get to pick the person that you want to, and even if you didn't get to pick the
> person, I think if they, if you ended up coming to the meeting late, anyway, [and most
> everyone was partnered already], anyone who voluntarily did this would be someone I
> would want as a peer coach, you know. I really think you've got, you know, people
> that are motivated to improve themselves, and that think they might have something to
> offer someone else.

Finally, Ms. Martin noted greater morale among peer coaches. She explained that peer coaching, "makes us happier teachers.'" She did not mind the extra work involved with peer

coaching, and said, "It is a little more work than [the traditional observation], but [the traditional observation's] not helpful."

Paula Reese

Ms. Reese served Hope High School as the Special Education Department chair. She had been at Hope for 13 of her 24 years, and had participated in peer coaching both years the program had been offered. As Ms. Reese was the only teacher at the school who worked with her category of students, she chose to peer coach with a teacher in similar circumstances at the middle school across the street. Ms. Reese asked Ms. Long to observe how she was responding to and redirecting a particular student.

Seven themes emerged from the interview with Ms. Reese. Four themes addressed motivation and three themes addressed meanings that Ms. Reese held for peer coaching. These are noted in Figure 13.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 13: Paula Reese's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Reese was motivated to participate in peer coaching because she wanted to learn. She was motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback, by the choices offered, and due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation.

Ms. Reese's choice to coach with a teacher at another school in order to secure the expertise she sought is noted.

Peer coaching's a comfort zone. They've got as much to risk as I have. They have as much, hopefully, to give. We knew each other professionally. It was interesting seeing someone else, to see her side, her way of running the classroom, to see what her big emphasis was.

Ms. Reese was motivated to participate by her desire for meaningful feedback, and stated:

Okay, I can have someone come in and watch for things I'm worried about and then from that observation they give me back, I might go, 'Oh, why did I do it that way?' Therefore I might be prompted to change some things and do things in a little different manner.

Ms. Reese found the choices offered throughout the program attractive. She particularly wanted to work with a teacher in a field of special education similar to her field, a teacher who resided at another school. Finally, Ms. Reese was motivated to participate because of her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. She stated that

[the traditional observation] is, "meaningless and doesn't motivate me to do anything differently."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Reese noted the meaningful feedback she received. She wanted to direct her own learning. She found that the peer coaching experience led to discussions of behaviors in the class other than the thing she had targeted for Ms. Long to observe. Ms. Reese, through the post observation conference, was able to see things a little clearer. "I found out some of the things I was doing that were probably making the student seem more successful. I was structuring this child's environment so much that maybe it wasn't the child, it was me." She noted a desire to have an open ended instead of focused choice with regard to the focus of the observation, and said, "I think it would be good." Ms. Reese did not mind the extra work associated with peer coaching, and said, "It is more work. For selfish reasons, I do it, for my own professional and personal reasons. I gain something out of it, so why not go to the trouble?"

Nancy Dixon

Ms. Dixon had completed 14 years at Hope in a career that had spanned 16 years. She had participated in peer coaching both years that it had been an option. Her choice of a partner was another teacher in her department, Language Arts. The two women were "good friends" who "really know each other well". Ms. Dixon liked the idea that she would be able "to get together with a friend of my choice." Ms. Dixon asked her partner to "find something, please, tell me." She was concerned that their friendship might prevent her partner from giving her meaningful feedback.

Eight themes, as noted in Figure 14, emerged as a result of the interview with Ms. Dixon. Five themes addressed motivation and three themes addressed meanings that Ms. Dixon held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because of her experiences with informal peer coaching.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She noted greater trust among peer coaches.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	

Figure 14: Nancy Dixon's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Dixon was motivated because she wanted to learn. She was motivated because she had experience with informal peer coaching. She was motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback, by the choices offered in the program, and due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation.

Ms. Dixon wanted to learn. She chose to work with her partner because, aside from being friends in the same department, they taught the same curriculum, and had for several years. She and her partner "talked about our subjects so much because we both teach it, we really know each other real well and how we teach and everything." They had experience with informal peer coaching, and indicated they "got together and talked and talked about what novels we want to teach and what ways we can challenge them more." In addition to talking at great length with her partner about teaching and learning, Ms. Dixon noted that she and her departmental peers talked together a great deal, especially those who taught ninth grade as she did.

Ms. Dixon, motivated by her desire for meaningful feedback, noted that it was important to her that "someone give me feedback that was specific, someone knowledgeable in my subject." Ms. Dixon was motivated because she found the choices attractive, including the choice of a partner and a focus for the observation. Finally Ms.
Dixon was motivated due to her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. She said, "Administrators, they just give you vague, very general feedback."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching had for her, Ms. Dixon noted the meaningful feedback she received, particularly with regard to idea sharing and affirmation, and her desire to direct her learning. She also noted greater trust among peer coaches. "Being able to get together with other teachers, and sharing ideas" was valuable to Ms. Dixon and has led her to the belief that she:

> Would like to have times to be able to go observe other teachers, especially English
> teachers and see how they're teaching certain things, especially things I'm teaching. And
> sometimes I'll get new ideas, and I'll think, 'Oh, what a great idea Why didn't I think
> of that?' So those are the types of things I like, sharing sessions, like learning new
> things with what I have.

Ms. Dixon not only received meaningful feedback in the form of ideas as a part of the peer coaching process, but as she was able to share her thoughts with her partner, she received affirmation: "You know, I get feedback when I'm being observed. As the observer, I found that I liked that I was looking for someone, and that my opinion was being valued."

Ms. Dixon also noted that the structure of the peer coaching program, which asked her to choose a target for her partner's observation, forced her to think. She liked this component of the program.

> It makes you think, which I may not do sometimes, but it makes me think, 'Okay, what are the areas in my teaching that I need to work on and have someone watch and see how I'm doing?' Because sometimes, when you're a veteran teacher, you get used to doing things, and by doing the peer coaching and knowing I have to come up with something to have someone observe, it makes me really think about my teaching techniques, and where are areas that I think I may need to work on?

Ms. Dixon said she wanted to direct her learning and suggested to the researcher that, "It would be neat if, besides the person that you're observing and is observing you, if, as a part of it, you could actually go into other teachers' classrooms and watch them teach." She would appreciate having the time to pursue that idea.

Finally, Ms. Dixon noted greater trust among peer coaches. She indicated the increased trust she felt toward her partner by asking that her partner, "Find something, Please feel free to tell me if there's anything whether it's my delivery or if I could make the lesson more exciting of whether you felt like the kids were not engaged or whatever." Because she trusted her partner, she was comfortable exposing her practice and asking for feedback.

Rita Jones

Ms. Jones was at the point in her career where she felt she could choose to retire. She had 30 years of experience, 16 of them at Hope, all of those as chair of the Language Arts Department. Ms. Jones, as a department chair, was involved in the teacher evaluation process.

She enjoyed peer coaching because, "I was going in on a teacher-to-teacher basis and I think that made a difference." Ms. Jones coached with the reading specialist in the school, noting that although Ms. Webster taught several remedial reading classes, and she herself taught primarily Advanced Placement classes, "you can still use some of the same strategies. We shared some materials, particularly on reading circles." In choosing to work with Ms. Webster, Ms. Jones reported that:

> I said I'd really love for her to come in and watch me try something and she would really like for me to come into the reading class. It gave me an opportunity to go into somebody else's class for an hour, and that's very, very important. So that's how we chose each other.

Eight themes, as noted in Figure 15, emerged as a result of the interview. Four themes addressed motivation and four themes addressed meanings that Ms. Jones held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because she wanted meaningful feedback.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she found the choices attractive.	She noted greater trust among peer coaches.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Figure 15: Rita Jones' Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Jones was motivated because she wanted to learn. She was motivated to do extra work for the gains she anticipated and by her desire for meaningful feedback. She found the choices offered throughout the program to be attractive. Finally, she was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.

She "wanted to work with somebody else and wanted to have somebody else come into my class meaningfully." She found the choices attractive, and said, "We chose each other." She also noted her choice regarding the focus of the observation. "I wanted her to watch the class participation." Finally, she was motivated because, "People find it [peer coaching] less threatening than [the traditional observation]."

When discussing the meanings that peer coaching had for her, Ms. Jones mentioned meaningful feedback and her desire to direct her learning. She noted greater trust among peer coaches. With regard to meaningful feedback, Ms. Jones reported that though their post conference began with a discussion about class participation, "we started talking about rapport among the students and how the students would try to bring others into the conversation, into the discussion, who didn't want to participate."

She indicated her desire to direct her learning. Ms. Jones mentioned that peer coaching had "given people a reason to go into other people's classes" which she did not believe would have happened without time set aside. In her opinion, a change of partners from year to year would be beneficial because "the more people you have this interchange with, the better," but recognized also that "people are probably comfortable with certain people."

Ms. Jones noted greater trust among peer coaches. She said:

They find it more meaningful because, for one thing, there's someone looking for something that they want to improve, so they have something specific somebody is looking to help them [with], something that gets them into other people's classes who would not normally be doing that, and I think that we don't think we get to do enough of seeing each other in action. I think that has built probably a great respect among teachers.

She appreciated the "give and take" associated with peer coaching, the "rapport that builds" and "respect among colleagues who do this." Ms. Jones closed by mentioning her appreciation of the peer coaching program, saying, "I would imagine, almost to a person, that peer

coaching's been very positive, hasn't it?" She did not mind more work "because it's more meaningful."

Nita Johnson

Ms. Johnson had taught Business Education for 25 years, had been at the research site for six years, and had peer coached for one year. Her choice of partners, a Guidance Counselor at Hope, gave her the opportunity to "see how I connected to other components in the school, real neat." Ms. Johnson was chair of the Business Department at Hope, a position she had held for one year.

Seven themes, as noted in Figure 16, emerged as a result of her interview. Three themes addressed motivation and four themes addressed meanings that Ms. Johnson held for peer coaching.

Motivations	Meanings
She was motivated because she wanted to learn.	She received meaningful feedback.
She was motivated because of her experiences with informal peer coaching.	She wanted to direct her learning.
She was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	She noted greater morale among peer coaches.
	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Figure 16: Nita Johnson's Motivations and Meanings

Ms. Johnson was motivated to participate in peer coaching because she wanted to learn. She was motivated because of her experiences with informal peer coaching. Finally, she was motivated because she was not satisfied with the traditional observation.

Ms. Johnson wanted to learn about the total school program. Her choice of a guidance counselor gave her the opportunity to "pull together the different components of the school, because, you know, everything that comes up is not traditional teaching." She was motivated,

having experienced informal peer coaching, and said, "In our department alone, we're constantly sharing new things."

Finally, Ms. Johnson was not satisfied with the traditional observation. When discussing [the traditional observation], Ms. Johnson referred to teachers in general, and said, "They didn't get anything out of [the traditional observation]. They just did their daily routine. Someone came in and observed them and gave them feedback, but it was not the same [as peer coaching]. The feedback was not meaningful."

In discussing the meanings that peer coaching held for her, Ms. Johnson noted the meaningful feedback she received, especially with regard to affirmation. She noted her desire to direct her learning, and she noted greater morale among peer coaches. Ms. Johnson was able to gain meaningful feedback from her partner's observation: "I guess I didn't realize how much of that class is one-on-one instruction. She was impressed with the one-on-one instruction and I guess that's the biggest thing I got." As a veteran teacher, Ms. Johnson gained, from peer coaching, the opportunity to "get feedback from a different level. You get to talk to the person. They tell you things and you get to expand a lot more than what's on that form. You get to offer also." She appreciated the structure in peer coaching, and said, "You have interaction with the person right away, kind of ongoing."

Ms. Johnson noted a desire to direct her learning. She said, "I like the open door policy where people can just come in and kind of visit and pick up what they want to pick up and maybe stop and offer what they want." She "likes the idea of going in and not having to fill out a form, just kind of visit, and wouldn't mind if that was a requirement."

Finally, Ms. Johnson noted her perception of increased morale among peer coaches. In closing, Ms. Johnson indicated that, in her opinion, the peer coaching program attracted people who "were confident in what they did." "I think most people who would choose peer coaching would be those people whose personalities lend itself to openness." She did not mind the extra work required. She was motivated despite the extra work. Ms. Johnson chose to peer coach

"after listening to the people who did it last year" because "they found it more meaningful and enjoyed it." They told her "it was more work, but it was worth the extra effort." She expressed to the researcher that she agreed with that statement, having now been through the process.

> I think if more people tried it, they would really like it, because I really wouldn't want to go back to [the traditional observation] at this point. I would love to just do peer coaching. My concern at the beginning was, "Was it more work?" and everybody said, "Yeah, it is." And I thought, "How much more?" There are some people that would never try it just because it's more work, but it really ends up not work, it just ends up something that you're glad you did, so it doesn't seem like work.

Nate Underwood

Mr. Underwood was in the Fine Arts department, and the head band director at Hope High School. He was in his twenty-eighth year of teaching and his sixth year at Hope. Mr. Underwood had participated in the voluntary peer coaching program both years it had been offered. Mr. Underwood had expressed a desire to expand the peer coaching opportunity to include band directors at other local high schools.

As noted in Figure 17, ten themes emerged from the interview with Mr. Underwood, five addressing motivation and five addressing meanings.

Motivations	Meanings
He was motivated because he wanted to learn.	He received meaningful feedback.
He was motivated because of his experiences with informal peer coaching.	He wanted to direct his learning.
He was motivated because he wanted meaningful feedback.	He noted greater trust among peer coaches.
He was motivated because he found the choices attractive.	He noted greater morale among peer coaches.
He was motivated because he was not satisfied with the traditional observation.	Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Figure 17: Nate Underwood's Motivations and Meanings

Mr. Underwood was motivated because he wanted to learn. He was motivated because he had experience with informal peer coaching. He was motivated because he wanted meaningful feedback. He was motivated because he found the choices attractive. He was also motivated because he was not satisfied with the traditional observation.

Mr. Underwood knew what he wanted to gain from the peer coaching opportunity: "I want them, as another band director, to come in and comment." He and his colleagues shared the experience of informal peer coaching. He said, "We network a lot anyway." Mr. Underwood went on to say that he and his colleagues sought out informal peer coaching opportunities on a regular basis. Almost daily, he said, he and band directors from other schools talked about problems or challenges they encountered in their teaching:

> Band directors, I can say this, and I suppose orchestra and chorus directors are the
> same way, we network a lot anyway. This [peer coaching] is just an extension of it. It's
> not unusual at all, at least once a day, to call one of your buddies, or a buddy to call
> you or e-mail you, and he says, "Hey, I'm having trouble with blah, blah. What do you
> guys do about that?"

Mr. Underwood noted his desire for meaningful feedback with regard to idea sharing and affirmation.

> What we want is, I've been doing this for X number of years, and it's easy to get stuck in a rut. I'd like somebody in my field to come watch and see if they see anything. Or maybe if I have a particular concern, I want them, as another band director or another music educator, to come in and comment. Sometimes it's just general observation, sometimes it can be very specific things that I ask them to look for. I would personally like to see it be not limited to people within your school. I would love it if it could be where, if I particularly respect a band director within the county, but not at Hope, that we could work it out where I could go there and do that.

Mr. Underwood mentioned the choices that were available throughout the program. He liked being able to choose the person with whom he worked and the area on which they focused. Finally, in discussing his experiences with peer coaching, Mr. Underwood noted his dissatisfaction with the traditional observation alternative. In noting this dissatisfaction, he remarked that those measures did not help him improve his teaching, and that there was a lack of meaningful feedback in the traditional observation program.

> I don't think it's ever going to do the job, except in a legal sense, that something like peer coaching can do. Anytime you have a checklist, you're always limited to those answers, and there's not any give and take. It's not measuring things that maybe the teacher needs or wants for their improvement. It's basically a formatted situation. You are either satisfactory, unsatisfactory or need improvement or whatever, and you get a little bit of dialogue at the bottom. I realize that there's a need for that, but for anybody who wants to try and improve their teaching, that would not suffice.

In discussing the meanings that peer coaching had for him, Mr. Underwood mentioned the meaningful feedback he received and his desire to direct his learning. He noted greater trust and greater morale among peer coaches. In discussing the meaningful feedback he received,

particularly with regard to affirmation, Mr. Underwood found that his expertise was valued by his peers, and that he had skills and knowledge to share.

> The first year John and I worked together, we were talking about articulation, how you tongue, and this kind of stuff, and I said something that I've been doing for years and years and years, and John said, "Hold that thought." And he got up and he was gone for about five minutes, and he had gone to his car and gotten his French horn out and brought it in. And he said, "I want to try this. I've never thought about it this way before." John, at the time, had been teaching about nine or ten years, and he played on his instrument and he said, "Oh my gosh, that's what I've been doing, but that's not what I teach!" I brought it to his attention, he processed it and thought about it and got his instrument, and then he

realized that he had been teaching the opposite of what he actually did to get the results! Mr. Underwood wanted to direct his learning. He noted his need for more observations throughout the peer coaching process. He said, "I like it, like, once a month, or once every nine weeks. You know, if I did it that way, it would open up more possibilities." He also expressed his opinions regarding partner choice and trust. When asked, as a veteran teacher, how he felt about peer coaching, Mr. Underwood responded:

> That's funny, I was just going to say, I think it has a direct, explicit implication that the administration trusts me, that I know what is best for me, and that they're allowing me to participate in a process that will be helpful to me, and not just some legal process we have to go through that's not meaningful. It allows me to pick somebody that I respect and that I can gain something from so it makes me feel like I'm treated as a real professional, and you know as well as I do, that's so rare in education. All of a sudden now I'm having to think about what I want out of it. It's not really that much more work. Yeah, you have to think a little bit about something that would be meaningful for you, but how many times did Dr. Blase say, 'The way you get teachers to improve

teaching is to get them to talk about teaching?' Well, any good teacher, as far as I'm

concerned, thinks about it [teaching] all the time anyway.

Mr. Underwood noted a greater trust among peer coaches. In addition, he felt an increased

perception of trust from the administration, and felt this was shared by teachers in the program.

He said, "I think it has a direct, explicit implication that the administration trusts me, that I know

what's best for me, and that they're allowing me to participate in a process that will be helpful

for me." He noted greater morale among participants as he mentioned the feeling of

professionalism fostered by participation in the peer coaching program. He said, "And so it

[peer coaching] makes you feel like we have credibility with the administration who is willing to

do that."

Mr. Underwood did the extra work associated with peer coaching. However, in his

opinion, the work was worth the gains, and the gains were great. "It's not really that much more

work. I mean, yeah, you have to think a little bit about something that would be meaningful for

you." The gain Mr. Underwood hoped to achieve was meaningful feedback.

In summary, each of the 14 participants has been discussed individually. Each one's

perceptions of peer coaching with regard to their motivations for participation and the meanings

they held for peer coaching have been revealed through their conversations. The data they

revealed during the course of their interviews was confirmed by the data derived from artifacts

that were available at the research site.

<u>Individual Findings Derived from Artifacts</u>

The motivations participants listed in their surveys correlated with three of the findings in

the interviews. When asked why they chose to participate in the voluntary peer coaching

program, nine teachers mentioned meaningful feedback, four teachers mentioned choices, and

three teachers noted their dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. As they noted their

desire for meaningful feedback, teachers stated, "I like working with other teachers and value

their expertise." "I admire many of my coworker's talents and skills." "It is more informative."

"It seemed to be beneficial to me." As teachers noted their attraction to choice, they stated, "I was motivated by personal interaction." "I enjoyed the idea of working with a peer." Finally, as they noted their dissatisfaction with the traditional observation, teachers explained, "I felt it was more beneficial than the standard evaluation where I was provided very little feedback." "It is more informative and therefore, more helpful than [the traditional observation]." Surveyed teachers, when asked about their motivation for participation, did not comment on their growth needs, their informal peer coaching experiences, or their willingness to do the extra work.

Surveyed teachers noted the meanings that peer coaching held for them. They mentioned, in their survey, meaningful feedback, a desire to direct their learning, and made comments about greater respect among teachers. They did not mention greater morale among peer coaches in their survey results. When discussing meaningful feedback, teachers' comments included:

Learning from another teacher; The ability to get direct feedback and the relaxed atmosphere; Opportunity to socialize/exchange ideas with adult; New ideas gained by interaction; Most beneficial was observing peer working with special education students and gaining techniques of classroom management; Direct feedback on a specific area from a fellow teacher.

As surveyed teachers discussed their learning they said they valued, "Being able to see other classes;" "Direct feedback on a specific area from a fellow teacher;" "Watching another teacher's classes (techniques, rapport);" "I needed/wanted feedback." Finally, teachers noted greater respect, and noted the benefit of "talking to a peer who teaches my field and grade level, about my classes; " "Observations by, and talking with someone who does exactly what I do." As mentioned previously, survey results did not indicate greater morale among teachers. The preceding section has discussed individual findings based on interviews with the participants and based on anonymous surveys. These findings have been discussed with regard to motivations teachers had for participating in peer coaching and with regard to the meanings

they had for peer coaching. The next section will discuss each of the ten common themes in light of these same motivations and meanings and will provide support from data for each as provided by the participants.

<div align="center">Common Themes</div>

As a result of the interviews, ten common themes were noted. Five of these themes addressed motivation and five themes addressed meanings that the participants held for peer coaching. The chart below (see Figure 18) provides the reader with an overview of the categories of motivation and meanings, and the themes that relate to each category.

The table below (see Table 1) indicates the ten themes as well as the participants upon whom those themes were determined. Participants' initials are noted on the left side of the table. The bottom line indicates how many participants noted that particular theme.

Following the table, each of the ten themes is described and listed as a motivating factor or as a meaning held for peer coaching. This section of the chapter will discuss the second level of findings, these common themes, as they relate to the motivations the teachers had for participating in the program and as they relate to the meanings that the teachers held for peer coaching. Each theme will be presented along with supporting examples from the data.

Category - Motivation

Motivated because they wanted to learn	Motivated because of experiences with informal peer coaching	Motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback	Motivated because they found the choices attractive	Motivated because they were not satisfied by the traditional observation

Category - Meanings

Received meaningful feedback	Wanted to direct their learning	Great respect among peer coaches	Greater morale among peer coaches	Worth the extra work

*Figure 1*8: Common Themes

Common Themes as Reported by Individual Participants

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
RV	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
DI			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
EO	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
LC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
PH	X			X	X	X	X			
OR	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
VY		X	X		X	X	X			
JO	X		X	X	X	X		X		X
DM		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PR	X		X	X	X	X	X			X
ND	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
RJ	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
NJ	X	X			X	X	X		X	X
NU	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Totals	11	9	11	12	14	14	12	6	5	9

Motivating Factors
1. Teachers were motivated because they wanted to learn.
2. Teachers were motivated because of their experience with informal peer coaching.
3. Teachers were motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback.
4. Teachers were motivated because they found the choices attractive.
5. Teachers were motivated because they were not satisfied with the traditional observation.
Meanings for Peer Coaching
6. Teachers received meaningful feedback.
7. Teachers wanted to direct their learning.
8. Teachers noted a greater trust among peer coaches.
9. Teachers noted greater morale among peer coaches.
10. Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Table 1

Motivations

Motivation-Theme One: Teachers were motivated because they wanted to learn.

Eleven out of 14 participants in the voluntary peer coaching program mentioned the importance of peer coaching to learn. They identified an area that they liked to work on, and worked with a fellow teacher to improve in that area. Although every teacher did not approach their coaching in this way, teachers who had specific areas in which they wanted to learn or improve often chose a partner that was known to possess those skills. Nate Underwood noted:

> I'd like somebody in my field to come watch and see if they see anything, or maybe if I have a particular concern, I want them, as another band director or another music educator, to come in and comment. This past year I did it [peer coaching] with the Berkeley band director. I went over one day and made comments, and then he came over. He wanted me to do it with him, [offering] helpful, general band comments. I had some very specific things I wanted him to observe. I'm instructing well, but I'm not happy with my presentation. I'm not happy with how I evaluate them. So I think it's all about, just like when you're cold and hungry, your priority is food and shelter, and when that's done, you move on to other priorities, so I think it's the same thing.

Nita Johnson said that peer coaching gave her the opportunity to understand a teacher's work with students outside of the traditional classroom, an understanding she was attempting to gain:

> Well, for me, doing someone that was in counseling, not even a classroom teacher, it helped me pull together the different components of the school. Everything that goes on is not traditional teaching, but the students are still learning, and in different ways, because you know, sometimes things come up in the classroom that we have to deal with, and it's not traditional teaching content, but we have to teach. We're still teaching, so that's where it really was meaningful for me because I got to see how I'm connected to other components in the school, real neat.

Rita Jones, the Language Arts chair, wanted to learn more about reading skills. In discussing her partner and the focus of their work together, she stated:

> Rhonda and I talk a lot anyway because she's our reading specialist. I obviously solicit her help in the department, and if I have a lot going on anyway, I talk with her about reading strategies even though she's teaching the readers who are struggling readers and I'm teaching Advanced Placement. You can still use some of the same strategies. We shared some materials, particularly on reading circles. I said I'd really like for her to come in and watch me try something.

Ms. Jones and her partner, Rhonda Webster, worked together on an area that Ms. Jones felt would improve her instruction, an area in which Ms. Webster had a skill that Ms. Jones wanted to gain and apply to her own teaching situation.

Paula Reese noted, "That's why I did peer coaching because I thought, 'Okay, I can have someone come in and watch for things I'm worried about.'"

Nancy Dixon stated:

> I wanted something that would give me feedback that was specific to my subject area with someone that was really knowledgeable in my subject area and that I thought would be helpful. I thought, "If I'm going to do this, I would like some feedback that would help me improve, or let me think of areas that I needed to improve in." I wanted more specific feedback and somebody in my field. And I chose Lou both years because we're really good friends, because we both taught ninth grade language arts, and we both know the curriculum and we both know each other's teaching style really well.

Ms. Dixon wanted to learn from a partner in her field, Language Arts, a partner that knew the curriculum and the types of students with whom she, Ms. Dixon, worked.

Jane Overton, a Social Studies teacher at Hope, wanted technological skills. She specifically chose to work with a media specialist because of the technological knowledge she had that Ms. Overton wished to gain. Ms. Overton said:

I thought it [peer coaching] was great. This year I wanted to continue it and get into technology, which I'd like to step up next year. The peer coaching allows you to do some things and, you know, kind of work as you go through it and check some goals and do some different things. Karen and I worked on using the technology in the classroom. We worked on setting up the technology. We used the video machine that you hooked up to the computer, and then I could go on the Internet and bring up all these sites and put them up on the big screen. I was just thrilled to have her help me because she knows a lot about the technology and the computers and she's wonderful about finding sources. And if you have a particular idea, she knows exactly what to do and where to go and that's what I'd like to be able to learn.

Ms. Robinson, a guidance counselor, wanted feedback from another guidance counselor regarding the teaching of study skills to at-risk ninth graders in a voluntary after-school program she was conducting.

What Katherine had to say was more appropriate [than a traditional observation] since she knows counseling. The thing I like about Katherine is that she's very honest and very professionally qualified. I think that I know that I could trust what she told me. I respect her counseling techniques. She watched something I had never done before which was a study skills group with unmotivated children after school (laughter), like trying to walk standing on your own shoestrings, but that's what we did.

Mr. Collins, as a veteran teacher with 37 years of experience, wanted to work with someone that had fresh ideas he could learn. He felt it was important to constantly be learning so that he would avoid "stagnation." Again, as with the other teachers mentioned, Mr. Collins

sought out his partner based on what he wanted to know that he believed his partner possessed.

> We were both teaching the same subject area. Kendra was new to Hope and I thought it would be a good idea to get someone who was coming from another school, another science department, where perhaps they do things a little bit differently than what we do here. Even the methods that we were doing in a particular content, one teacher may do it differently from another, and then, after talking, I would go back and change something in my methods.

Elaine Overstreet, in discussing her coaching with another Foreign Language teacher, noted that the two of them had a similar goal in mind when they decided to coach together.

> We decided to do question and answer techniques because I teach Foreign Language and most of the class is question and answer because we have to get students to speak. Their grade is based on their participation and their grade is based on how many attempts they make at answers, how complete their sentences are and how fluent their answers are. So, it's real important that each student is able to answer questions in the classroom.

> In contrast, Rose Vickers, unlike many of her peers mentioned above, wanted to work with someone outside of her department that possessed a skill she lacked.

> I wanted to be more involved and I wanted to have the chance to work with somebody from another department to give me a chance to find out what else is going on in the school. [Peer coaching] would give me a chance to think more about my own teaching and to see how other experienced teachers were handling situations and what they do in their own classrooms. I wanted her input and her ideas. I was able to get some ideas from her, another point of view, and ideas that could help me, or confirm what I was doing.

In summary, teachers were motivated because they wanted to learn. Teachers who participated in peer coaching often had a specific area in mind in which they wanted to gain skills or grow. They were able to determine their needs and to seek the learning they needed in order to gain or grow in that predetermined area. They talked with their peers about their practices, working collaboratively toward improved teaching and learning.

Motivation-Theme Two: Teachers were motivated because of their experiences with informal peer coaching.

The veteran teachers, wanting to learn, were motivated because of their experiences with informal peer coaching. They had been engaged in conversations with their peers regarding teaching and learning for years prior to the research. This routine of working with their colleagues brought them to the peer coaching program, giving them the initial comfort they needed to participate. Additionally, they moved toward the voluntary program because the program provided a sanctioned opportunity for them to do what they had been doing, on their own, all along. They noted that they had discussed curriculum issues with colleagues for years. They were comfortable discussing teaching concerns with their peers as they had practiced this behavior on a routine basis. More than half of the participating teachers mentioned their experiences with informal peer coaching.

Rose Vickers, in discussing her behaviors prior to the formal peer coaching program noted, "The conversations that my peers and I had were pretty much on the fly, in the hall, limited conversations, but I think we got out of it what we wanted to, on the surface." Deb Ingles also noted her experiences with informal peer coaching as she said:

Sometimes it's hard for me to think of something I want someone to help me with, because in the classroom itself, I'm good. It's the behind-the-scenes stuff where I'm not [good] and sometimes it's hard to pinpoint that. That is my hardest part. However, over the years, Colonel Donaldson has been a lot of help to me on that stuff. I've gone to him and let him help me, so I guess that I have really been doing this for years

anyway, one way or another. I guess I made it up in my head that that's what I needed to do and I did it.

Elaine Overstreet said, "We are all so close, and we meet informally all the time, just after school, before school, 'How's it going?, What are you doing?, Have you thought of this?'"

Ms. Overstreet's experiences with informal peer coaching were noted by the researcher.

Informally, we do it [peer coaching] all the time. We really couldn't survive without it because on block, when somebody has mastered a prep, you have to see what they've done, how they get through it and what's easiest and hardest, so we talk a lot.

When asked about the conversations she and her partner had on a routine basis, and what portion of those conversations related to teaching and learning, Ms. Overstreet responded:

A lot more than half; I would say 75% because people in my department, at lunch, we don't that often talk about, "What did you do over the weekend?" Sometimes we do, but most of the time it's, "Guess what happened last period?" or that type of thing. We talk shop a lot, probably more than we need to. It's a good sounding board because at least people understand where you're coming from.

Lee Collins discussed his experiences with informal peer coaching, and said:

We didn't call it peer coaching, but in a sense I guess it could be because I've asked other teachers if I could come into their classroom to observe them teaching in different areas, and it was [peer coaching] although we had not prearranged things. It was just sort of an informal drop into a teacher's classroom. I think that as beneficial to me. I know it was.

Olivia Robinson, a guidance counselor, noted that counselors, in particular, discussed issues concerning individual cases on which they were working, seeking each other's ideas and input:

Well, I think the nature of counseling itself is that we do that because, depending on what the situation is, we do discuss that because there are so few of us, and because

we do hit a lot of problems. I think the main thing in counseling that's stress, is when you do have a problem, you go find another peer and talk to them about it, you know? And sometimes, some of the problems that we encounter are intense and because we serve teachers and administrators, and children and parents, we pretty much have to go to one another.

Vick Young noted that he had experience with informal peer coaching when he said, "I've done a lot of talking with Chris and Rick because those two guys are just so doggone smart, you know. I sit there and listen to them talk." Jane Overton, in discussing her past, noted, "In a sense, I guess I have always [peer coached]. It seems like, in the early years, that was sort of a natural, normal thing. I think teachers are sharing ideas within the department, and so forth."

Donna Martin noted that teachers within her department work, not only as a math department, but within smaller groups according to the curriculum they are teaching.

O yeah, oh yeah, it happens a lot, almost exclusively with other math teachers. Like going down the hall, "How are you doing?" or even walking in. For example, Maggie taught algebra this year for the first time in a long time. She would come to me with content questions, well not content, she knew the algebra. But emphasis, you know, "Do I need to spend a whole block on this or can I just pass through it?" That kind of thing, you know. And she would come to me and say, "Look at this test. So many of my kids did poorly. Can you help me figure out why?" I don't know if all departments are like that, but in the math department, Van puts us in groups, all the algebra teachers are a group, and such and such a person is in charge of the group, and we work together. Most of it's work at the beginning, when we devise the syllabus and everything, but we still, you know, talk to each other a lot. Yeah, we do that a lot. It helps a lot of times when you're frustrated or stuck on something. It helps to kind of

blow on somebody and they go, "Okay, your actual problem is this little piece right here." Yes, it helps tremendously. It makes us happier teachers.

Nancy Dixon noted that she and her peers had discussed academic and curriculum issues for many years:

We would just get together and say, "Okay, what are some techniques we can use?" and we'd go to other people that had taught it [same curriculum]. Our rooms used to be right there together and we'd meet in that little room in between and talk about what worked and what didn't, little things like that. I've done it constantly, for many years now. With Kelly Daniels, I've done a lot of talking too, because she's on this hall. I think the reason I talked so much with Lou is because she was right there, but with Kelly, in fact, we just did a writing seminar this summer. We've already been talking about ways to implement it. We're real excited about that. Rhonda was there too and we're going to do a reading thing, you know? So that's one thing, I feel like our department, especially the ninth grade teachers, we're really good about talking and sharing.

Nita Johnson reported, "In our department alone, we're constantly sharing things. If someone comes up with an idea, we think we can tailor that to [our] class, so we talk about some things we've done." Nate Underwood noted that he and other band directors have always worked together:

Band directors, I can say this, and I suppose orchestra and chorus directors are the same way. We network a lot anyway. This [peer coaching] is just an extension of it. It's done in-house, and the reason for that is that, like I said with Marlon and me, we had to coordinate our schedules. But it's not unusual at all to, at least once a day, to call one of your buddies, or a buddy call you or e-mail you, and he says, "Hey, I'm having trouble with blah, blah, blah. What do you guys do about that?"

In summary, 9 of the 14 teachers interviewed specifically mentioned their experiences with informal peer coaching. Because of these experiences, they were motivated to participate in the voluntary peer coaching program. They had worked with other teachers, primarily those within their subject areas, for years, regarding curriculum and behavioral issues.

Motivation-Theme Three: Teachers were motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback.

More than half of the teachers were motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback. Meaningful feedback, as the teachers perceived it, included idea sharing and affirmation.

Rose Vickers thought it was important for her to "find out what else is going on in the school that would indirectly help her with her ESOL kids." Furthermore, she and her partner "knew what we were looking for":

> Well, the first thing we did was try and figure out exactly what she wanted to focus on and what I wanted to focus on, and that took some conversation and some narrowing down. I had to think about what exactly was going on in my room and what I wanted to know about, and another person's view of what I could handle in a different way. Even though this peer coaching is not supposed to be judgmental, I wanted her input and her ideas. After we narrowed down the topics we wanted to focus on, and through several conversations, we settled on a time.[When I was in her classroom], I kind of wandered around to see what they were doing and at the same time was listening to how she was handling the situation, keeping in mind what she wanted to focus on, and ideas about her method that she was interested in. After the two visits, we kind of sat down together and talked about what we had seen and done and gave thoughts to each other.

Rose and her partner valued the idea sharing that was a component of their coaching process. Deb Ingles and her partner noted a similar benefit. Deb said:

This opportunity to get with someone else, even someone outside of my department who could see with fresh eyes. I mean, truly, after 21 years of teaching, you know that there are things you do well and you know that there are things that you'd like to do differently, or new ideas or some change, or an encouragement or a "Help me fix this!" so having the opportunity to have someone else come in and talk with was just great.

Ms. Ingles continued, saying:

We got together for dinner and sat and talked for a couple or three hours and really hashed out, "Okay, this is an area I really need some help on," or "This is something I just want to experiment with. Give me some ideas." We just went back and forth and we really talked about a whole lot more than what we had pinpointed, so that was very enriching to me. We covered lots and lots of things and in that process, we sort of solved some problems right there while we were just talking that first three hours. We worked on this little problem and that little problem, and finally, we found some focus areas that you couldn't solve just by talking, you needed to go and observe and watch and see what you could do differently.

Elaine Overstreet, in discussing the ideas that she and her coaching partner shared, noted:

I think that goes back and it sort of ties in with what you said, "Did we observe any other behaviors and discuss them?" and we did not. I think it might be interesting, next year, to just sort of go in, and say, "Write down what you've observed,' instead of just targeting a specific behavior. Tell me about my methods or tell me about how I run my classroom, and is it different from yours and how can I learn from you?"

In her opinion, she and her partner did not get to share enough.

Lee Collins coached because he valued getting new ideas. He stated:

Peer coaching actually means to me to get the other person's ideas, not just in the subject areas, but just to get to know the other person that I'm peer coaching with. The relationship is very valuable, and the other thing is that talking with a different person

gives me the idea that they have something that I didn't have and to me, the only way to do that is communication. And peer coaching allows for that so I would get that from peer coaching. And then the pre conferences that we had gave us a background as to the best way for us, as peer coaches to each other, to get the best out of the peer coaching idea. And to me, that was very important.

Though Mr. Collins noted that idea sharing began as early as the pre conference, he further explained that the sharing of ideas continued, and stated:

That's exactly what we did and the way we looked at it. It just makes you feel more comfortable when the person is doing the observing because you know you're not going to be necessarily graded on what they write down and so forth, but you're actually looking for whatever you say or whatever you're teaching that maybe you need to make a change in. There were some things, as we went along, and in the post conference, that I was able to get that I did that was perhaps not the correct way of doing, or at least not the best way. Because of peer coaching, I as able to get that because she had written down the things that she thought, from her standpoint, that I should have been doing, even to the point of recognizing certain students within the classroom that perhaps I had not noticed.

Jane Overton, a Social Studies teacher who wanted to gain technology skills, based her entire coaching experience on the sharing of ideas. It was her intent to work with the media specialist, gaining technology skills, while the media specialist observed and gained the historical background to go with sample media presentations regarding Internet sites. Ms. Overton said:

Oh, well, for me, I just was thrilled to have her help me because she knows a lot about the technology and the computers. She's knows exactly what to do and where to go and that's what I'd like to be able to learn.

Donna Martin, who referred to peer coaching as "professionally useful camaraderie," noted her attraction to idea sharing. She said:

It helps me to feel like there are so many people that I can ask questions to that will give me helpful information, not just pats on the back. Those are necessary too, but [I like] actually helpful feedback.

Ms. Dixon liked the idea sharing component of peer coaching as well, and noted;

I think the thing that's most helpful to me is just being able to get together with other teachers and sharing new ideas. Of course, I keep taking classes, and you know, staff development, and they show you new ways. But, it's just really nice to get together with new people. I would like to have times to be able to go observe other teachers, especially English teachers, and see how they're teaching certain things, especially things I'm teaching. And sometimes, I'll get new ideas and I'll think, 'Oh, that was a great idea! Why didn't I think of that?' I like sharing sessions a lot. I like learning things with what I have. I like learning, sharing my ideas, and having people that have knowledge.

Rita Jones noted that she and her partner "shared some ideas, particularly on reading circles." She noted especially, "I like new ideas, always, new methods, not just new materials, but even new methods to teach the materials that I'm teaching." Nita Johnson said, "I can see how going to different people would be good because you get different things from different people." She liked the feedback she got from peer coaching. "I think because you're getting feedback from a different level, you're going to see and participate without being watched." In her department, idea sharing was not limited to those who were peer coaching. Ms. Johnson said:

I know just in out department alone, we're constantly sharing things. If someone comes up with an idea, we think, "Oh yeah, we can tailor that to a different class," so we do talk about the things we've done.

Finally, as teachers discussed the sharing of ideas, Mr. Underwood, who had a profound effect on his peers, noted:

He and I were talking about articulation and I said something to him. He said, "Whoa, wait a minute. You just changed all my reference points. I have to go home and think about this." I said, "Okay, here's what you do. Go home and write some of this stuff down and come back and ask questions." And he came back and he asked questions and I made some other points to him and he told me, "This is life altering."

Not only were peer coaches motivated because they wanted idea sharing, a component of meaningful feedback, they were also motivated because they wanted affirmation. Mr. Underwood, in his statement, indicated the importance of exchanging ideas and the value of affirmation. He continued:

Probably what I will do this year is notice something about this [next school] year that's unique, or something that comes up, you know, like I've never really been satisfied about whatever. What do I do in this situation? I feel like one of the dangers of being at it for so long, and I'm not afraid to change, thankfully, is, you feel like, "I've been doing it this way for so long. Is that the way to do it? Is there another way?" There are lots of ways to be a good band director. There's no one way. I know bands that are equally good and the band directors approach the program totally different. If you could couple [peer coaching] with a good process of what the goals are, the pre conference, post, with someone with credibility, I think you're getting the best of everything. I mean, there are things that I've had band directors suggest to me. I did it and I said, "Why has it taken me fifteen years to find this out?" And, fortunately, I've been able to do the same thing in return to other guys.

Ms. Dixon, a Language Arts teacher who coached with a good friend who taught the same curriculum, valued feedback from her peer. However, in addition to enjoying the sense of affirmation she gained, she wanted more. She said:

Lou always says, "Well, maybe this is the way you could improve that." Last year her feedback was that she thought everything was great. But I told her this year I didn't

want her to say that to me. I wanted her to find something that she thought I did really

well and talk to me about that, but to tell me something that she noticed that I could

work on because, to me, that was the purpose of this, giving you really specific

feedback.

Other teachers who participated in the peer coaching program valued the affirmation they received regarding their teaching, and yearned, still, for more feedback. Donna Martin explained:

You know, to tell me frankly what they saw, and not just write a bunch of little nice

comments. I mean, it's nice to know you're not doing anything blatantly bad, but it's

also good to have somebody who will see, you know, if they see something. So, it had

the potential, to me, to really and actually be helpful and

constructive. That was a big appeal to me.

Because Ms. Ingles' partner was seeking a skill that Ms. Ingles possessed, she noted:

She doesn't have the training and the background that I do and so that was a nice

match, that I could use my expertise to help her solve an area that she had no training

in, particularly. She used her expertise to help me in my areas. It was some other things

like accomplishing the volume of stuff that I've got to accomplish, so she gave me some

hints that were computer related.

In summary, teachers were motivated to participate because they wanted meaningful feedback which included idea sharing and affirmation.

Motivation-Theme Four: Teachers were motivated because they found the choices attractive.

Twelve out of 14 teachers mentioned that they were motivated to participate in the voluntary peer coaching program because they liked the choices offered throughout the program. Their choice to participate was just one of many choices they had to make as they worked through the program. As teachers worked through the processes associated with peer coaching, choices determined how they would move through the program as well as with whom they would work.

Rose Vickers chose her partner. "I wanted to have the chance to work with somebody from another department." Rose and her partner had a choice for the focus of their observations. She and her partner, Pat Howell, chose to closely follow the "rules" of the peer coaching process. Ms. Howell noted:

> You don't offer any suggestions and you don't try to solve problems, and you don't advise. You just write down facts, and that's a good part to me. So I just wrote down, "This boy did this, that child did that."

Ms. Ingles and her partner chose to work outside of the suggested rules, to offer suggestions to each other. Ms. Ingles, after observing her partner, offered specific feedback. She reported, "She had decided to incorporate some of the more useful things. At first, she said, 'I can't do that,' but she did do it and she chose to do it". Ms. Ingles continued, saying:

> Choice is important, I think. I don't think it [partner choice] should be mandated.
> Sometimes you get with someone and you discover that it just doesn't work. I mean, you may think that they don't have anything to offer, or your personalities clash, or they don't ever have time for you or you find that you're uncomfortable with them or whatever. So you need to have the option to choose someone else the next year if you feel that way.

Choice, to Elaine Overstreet, included the decision making process. She explained:

> We decided to do question and answer techniques. We decided that was a good thing to observe. We decided to figure out, to be tallying, how many times we called on each student.

Later in the conversation, Ms. Overstreet stated:

> I chose her because she approached me with it. I'd like to stay in my department, but after a while I might like to go to somebody in another department and see how they do things. So I like the fact that you can choose anybody you want.

As mentioned previously, Lee Collins chose people he felt might be able to provide him with fresh ideas. As for the process itself, he and his partner chose to adhere closely to the structure that was suggested:

> To get the best out of peer coaching, and to me, this was very important, and it's something I would suggest for anyone that's going into it, is to make sure you get a clear understanding as to how you're going to go about it with each other. It will feel more comfortable when you get into the actual teaching.

Lee Collins, in discussing partner choice, noted, "I think it would be good for me if I changed partners for next year mainly because, again, these will be different ideas, these will be different methods, and I feel that I can get something new."

Olivia Robinson, as noted earlier, felt that partner choice was important, particularly as she valued input from someone that was in her same field. She also liked having choice regarding when and how the observation would take place. Her partner expressed her choices as well. Ms. Robinson said, "We talked about when would be a good time to observe one another and then we set the times to do that. She picked a classroom guidance session with juniors."

Jane Overton chose to participate and chose her partner based on the things that she, Ms. Overton, wanted to learn. She said, "We decided what we would work on. Our original plan was the Renaissance." Donna Martin discussed the choices she would like to see offered

in the future regarding staff development as a whole, not just the peer coaching program. She said:

> I already know I want to work on the technology requirement for the certification thing. I know a lot about classroom discipline, but if I just had a bad year, then maybe a refresher in discipline would be good. I'm teaching something I've never taught before this year. Maybe just something department wide, or maybe getting me together with other teachers who have taught this class before.

Ms. Martin also appreciated the choices within the peer coaching program but noted that they were not, in her opinion, as necessary as some of the other teachers indicated. Her thoughts appeared scattered as she formed her idea and spoke.

> Like I said before, when you get to pick the person that you want, and even if you didn't get to pick the person, I think if they, if you ended up coming in the meeting late, anyway, anyone who voluntarily did this would be someone I would want as a peer coach, you know? If it became mandatory, obviously, it wouldn't be as useful because you don't have the same motivation there.

As for her choice regarding her partner, she noted:

> I think it depends on your goals. Since with peer coaching you're only focusing on one thing, if it was someone that I didn't share a room with and talk with at length daily, it would be beneficial, I think, to keep the same person [from year to year], or could be.

When she discussed partner choice, Paula Reese explained:

> I think it would depend on what I was doing at the moment when I had to decide about the peer coaching, what I wanted out of it. Like when I wanted to work on this one particular student last year, it was very appropriate for Rosie to come. She had different techniques and experiences and outlooks and subjectivity that I didn't have. So, I think that I would have to wait and decide what my target was and then I would probably say, "Now, who do I go with? Do I want somebody that's a reading expert because I

might have something to do with reading? Or do I want behavior?" I think it would

depend on what I was after.

Nancy Dixon, a Language Arts teacher said, "I liked the idea that I'd be able to get

together with a teacher that I knew, a teacher of my choice." She continued, "And I chose Lou

both years because we're really good friends." Nancy's freedom to choose provided her

comfort. After two years of participation, Nancy mentioned she might move beyond that

comfort zone of working with a friend. "I think it might be good, that it might be something we

talk about with peer coaching, switching people that you do it with because you get different

feedback."

Rita Jones and her partner, Rhonda Webster, had a coaching experience that involved

many choices, including the choice they made to talk beyond the target of the observation.

> We were talking about the class participation, but then we started talking about the
>
> rapport among the students, and how the students, it's not something she was looking
>
> for, but how the students would try to bring others into the conversation, into the
>
> discussion, who didn't want to participate. She observed the seminar, then we just
>
> started talking about different issues with the students. Same thing in her class. She
>
> wanted me to look for strategies that she was using. She had certain kinds of strategies
>
> she was using with the kids, and she wanted me to look for the number of times, but, as
>
> it turned out, we ended up talking about other things going on in the class.

Nita Johnson, interviewed later than most of the other teachers, was asked about the

choice some teachers asked for regarding visiting other classrooms. She stated, "I like the

open door policy where people can just come in and kind of visit and pick up what they want

to pick up and maybe stop and offer what they want to say to students." She continued, "I

think teachers really like options. I guess all people like options, but teachers really like

options. We like when we can do either/or."

Finally, Nate Underwood saw the value of choice as a statement made by the administration.

>That's funny. I was just going to say, I think it has a direct, explicit implication that the administration trusts me, that I know what's best for me, and that they're allowing me to participate in a process that will be helpful to me, not just some legal process that we have to go through that's not meaningful. It [peer coaching] allows me to pick somebody that I respect and that I can gain something from.

In summary, teachers found the choices offered throughout the program attractive. They liked the choice to participate or not participate, and the choices offered with regard to their partner and structure of the program.

Motivation-Theme Five: Teachers were motivated because they were not satisfied with the traditional observation.

Teachers craved feedback and did not feel it was present, to their satisfaction, in the traditional observation choice. Every single teacher interviewed either directly or indirectly noted a dissatisfaction with the traditional observation, generally done by an administrator or a department chair. They were not satisfied to continue with the traditional observation that they did not see as relevant, and from which they gained very little, if anything. Nate Underwood said:

>Well, I think that those of us who have been in education for any length of time realize the limitations of the various measuring tools that administrators are forced to use because we need something standardized. We need something objective, and it probably serves its purpose to a certain degree. But I don't think it's ever going to do the job, except in a legal sense, that something like peer coaching can do. Anytime you have a checklist, you're always limited to those answers, and there's not any give and take. It's not measuring things that maybe the teacher needs or wants for their improvement. It's basically a formatted situation. You are either satisfactory,

unsatisfactory, or needs improvement, or whatever, and you get a little bit of dialogue at

the bottom. I realize there's a need for that, but for anybody who wants to try and

improve their teaching, that would not suffice. It's not interactive. It's someone

observing and then telling me what they see I need to do rather than going and

observing me and saying, "Okay, what was the point of your lesson today?"

Rita Johnson said:

They didn't get anything out of their [traditional evaluation]. They just did their daily

routine, someone came in and sat and observed them and gave them feedback, but it

was not the same. The feedback was not as meaningful to them is what they all told

me.

Nita Jones added, "I think people find it [peer coaching] less threatening than [the traditional

observation]. But in being less threatening, it's also more meaningful. Nancy Dixon concurred:

I liked the idea that I'd be able to get together with a teacher that I knew, a teacher of

my choice, a teacher that was in my field, particularly because, and this is not to be

offensive, but sometimes, when you're being evaluated by administrators, I mean you

know what their field is. I mean, they give you very vague, general feedback. I know

I've reached the time in my career where I don't feel intimidated anymore. I'm a good

teacher, I do a good job, and I wanted to do something that would give me feedback

that was specific to my subject area with someone that was really knowledgeable in my

subject area and that I thought would be helpful. I thought, if I'm going to do this, I

would like some feedback that would help me improve or let me think of areas that I

needed to improve in and then talk it over.

Paula Reese, in expressing her dissatisfaction with the traditional observation said:

I think it's meaningless. I don't think they give me anything that helps me. I think the

person comes in to do the observation with all the best intentions, spends their 20 or 30

minutes in there, and yes, I'm teaching and doing my routine. What I get back from

them doesn't necessarily motivate me to do anything different or doesn't jog me to go, "Ooo, why don't I do that?" It doesn't do anything for me professionally.

Like Ms. Reese, Donna Martin felt dissatisfied with the alternative observation choice. She ventured:

One thing that I've noticed is that feedback from people who are not classroom teachers, is, in general, kind of disregarded, or lightly considered. The month you left the classroom, your credibility with suggestions decreased in general. If they're not directly in the classroom, some of the credibility is gone.

She continued, "There's always a little bit of nervousness when your [traditional] observer comes in. It's not helpful unless you're blatantly doing something very, very wrong, in my opinion."

Ms. Overton said:

I don't think the [traditional observation] is a very accurate way to measure the worth of a teacher in the first place. I'm not learning anything, and after 32 years, somebody might tell me something, but if you're an experienced teacher, I would pretty much venture to say you like the way you're doing it or else you wouldn't have been doing it that way for so long. It's a piece of paper. I think it's a very easy way to discourage a teacher rather than encourage them to think positive. [The traditional observation] lacks a lot in getting a teacher to learn and go on. It's just another form.

Vick Young indicated that teachers could get through observations with the traditional model even if they were not strong teachers. He explained, "Even if you weren't doing a good job, those three days [of observation], you could kind of knock that out. Vick Young mentioned the conversations he and his coaching partner had, and said:

I think you just get something out of it. We could always make little comments, little suggestions on what we were doing. I think you kind of get more out of it than just having somebody come in there and sit for thirty minutes.

Olivia Robinson voiced her dissatisfaction with the [traditional observation]: "I thought I probably got better feedback from peer coaching than I did from the [traditional observation]. What my partner had to say was more appropriate since she knows counseling." She elaborated:

With [the traditional observation], after you've been in education as long as I have, you know, it's all pretty standard. You either do it well, or you don't, and I thought I got better feedback from peer coaching than I did from the other. Not that those observations weren't honest, but they weren't a fellow counselor and they didn't know what to look for. I mean, they did know what to look for and they were always very positive, but I felt like this was more. What she [partner] had to say was more appropriate since she knows counseling.

Additionally, Olivia asked her partner to observe an activity that was new for her. She said:

I probably wouldn't have asked an assistant principal who was observing me to come and watch that because they're putting something down on a form that goes in my folder. I would have asked them to come see something I was very sure of.

Pat Howell added:

Somebody came in and got it over with, so to speak, you know. I mean, I've been [in the traditional observation cycle] forever, and for some reason, I just wasn't getting much out of it. You got your little form and you read through that and signed it and everything. I just didn't feel like that was very effective and so when the idea of this peer coaching came up, I just felt like it would be much more helpful, more beneficial, more rewarding.

Elaine Overstreet noted:

[The traditional observation] is just sort of artificial, especially if you know the day that the administrator is coming and you pick your best class, and all that type of thing. It's a little bit more artificial. Not that that's totally bad, because you do want to do your best

for the administration or whoever observes you. But, I think that day-to-day teaching is

where we really sometimes get bogged down and we need some fresh ideas with it.

Deb Ingles agreed.

I don't think a 15-minute observation tells you anything about what I do. I felt like

that's a rote performance, and a lot of people I know set it up special when they know

somebody's going to come in and observe them. When administrators or department

chairs come in to observe, you don't get to develop the relationship because you don't

get to spend that time with them. They've got too many people to cover. I'm not sure

the [traditional] observation is all that effective. You may pick up some things, but it's

kind of a rote behavior.

Rose Vickers summed up the feelings of the teachers when she said:

I've been [traditionally] observed several times and I knew what the process was.

And, I knew it was a passive experience. Somebody would come in and watch me

and write notes and that was the extent of it. I wanted to be more involved in it.

It seems that teachers were motivated to participate in the peer coaching program

because they wanted to learn. They were motivated because of their experiences with informal

peer coaching. They were motivated to do the extra work associated with peer coaching due

to the gains they anticipated. They were motivated because they wanted meaningful feedback.

They were motivated because they found the choices to be attractive. Finally, they were

motivated because they were not satisfied with the traditional observation.

<div align="center">Meanings</div>

What were the meanings that teachers held for peer coaching? In addition to the five

themes of motivation that were revealed by the data and discussed above, the five themes

which addressed the meanings that the participants held for peer coaching will be discussed.

Meanings-Theme Six: Teachers received meaningful feedback

All of the 14 teachers interviewed mentioned the meaningful feedback they received as a result of participation in the voluntary peer coaching program. This meaningful feedback included the sharing of ideas as well as the affirmation of skills and expertise that teachers experienced.

Ms. Johnson, a business education teacher, in discussing her coaching session, was surprised to learn that her peer was impressed with a skill that she, Ms. Johnson, took for granted. She explained:

> What I learned is, first of all, I guess I didn't realize how much of that class is one-on-one instruction because they're working on things and they don't all have the same questions. I present something on how to do something and then they all go for it. And I guess what I gained from her was that she was impressed with the one-on-one instruction. I guess that's the biggest thing I got from her.

Ms. Robinson, a guidance counselor, enjoyed the feedback she received, even though it was not always positive affirmation. She said, "Not all the comments were glowing, simply because of what she observed with me. I just think it's good to have some good honesty there."

Ms. Howell noted that her external affirmation was present in both years of her coaching experiences. She explained:

> I think the idea sharing after we sort of said what had been going on and sharing ideas about each other's classrooms, was very, in our case, good. I guess because we all had good things to say about each other because we all enjoyed each other's classes so much. I think that was encouraging and uplifting because I think she is an excellent teacher.

Pat Howell felt a sense of relief as she worked with her peers. She said;

> She was very animated. She didn't realize it! It was very much fun and very interesting. You have the kids' attention and you have the kids on task, and you know

> if you have a problem with a kid sometimes, with them being off task and not paying attention, well then so does Marjorie, so does Deneen, so do all those other teachers you think have such personalities. It helped to know that the kids are going to act the same every once in a while.

In discussing her experiences with feedback, Ms. Overstreet noted the affirmation she and her partner received regarding their teaching:

> After we finished, we met and discussed the results and we sort of tallied percentages of different things that we found out. We did find that actually we were pretty fair with what we did, taking into consideration that some kids never raised their hand and some have their hand in the air all the time. We found that we were really doing an adequate job, each of us was, in running our class in that manner, so I think in that way it was beneficial. After we met, we looked at the data, and it sort of reinforced the fact that we were pretty much on the right track and doing it the right way. It helped us a little bit more to see what was actually going on in our classroom.

Rose Vickers reviewed the affirmation she received from her partner, which she referred to as "confirmation":

> I focused on some classroom management when she came to visit me. I knew that since she had larger classes that management had to be something under her belt. I was looking for ideas as to management with a particularly rowdy group of kids. What I had done, that she saw evidence of, was right on track. She confirmed that what I was basically doing was what she would have done, and that there were personalities involved in the problem, and that, in her opinion, I was doing the best that could be done in that particular situation.

Lee Collins was pleased to know that he had contributed to his partner as she had contributed to him. He said:

In working with her, and she not being as veteran as I am, I learned to share with her some of the things I've learned over the years. I learned that I got something from *her* picking up on what I had to offer and I thought, "Gee, I was able to offer this teacher something!" This was another teacher in the classroom and she tells me that she picked up that and that's something I learned simply by working with her.

Olivia Robinson enjoyed the sense of affirmation she received as well. She referred to it as "validation" and explained, while referring to the traditional observation process:

Quite frankly, I think pieces of paper left to sign, put there, serve very little purpose for the true meaning of life. And the true meaning of life has a lot to do with process and with feeling validated. Although I felt validated when I had the assistant principal write something nice about me on a piece of paper, it was always more of a relief that it was over than a part of the process where someone might actually be concerned about what I was doing. It was more of something they had to do, something that I had to do, and with peer coaching, it did take more of a form of, "Well, let's sit and talk about this. How can we make it better?"

Vick Young noted the sharing of his expertise and the affirmation he received from that to be the most valuable component of his peer coaching experience. He said:

Well, I think the main thing I got was reemphasizing to myself that I felt like I was doing a pretty good job, and basically, I saw some things that he was doing that he probably shouldn't do. Basically, it [peer coaching] emphasized that I thought I was doing a good job with organization and with staying on time, kids staying on task, and I felt good about some of the things I could give him to kind of help him out. I think the thing I got out of it was reemphasizing things that I'm doing pretty well.

Donna Martin said it well when she said:

We get asked to do a lot of things, you know? We do questionnaires and we do surveys, and we have discussions at department meetings, and all of that, I know, is

what people really do want from me. But to talk to a person who's asking me for help

makes me feel like my 23 years have been worth something. I feel valued, and

sometimes we don't feel very valued.

Like Donna Martin, Nancy Dixon felt valued for her skills and expertise. She explained, "You

know, I get feedback when I'm being observed. As the observer, I found that I liked that I

was looking for something and that my opinion was being valued." Nate Underwood

summarized the idea of affirmation well when he said:

I'm influencing people, whether its colleagues or students or student teachers, through

what I was taught. The essence of peer coaching is that you're influencing each other

so each will benefit through a process where, if we didn't have it, we wouldn't be doing

it.

He continued:

I read a eulogy one time that I think is appropriate. It was talking about conductors,

musicians, all the generations that a famous musician had contact with and that he had

achieved, the quote was, "the immortality of continued influence." And I thought that

was so poetic. I'm influencing people, whether it's colleagues or students or student

teachers, through what Dr. Mitchell taught me, and Dr. Mitchell has been dead for eight

years now, so he's immortal. We're passing things on. Hopefully you leave a little bit

of yourself behind that way. I think that's the essence of peer coaching, that you are

influencing each other so

each will benefit through a process where, if we didn't have it, we wouldn't be doing it.

In summary, peer coaching, for most teachers, was about meaningful feedback.

Teachers received meaningful feedback, which included idea sharing and affirmation of their

skills and expertise, as a result of their participation in the voluntary peer coaching

program. Teachers, in addition to valuing this opportunity to learn and grow, based on the feedback they received, determined that they wanted to direct their learning.

Meanings-Theme Seven: Teachers wanted to direct their learning.

Most teachers involved in the voluntary peer coaching program wanted to grow and learn beyond the structure of the program. In addition, they wanted to direct that learning by tailoring the peer coaching program to better meet their needs. For example, several asked if the program could be expanded to include an open door observation component. Others asked if the observation focus could be open ended, as opposed to the observer only watching and commenting on one component of the teaching and learning viewed.

Nate Underwood particularly liked the idea of visiting other teachers and expressed a desire to visit beyond Hope High School. He wanted to tailor the coaching opportunity to suit his needs. He wanted to direct his learning.

Sometimes it's even interesting to do it [peer coaching] from chorus to band or orchestra to band so that you're really out of the box. I personally would like to see it be not limited to people within your school. I would love it if it could be where, if I particularly respect a band directory within the county, but not at Hope, that we could work it out where I could go there and do that.

In addition, Mr. Underwood requested that he have more frequent opportunities to peer coach:

I would like it to be more periodic. I like it maybe once a month, or once every nine weeks. You know, if I did it that way, what it would do is, it would open up more possibilities. If I was doing it every nine weeks, I'm sure that I will run into a problem that I will want to work through every nine weeks, and it could be a pedagogical problem, it could be a classroom management process, it could be just about anything. I'm not limited and I don't know about other people, but it's better for me to have something regular.

Mr. Underwood expressed that he would prefer the option of an open-ended observation that he could use as needed. He noted that he sometimes has specifics he wants someone to watch for him, but at other times would like an open observation.

Nita Johnson discussed her preferences of coaching partners, and noted:

I guess I would just approach someone that I felt, hmm, what's the right word? I guess I would want the person to be someone I have a professional relationship with, even though you wouldn't have to. But I guess I have a professional relationship with everyone in the school, so I guess maybe someone I would know that is open to me being in their classroom and maybe moving around and maybe asking questions. I would prefer to be in a classroom that's more relaxed than a classroom where I sat and listened to a lecture. I would prefer a classroom that's maybe similar to mine. I guess most people who would choose to do peer coaching would be those people whose personalities lend itself to openness.

Ms. Johnson explained, "I like the open door policy where people can just come in and kind of visit and pick up and maybe stop and offer what they want to say to students."

Ms. Jones noted that finding a focus for her peer to watch was difficult for her. She wanted to direct her learning. She suggested:

The target, what to look for, that was very hard for me. Even a list of different, some examples [would help]. I always like examples of what people have done, then I could adapt it to my classroom. I would love to see a list because that was hard. I like that open ended one that you just said and I also would like just having a list of what, in the last two years, people have observed. That would be very helpful.

Nancy Dixon also expressed a desire to visit other teachers more often. She explained:

It's just really nice to get together with new people. I would like to have times to be able to go and observe other teachers, especially English teachers, and see how they're teaching certain things, especially things I'm teaching.

Ms. Dixon expressed her desire to change partners from year to year so that she could gain

new information, but liked the choice to do so was left up to her. She came back again, though,

to her desire to visit other teachers, and said:

> Well, I think it would be neat if we could do this, and I don't even know if this is
>
> physically possible, but, as a part, if you're choosing to do the peer coaching, I think it
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> would be neat if, besides the person that you're observing and is observing you, if, as a
>
> part of it, you could actually go into other teachers' classrooms and watch them teach.
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> Maybe you could go to three or four others that you're going to write up, maybe
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> teachers of your choice that you've heard about. There are teachers at this school that I
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> would love to see. We all like that. That's the one things I've always wish we could do
>
> more.

Donna Martin described peer coaching as "professional useful camaraderie." She

expressed a desire to tailor the program to suit her needs. She wanted to direct her learning.

She explained, "Anyone who voluntarily did this [peer coaching] would be someone I would

want as a peer coach." Ms. Martin did not value choice as much as some of her colleagues.

She had trust in the program as much as she had trust in individual people involved in the

program. She asked for a time line in the program, and as she talked through the idea, changed

her mind:

> Maybe because I'm a procrastinator, but maybe having the first conference done
>
> earlier, but I don't need you to impose that. I can do that to myself. If I had told Joan
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> I wanted to have this done by the end of November, I would have. All I have to do is
>
> say it out loud to one person and then I'm committed to it. Maybe that's a good trick I
>
> can try next year.

Vick Young, a Social Studies teacher, particularly asked about visiting other teachers'

classrooms more often. He said:

I found where I would, during my planning period, I'd just kind of walk around the halls

and just watch what other people were doing and not necessarily stick my head in, but

if the person was like me, I'd just kind of stand there and kind of listen, you know. I

watched more math type teachers because I'm not very good at math. But math

classes seem to just be so much more focused. I just got to where I'd kind of walk

around and watch what other people were doing.

As Pat Howell discussed open ended observations, she said:

It may be, if you have a class, you have problems with that class. That's an easy one,

you know what I mean? If, before, you've had a chance to do your discussion with

your partner that you're working with, you've already come up with, "I need help with

this kid or something." But then, if you don't, if things are just sort of rocking along,

and everything's going well, that [open-ended observation] might be an idea. Just let

somebody come in, just open ended, and see if they see any ways you could improve.

Lee Collins mentioned that he liked to learn by attending conferences and appreciated the

opportunity to choose to change partners each year so that he would gain new and fresh ideas.

He said, "I am forever trying to learn a different way of doing the same thing. It looks like I'll

be learning the rest of my life." He wanted to direct his learning as he expressed a desire to

visit teachers other than his peer coaching partner, and said:

I mean, to be able to go and when I hear about a particular teacher, not particularly in

science, that's doing this particular method or project, then I would like to go see that in

action and I think it would be good to do that.

Mr. Collins also suggested that one cycle of observations was not enough for him.

I think it would be beneficial for me if I did two [cycles]. If for nothing else, as we

move through the school year, and we get into different areas for study, and that

particular area may lend itself to a different method than what we'd talked about the

first time. So, if for nothing else, just to pick up on different methods and procedures for covering different subject areas.

Elaine Overstreet wanted to direct her learning. She explained:

> I think it might be interesting, next year, to just sort of go in and say, "Write down what you've observed instead of just targeting a specific behavior. Tell me about my methods or tell me about how I run my classroom and is it different from yours and how can I learn from you?" Make it more open ended. I don't know if that's possible because I know you're supposed to do something measurable which is sometimes difficult if it's too open ended.

Deb Ingles expressed strong opinions about directing her learning. She reflected:

> This opportunity to get new ideas from other people, this idea to get instruction from someone else, this idea to refresh and renew, to look at myself in a new light, to go deeper into my experience as a teacher [is good]. I love teaching, so I don't want to be stagnant. I like to constantly renew and change it so I see it as an opportunity to grow.

However, Ms. Ingles noted, when talking about directing learning, that some people in the peer coaching program might need more guidance than others. She discussed target behaviors of observations and said:

> That's real critical. Some people would need guidance and that's okay. I think the opportunity for guidance needs to be there, somebody they can go to and say, "I don't know what I need to work on," or go to their peer coach and say, "I don't know what I need. Come in and tell me what I need."

Ms. Ingles suggested that new teachers should be encouraged to participate in the peer coaching process so they "get comfortable with the fact that somebody actually helps them work on something." She continued her reflection and noted:

It is much more work. It is much more work although it's not great volumes of work.

Just the fact that I get to feed me, it's like an opportunity to feed me. It's just that there

wasn't much time to eat this year (laughter), but the chance to get these new insights,

it's just refreshing to me. It's exciting. It's a new opportunity and I like that. I like to

change and grow and do something new.

Rose Vickers felt that her coaching relationship would have developed more with

opportunities for she and her partner to work together. She said, "It might be kind of interesting

if that relationship continued, so that you have occasion and comfort level for further discussion

about what was going on." In summary, teachers, in various ways, wanted to direct their

learning.

Meanings-Theme Eight: Teachers noted greater trust among peer coaches.

About half of 14 teachers noted greater trust among peer coaches. Teachers who

worked together experienced increased trust, particularly since that learning situation involved

choice on their part. The open, caring opportunity that teachers needed in order to work

together toward continued growth and renewal was provided, in the teachers' opinions, through

the peer coaching program. This program provided the opportunity for greater trust among the

teachers involved in the program. The general camaraderie among teachers involved in the

program evolved as the program developed.

Rose Vickers trusted her partner, and because of this trust, looked forward to an

observation, which was a change for her. She stated:

It's [peer coaching's] different. There's a level of excitement rather. When [the

traditional] observation happens, it's always dread. "Oh, am I going to get it right

today?" I just hate it and I know I'm not normal when it's going on. But, with this peer

coaching, it was much more comfortable because it was a peer. I knew what I was

looking for and she knew what she was looking for. It really was more an adventure.

Deb Ingles, a special education teacher, worked with the same business teacher two years in a row, and found that the trust they had established in year one carried them through a more difficult second year. The difficulties were personal in nature, related to health issues, but impacted Ms. Ingles' time, in particular. She explained:

> Since we had the foundation of the first year, we could play it easier, you know. We already knew each other well enough because of what we did the first year. The second year we sort of could bounce it off and sit down and accomplish a whole lot more in a less amount of time.

The trust they had was established early on in the relationship and was expressed this way:

> We established trust that first night. By sharing so many things you're having problems with, you have to trust the other person. You have to do that to open yourself up and share your weaknesses and your faults. You have to trust the other person.

Ms. Ingles also noted that as a veteran teacher, she has found herself becoming more vulnerable, more open to others, more trusting, and as a result, she had shared more with her peers.

> Over the years, quite a few of the last years, I've really felt like I'll get so much more by sharing. I'll cut my work in half by sharing. I'll gain new ideas by sharing. Team teaching, peer coaching, all of these are tools to have contact with others to pick their brains and get ideas.

She continued:

> I'm much more confident now. In those early years, of course, I don't think I was as sure of myself. I don't think I was as open to criticism. I'm a lot more open to it now than when I was younger. I was much more insecure when I was younger. She expressed her opinion that peer coaching built trust among the teachers who participated. I love the fact that relationships develop. With peer coaching, it brings a better sense of community to your school. You get a better opportunity to develop

relationships. You become closer to other teachers. You can get to know them better. You can develop yourself, your sense of openness. I didn't have that as a younger person. I had these pockets that I had to hide. You can let go of that some because you've built this trust with this other person so you're not as protective, personally. You're more open.

Pat Howell discussed trusting other teachers in the program and noted that she was a little hesitant about having someone observe her at first.

You know, I was raised in that "be seen but not heard" generation of being perfect. I don't think some of us raised in that way have as much self-confidence as some of the young teachers have. It's taken us a while to build up that self-confidence and I think that thinking that somebody's going to come in and make you feel inadequate in any way is a little threatening.

She continued:

I guess that it's important that they [peer coaches] are still in the same place that you are. They're still up there teaching their heart out just like you are, dealing with all the discipline, the management, inquiry based, whatever situation you're dealing with there. They're not out of the classroom and coming in and having to remember what it's like because they know what it's like to be in the classroom. I think I'm getting over the worried about making a booboo. I think I'm getting to the point, and I don't know if peer coaching has helped me with this, but I think maybe talking it out, you know, having somebody come in, having a peer come in, and like I say, that's right there with you and talking out the situation and seeing some things that are going on. I think I'm getting over the actual worrying about messing up and I do think that if I mess up it might be okay. It might be helpful for something to go wrong so that they could see it and give me some input. I think maybe peer coaching's helped me with that.

Olivia Robinson said of her partner, "She's very honest and very professionally qualified. I know that I could trust what she told me and I respect her counseling techniques." Ms. Robinson felt trust in her partner and said, "It was kind of bold of me to ask her to come to watch something I'd never done before. So that was good. I guess I'm getting older. It helps you do things like that." She continued, "I think peer coaching would encourage a veteran teacher to try something different and have someone they trust come in and watch."

Jane Overton talked about the trust she had in her partner. She explained:

I think the two of you have to be very good friends and understand. Having worked together over the years, I know how wonderful she is and how skilled in technology. She knows that stuff and I know that I can learn an awful lot. She's been trying to sell me for years on the computer and I'd think, "No, not that," but she's great. I knew I could learn something if I could just ever get past the button pushing stage. (laughter)

Ms. Overton also noted the importance of earning and keeping the trust of her partner. She said, "I love working with her but I really want to prove to her I can learn something. It's a quest!"

Ms. Martin noted the professional respect she felt for teachers in general. She explained:

Going back to [the traditional observation], where all you get is flowery things written down for you, I would be comfortable with any classroom teacher just coming in and observing me because they may see something that I might not know to pick, which is another reason to make it open ended. You know, just come in and give me three ideas of what I might focus on, you know. Don't tear me down to the ground, but, you know, give me some suggestions of what I might focus on.

Paula Reese trusted her peer coach as well. She noted, "Peer coaching's a comfort zone. They've got as much to risk as I have. They have as much, hopefully, to give, if not more, than I have to give."

Nancy Dixon trusted her partner enough to risk asking for more critique. She explained:

I said, "Please tell me what you think because I know there is no teacher that is perfect, that everything is perfect. There's something." So, I said, you know, "Find something. Please feel free to tell me if there's anything whether it's my delivery or if I could make the lesson more exciting or whether you felt like the kids were not engaged or whatever." So, when I said that, she said, "Well, I want you to do that for me too." So, that's what we did this year.

When she discussed the opportunity teachers had to visit each other's classrooms and give meaningful feedback, Ms. Jones said, "I think that [peer coaching] has probably built a great respect among teachers. In contrasting the traditional observation with peer coaching, she noted, "There's not the give and take, there's not the rapport that builds, and I think you find a greater respect among colleagues who do this [peer coaching] and I think that's a real plus. She concluded, "I would imagine, almost to a person, that peer coaching's been very positive, hasn't it?"

Nate Underwood noted a greater trust among peer coaches, and believed it originated with the administration. He stated, "I think it [peer coaching] has a direct, explicit implication that the administration trusts me, that I know what's best for me, and that they're allowing me to participate in a process that will be helpful to me." When describing peer coaching, Mr. Underwood said:

It's interactive, an interactive process with people with credibility, real credibility, not perceived credibility, not Teacher of the Year credibility, but real credibility, toward a mutually beneficial goal. I can interact with somebody that I think a lot of and I can get some ideas that are going to keep me fresh and help my students and help me. And, I can do that in turn for them. That's got to be the best situation.

Therefore, teachers noted greater trust among peer coaches. The sense of trust among teachers in the program was enhanced by the relationships they experienced through

participation as well as through their increased trust in the program itself. The overall increase in trust led teachers to note a greater morale among peer coaches.

<u>Meanings-Theme Nine Teachers noted greater morale among peer coaches</u>.

About half who participated in the research noted greater morale among peer coaches. Their enthusiasm, their confidence, and their courage were enhanced as they participated in the peer coaching program. Nate Underwood voiced his confidence when he said, "I'm not afraid to change, thankfully." He continued:

> There are things I've had band directors suggest to me. I did it and I said, "Why has it taken me fifteen years to find this out?" You know? And, fortunately, I've been able to do the same thing in return to other guys. They say, "How do you teach ta da ta da?" And, I say, "Well,, I blah, blah, blah." and they say, "That's great." So, it's kind of, well, I always like to say band directors are an incestuous lot anyway. (laughter)

As he noted specific benefits of the peer coaching program, Mr. Underwood said:

> For some reason, we're not thought of as professionals by a certain sector of the public. And so it [peer coaching] makes you feel like we have credibility with the administration who is willing to do that. I would think that an administration or a school system that would not allow peer coaching is assuming that the people they've hired are not competent enough to know what's best for them, and that they need this real structured process. And you know, to be honest, it's always easier to default to a pre organized plan than it is to think through something that's out of the paradigm. All of a sudden, now I'm having to think about what I want out of it.

Mr. Underwood further explained:

> When I reach these conclusions, through this hard thought process, I think it's meaningful for me to have come up with said process. I think that anybody that's fervent about their belief system, and I think people who have accepted beliefs that are other's beliefs, aren't fervent believers, I think your beliefs are passionate only if you

come to them through some very intense process. And, if you are passionate about that,

then you want to share with somebody else. And, if you share it once, you see the

impact it has on them.

Mr. Underwood's passion for his work and his desire to share that passion with others, led, in

his opinion, to a greater sense of community with his colleagues. As mentioned previously, Mr.

Underwood defined peer coaching as, "an interactive process with people with credibility, real

credibility, not perceived credibility, not Teacher of the Year credibility, but real credibility

toward a mutually beneficial goal." He continued:

If I can interact with somebody that I think a lot of and I can get some ideas that are

going to keep me fresh and help my students and help me, and I can do that in turn for

them, that's got to be the best situation.

Nita Johnson expressed her opinion that the nature of the peer coaching program

attracted people who were confident in what they did: "I would think most people who would

choose peer coaching would be those people whose personalities lend itself to openness." Rita

Jones said that she felt like teachers would benefit from participating in the peer coaching

program. She stated:

It's given people a reason to go into other people's classes whereas, if we just say,

"Go, take your planning period and go into someone else's class," then it, time, just eats

everything away, whereas here, it's, "Okay, I am going into this other class." And, over

the years, I think as people do this with others and change the people, and I don't

know how you plan for that, if people should pick different people each year, but the

more people you have this interchange with, you know, people are probably more

comfortable with each other. I think it would be very beneficial to work with other

people because that gets me into their classes and them into my classes.

Nancy Dixon said, "As a veteran teacher, I think the thing that's most helpful for me is

just being able to get together with other teachers and share new ideas." This idea sharing, in

Ms. Dixon's opinion, caused teachers to feel their "opinions were being valued." Donna Martin

discussed the credibility teachers felt for each other as opposed to that they felt toward the

administration regarding observations. She noted the trust and confidence she and her coaching

partner had in each other. "She would have accepted anything I said and I would have

accepted anything she said, but at the same time, with the room situation, there's a lot of

togetherness there." As stated previously, Ms. Martin referred to peer coaching as,

"professionally useful camaraderie." She continued, "Anyone who voluntarily did this would be

someone I would want as a peer coach." She continued:

> To talk to a person who's asking me for help makes me feel like my 23 years have
>
> been worth something. I do feel valued, and sometimes, we don't feel very valued so it
>
> helps morale, frankly. It does, and of course, it helps me to feel like there are so many
>
> people that I can ask questions to that will give me helpful information, not just pats on
>
> the back. Those are necessary too, but [I want] actually helpful feedback.

Olivia Robinson noted, "I think it's a good program and I'm glad we're doing it.

What's the use of having wisdom if people are spitting in your eye, implying that you don't

know anything anyway?" In her opinion, the ability within the program to choose a partner and

to share at will contributed to her overall sense of well-being and meaningfulness. Lee Collins

said:

> I just don't think a person should become stagnant in their thinking or their ideas and
>
> learning. Continuing to learn from others, to me, is the best way to continue to increase
>
> your ideas, or to get fresh ideas, even though you may not use them in the classroom.
>
> But, you're still moving around among people, and the more you learn, the more
>
> procedures and ways of learning you learning, I think the better off you are as a person
>
> in society.

Deb Ingles noted:

> Peer coaching, I think, brings a better sense of community to your school. You get a better opportunity to develop relationships. You can become closer to other teachers, and you can get to know them better. You can develop yourself, your sense of openness.

> In summary, teachers directly or indirectly noted greater morale among peer coaches.

Meanings-Theme Ten: Peer coaching was worth the extra work.

Eleven of 14 teachers said they were motivated to do the extra work associated with peer coaching because of the gains they anticipated. Nate Underwood, when asked why he would choose to participate in a program that, unlike the traditional observation, was not passive on his part, but required more work, responded:

> Well, for one thing, it's really not that much more work. I mean, yeah, you have to think a little bit about something that would be meaningful for you. I would sit down and think of something that would go back and address that need. And so, as I've thought about it, I came up with something that would address that, and yeah, it takes a little brain power. I think a good teacher's always evaluating it anyway.

Nita Johnson said:

> Well, they said it was more work but it was worth the extra work and I agree, having done it. There are people who would rather say, "Just come observe me [traditionally] and get it over with. I don't want to get anything out of it. I don't want anybody else in my classroom." I'm sure we have a few who feel that way. I think if more people tried it, they would really like it, because I really wouldn't want to go back to [the traditional observation] at this point. I would just love to do peer coaching. My concern at the beginning was, "Was it more work?" and everybody said, "Yeah, it is," and I thought, "How much more?" There are some people that would never try it just because it's

more work but it really ends up not work. It just ends up being something that you're

glad you did, so it doesn't seem like work.

Ms. Jones, the Language Arts Department chair, noted that peer coaching did involve more

work, yet had an explanation as to why people would choose peer coaching.

I think they find it's more meaningful because, for one thing, they have somebody

looking for something that they want to improve. They have something specific

somebody is looking to help them [with], something that gets them into other people's

classes who would not normally be doing that.

Paula Reese, when asked why she and other teachers would participate in something that

involved more work, responded, "For selfish reasons, for my own personal and

professional reasons. I gain something out of it, so why not go to the trouble?" She elaborated,

and said:

Oh yeah, it's more work. I actually have to do something that is off the norm. I have to

make a plan, an observation, a request and contacts. If I think about the

first five years [of teaching], I was wanting advice and input. I wanted some

validation. I wanted it for some different reasons than I want it now.

Donna Martin acknowledged that peer coaching was more work for her, then stated further:

Yeah, but there's always a little bit of nervousness when your [traditional] observer

comes in. I think the main reason I peer coached was it actually seemed like it would be

useful to me personally. [If it were mandatory], it would just turn into paperwork, non

useful paperwork, which would be pointless. But I really think you've got, you know,

people that are motivated to improve themselves, and that think they might have

something to offer someone else.

Elaine Overstreet recognized that peer coaching was more work than the traditional

observation choice. She said:

I think it's wonderful. I think it's a much better option that doing the other. This kind of

program, you're working on something that you really can exchange information and

learn from. But to me, the [traditional] lacks a lot in getting a teacher to learn and to go

on. It's just another form.

Olivia Robinson, when asked why she would choose to do more work, responded:

I think personally, and this holds true for most human beings, that given the chance,

we'd rather do something meaningful even though it might be harder, than to do

something that is just another piece of paper, just another talk. Some of the things my

partner said to me were things that needed to be improved which I was aware of. And

her saying those things to me, it wasn't just her sitting there

patting me on the back saying, "[Olivia], you were great," but it was more meaningful.

Lee Collins, in discussing his choice of peer coaching, mentioned:

I definitely think that it would be one of the things that I would want to do in the future,

having gone through it, and there are some advantages in peer coaching that I think

would help both partners in the program to learn. I'm always looking for something new

in my teaching. That's exactly what I'm talking about, what I mean. To be able to go,

when I hear about a particular teacher, not particularly in science, that's doing this

particular method or project, then I would like to go see that in action. I think it would

be good to do that.

Although Mr. Collins did not explicitly note that peer coaching was more work, he mentioned

proactive courses of action that he had taken or would like to take with regard to peer coaching

which were not inherent in the passive traditional observation choice.

Elaine Overstreet noted:

It was more beneficial than the observation by the administration. You actually got to

meet with a peer and figure out a plan that you wanted, and observe and try to tackle a

problem. I enjoyed sitting back and watching somebody else's classroom. It actually

helped me evaluate and say, "Is this a problem? Do I do that? Should I do that? Should I incorporate this technique into my classroom?" You never get that opportunity with the [traditional observation]. It really never tells you too much about specifics, and I think that we can benefit more, at this stage, especially after we've been teaching awhile, from specifics.

Rose Vickers agreed that the extra work involved was worth the effort and indicated:

I knew what I was looking for and she knew what she was looking for and it really was more an adventure. I don't think of it as additional work. The forms that we filled out before and after were very simple and took very little time to do.

To summarize this motivation, it seems that teachers were motivated to do the extra work associated with peer coaching due to the gains they anticipated receiving from the program.

Based on the data, ten common themes were determined. These commons themes were supported by data and discussed with regard to the motivations that teachers had for participating in the voluntary peer coaching program and with regard to the meanings that teachers held for the peer coaching experience. This chapter discussed individual findings and common themes with regard to motivations that teachers had for participating in a voluntary peer coaching program and the meanings that they held for peer coaching.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to describe the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. This research was conducted in order to answer the following research questions: What motivated these veteran teachers to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program? What meanings did peer coaching have for them?

This chapter presents a summary of the study. Discussion and implications for further research and practical applications, based on this study, are then presented, followed by a final commentary.

Summary of the Study

A grounded theory research design was used to study the perspectives of 14 veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program. In-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants utilizing the initial guiding questions: What motivated you to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program? What meanings does peer coaching have for you? Motivations noted by the teachers included their desire to learn, their experiences with informal peer coaching, their desire for meaningful feedback, their attraction to the choices offered throughout the program, and their dissatisfaction with the traditional observation. Meanings for the teachers included meaningful feedback, a desire to direct their learning, a perception of increased trust and increased morale among teachers who participated in the program, and an indication that peer coaching was worth the extra work.

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Research Design

Data collection, which consisted of in-depth interviews with each participant, as well as a review of available artifacts from the research site, began in June of 2001. Initial interviews were guided by two questions: What motivated you to participate in the voluntary peer coaching program? What meanings does peer coaching have for you? Constant comparative analysis was employed as codes were established and categories emerged leading to theoretical discussion..

Symbolic interactionism was the guiding theoretical framework used to shape this research and to inform the researcher's interpretation of the findings. Symbolic interactionism is defined as "activity in which humans interpret each other's gestures and act on the basis of meaning yielded by interpretation" (Blumer, 1969, pp. 65-66). The researcher, utilizing these components of symbolic interactionism, determined and analyzed the perspectives through which voluntary participants in a peer coaching program created meanings and interacted with each other based on the meanings, and determined how those meanings were modified by participants as they worked with their partners in the peer coaching process.

Two levels of findings were noted and discussed in Chapter 4. These two levels included individual findings and common themes. Data from 14 participants yielded individual findings from which ten commons themes were established, five which addressed motivation, and five which addressed meanings. Discussion and implications with regard to further research and practical applications were determined based on the findings at those two levels.

Discussion

Two levels of findings, individual findings and common themes, were discussed in Chapter 4 with regard to motivations and meanings. The purpose of this section is to discuss some of the major findings in the context of the extant literature. Each section below will include an assertion, supported by data and theoretical discussion, and followed by comments regarding the current literature.

Teachers are willing to do extra work because they want to learn. Teachers involved in the voluntary peer coaching program were required to do more work than they would have done had they chosen the traditional observation. This extra work included decision making, problem solving, and reflecting as well as conducting pre conferences, observations, post conferences, and completing the accompanying forms. Why would teachers choose to do more work? Teachers reported that they wanted to "get something out of it [the observation]." They wanted to learn and were willing to invest the extra time and effort required by peer coaching in order to satisfy that desire to learn.

More than half of 14 teachers reported that peer coaching was worth the extra work required of them. They wanted to learn and indicated that desire for learning by specifying an area with which they wanted their peer's help. For example, Ms. Jones reported, "I think they find it's more meaningful because, for one thing, they have somebody looking for something they want to improve. They have something specific somebody is looking to help them [with]." Donna Martin believed that participants in the voluntary peer coaching program were willing to do the extra work because the gain was "useful". She recognized that people were willing to do more work because they wanted to learn. She said, "But I really think you've got, you know, people that are motivated to improve themselves, and that think they might have something to offer someone else." Elaine Overstreet wanted to learn and was willing to do the extra work. She stated, "I think it's wonderful. It's a much better option that doing the other. This kind of program, you're working on something that you really can exchange information and learn from." Ms. Overstreet wanted to learn new technology that she could incorporate into her lessons. Mr. Collins wanted fresh ideas and was willing to do extra work to get them. Mr. Collins said, "There are some advantages in peer coaching that I think would help both partners in the program to learn. I'm always looking for something new in my teaching."

What research has been done to support this notion that teachers will do extra work in order to learn? According to Knowles (1970), adult learners are motivated to learn those things

for which they see a need to learn. The teachers involved in the voluntary peer coaching program were motivated to participate because of the gains in learning they hoped to achieve. They were acting according to their own standards, achieving self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). These teachers were motivated by the possibility of learning (Herzberg, 1987). These teachers know "performance is acceptable and now strive for excellence" (Glickman, et al, 1995, p. 68). These teachers chose to learn even though it involved more work for them. Besides their willingness to do the extra work because they wanted to learn, teachers were willing to do the extra work because they wanted meaningful feedback.

Teachers will do extra work in order to receive meaningful feedback. Meaningful feedback, defined by the teachers, included idea sharing and affirmation. It can be discussed separately from learning, which usually included the acquisition of a new skill. Teachers were willing to do extra work in order to gain meaningful feedback. Meaningful feedback was mentioned by every participant in the research. Likewise, every teacher in the research mentioned a lack of satisfaction with the traditional observation because it did *not* provide meaningful feedback. Ms. Robinson discussed her desire for meaningful feedback, and said, "We'd rather do something meaningful even though it might be harder." Nita Johnson said, "Well, they said it was more work but it was worth the extra work and I agree, having done it." She continued her discussion of the traditional observation and stated, "I just don't get anything out of it." She concluded, "There are some people that would never try it just because it's more work, but it really ends up not work. It just ends up being something that you're glad you did, so it doesn't seem like work." Paula Reese said the meaningful feedback she received was worth the extra work. She mentioned, "I gain something out of it, so why not go to the trouble?" Donna Martin said, "I think the main reason I peer coached was it actually seemed like it would be useful to me personally." The extra work involved was incidental to the teachers. The meaningful feedback they hoped to receive was of greater importance. Olivia Robinson noted, "I think, personally, and this holds true for most human beings, that given the chance, we'd

rather do something meaningful even though it might be harder, than to do something that is just another piece of paper, just another talk." Teachers will do extra work in order to receive meaningful feedback.

"Feedback is central to maintaining high motivation and commitment to both organization and activity (Firestone and Pennell, 1993, p. 503). Teachers wanted to receive this feedback from someone they trusted, someone they considered to be expert, someone they felt would be honest with them. They were willing to do extra work in order to gain this meaningful feedback. Darling-Hammond (1998) supported the notion that teachers need to reflect on their practice and that of others. These teachers wanted to reflect. They wanted feedback that was meaningful and specific to their strengths and weaknesses. Joyce and Showers (1996), however, indicated that feedback is not a necessary component in the coaching process. In fact, they noted, feedback may even be harmful. They discovered that teachers, in providing feedback, became too supervisory with one another. Consequently, coaching partnerships suffered. As a result, they suggested that feedback be eliminated from the coaching process. This was not found to be true within the context of this research.

Teachers who have experiences with informal peer coaching are likely to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program. Data revealed that 9 of the 14 teachers had experiences with informal peer coaching. Teachers who felt comfortable speaking with their peers about teaching and learning were likely to participate in voluntary peer coaching. The level of trust required when exposing one's practices to a peer was established through teachers' previous experiences with informal peer coaching. Almost always, teachers chose to peer coach with friends or fellow department members with whom they already had a relationship. Therefore, it is asserted that teachers who have experiences with informal peer coaching will likely participate in a voluntary peer coaching program. The veteran teachers who participated in the voluntary peer coaching program were motivated due to their previous experiences with informal peer coaching. They had been engaged in conversations with their

peers regarding teaching and learning for years prior to the research. This routine of working with their colleagues brought them to the peer coaching program, giving them the initial comfort they needed to participate. Additionally, they moved toward the voluntary program because the program provided a sanctioned opportunity for them to do what they had been doing, on their own, all along. They were accustomed to reflecting and sharing with their colleagues. Lee Collins said:

> We didn't call it peer coaching, but in a sense I guess it could be, because I've asked other teachers if I could come into their classroom to observe them teaching in different areas, and it was [peer coaching} although we had not prearranged things.

Jane Overton noted, "In a sense, I guess I've always [peer coached]. It seemed like, in the early years, that was sort of a natural, normal thing. I think teachers are sharing ideas with the department, and so forth." Nancy Dixon reflected on the previous informal coaching experiences she and her colleagues had shared. She offered, "We would get together and say, 'Okay, what are some techniques we can use?' and we'd go to other people that had taught it [same curriculum]." The teachers had been peer coaching, informally, for years. They saw the formal program as an extension of something they were already doing. Nate Underwood said, "We network a lot anyway. This [peer coaching] is just an extension of it." Teachers who have experiences with informal peer coaching are likely to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program.

Why would teachers with experience in informal peer coaching be inclined to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program? Knowles (1970) suggested that adult learning should relate to an adult's previous experiences as adult learners have had the opportunity to experience much in life. Adults see themselves as a result of the experiences in which they have participated up until the point of new learning. Fullan's (1991) work is consistent with Knowles' theory that adults' learning should be linked to prior experiences. Not only is the voluntary peer

coaching program linked to the previous informal peer coaching in which teachers participated, participation was a choice for these adults, a choice to direct their learning.

  Veteran teachers who participate in a voluntary peer coaching program want to direct their own learning. The teachers who participated in the voluntary peer coaching program came into the program willing to meet the established requirements. However, once they became engaged in the coaching experience, they said they wanted more flexibility and more choices in the program. They wanted to direct their learning. In addition, it was noted by the researcher that teachers who were considered to be higher risk takers wanted to direct their own learning more than teachers who were considered to be lower risk takers.

  Higher risk takers asked that the structure of the program be changed in order to include their own ideas about the coaching process. For example, instead of a prearranged time for observation, higher risk takers asked if an open door policy could be established, voluntarily, among participants. They wanted to visit each other's classrooms whenever they could. They wanted others to visit their classroom unannounced. They felt they could risk that exposure of their practices. They wanted to direct their own learning and found the pre-established structure of the peer coaching program to be confining. They wanted to direct their own learning by visiting and receiving other teachers on their own terms. Ms. Johnson noted, "I like the open door policy where people can just come in and kind of visit and pick up what they want to pick up and maybe stop and offer what they want to say to students. Nancy Dixon also wanted to direct her own learning and asked for an open door policy. "It's really nice to get together with new people. I would like to have times to be able to go and observe other teachers, especially English teachers, and see how they're teaching certain things, especially things I'm teaching." Lee Collins said, "I mean, to be able to go and when I hear about a particular teacher, not particularly in science, that's doing this particular method or project, then I would like to go see that in action and I think it would be good to do that."

Furthermore, these higher risk taking teachers wanted the focus of the observation to be open-ended. Elaine Overstreet noted:

I think it might be interesting, next year, to just sort of go in and say, "Write down what you've observed instead of just targeting a specific behavior. Tell me about my methods or tell me about how I run my classroom and is it different from yours and how can I learn from you?" Make it more open ended.

Pat Howell stated, "If things are just sort of rocking along, and everything's going well, that [open ended observation] might be an idea." Veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program wanted to direct their own learning.

What causes teachers to want to direct their own learning? These teachers reached a point of volunteering to participate in a program, and went so far as to ask that the program be made flexible to accommodate their learning needs. They were at a stage in their career, similar to Maslow's (1954) self-actualization stage, that found them seeking opportunities to enhance themselves, and pushing for these opportunities to be flexible enough to meet their self-determined learning needs. Knowles (1970) suggested that adults want responsibility for what they are going to learn and how they are going to learn it. Brookfield (1986) noted that collaboration between teachers and instructors as to objectives for teacher learning, as well as a goal on the part of the facilitator for the program to be empowering for the adult learner while providing self-directed, proactive learning opportunities are central in effectively facilitating adult learning. Herzberg (1987) noted that adults who are given more opportunities to make decisions will work harder in order to ensure their success. Teachers who want to direct their own learning are likely to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program.

Trust among teachers was enhanced when they participated in a voluntary peer coaching program. Participation in a voluntary peer coaching program enhanced teachers' trust. Teachers stated a clear preference for someone to observe them who "does what I do." Initially, teachers chose their coaching partners because they felt comfortable with that person.

Olivia Robinson said, "I picked her because we were friends." Deb Ingles noted, "We established trust that first night." Though trust was present in many of the coaching relationships, being the basis for the formation of that relationship, trust was enhanced as teachers worked through the process of participating in a voluntary peer coaching program. Donna Martin, moved beyond her trust in individual people and toward trusting the program itself, explained, "Anyone who voluntarily did this [peer coaching] would be someone I would want as a peer coach." She trusted the motivations other teachers had for participating in the voluntary peer coaching program. Olivia Robinson trusted her partner enough to ask her to go beyond polite "nice things" and "tell me what you really see."

Melenzyer (1990) said that peer trust is not only noted but also appreciated by teachers, especially with regard to their abilities. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) suggested that teachers work together, talk together, read and reflect, and gain from each other's understandings. Teachers believed that the nature of the program caused it to involve proactive teachers, motivated to grow professionally. This notion is supported by research (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Lieberman, 1995; Showers, 1985). Maslow (1954) determined that once humans feel safe, their desires include belonging to a group and forming relationships with which they are comfortable. This fulfilled, their motivation changes from one of seeking acceptance to becoming a contributing member of the group. Trust among teachers was enhanced when they participated in a voluntary peer coaching program.

The section above has discussed some of the major findings in the context of the extant literature. Comments from teachers have served to strengthen these categories along with the connections between these categories. In working with these findings, the researcher established a picture of the perspectives of veteran teachers who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program.

Implications

The implications of the research on veteran teachers participating in a voluntary peer coaching program include suggestions for further research. Furthermore, implications for higher education and for staff developers in K-12 schools will be discussed.

Implications for Further Research

As teachers grow and develop, it is hoped that schools will become more effective, thereby improving teaching and learning.

> If a supervisor could promote thinking among the school staff, school effectiveness might not be far behind. Thinking improves when people interact with each other, when they break routine by experimenting, when they observe others at work, and when they assess and revise their own actions. A cause beyond oneself becomes the norm, and the school becomes successful. (Glickman, et al, 1995, p. 73)

The impact of a voluntary peer coaching program on the effectiveness of the school might be a topic for further study. School reform, including a focus on improved teaching and learning within schools, often begins within schools as a move toward increased professionalism. What effects does this increase in professional responsibility, inherent in a voluntary peer coaching program, have on school effectiveness? What meanings does a voluntary peer coaching program have for the school as a whole?

Based on their research, Joyce and Showers (1996) suggested that meaningful feedback should not be a component of peer coaching. They determined that teachers providing the feedback became too supervisory and damaged the coaching relationship. However, data in this study have revealed that meaningful feedback was a motivator for participation as well as a meaning that teachers held for peer coaching. Further research might determine the point, if any, at which feedback, so craved by participants, becomes detrimental to the coaching process. Does the structure of the program impact the effectiveness of the feedback? For example, if teachers are willing to choose coaching partners, will they continue

to receive feedback that they determine is meaningful? Does the amount of time or trust invested in the coaching relationship determine the meaningfulness of the feedback as the teacher perceives it Does the structure of a voluntary program cause teachers to work consciously at providing their chosen partners nonjudgmental feedback?

Finally, it is known that teachers, particularly these veteran teachers, want to direct their own learning. What are the professional growth opportunities that are meaningful enough for veteran teachers to cause them to do more work in order to participate in the opportunity? Veteran teachers in this voluntary peer coaching program were willing to do more work because of the learning and the meaningful feedback they would gain. What other types of staff development or professional growth opportunities yield similar commitment?

Implications for Higher Education

Professional growth opportunities geared toward veteran teachers suggest implications for higher education. Educators at the university level might work with staff developers toward establishing programs specifically tailored to meet the needs of veteran teachers. This training and assistance might be provided within already established service learning structures.

Staff development and supervision classes should include opportunities for aspiring administrators to exchange ideas about programs that address the needs of veteran teachers as voluntary adult learners. In addition to the theoretical basis provided regarding staff development, aspiring staff developers might be presented with examples of programs that are working well to serve veteran teachers.

Additionally, postgraduate work, in particular, might address veteran teachers with ideas for growth opportunities they might initiate within their schools as well as with the curricular information they seek while working on advanced degrees. As indicated previously, though adult learners want to take initiative for their own learning, they do not always know how to go about it, having seldom been exposed to the opportunity (Knowles, 1970).

Veteran teachers, while not always desiring an advanced degree, want an opportunity to grow and develop. Though many find that opportunity in a postgraduate program, how many more would welcome the opportunity for furthered growth and development without the commitment that working towards an advanced degree demands? Are there seminars or presentations that could be provided for these veteran teachers, perhaps at their local school sites, that would encourage them to seek knowledge and explore growth opportunities?

<center>Implications for K-12 Staff Developers</center>

Staff developers within K-12 school systems are often found at both the local school level as well as the county level. The implications for staff developers from the findings of this study are many. Though many districts are guided in their staff development by suggestions or mandates from their county level personnel, the perspectives of the veteran teachers who served as the basis of this study imply that opportunities to discuss their teaching, formally or informally, are valued by educators, an idea that may be applied in local schools regardless of district mandates and requirements. With regard to the teachers for whom staff developers are responsible, implications have been drawn in several areas and will be presented as such. These areas include implications with regard to veteran teachers and adult learners, motivation, risk-taking, efficacy, trust, and empowerment. Each of these areas will be discussed and the implications for those areas stated.

The implications for staff developers with regard to veteran teachers and adult learners include the need for the staff developer to be aware of the characteristics of each. Nolan and Hillkirk (1991) hypothesized that veteran teachers who participate in professional growth and development programs that include coaching and reflection will think significantly more about their teaching, and they are more likely to make changes in their teaching than veteran teachers who did not participate in such activities.

As staff developers work toward providing professional growth opportunities for teachers, it is imperative that adult learning theory guide that staff development. The peer

coaching program at Hope has illustrated this guidance with its willingness to give adult learners the responsibility for their learning and their actions (Knowles, 1970). Staff developers should provide opportunities for discussion among the adult learners in their programs. The atmosphere should be one of mutual exchange (Brookfield, 1986). Because adults will best learn those things for which they see a need to learn, it is of extreme importance that peer coaching programs are voluntary (Knowles, 1970). Adults should have the opportunity to suggest what it is they want to learn as well as how they plan to go about gaining that knowledge.

Furthermore, staff developers should note the importance of the program coordinator and the teachers working together to facilitate the adults' furthered learning. Responsibilities for the learning process should be shared. Finally, teachers must be encouraged to evaluate their own learning experiences in a nonjudgmental manner, planning for further learning as needed.

Teachers are motivated to work for gains they determine to be meaningful. Because they anticipated the gain of meaningful feedback, teachers, who were the participants of this study, were willing to do more work. The implication for staff developers is that teachers are willing to work harder if they believe that the results of their work will be meaningful. They are willing to spend time, devoted to their professional growth, if they feel that their time is well invested, and that the outcome of that time spent will be meaningful to them. It would serve staff developers well to examine the motivations teachers have for participating in programs and to offer teachers differentiated staff development opportunities based on those motivations.

Teachers in varying career stages, for example, are motivated by different factors. The staff developer must keep in mind those teachers who are seeking staff development simply to fulfill a certification requirement as opposed to those teachers who are seeking staff development for the sake of the learning itself. The approaches toward the wide range of motivated teachers differ.

It would behoove staff developers to listen to their teachers, noting especially what teachers ask for with regard to their own professional growth. The risks that teachers are willing to take will indicate, to the staff developer, their willingness to grow, perhaps even beyond the parameters of a program that is already in place. Allowing teachers to note and seek these risks is a risk in itself, for the staff developer, but one which is necessary in order for the staff developer to maximize professional growth and development for his or her staff. Staff developers must encourage risk taking behavior on the part of their teachers in order to facilitate improved teaching.

As a result of taking risks in the voluntary peer coaching program, teachers received affirmation. Several teachers mentioned, when discussing the meanings that peer coaching held for them, the sense of affirmation they received as a result of a teacher's comments after observing them or as a result of their internal self-confirmation when observing a peer. Their ability to produce a desired result as well as their effectiveness was confirmed for them, leading to a greater sense of efficacy on the part of the teacher. Staff development programs which involve teachers in peer coaching and reflection will note this result.

Staff developers have the opportunity to enhance teachers' efficacy by providing an opportunity for teachers to choose to participate in a trusting, caring, and open exchange with a chosen and respected fellow teacher. When teachers direct their growth from the point of even participating in the voluntary peer coaching program, they develop a sense of ownership in the program. They find in themselves the power to produce the effects they desire. As teachers experience affirmation as a result of the choices they make, their sense of efficacy is enhanced. This has far reaching implications for staff developers working toward improved teaching and learning and eventual school reform. Prior to this, trust must be present among persons involved in the staff development program.

Teachers indicated to the researcher that their trust in a person was a determining factor in how much they valued feedback from that person. They believed that a person had more credibility, and ergo, earned more of their trust, when that person was in circumstances similar to theirs, such as a classroom situation. They did not grant similar credibility to administrators who were no longer experiencing, on a daily basis, what they were experiencing.

Trust between the two participants generally was established prior to entering the program, as teachers initially chose teachers with whom they already had a relationship. Eventually, as teachers moved toward taking higher risks, their trust of the program and its participants superseded specific trust, and allowed them to place general trust in most all of the participants. McBride and Skau noted, "Experience suggests several factors are closely related to trust. Relations built upon confidentiality, consistency, risk taking, honesty, sincerity, and a climate of mutual exchange promote the development of trust" (1995, p. 264). Staff development programs which have a trust building component will benefit teachers.

Staff developers may enhance this sense of trust among participants by consciously working to serve teachers as a facilitator of a program as opposed to serving as a director of a program. Teachers who have choice will move through programs with a heightened sense of trust toward the program, the participants, and toward the administrators from whom they are perceiving this trust. The power to choose, throughout a growth process, is a primary component in the development of trust. Staff developers must be willing to direct less and facilitate more in order to maintain the trust they establish by offering this type of learning opportunity to their teachers.

Teachers who participated in the peer coaching program at Hope High School enjoyed a heightened sense of empowerment, though they did not identify it as such. They expressed a heightened feeling of trust from the administration. However, staff developers, in developing programs for teachers, should note that sharing power and decision making with teachers, having teachers assess the knowledge base, encouraging trust and confidence between

teachers, and extending recognition and appreciation will develop, in teachers, a sense of caring and community. A culture of honest communication will emerge and the sense of empowerment among teachers will be heightened (Melenzyer, 1990).

Trust and empowerment work together to move teachers toward achieving higher levels of development with regard to their career stages. Empowered teachers can be developed through staff development programs that have, as a goal, teacher empowerment in mind. Facilitators of staff development will work with adult learners to provide the adult learner the opportunities he or she requests in order to perpetuate that person's professional growth and development. The sense of empowerment that will result from a teacher asking for and receiving what, in their professional opinion, is needed in order to grow, serves to motivate the individual further.

As teachers moved through the researched peer coaching experiences, they confirmed the tenets of adult learning theory, established trust, experienced empowerment, and moved toward a form of "autosupervision" as suggested by Zepeda (1996). Zepeda, et al (1996) defined "autosupervision" as the ability of teachers to supervise themselves, analyzing their goals and progress through reflection while working at a developmental level that is high enough to support themselves with regard to their own personal growth and supervision. The teachers at Hope, who participated in a voluntary peer coaching program, grew from merely participating in a program to a point of shaping the program to fit their individual needs. They appreciated the initial structure provided by the supervisor, but eventually wanted more freedom to shape the program to their needs.

Staff developers who provide teachers with the opportunities noted above will find themselves facilitating supervision more, but directing that supervision less. The adults involved in such programs will establish a culture of "asking for" instead of "being done to" with regard to their own professional growth and development. The irony lies in the fact that in order for teachers to become empowered autosupervisors, staff developers must be willing to do less of

the traditional staff development they might have practiced for years. This move toward creating autosupervisors must be learned by supervisors. Teachers must be encouraged because the power to autosupervise is not within their realm of experiences, in most cases. They will be asked to behave in ways that are, perhaps, awkward or unknown for them. These teachers need to be supported by strong staff developers who will, in turn, need support from their principals. School administrators might support staff developers by offering them freedom to run programs which are based on teacher input.

In summary, the implication of this research is that voluntary peer coaching, as a form of mentoring, motivates veteran teachers, as adult learners, to achieve higher levels of trust, empowerment and efficacy, resulting in greater risk-taking and a movement toward self supervision. For staff developers, the implication is that peer coaching, presented as a voluntary professional growth program, and guided by adult learning principles, will serve to increase, not only teachers' perceptions of their own professional skills, but respect and morale among teachers as well.

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APPENDIX A

CODING CHART

Coding Chart

	PC	RSK	NSO	REL	MF	TRU	CHO	M/R	TALK	IPC	G&T	ISHR	REF	AFF	TIME	VET	FOC	VST	RULE
RV	X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
DI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
EO	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
LC	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
PH	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
OR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	
VY	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
JO	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X				X	X		
DM	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
PR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X		
ND	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
RJ	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
NJ	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
NU	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	

Explanation of Codes:

PC = Partner choice	RSK = Risk
NSO = Negative Toward State Observation Tool	REL = Relationship
MF = Meaningful Feedback	TRU = Trust
CHO = Choice	M/R = Morale/Respect
TALK = Talk	IPC = Informal Peer Coaching
G&T = Give and Take	ISHR = Idea Sharing
REF = Reflection	AFF = Affirmation
TIME = Time Issues	VET = Veteran Characteristics
FOC = Focus of Observation	VST = Visit
RULE = Rules	

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIVE CHART

The Perspectives of Veteran High School Teachers Participating in a
Voluntary Peer Coaching Program

A Descriptive Chart

The State of Readiness at Which Participating Teachers Entering Peer Coaching

Veteran Characteristics
History of Informal Coaching
Will Work for Anticipated Gain

Low Risk Takers   High Risk Takers

Motivation

Meaningful Feedback	Meaningful Feedback
Choice (participation, focus, partner, logistics)	Affirmation

Risk Taking Process

Structure (rules, format, logistics)	Desire for Two-Way Open Door Policy
Choice (partner, focus, logistics)	Desire for Tailored Program to Suit Participants

Outcomes

Meaningful Feedback
Affirmation
Increase Respect Among Teachers
Increased Morale Among Teachers

APPENDIX C

ANALYTIC STORY

The Perceptions of Veteran Teachers Participating in a Voluntary

Peer Coaching Program

An Analytic Story

Lea Arnau-7/24/01

Peer Coaching at Hope is a voluntary program aimed at professional growth. Teachers, while required to have an observation each year, may choose the traditional means of observation which is based on the state observation model, though it is not an evaluative observation for them, or they may choose to peer coach.

Veteran teachers who chose to participate in a voluntary peer coaching program are the focus of this research. These teachers display characteristics of Readiness to participate and move through a cycle that includes Two Stages of Motivation, Process, and Outcomes.

The researcher found that these teachers are at a stage of Readiness to participate, having a history of informal peer coaching, a willingness to work for gain, and characteristics of veteran teachers. With regard to their history of informal coaching, the researcher found that these teachers have worked for years with colleagues, discussing methods, techniques, curriculum, etc., and constantly seek the opportunity to have these conversations.

These veteran teachers also come into the peer coaching program knowing ahead of time that it will involve more work on their part. Unlike the passive observation they might have chosen with the traditional model, the peer coaching program asks that they attend an orientation, choose a partner, and each go through a cycle of preconferencing, observation, and postconferencing with the other. Finally, they are asked to complete and submit a focus sheet and a survey of the program at the end of each year.

In addition, the researcher found that these teachers display the characteristics of veteran teachers. That is to say, they desire and benefit from andragogy, the "art and science of helping adults learn" (Knowles, 1970, p. 38). They are at high stages in their career development, and they have preferences regarding the types of supervision they desire.

Though teachers may bypass Stage I, most teachers initially were motivated to participate in the program due to three main reasons: they were dissatisfied with the alternative form of evaluation, the lure of choices within the program appealed to them, or they participated because they desired meaningful feedback and felt like they would get it within the program.

The process for Stage I teachers included Choice and Structure. Although choice is a motivation, choice is also considered part of the process. Teachers were asked to make choices regarding their partner, the focus they wanted their partner to observe, and logistics, that is, when, where, and how the observation and conferences would take place. Structure was provided through the orientation session and within the form the participants used. The form provided teachers with structure as far as observing and reporting. At the orientation, teachers were given information on time for observing, information regarding substitutes that were provided for them to use, as well as tips on observing, tips on conferencing, etc. The researcher found that most partners were chosen because they were friends, or because they had a skill that the other wanted to learn.

The outcomes for Stage I teachers included meaningful feedback, affirmation, increased respect and morale among teachers coaching, and the desire to tailor the program to better meet their needs, which leads to Stage II.

Meaningful feedback, though also a motivation for some teachers in Stage I, was often cited as an outcome, and indeed, becomes a primary motivator for teachers in Stage II. Confirmation of their skills and expertise was enjoyed by teachers as they worked through the observation and postconference with their partner. The researcher found that teachers mentioned a feeling of increased respect among teachers who coach, and that morale within this group was increased. Finally, an outcome of the initial process was teachers suggestions ways in which the program could be tailored to better meet their needs.

Therefore, the outcomes for teachers at Stage I are also the Motivators for

teachers at Stage II. The teachers in Stage II are focused not on what they do to get through the process, but how they can shape the process to make it work for them. At Stage II, the process changes, but the outcomes remain the same (as far as this researcher knows at this point in time).

The process at Stage II finds teachers asking for more opportunities to visit other teachers' classrooms, asking for an open-door policy that welcomes teachers to come and visit them, either within the program or without. Teachers in process at Stage II also ask for focus flexibility, preferring an option for an open-ended observation as opposed to a focused observation. These teachers in Stage II also note that they don't require choice regarding their partners, but volunteer to work with anyone in the program, believing that anyone willing to work through this growth process would be a valid partner.

APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTIVE STORY

A Coaching Story

Lea Arnau

7/17/01

Once upon a time, two coaches were talking, reviewing what had happened that day with their kids. They both had quite a bit of experience, and felt comfortable with each other. They were friends, and respected the skills each had acquired during years of working with kids. Mostly, they just liked to talk to each other, share ideas and such.

The two coaches, you see, had the same goal in mind, getting better, and they were willing to put in extra hours if necessary to meet that goal. As long as they felt like they were getting something out of it, as long as it was meaningful, they were willing to work harder than ever. They wanted to be better than they'd been last year. They wanted to be the best.

And so the two coaches talked. They discussed their individual game plans with each other, since each worked with a different group of kids. Their talents differed. They both had things to share, and they both had areas they wanted to improve.

One day, the coaches decided they would watch each other at practice to see if they could gain a few pointers from each other and give a few ideas to each other as well. As they talked this over, it happened that each coach asked the other's help with a particular thing.

The first coach asked the second to watch, to listen and see if his directions were clear to the kids, if his explanations were easy to follow. He wanted someone else, an adult he respected, to be a second set of eyes and ears as he instructed his kids. There was too much at stake this week to have any misunderstandings.

The second coach said, "Sure, and when you get a chance, walk over to my area and help me look at this kid named Steve. He's good at what he does, but he has the potential for greatness, and I can't quite get him there. I'm not seeing the problem. I'm missing something. Tell me what you see."

And so the two of them took a bit of time that day to help each other. Both wanted to be at their best. They wanted their kids to be prepared, and polished, with so much at stake.

And because they couldn't wait to hear what the other had to say, they decided to meet for dinner as soon as they finished up that afternoon. They shared the stories of what they'd seen that day, and both coaches were able to reassure the other that they saw good things, but also offered tips that might make things even better, tips that might bring about greater success, more victories.

Dinner was a comfortable time between the two, and they left, each agreeing, "Hey, this was good. Let's do it again soon." Driving home, each coach was in the zone, thinking not only about what he'd learned about himself and his abilities, but about how good he felt because his buddy had asked and valued his opinion. Imagine....

The next day, the coaches were pumped. They were ready, excited about working with the kids, ready to take them to the next level. They were going to be better than ever, stronger than before, and hmmm, just wait 'till the new coaches came around. They were going to get an ear full....and maybe they have some new ideas to share with us old guys!

Soon it was time. Each coach stepped onto his playing field. The kids were all lined up, ready to go. Each coach had a plan, including some of the new ideas he'd gotten at dinner the night before. Anticipation was in the air.

Finally, the bell rang, and the coach began class, a teacher first, who'd learned all about coaching, peer coaching, on the playing field, and had brought the idea into the classroom, where he was always striving to be the best he could be.

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Human Subjects Consent Form

I agree to participate in the research titled The Perspectives of Veteran Teachers Who Participate in a Voluntary Peer Coaching Program, which is being conducted by Lea Arnau, Educational Leadership Department at The University of Georgia (678-376-0884) under the direction of Dr. Jo Blase (706-542-3343). I understand that participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The following points have been made to me:

1. The reason for the research is to identify and examine the perspectives of veteran teachers who participate in a voluntary peer coaching program. The benefits I may expect from it include the enhancement and improvement of the above mentioned program, thereby contributing to the retention of veteran teachers.

2. The procedures are as follows:

In June of 2001, or shortly thereafter, I will be interviewed by Lea Arnau for a period of approximately one to two hours. She will ask me questions about my participation in a voluntary peer coaching program, why I chose to participate, and the meanings that peer coaching has for me.

3. No discomforts or stresses are foreseen.

4. No risks are foreseen.

5. The results of this participation will be confidential, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. I understand that conversations will be audio-taped for transcription purposes and will be destroyed in June of 2003.

6. The researcher will answer further questions about the research, now or during the course of the study, and can be reached by telephone at 678-230-6397.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date   Signature of Participant   Date

Please sign both copies of this form. Keep one and return the other to the investigator.
==
Research at The University of Georgia that involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions of problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Institutional Review Board, Office of the Vice President for Research, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; telephone 706-542-6514; E-mail address CAJ@ovpr.uga.edu

APPENDIX F

PEER COACHING PARTICIPATION FORM

Peer Coaching Form for use in 2000-2001 (Please see deadline at bottom of page.)

Teacher _____   Peer Coach _____

Preobservation conference date _____

Target behavior that coach is observing: _____

Date of scheduled observation _____   Block _____

Time arrived _____   Time departed _____   (Observation must be 45 minutes long)

During observation, students were:

_____ Working in small, cooperative groups   _____ Taking a test

_____ Making a presentation   _____ Viewing a film

_____ Working independently at their desks

_____ Other _____

During observation, the teacher was:

_____ Lecturing   _____ Reviewing for a test

_____ Facilitating a question and answer sequence   _____ Introducing a new concept

_____ Working independently with students   _____ Demonstrating a concept

_____ Other _____

Comments noted during observations: (Student characteristics, classroom climate, classroom culture, learning objectives, instructional objectives, student involvement, materials and resources, focus)

_____

_____

Date of postconference _____   Comments: (continue on back as needed) _____

_____

This form adapted from Zepeda and Mayers' Supervision and Staff Development in the Block (2000). This complete form is due to Arnau by Friday, March 30. Thanks for participating. You will receive a survey once your form has been completed.

APPENDIX G

PEER COACHING SURVEY FORM

Peer Coaching Survey

2000-2001

1. How many years have you taught?

2. Have many years have you been at (Hope High School)?

3. Did you participate in peer coaching last year, 1999-2000?

4. Do you plan to participate in peer coaching next year?_____ If not, why not?

5. Why did you choose to participate this year?

6. What has been most beneficial for you in the peer coaching program?

7. Regarding your own professional growth, in what area(s) would you like to improve?

8. Would you be willing to do two cycles next year, instead of one, if an entire sub day was provided for you? (This would be optional, not required.)

9. What kinds of conversations did you and your partner have about your teaching outside of your formal peer coaching session?

10. What professional growth opportunities can you suggest you'd like to attempt/have access to that we don't have at this point in time?