POSITIVE DEVIANCE AND TEACHER CHANGE

by

SHARON CARROLL QUINTERO

(Under the Direction of Wendy Ruona)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom practices. Three research questions guided this study. First, what propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices? Second, what did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices? Third, what strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

Eight teachers from different schools within four different systems were purposely selected for this study. A qualitative approach was chosen for this study in order to explore the emotional and personal experiences of each teacher's change processes. I interviewed each teacher using an interview guide to capture answers to the three guiding research questions. After transcribing each interview each teacher had the opportunity to affirm and clarify what I had captured and interpreted. I conducted constant comparative analysis of the data from all eight interviews.

Three conclusions emerged from this study. First, emotions are a key stimulus in recognizing a problem and engaging in attempts to change . Second, a strong self-efficacy and self-determination achieve effective change processes and positive deviant

behaviors. Third, teachers who engage in behaviors of positivity and positive deviance reap more classroom gains and personal satisfaction in his or her work and life.

INDEX WORDS: Positive deviance, positive deviant behavior, positivity, emotions, self-efficacy, self-determination, teacher change

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. My families love, undying belief in me, and cheerleading was a huge motivator. My husband, Ray, has always been an encourager in whatever employment or schooling endeavor I've pursued. My adult son's, Patrick and Andy, continuously told me I could do it. My 93 year-old Mother has been extremely supportive and understanding in need of consistent work to accomplish this. So Mom, we have a lot of girl time to resume having. My brother, Gary, thanks for your aiding in entertaining Mom when I couldn't. Lastly, to my Dad who is watching me from above, I did it Dad and can you believe my graduation lands on your birthday!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Change is necessary for improving any individual or organization. Public education's efforts to achieve change have been typically through a series of different reforms. Some reforms have been initiated through laws, national organizations, or state initiatives, while others have been initiated within individual school systems or schools. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has been and still is our national education system's current reform effort. Designed to achieve improved education for all students through measureable student progress year after year for all students until all students in a school reach or exceed proficiency in Math and English.

For most of the nation, this goal has required schools to transition to a standards-based curriculum which provides students with opportunities to investigate real-life experiences through activities that require them to develop their own in-depth thinking and questioning. The current NCLB reform effort has required many if not most school systems across the country to develop new curriculum frameworks, improve instructional strategies, purchase new materials, and adopt additional methods of assessment for meeting the standards of NCLB (The Southeast Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education, 2003). Then more recently the Common Core Curriculum movement surfaced and continues to struggle for support from legislators, parents, and some educators. These educational adjustments have escalated the demands on teachers to change not only what they teach, but also their classroom instruction and practices. For administrators it has required investigating what these change efforts

should look like within their systems and schools as well as their role in supporting efforts to ensure success and sustainability. Then even more currently, the NCLB act is under discussion for revamping due to all the different testing modes that are conducted across different states, systems, and schools (Glum, 2015; Huff Post Politics, 2015).

If transforming education, schools, and teaching is at the heart of reform, it is clear that it is the teacher who must be at the center of all efforts to improve academic achievement. The pressure to change any education system ultimately rests on each teacher as the results of their students' achievement on high stakes tests are used to rate not only teacher individually but the school as a whole (Darling-Hammond, 2015; Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). Many report the most important factor affecting individual student success in schools is the classroom teacher (Marzano, 2007; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Marzano & Toth, 2013, The New Teacher Project, 2015). Classrooms are the primary place for teaching and learning. Therefore teachers' beliefs, practices, dispositions, and prior knowledge have an undeniable influence on reform attempts (Marzano, 2007; Olsen & Kirtman, 2002). Without a teacher believing there is a need for change, change will not occur. It's been understood for years how teacher development and school development go together (Darling-Hammond, 2015; Darling-Hammond & Hill, 2015; Fullan, 2007; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2012; McLester, 2012). Without both teachers' and leaderships' full participation to implement initiatives reform is destined to fail. Each affects the other—positively or negatively. Large-scale reform fundamentally involves simultaneous individual and institutional change (Fullan, 2007, The New Teacher Project, 2015).

Framing the Problem

The Failure of Mounting Educational Reform through Professional Development

It's asserted that we have a major gap in our understanding of change as we continue to underestimate the importance of the relationship between individual teachers and their schools (Darling-Hammond & Hill, 2015; Fullan; 2007; McLester, 2012). In education, this is certainly evidenced by an over-reliance on professional development as the primary vehicle used to facilitate a reform effort. The prevailing theories and the hope is that when learning occurs, change will happen (Deutschman, 2005; Fullan, 2007; Gardner, 2004). Thus, many states require a certain amount of professional development hours or the completion of college classes for periodic certification renewal. Many of the acceptable learning opportunities can be of system, administrator, or school mandated initiatives or educators can select from a menu of choices offered by systems, schools, or educational service agencies. The overall goal of these training opportunities has hypothetically been to strengthen and facilitate teachers' learning to ultimately promote change of and improve teaching, which hopefully results in improved student learning.

Unfortunately, a plethora of research has repeatedly reported professional development in the United States does not accomplish this goal (Cohen D. & Hill, 1998, 2001; Cohen M. & Hill, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 1992, 2007; Guskey, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2014; Kennedy, 1998, 2006; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2004, 2006, 2009; The New Teacher Project, 2015; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). The problem has existed for years throughout the United States. Training is not only to acquire new knowledge, but for also creating new behaviors through transformation experiences for

positive transfer to the workplace, thus the classroom (Lim & Morris, 2006). Professional development has traditionally been ineffective or inadequate (Cohen D. & Hill, 1998, 2001; Cohen M. & Hill, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 1992, 2007; Guskey, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2014; Kennedy, 1998, 2006; Marzano, 2003, 2007; Reeves, 2004, 2006, 2009; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). It has largely consisted of episodic, fragmented approaches that don't provide the participant with rigorous, cumulative learning (Knapp, 2003) or adequate support to ensure sustainability with changed practices (Fullan, 2007). Other sources have also reported for decades that schools have implemented professional learning without a clear vision of what they want to accomplish from such training (Guskey, 2003, 2014). Even professional learning with espoused elements of effective learning methods like inquiry-oriented learning approaches, a strong content focus, collaborative leadership, and coherence with school curriculum and policies have yielded less than positive results (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallager, 2007).

The New Teacher Project *(*2015) revealed in *The Mirage: Confronting the Hard Truth About Our Quest for Teacher Development* the perception is we already know how to help teachers improve and that goal could be achieved if we applied what we know more widely. Thus, the findings in this report still show teachers do not improve substantially from year to year and the longer a teacher teaches without achieving improvements there is a fifty percent chance they will be rated below 'effective' in core instructional practices. When growth is found there seems to be no particular development strategy that could be linked to the teachers improvement.

It seems extremely clear the most important factor affecting individual student success in schools is the classroom teacher (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011; Darling-Hammond, & Lieberman, 2012; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Yet, some would say teachers can be highly resistant to change and are accustomed to doing what they have always done behind closed doors (DuFour & Marzano, 2009; Kennedy, 2006; Reeves, 2004). Additionally, what is taught behind those closed doors can vary dramatically between teachers'. U.S. professional development has been primarily a private endeavor focused on serving individuals rather than focused on what all teachers need to learn to enhance student achievement and what students need to be more successful in learning (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Fullan, 2007; Hirsh, 2001; Marzano, 2007; McLester, 2012), thus missing the goal of fostering change and improving instructional practices.

Professional learning that is sustained over time is more closely linked to improved student learning than short term or one-time experiences (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). Indeed, Cohen M. and Hill (2000) found that the longer teachers engaged in curriculum-related professional learning, the more they reported using the practices in their classroom. Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley (2007) found professional development lasting 14 or fewer hours showed no effects on student learning and the largest effects occurred from 30-100 hours spread out over a 6-12 month timeframe. It's been found that schools in the United States typically don't provide professional learning time in teachers' workday—U.S. teachers are with their students 80% of their total working time, compared to approximately 60% for teachers of other industrialized nations (Darling-

Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). The lack of ample time spent on learning, paired with the many ineffective professional development offerings have both most certainly contributed to the slow change process in U.S. classrooms and schools.

Lack of Support for Teacher Change

While traditional professional development methods have been both misused and overused in the field of education, unfortunately it is not the only explanation for the lack of success in achieving teacher change. It has become quite clear in the human resource and development (HRD) training literature that the organizational system's support is critical in teachers applying what they have learned in professional development (Supovitz, 2006). It is through transfer of learning that change occurs, thus support is crucial. These are areas referred to in the literature as support to sustain processes of "application, generalizability, and maintenance of new knowledge and skills" (Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000, p. 334).

Research over the past three decades has validated that transfer of learning is complex, involves multiple factors, and influences (Choi & Ruona, 2008; Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; Swanson & Holton, 2001). The literature on transfer of learning has been strongly focused on understanding what it is, what affects it, and how to measure the transfer factors that influence it. While we know a lot about the transfer of learning process and the systems that should support it, many educators miss the mark of ensuring the inclusion, monitoring, collaboration, and support of such processes and practices. For instance, Elmore (1996) proclaimed,

Teaching practice is unlikely to change as a result of exposure to training, unless

> that training also brings with it some kind of external normative structure, a network of social relationships that personalize that structure, and supports interaction around problems of practice (p. 21).

Repeatedly, past and present research findings have divulged that if the support for what we have learned ends with the initial training, there is only a one-in-ten chance that we will engage in sufficient practice on our own (Joyce and Showers, 1995). Showers, Murphy, & Joyce (1996) assert that 20 to 30 uses of new practices are necessary before teachers become comfortable with them and those practices are sustained. Educators have to learn how to do new things for improving student learning and improving their schools' performance, but to do this teachers have to access the knowledge needed and incorporate that knowledge into their practices and with this comes the need for support (Elmore, 2005).

Ironically, schools and systems have traditionally had a reputation of providing little support outside the setting of a training session. There have been many findings in the past 20 years that provide evidence to back this statement up. For instance, we know that teachers' learning is reinforced and enhanced by offering ample opportunities to connect with colleagues at the same school or grade level (Blankstein, 2005; Elmore, 2002; Fullan 2007; Reeves, 2004, 2006, 2009; Stronge, 2002), with ultimately the most powerful learning and collaborative solution being communities of learning (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; McLester, 2012). Other findings have revealed that learning is more likely to occur for teachers when understanding and support is provided by coaches, peers, or administrators as teachers learn about and implement new practices in their classrooms (Guskey, 2014; Supovitz,

Mayer, & Kahle, 2000; DuFour & Marzano, 2009). That support can be as simple as facilitated learning with colleagues in small, trusting, and supportive groups (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000) or peer observations within one another's classrooms that includes providing assistance and feedback to one another (Fullan, 2007). The element of follow-up with feedback is crucial in self-assessing progress (Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000) and self-assessing through reflection (Broody, 2008; Fullan, 2007; Strong, Silver, & Perini, 2001; Stronge, 2002). Joyce and Showers (2002) have found through numerous studies teachers can learn through theory, knowledge, modeling, and practice but the data shows only a 5% application upon returning to their classroom. The additional strategy of supporting teachers with a coach who is readily available to assist in using new skills and knowledge raises this application process to 95% (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

An excellent system that facilitates transfer of learning would be a strong professional community where principals and staff reinforce a climate of support, respect the work of teachers, and consciously conduct a continuous cycle of collaborative innovation, feedback, and redesign in curriculum, instruction, and assessment (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Fullan, 2007). Unfortunately, this does not characterize many educational institutions in the United States. Without this culture of support many teachers will find it difficult to try things out, feel they have someone to confer with, be comfortable in making adjustments, and actually integrate new ideas into their teaching. The element of safety should be present. Teachers must know they are supported during their different stages of trying new practices, even if they are not successful right away.

Fullan (2007) and Elmore (2004) have both emphasized, improvement is more a function of learning to do the right things in the setting where one works, rather than what one thinks they know when they start to do the work or when they come from the latest workshop. Professional learning should occur for an entire school staff, where groups of teachers can engage in peer observations and support each other to refine individual practices (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). When complete grade levels, schools, or departments are involved in professional development and their learning and improved performance is actively supported, it's possible to reach a critical mass for changed instruction, which can empower and stimulate entire schools. Likewise, when support comes through coaching after professional development Joyce and Showers (2002) have repeatedly found the level of application of learned strategies and practices is around 95 percent.

Change through Positive Deviance

Clearly the educational systems within the United States have major deficits with professional development (The New Teacher Project, 2015). The systems for effective transfer of learning and active support of improved performance are clearly lacking. And yet some teacher change *does* occur both individually and in groups (Fullan, 2007; Reeves, 2009; Wenglinsky, 2000, 2002). Some change happens due to daily challenges with instruction and classroom management facilitates the need to adjust to the current situation (Fullan, 2007; Marzano, 2007; Stronge, 2002). The deficit in research is that we know very little about what stimulates and fosters these changes.

While there is a growing movement to improve the day-to-day efforts of all involved in education much of the literature has focused on the failure of traditional

professional development efforts and results. Professional development certainly isn't the only way to promote change efforts of individuals and organizations. Cameron (2008) stated, "that tendencies toward both the positive and the negative are important stimuli for positive change, but the negative tends to dominate…an overemphasis on either the positive or negative is dysfunctional" (p. 16). Ironically, Cameron & Caza (2004) identified, "it takes an intentional concentration on positive phenomena to avoid being inundated by negative phenomena" (p. 736). A person displaying these intentional positive phenomena behavior is referred to as a positive deviant (Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010). Another definition explanation of positive deviance is when behavior or actions override environmental contingencies or apparent personal limits to create extra-ordinary change in the person (Bateman & Porath, 2003). The element of being positive is believed that a focus of positivity may cause us to reflect or focus on the areas of human flourishing, which breathes life and contribute value to organizations even in the context and structure of challenges (Roberts, 2006).

To avoid the negative focus, there has been an exciting scholarly movement emerging globally on positivity. The movement toward positive psychology began with Martin Seligman in 1999, when he was president of the American Psychological Association (Caza & Cameron, 2008). His call to psychologists was to study positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. The intent of positive psychology was to offset the research focus on pathology and to develop "a science that takes as its primary tasks the understanding of what makes life worth living" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 13). The outcome of this focus on positive psychology has resulted in considerable popularity and success and the production of

extensive research and education (Peterson, 2006; Snyder & Lopez, 2002). The study of positivity and the outcomes of its usage still need to be thoroughly explored.

This movement has also stimulated the emergence in organization studies called Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Caza & Cameron, 2008; Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006; Dutton & Sonenshein, 2008; Roberts, 2006). Cameron (2007) explains,

> Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) is concerned primarily with the study of especially positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations. POS does not represent a single theory, but it focuses on dynamics that are typically described by words such as excellence, flourishing, abundance, resilience, or virtuousness. (p. 4)

The perspective of POS is to accentuate ideas of goodness, positive human potential, and the phenomena of positive deviance.

Research in the POS movement has included the need to understand how individual change occurs through acts of self-determined behavior—also known as transcendent behavior (Bateman & Porath, 2003). The POS literature references an individual who displays transcendent behavior is able to override constraining personal or environmental factors to result in extra-ordinary positive change. Bateman & Porath (2003) express it isn't about just surviving or avoiding being a victim of change, but "to create constructive, high-impact change" (p. 123). Transcendent behavior is predominately self-determined; self-directed; and involves a great deal of proactive behavior, perseverance, and positivity (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Transcendent behavior at work is distinguishable from other behaviors according to Stewart's (1982) model of work. He describes how one reacts to the three components of a person's task environment: demands, constraints, and choices. Bateman & Porath (2003) expanded on Stewart's work saying "transcendent behavior at work is evidenced when people affect extra-ordinary [sic] change by *exceeding* demands, *eliminating or overcoming* constraints, and *creating or seizing* opportunities" (p. 125), thus displaying positive deviant behavior.

The quote above aptly describes teachers who have changed in schools in spite of ineffective professional development and unsupportive systems. The emerging focus on positive deviance provides an exciting opportunity to study teachers who have exercised such behavior and changed their practices. What research is lacking is the information of why and how teachers change voluntarily and extra-ordinarily. We don't know the choice points or opportunities at which teachers decide to attempt change or how they respond to progress or setbacks throughout their attempts to change. Understanding positive deviance in teachers is needed to gather additional research on teacher change, yet crucial for understanding the reasons for and innovative levels in which they operate during a self-prescribed change effort.

Problem Statement

Research findings are saturated with the problems of inadequate professional development within educational systems in the United States. Many staff developers, trainers, teachers, and administrators keep doing what they have always done, and back in the classroom practices don't change (Reeves, 2004). When professional development is effective and adequately supported, it can promote additional opportunities for learning,

collaboration and change in classroom practices. Historically, professional development has been found to be ineffective due to insufficient design and/or inadequate support being provided after these learning opportunities. Understandably this has caused teachers to devalue and dislike professional development (Knight, 2007).

In spite of these conditions, amazingly, some teachers voluntarily do change their classroom practices. We need to understand why and how this occurs. Many studies are revealing the re-culturing efforts to get teachers to question and change their beliefs and habits is far more difficult to achieve than previously realized (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Brookfield, 1995, 1998; Cohen D. & Hill, 2001; Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform, 2005; Fullan, 2007; Oakes, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 1999; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999; Timperley & Parr, 2005). Therefore, we should better analyze those that have questioned their environments or achievement outcomes and changed their beliefs, habits, and practices.

Purpose of the Study

The emerging Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) movement provides a unique perspective to help us change beliefs, habits, and practices through positive support, environments, and collaboration. The focus of POS is to highlight and seek to understand "positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations and their members" (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003, pg. 4). Due to the overwhelming data that says professional development in most educational settings is broken, this study will focus at the teacher level to explore his or her independent choice to change. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom

practices. Specifically, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to contribute to the knowledge and literature on adult education, teaching related to positive deviance and teacher change. Repeatedly, research continues to report our struggles to achieve teacher change through professional development. This study will attempt to identify individual teachers who are recognized as innovative in their practices, have student achievement data that shows they are effective teachers, and who self-prescribed a change effort in the absence of formal professional learning within their system or school. The description of their change effort for this study will hopefully meet the definition of positive deviance when behavior or actions override environmental contingencies or apparent personal limits to create extra-ordinary change in the person (Bateman & Porath, 2003) and their classroom practices.

The element of investigating positive deviance is relatively in its infancy stage in regards to public education and teachers. It also seems scarce in reference to teacher change. The whole idea of including positive deviance is the promotion and outcome of the process mentioned by Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin (2010), "identify the positive deviance (PD), discover their practices, and disseminate them to the broader community"

(p. 7). Identifying positive deviant teachers and exploring their change effort processes for improving their classroom practices is valuable information to share with other educators for the possibility of growing individual change on a larger scale. This shared knowledge may contribute towards the enhanced capacity of school systems to support individual teachers. Capturing these individuals experiences—the why, when, and how of their process—can inform and possibly motivate other teachers to attempt change without formally offered professional learning or school support.

Identifying what organizational contexts, strategies, and tactics promoted their change efforts can also be extremely informative. This knowledge can benefit organizations and educational systems to better understand what promotes an individual positive deviant teacher to initiate a self-prescribed change effort. The ability to promote and foster individual change could be advantageous for educational institutions and organizations of all types.

Identifying when teachers decide to attempt change can inform our understanding of when to foster such change attempts and, possibly, how. Knowing the choice points or triggers in deciding to attempt change can provide us a deeper understanding of individual decision-making and the thought processes involved for helping organizations how to foster opportunities to encourage these processes. Issues such as the context, time, and readiness are crucial to understand how teachers accept, react, or act to the situation.

The phenomenon of teacher change has been an ongoing investigation. Debates continue to whirl around the effects and outcomes on teacher change from reforms (Fullan, 1991, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007; Kennedy, 2006; Olsen & Kirtman, 2002) and

many different issues around professional development (Cohen D. & Hill, 1998, 2001; Cohen M. & Hill, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 1992, 2007; Guskey, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2014; Kennedy, 1998, 2006; Marzano, 2003, 2007; Reeves, 2004, 2006, 2009; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). The information from this study on positive deviance and teacher change can add to the science of human behavior which Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000) say "should include: to understand what *is* and what *could be"* (p. 7). The findings from this study will identify what *is* for these teachers who have engaged in positive deviance and the results of their change efforts can inform others what the 'is' could be for them too.

Learning what propels teachers to initiate positive deviance; what steps they took to acquire the knowledge and skills they needed to change their practices; and identifying what strategies, tactics, and support enhanced their efforts can add to the research literature on positive deviance in teachers and that of individual teacher change. In addition, it seems as if this study could add to the limited POS literature base on teacher positive deviance and teacher change, as only one article on teachers was found by Quinn, Heynoski, Thomas, & Spreitzer (2014) on *Co-Creating the Classroom Experience to Transform Learning and Change Lives.* A website reported a teachers testimonial on positive deviance stating his title as *A Teachers Journey of Positive Deviance: From the Trenches* (Hillman, 2014). Other evidence is positive deviant approaches are being used in schools or systems to improve attendance and dropout prevention.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom practices. The following research questions will guide this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

The review of literature in this chapter will focus on the areas of theory and research that guide, inform, and support this study. Those areas are individual change, systems that affect teacher change, and positive organizational scholarship (POS), with a specific focus on the organizational member and positive deviance. The first section of this chapter will review individual change and individual change theories.

The second section will discuss systems that affect teacher change. This will include professional development and factors that influence or inhibit teacher change. These factors of influence will explore support elements, learning communities, school-based coaching, and other support contexts.

The third section will provide an introduction to positive organizational scholarship (POS), an emerging field of study in the organizational sciences. POS is

introduced and it is explored in terms of how it's related to positive psychology; how it affects our understanding of human behavior; and how it relates to individual and organizational change. Section discussions will include: psychology and positive psychology; positive psychology and POS; POS and human behavior; and POS and individual and organizational change.

The last section will address positive deviance, which is an area included in the scholarship in POS to further extend the phenomena of positive deviance and to build the limited scholarly inclusion within organizational studies. Positive deviance is including the related constructs of self-determination, resilience, motivation, and intrinsic behaviors.

Searches to find resources for this literature review were conducted in the following databases: EBSCOhost, ERIC, Academic Premier, ProQuest, PsychINFO, PsycARTICLES, and Google Scholar for electronic journals, articles, texts, dissertation abstracts, and dissertations. Numerous library visits were conducted to access the use of books and other items unavailable electronically. Key words in different combinations were used such as: teacher change, change theories, positive deviant, behavior, positive psychology, resilience, self-determination, intrinsic motivation, professional development, staff development, coaching, teacher support, learning, transcendent, and key authors of many of these subjects, etc. Articles on Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) were accessed through the website for POS at http://www.bus.umich.edu/Positive/Center-for-POS/ which is the leading repository for published and unpublished scholarship as well as practitioner-oriented publications

related to POS through works in the department of Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.

Different Elements of Change

Individual Change

In general, change is an integral part of life. In education, change is a necessary part of classroom life and the profession of teaching. In order to improve the quality of learning opportunities within the classroom for students, teacher change is essential. It is through the change of teacher beliefs and practices that the greatest impact on student learning occurs. The controversy of whether beliefs and attitudes change before or after a change in practices is still an ongoing debate in all disciplines and of all individuals. Bullough & Knowles (1991) suggest in the naturalistic change process, changes in beliefs appear to precede changes in practice. Yet, many support the Guskey (1997) model of teacher change that asserts alterations in classroom practices that result in different student learning outcomes promote change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes (Fullan, 1991, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007; Guskey,1997, 2000, 2002, 2003; Mevarech, 1995; Prawat, 1992; Sparks, 1988). While others posit this process of changing beliefs and practices is interactive or synergistic (Goffman, 1973; Peterman, 1993; Richardson & Anders, 1994), where dialogue about practices in teaching begin to direct teachers changes in beliefs and practices (Anders & Richardson, 1991; Broody, 2008; Fullan, 2007; Placier & Hamilton, 1994; Richardson, 1998; Richardson & Hamilton, 1994; Strong, Silver, & Perini, 2001; Stronge, 2002).

Odds of changing. Change can be difficult and uncomfortable. In some cases, deliberate change isn't even attempted. Research in medicine has revealed the odds are

stacked against us in changing—nine to one. John Hopkins University Dean of the medical school and CEO of the hospital, Dr. Edward Miller sadly reports study after study keeps revealing that, in spite of health saving information, 90% of patients do not change their lifestyle in order to save their lives (Deutschman, 2005). Kotter (1996) and Kotter & Cohen (2002) posit that changing the behavior of people isn't just a challenge within healthcare, it is the most important challenge for businesses trying to compete in a turbulent world. Different searches on the Internet reveal change comes from approximately twenty-one days of repeatedly performing a new habit. It is the inconsistency in keeping up this lengthy commitment that makes the process toward change fail.

Individual change can be a personal choice or an outcome encouraged by an organization. Within the organizational setting, organizational change will not occur without individual change (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Senge, 2006). The complexity of individual change itself involves: identifying a need for change, emotions, a plan, time to learn, practice, evaluation of efforts, needed adjustments, and, most of all, time and patience. The odds of changing in an organization are no different then for an individual. Organizational change is also facilitated through learning, knowledge sharing, trainers with human resources understandings to the key processes and needs of the learner, and understandings to uncertainties and challenges in order to make change successful (Blankenship & Ruona, 2007, 2008; Chermack, Lynham, & Ruona, 2003; Choi & Ruona, 2008; Ruona & Gilley, 2009; Ruona & Lynham, 2004; Ruona, Lynham, & Chermack, 2003). The procedures that promote success in organizational change are very similar to how successes can occur in professional development for teachers.

Changes throughout life and work. Individual change is a constant occurrence in order to adapt to the context of our constantly changing environment. These contexts include self, home, relationships, work, community, and society. There are many different factors that affect individual change and the opportunity for change success depends on other factors too. These factors also can explain resistance and unsuccessful attempts at change. Some of these factors range from age, education, environment, time, effort, goals, self-efficacy, fear of change, fear of failure, attitude, influential peers, etc. to name a few. In addition, the perception of two different people of the same environment will be different, as perception is different for everyone.

Early scholars defend that teacher change occurs all the time, due to the dynamics of multi-individuals making up a teacher's classroom, minor and major changes in curriculum, and changes that occur in different ways of thinking, teaching, and learning (Cuban, 1990; Guskey, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2008). These are changes that are voluntary and that take place over the career of the teacher due to the natural adaptation or needed adjustments for the situation or of personal election. Richardson & Placier (2001) refers to this as naturalistic change, yet say it is not deterministic and assumes teacher autonomy and choice. Many of these changes also occur from drawing on life experiences and changes. Examples of such experiences that frame or alter behaviors of teachers have been identified from being a mother or becoming a mother, where the philosophies of these experiences frame or change their practices (Bullough & Knowles, 1991; Bullough & Baughman, 1997). Thus, these life occurrences happen naturally from living a life, aging, and selectively responding to dynamic and unexpected situations at home and at work. It is these shifting contexts that

create and change the personal selves and professional identities of teachers both positively and negatively.

Change is not always planned. Transitions, or change, are continually experienced throughout life, whether anticipated or unanticipated (Bridges, 1980, 1991). Planned change consists of desired and expected events, like going to college, getting married, having children, or starting a new job. Although, typically desired events, they can also be unexpected, such as unplanned pregnancy or job/duty changes out of your control. Events that are not desired yet expected life events such as death of parents, saying goodbye to close friends due to moving, or the end of a cherished project. The most stressful is unplanned change, which is not expected or desired. These can be events such as a sudden crisis, unexpected illness or death, or layoff from work.

As mentioned previously, the element of living brings with it natural transitions. Transition models also present the stages or phases of change through the understanding of transition as a process (Bridges, 1980, 1991; Schlossberg, 1989; Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995; Sugarman, 1986). Bridges' (1980, 1991) model starts with endings, where "letting go of something" (Bridges, 1991, p. 5) begins the journey of change. The middle is neutral zone, where the person is considered between the old and the new. His final phase is new beginnings. Sugarman (1986), in agreement with Bridges that transition cycles are not an orderly or sequential process identified seven transition stages: (1) immobilization—frozen or overwhelmed, (2) reaction—drastic mood change depending on perception of the transition, (3) minimization—controlling one's feelings and anticipation of impact, (4) letting go—separating from the past, (5) testing—exploring new territory, (6) searching for meaning—learning from experience, and (7)

integration—feeling at home with change. Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman's (1995) model embraced a three-phase process: moving in, moving through, and moving out. All three models basically include letting go of the past, which seems to be crucial for achieving transformational change.

Overcoming resistance to change. It is through this reframing process of life experiences where learning also occurs. The influential writer and researcher Schön (1983) declared this reframing process is essential in being able to learn from experiences. Other research examined teacher learning of professional knowledge through experiences (Munby & Russell, 1992, 1994; Russell, 1988, 1995). Findings from this research divulged first year teachers know practice and theory are related but aren't clear how. Conversely, veteran teachers rely on experiences of practice to confirm or reject what they read in research, theory, and recommendations of practice. Learning from experience may not always involve a completely conscious process, but does often lead to changes in tacit knowledge that becomes evident through dialogue (Richardson & Placier, 2001).

Change is not easy, but possible with the right approach and consistency. Well-known writer Robert Kegan (1982, 1994, 2009) published with Lahey (2009) their life's work and "road-tested" approach for significant improvement (change) in individuals and groups in the workplace (p. IX). Their book, *Immunity to Change*, reviews the previous hard science research and reveals the current research on the updated view of age and mental complexity in relationship to change accomplishment or resistance. Previous research on brain research revealed that there were no significant changes in capacity after late adolescence, but current scientists "talk about neutral plasticity and the

phenomenal capacities of the brain to keep adapting throughout life" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p. 13). Mental complexity in this case does not refer to how high one's IQ is, but about the level of adult meaning systems of the mind—the socialized, self-authorizing, and self-transforming mind as shown in Figure 2.1 on the next page.

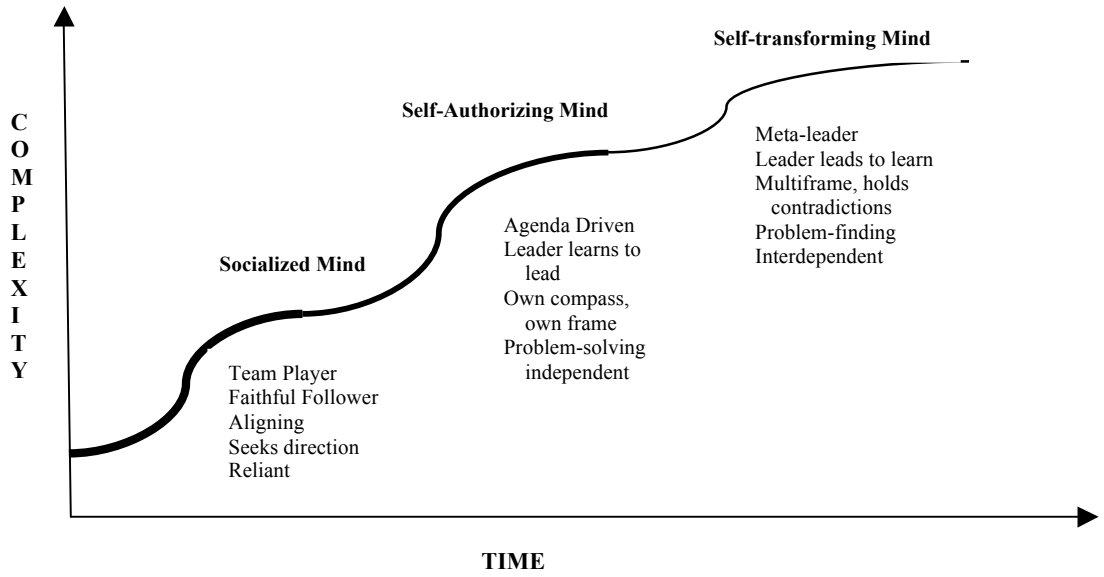

Figure 2.1 Three Plateaus in Adult Mental Development of Kegan & Lahey (2009)

The higher planes of mental complexity have been correlated to work competence. The growth of both mental complexity and work competence also correlates to effectiveness. Thus, being at a given level of mental complexity determines one's ability to adapt and manage the complexity of the world. Yet, many times we expect certain behaviors from individuals, managers, and others of authority without an appropriate mental complexity level to be successful. Technical skills aid us to be adaptive where adaptive challenges are met by transforming our mindset, which relies on the level of mental complexity (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Kegan (1994) referred to this

deficit as "over our heads" (p.5). This mindset is either positive or negative resulting in the approach taken to these adaptive needs.

Each successive level of mental complexity is formally higher than the preceding level because it can perform and even outperform the mental functions of the prior level and additional functions. Unfortunately, studies have documented that the percentages of people beyond the plateau of the self-authorizing mind are quite small (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Thus, it is those adaptive challenges that require a transformation of mindset by advancing to a more sophisticated stage of mental development. The bottom line of their book, *Immunity to Change,* is change can occur, and we have the capacity to continue mental development throughout our life for improving our mental complexity.

Likewise, change is not of just one type. Kotter (1996) describes three kinds of change: incremental, transitional, and transformational. The incremental change is just a trying and tweaking type. Transitional change requires intentional restructuring or reorganizing efforts. Transformational change encompasses a detailed difference from past and present, typically involving a new vision, mission, and values.

Learning and change Thus we have models that tell us how to change or what is expected of us in order to change and models that explain what we go through when we change. Many educators for over three decades have proposed that engaging in learning activities is one way in which adults cope with life events and transitions (Aslanian & Brickell, 1980; Blaxter & Tight, 1995; Knox, 1977; Merriam & Clark, 1991, 1992; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Merriam & Yang, 1996; Schlossberg, Waters, and Goodman, 1995; Tennant & Pogson, 1995; Wolf & Leahy, 1998). Specifically, Aslanian & Brickell (1980) profess most adults learn in order to cope with their lives, while others

challenge most adults learn as a result of life events (Blaxter & Tight, 1995), where work life, personal life, and family changes are sources of learning (Merriam & Clark, 1991, 1992). Likewise, Merriam, Mott, & Lee (1996) also reported some life events can produce "debilitating, growth-inhibiting outcomes" (p. 1) and certain life experiences can function as barriers to learning too.

Whether one learns and grows from these life experiences is up to the individual. Social and cultural forces shape our development and learning (Elder, 1995; Tennant & Pogson, 1995). These forces are elements such as gender, race, and social class. Learning in general can mean different things depending on one's conceptual perspective (Richardson, 1999). Likewise human beings are autonomous creatures with the latitude to determine a selected behavior where the premise of self has the potential to grow and develop toward Maslow's level of self-actualization (Merriam & Brockett, 2007).

For teachers, the complexity of teaching evolves out of curriculum changes, cultural differences, diversity of life experiences, and the knowledge and beliefs of teachers and students (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Placier & Hamilton, 1994). This relates back to Kegan & Lahey's (2009) point that one's mental complexity needs to be sufficient or developed to manage these challenges. Research has revealed that if students are going to be equipped with more complex and analytical skills for the 21st century, teachers must learn to facilitate in ways that develop higher-order thinking and performance (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Therefore, in order to ignite teacher change, it takes knowledge and learning.

Greeno, Collins, & Resnick (1996) identify three theoretical perspectives on cognition and learning: behaviorism, the situative-sociohistoric view, and the cognitive

view. Without an understanding of these perspectives it is difficult to understand change and what factors control, hinder, and accentuate change efforts. To acquire change something has to be implemented, but the implementation process requires learning (Spillane, 2002).

Behaviorism. The behaviorist perspective believes the mind is at work and can't be observed or tested. Therefore, behaviorists are more concerned with actions as the evidence of knowing, teaching, and learning. Thus, optimum learning opportunities are accomplished through behaviors that facilitate well-organized routines of activity, clearly articulated instructional goals, provide frequent specific feedback and reinforcement, and scaffold skills from simpler to more complex levels (Spillane, 2002).

Situative-sociohistoric. The situative-sociohistoric perspective (Hutchins, 1995a &b ; Pea, 1993; Resnick, 1991) refers to individuals as being inseparable from their communities and environments. Knowledge is viewed as distributed in the social, material, and cultural artifacts of the environment, where knowing is the ability to participate in the practices of communities (e.g., communities of learning—classroom, teacher groups, etc.). Learning opportunities need to be organized that encourage participation, grounded in meaningful problem sets, develop learner inquiry, and for developing disciplinary practices of discourse and debate (Spillane, 2002). The difference is the learning process is with colleagues in small, trusting, supportive groups (Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000)—a learning community. Collaborative and collegial learning environments that assist to develop communities of practice can promote school change beyond individual classrooms (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hord, 1997; Knapp, 2003; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996; Perez, Anand, Speroni, Parrish, Esra,

Socias, & Gubbins, 2007). Research is clear how important the collaborative component to professional development or learning communities is to being successful.

Cognitive. The cognitive perspective (Piaget, 1970) aspires to understand and describe the working of the mind. Knowledge in this view includes reflection (Broody, 2008; Brown, 1978), conceptual growth and understanding, problem solving, and reasoning. Learning involves the active reconstruction of existing knowledge structures, instead of passive assimilation or rote memorization (Confrey, 1990). Thinking is reflecting, and reflection allows for the synthesis of learning, experiences, life, etc. for everyone and in any walk of life. As teachers learn to describe, discuss and adjust their practices in alignment to the collectively held standard of quality teaching, then change begins to happen (Little, 2003).

Learning is the catalyst to development. Thus lastly, the early works of Knowles (1980) needs to be included within this section of learning and change. Initially Knowles had four assumptions about the adult learner. His first assumption was as adult mature they become more self-directed. Second, the facilitation of learning for adults is drawn upon by their rich collection of experiences. Third, the development of an adult's social role correlates with their readiness to learn. Fourth, an adult's learning becomes less subject-centered to increasingly more problem-centered. Later, Knowles & Associates (1984) added two more assumptions: adult learning is of an internal motivation then external; and adults need a reason for learning something.

Change and reflective practices. The benefits of reflection stem from the earlier works of Dewey (1933), referred to as a problem solving process. For teachers, reflection as a retrospective analysis allows teachers to reexamine and grapple over prior

experiences to make sense of that experience for presumably becoming a better teacher (Broody, 2008). Van Manen's (1977) critical reflection is another method of how knowledge is achieved. Schön (1983) was the first to suggest reflection starts with a surprise, puzzlement, confusion or problem situation, which is referred in this study as a critical incident. Schön's work continued with other's following on implications and processes of reflection (Eraut, 1994; Richardson, 1990; Russell & Munby, 1989; Schön, 1987, 1991; Smith, 1994, 2001, 2011; Usher, Bryant, & Johnson, 1997).

It is through critical reflection that one assesses their technical alignment of interest and ability in accomplishing the given ends. It is also how one interprets experiences, culture, meanings, perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments and presuppositions for orienting practical actions in our new attempts. This interpretation can inform one of the possible psychological hang-ups that can hinder the attempt or overall process of change. The ultimate goal of critical reflection for teachers is determining what is worthwhile and what constructs create equality for all people to join in dialogue of important issues. Likewise, Schön (1995) presented the need for reflection on-action and in-action. Reflection-on-action is basically retrospective analysis as described above and reflection-in-action occurs in the moment to alter behavior immediately in order to change the outcome.

Individual Change Theories

There are different individual change theories and stages of change, which describe the field and study of change. Schein (2009) posits the key to change theory is, "human change, whether at the individual or group level, was a profound psychological dynamic process that involved painful unlearning without loss of ego identity and

difficult relearning as one cognitively attempted to restructure one's thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes" (p.2). Change theories explain both the process that people go through when they change and what experts think that people should go through when desiring to achieve change. There are numerous change theories. Some specifically address individual change, organizational change, or a combination of both. For this literature review the following individual formal or planned change models will be discussed: Social Cognitive Theory (Miller & Dollard, 1941), Lewin's three step change theory (1951), Prochaska & DiClemente's Stages of Change (1983), and the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006). These theories will be reviewed chronologically. Then a comparison of the four will be discussed.

Social cognitive theory. Miller & Dollard (1941) referred to social cognitive theory originally as social learning theory. The premise of the theory was that humans were motivated to learn a particular behavior through observations. Thus, individuals can learn by direct experiences, human dialogue and interaction, and observation. By imitating observed actions the individual observer would learn and sustain that learned action. The term social cognitive theory revolves around the process of knowledge acquisition or learning directly correlated to the model of observing.

From 1962 to present, Albert Bandura (1988) expanded on and is commonly associated with social cognitive theory. Bandura (1988) posited that self-efficacy is the most important characteristic that determines a person's behavioral change. The individual's perception and expectations inform the person of their ability to perform the desired behavior. Self-efficacy also determines motivation, affect, and action. Bandura (1989) also proposed that self-regulatory systems mediate external influences and provide

a basis for purposeful action all with control over thoughts, feelings, motivations, and actions. Self-regulation is an internal control mechanism that governs the type of behavior performed and the consequences for that behavior.

The main principles of social cognitive theory are: people learn by observing others, learning is an internal process that may or may not change behavior, people behave in certain ways to reach goals, behavior is self-directed, and reinforcement and punishment have unpredictable and indirect effects on both behavior and learning (Ormrod, 2003). Although a well-known theory, its comprehensiveness and complexity make it difficult to operationalize. Many applications and evaluations of social cognitive theory focus on one or two of its many constructs (self-efficacy, self-regulatory capability, feedback, self-reflective capability, etc.), while ignoring others.

Lewin's model—unfreeze, move, and refreeze. Kurt Lewin's (1951) model evolved through his primary interest to resolve social conflict within not only organizations, but within the context of society per behavioral change (Burnes, 2004). Lewin's model was one of the earliest fundamental models of change that incorporated field theory, group dynamics, and action research. His three stages of change include unfreeze, move, and refreeze which others have either adapted or incorporated within their models. The key purpose of unfreeze, move, and refreeze was to create modifications in forces that keep a behavior system stable for the challenge of change (Cummings & Worley, 2005).

Figure 2.2 Lewin's Model (Copied from www.change-management-consultant.com

Lewin's (1951) model for change takes time and is a series of transitions rather than simple steps. Although the graphic above appears to be linear, Lewin's model is more cyclical in practice. The theory behind this model is two groups of forces affect behavior at any given time, thus, the one force is trying to maintain the status quo and other force is prompting the system to change. *Unfreezing* occurs when an individual assesses their status quo forces and begins to explore other options that may provide significant benefits. The *moving* stage or transition occurs when behaviors are altered and are performed at new levels. Through the act of reducing resistance forces and increasing driving forces, a position of equilibrium towards the desire of a balanced position is adjusted. This movement occurs when the resisting forces have been explored, understood, and reduced, and this is when the change effort can be fully implemented. The moving stage is where the development of new beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors are the outcomes of the unfreezing stage. The *refreezing* stage, or freezing, stabilizes the individual or organization at a new state of equilibrium. Within organizations, support mechanisms such as organizational culture, norms, policies, and structures assist to achieve this new equilibrium. New rules, regulations and reward schemes are also adopted.

Prochaska & DiClemente's stages of change. Prochaska & DiClemente's (1983) and Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross (1992) stages of change model is also referred to as The Transtheoretical Model (TTM) where intentional behavioral change occurs in a series of discrete stages. This model was originally based on the ability for individual's to give up habits or addictions. Change is achieved through utilizing both cognitive and performance-based components for the adoption of healthy behaviors or

cessation of unhealthy ones (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997) where people move through a series of stages when modifying behavior. Used primarily in the context of medical or therapy settings, the premise has been adapted to other individual settings for encouraging change and promoting the best possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Dunkel, Kelts, & Coon, 2006). Yet, as reported earlier by Deutschman (2005), approximately 90% of patients do not change their lifestyle in order to save their lives. Even in regards to saving one's self—change is hard or viewed as impossible.

In the development of possible selves individuals demonstrate a self-directed effort of development that is grounded within developmental, interpersonal, and sociohistorical contexts. It is the degree of one's effort that depicts how recognized these changes are to others. Although the processes of some type of change have to occur for change to happen. Prochaska & DiClemente's (1983) and Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross's (1992) stages of change model includes: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. The Figure 2.3 depicts the stages of change.

Figure 2.3 Stages of Change (Stages.jpg by Philciaccio of Wikipedia)

The stage of *pre-contemplation* is the lack of awareness that life can be improved by a change in behavior. Basically the individual is not even considering change. The techniques to encourage change at this stage include explaining facts and personal risk,

acknowledging the lack of readiness, clarifying the decision is theirs, and encouraging self-exploration and re-evaluation of current behaviors. The focus of this stage is to bring about awareness.

The pre-contemplation stage can arouse the next stage of *contemplation,* which is the acknowledgement of a need and desire to change behavior. Although still an ambivalent stage, the individual has moved to increased awareness, but is still not ready. Encouraging and acknowledging that they are not ready and clarifying the decision is always theirs to make are vital at this stage. The individual is encouraged to evaluate the pros and cons of behavior change and identify and promote new, positive outcome expectations.

Once reaching a decision that change is needed, the stage of *preparation* is entered. This stage sets a plan for action, as the individual may have begun some trial and error attempts, which may have convinced them to try. Techniques in this stage include aiding the person to identify obstacles, pre-problem solving for when those obstacles arise, and identification of social support. All this includes verifying the skills the person has for accomplishing behavior change and encouraging small incremental steps.

The implementation of practices needed for successful behavior change set the stage for *action*. This stage may last three to six months while the person practices new behavior for achieving sustainability. Dealing with obstacles bolsters self-efficacy, but assistance may be needed to restructure cues and social support while the person also combats feelings of loss and fatigue. Reiterating the long-term benefits is a necessity at this stage.

The last stage of *maintenance* is the integration and consolidation of the behaviors initiated in the action stage. Continued commitment is the only assurance of sustained new behaviors. Maintenance is a continuation, not an absence of change, where stabilizing behavior change and avoiding relapses are the hallmarks. Techniques important during this stage are continued discussions around coping with obstacles or relapse, planned follow-up support, and reinforcement of internal rewards. Resuming old behaviors produces relapse. In order to achieve desired change after relapse, the individual must recycle their change effort process back through either the stages of preparation or action for getting back on track or the individual could abandon their change effort altogether. Internal rewards would involve personal encouragement techniques of self-talk and motivation, while also continuously assessing barriers, evaluating triggers for relapse, and planning stronger coping strategies for enhancing a stronger possibility of success.

ADKAR model—awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement. The ADKAR Model, born by Prosci Research in 1994 and extensively written about by Haitt (2006), is a five-step process of awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement (ADKAR). This model is a framework for understanding change at the individual level and has been extended to organizations and communities to increase the likelihood that their change efforts are implemented successfully. Haitt (2006) emphasizes that understanding how to achieve change at an individual level is essential to achieving the objectives of any large-scale change. Each step of the ADKAR model, as seen in Figure 2.4, consists of a list of factors that influence the change efforts at each particular step with actions that follow. In short it means people must become aware of

the need to change, they must have a desire to change, the knowledge to, the ability, and then they need reinforcement while making the change.

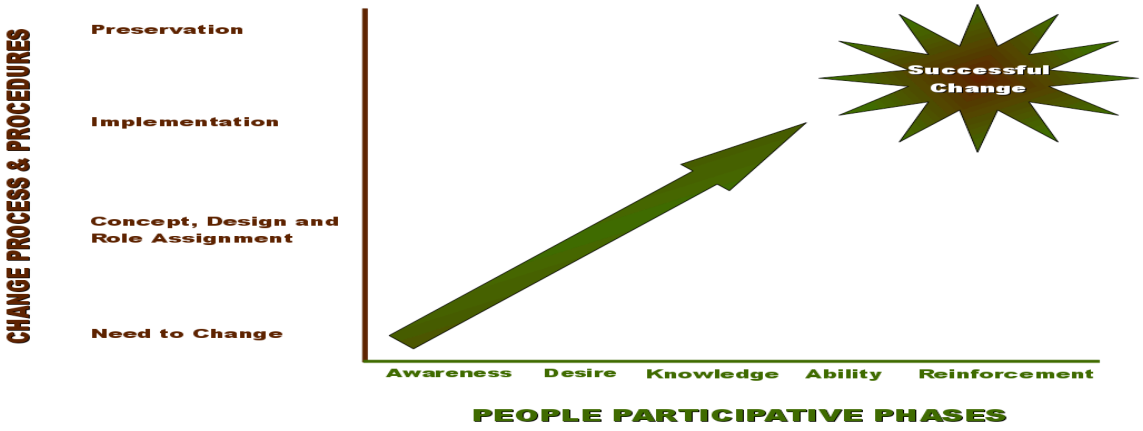

Figure 2.4 ADKAR Graphic (by Philciaccio of Wikipedia)

The first step of *awareness* is the individual acknowledges a need for change. The factors that influence this stage include the person's perception of the current situation, how they view problems, their knowledge or misconceptions of change, and the reasoning behind change. The second step of *desire* is the support and willingness to participate in the change. The factors that influence this step are the nature of the change effort, the individual's perception of the environment, their personal situation, and intrinsic motivators unique to them. The third step of *knowledge* pertains to how to change. Factors of influence are the individual's current knowledge base, capacity or capability to access, gain, and apply the knowledge and resources needed for this change effort. The fourth step of *ability* refers to the actual implementation of required skills and behaviors. Factors that influence this step include time, psychological blocks, physical ability, and intellectual capability to develop the needed skills and access the resources to

support this development. The last step of reinforcement sustains the change effort. The factors of influence are the degree to which the reinforcement is meaningful, associated with the progress attempted or accomplishment, and the absence of negative consequences to reinforce the change.

Change Theory Comparison All these theories have their own cycle of intended phases (see Table 2.1), yet the flexibility for revisiting a previous stage or step, if needed. No matter which theory is applied, change is complex and entails individual reflection, planning, action, adjustment, and monitoring to achieve success. Individual change attempts and successes are primarily in the control of the individual—the actual change agent. Change efforts are dependent on the level of individual readiness, intent, belief, attitude, value, and implemented behavior toward change. One theoretical model is rarely enough in the complex world of learning new behaviors, as there isn't a "one-size-fits-all" model.

The four theories reviewed in this literature review are all cyclical in process. In spite of a list of steps, stages, or graphics that might make the theory appear linear, some steps or stages are intended to be revisited for the refinement of the plan and behaviors. Even in the application of social cognitive theory, the individual may have to revisit modeled behavior several times before it is tried. A key part of Lewin's (1951) model seems to capture the whole process of change for any model in the notion that change is a journey rather than a simple step and the journey is not simple. The unfreezing of previous behaviors and beliefs assists in setting change into motion. The individual may need to go through several stages of misunderstanding before they get to the other side. Then freezing of new habits and beliefs facilitates a new sustainability process.

Table 2.1

Change Theory Comparisons

Individual Change Models	Steps	Factors
Social Cognitive Theory Miller & Dollard, 1941 Bandura, 1986	**No specific Steps Recognized** • Modeling observed • Knowledge acquisition • Learning • Imitation of observed actions • Solidified learning, knowledge, and actions	✓ People learn by observing others ✓ Learning is an internal process ✓ Certain behaviors attribute to goal attainment ✓ Behavior is self-directed ✓ Reinforcement and punishment have unpredictable outcomes on learning and behavior
Lewin's (1951) Model	• Unfreeze • Move • Freeze	✓ Reducing resistance to change ✓ Increase driving forces ✓ Transition to a desired state ✓ Organizational readiness
Stages of Change or Transtheoretical Model (1983—Prochaska & DiClemente)	• Pre-contemplation • Contemplation • Preparation • Action • Maintenance	✓ Target change at individual level ✓ Based on individual ability to give up habits or addiction ✓ Applicable to other fields outside medicine or therapy
ADKAR Model Prosci Research (1994) Haitt (2006)	• Awareness • Desire • Knowledge • Ability • Reinforcement	✓ Framework for understanding change at the individual level ✓ Individual and environmental factors involved ✓ Includes Organizational use

Systems That Can Affect Teacher Change

In education, change is essential for improving the quality of learning opportunities for students through new teacher instructional practices. Educators have learned that change requires both systemic and individual efforts (Campbell & Fullan, 2006; Eaker, DuFour, & Burnette, 2002; Fullan, 2007; Fullan, Hill, & Crévola, 2006; Gardner, 2004). Many different systems affect individual teacher change, although some

change is voluntarily implemented without external influences. This section will explore factors that influence or inhibit teacher change.

Professional Development

Professional development (PD) has typically been the primary mode to inform, train, and implement initiatives from educational reforms. The New Teacher Project (2015) projected, "The fifty largest school districts in the US will likely spend a combination of 8 billion dollars every year on teacher development. Teachers devote and enormous amount of time to their development too. According to our survey results approximately 150 hours a year, or nearly 10 percent of a typical school year." Much of PD is voluntary, and teachers who volunteer to participate may differ in motivation or prior knowledge and instructional practice from teachers who are not voluntarily attending, while other PD is mandated and thus comes under accountability systems (Birman, Le Floch, Klekotka, Ludwig, Taylor, Walters, Wayne & Yoon, 2007). Unfortunately, in 2015, only 40% of teachers reported that their professional development was a good use of their time and 60% of low-performance rated teachers still gave themselves high ratings (The New Teacher Project, 2015). More and more research continues to show professional development is episodic, often fragmented, not relative to the real problems of practice, and lacking support (Chung Wei, Andree, & Darling-Hammond, 2009).

While literature has revealed traditional approaches to professional development through short workshops or conference attendance do foster teachers' awareness or interest to deepen their knowledge, unfortunately evidence has consistently shown it is insufficient to foster learning that fundamentally alters what teachers teach or how they

teach (Boyle, While, & Boyle, 2004). Instead of adopting new techniques, professional development should be helping teachers acquire a change orientation. There is extensive early research on the qualities of professional development needed to create and sustain change more effectively (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Elmore, 2002; Fullan, 1990; Garet, Porter, Desimore, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Griffin, 1986; Guskey, 2003; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Hustler, et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley, Stiles & Hewson, 1996; McLaughlin, 1991; Whitehurst, 2002). A significant amount of later research also exists from these authors and others on effective professional development findings. Darling-Hammond & Richardson (2009) report that research supports professional development that:

- Deepens teachers' knowledge of content and how to teach it to students.
- Helps teachers understand how students learn specific content.
- Provides opportunities for active, hands-on learning.
- Enables teacher to acquire new knowledge, apply it to practice, and reflect on the results with colleagues.
- Is part of a school reform effort that links curriculum, assessment, and standards to professional learning.
- Is collaborative and collegial
- Is intensive and sustained over time. (p. 49)

It is imperative that providers of professional development are aware of these findings to enhance and sustain the desired changes in teacher learning and performance. Reform activities include study circles that include multiple sessions of experiential and active learning, practitioner research groups, and mentor teacher groups (Smith, Hofer,

Gillespie, Solomon, & Rowe, 2003). PD that is focused on teachers' specific instructional practices increases their use of those practices (Cohen M. & Hill, 2000; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Supovitz & Christman, 2003). Although the ultimate given is the teacher needs to be ready and willing.

Support Factors that Influence or Inhibit Teacher Change

Support for change is a key element to accomplish change at both a system level and individual level. In the era of implementation of standards-based reform, support is especially important due to the substantial learning needed for adequate implementation practices (Cohen & Barnes, 1993). Generally, not enough time is devoted to the support of effective professional development (Ofsted, 2002). Thus, schools and systems are in danger of actually not implementing new instructional or curriculum models that are required of them as a result of state and national reforms. Without appropriate structures in place the to ensure effectiveness, support and monitoring, it is as if PD should have even taken place. The items of key value are social support, learning communities, school based coaching and other components of support.

Social supports through peers, mentors and administrators. Conditions that help teachers apply their professional learning to their practice that can promote change include: assistance with the curriculum content, time to practice with colleagues, and ongoing support (Cohen M. & Hill, 2000; Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, & Hewson, 2003). The research on teacher learning collectively suggests teacher learning occurs individually and interpersonally. The interpersonal realm includes engagement in dialogue, collaboration, and support for further developing their teaching and learning (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Rosenholtz, 1989). Likewise, Coburn

(2001, 2004) emphasizes these same interpersonal components along with grounding teacher learning in examples of practice as two additional levels of support. Supporting teachers to engage in thoughtful conversations about their learning, thoughts, approaches, and practices builds opportunities to reflect not only on their own efforts, but also that of others. Respected teachers can cultivate self-efficacy in their peers and serve as role models and credible sources of feedback (Hoy & Hoy, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005; Rogers, 2003). Thus, support doesn't necessarily have to come from the top, it can be among and between the teachers themselves or of an outside of school source.

Learning communities. All of the above social support strategies are also components of learning communities, which have been increasingly adopted in school systems (Bryk et al., 1999; Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore, & Lash, 2007; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Hord, 1997, 2004; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; McLester, 2012; Supovitz & Christman, 2003) and other organizational structures (Blankenship & Ruona, 2007; Cameron, Duttton, & Quinn, 2003). Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos (2009) reported the collective findings of a meta-analysis of a number of key research studies saying,

> When schools are strategic in creating time and productive working relationships within academic departments or grade levels, across them, or among teachers schoolwide, the benefits can include greater consistency in instruction, more willingness to share practices and try new ways of teaching, and more success in solving problems of practice. (p. 11).

Participation in a professional learning community supports the collective effort through the phases of risk taking and struggles involved in transforming practices.

Dufour and Eaker (1998) refer to this structure as a community as participants are connected by a common interest, display mutual cooperation, can provide each other with emotional support, and typically results in personal growth from working together.

School-based coaching. Another form of support that has been implemented in schools and is considered as one of the fastest forms of professional development is the use of school-based coaching programs (Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 2002). Joyce & Showers (2002) have repeatedly found that inclusion of coaching raises the application process back in the classroom to ninety-five percent from only five percent without it. The structure of this model begins with an administrator selecting a well-regarded veteran educator and assigning them to provide continuous guidance, advice, discussion, and mentoring to teachers to help them improve their instruction. The convenient accessibility to someone providing ongoing support enhances consistency in availability, monitoring, feedback, and strengthens collaboration.

This form of support improves morale and change achievement by having a designated person to show teachers how and why certain strategies will make a difference for their students that typically results in raised test scores too (Russo, 2004). This person is knowledgeable, approachable, readily available, and supportive. The school-based coach is generally an expert in a particular subject area or set of teaching strategies working closely with small groups of teachers to improve classroom practice and, ultimately, student achievement. This readily accessible person with this specific role has been seen to make differences in not only teacher change, but instructional and academic improvements.

Additional factors that affect change adoption. Support is not only the face-to-face assistance teachers may need to assist them in facilitating change. It also includes support that might allow them to participate in professional development or for pursuing advanced degrees. These supports include what Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos (2009) list as that of :

> release time, scheduled time in the contract year, a stipend when engaging in professional development outside of work hours, full or partial reimbursement of tuition for college courses, reimbursement for conference or workshop fees, and reimbursement for travel and/or daily expenses. (p. 21)

Scheduled release time within a school year is rarely of long duration and little evidence is available that supports the use of stipends and reimbursements of expenses.

Other factors can alter opportunities to promote teacher change. Some of these contexts are school structures, teaching conditions, professionalism, teacher socialization, individualized school restructuring, and support (Richardson & Placier, 2001). All these factors can affect teacher behavior, just as teacher's can affect the structure of a school (Richardson & Placier, 2001). Thus, a culture for learning is established within the institution (Elmore, 2000).

Without opportunities for quality long-term professional learning and ongoing support throughout the duration of the intended process, schools and systems will continually miss the mark in strengthening the capacity of educators and building learning communities to deliver higher standards to the students they serve. The current thought of many schools and systems seems to be instead of developing communities of change they will continue to rely on those that voluntarily change in hopes that others

will follow. This is an insufficient approach to meet the demands of the need for educational change in the United States.

Positive Organizational Scholarship

Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) is a relatively new perspective, having formally begun with a 2003, edited collection of articles within a book of the same name (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003). Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer (2006) explain,

> the term POS describes this perspective is about: *positive*, because it emphasizes elevating, affirmation, and generative states and dynamics; *organizational,* because it highlights how these generative dynamics unfold within and across organizations; and *scholarship,* because it emphasizes theoretically-informed accounts, backed by data and analysis, that suggests implications for organizational functioning, practice and teaching. (p. 641)

POS provides an interdisciplinary perspective of not only those of psychology and organizational theories (Caza & Cameron, 2008) but the also the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, health and social work. POS promotes the focus on positivity, especially that of life-giving, generative, and thriving human conditions with a conceptual foundation for understanding how and why organizational contexts positively affect human behavior. Thus this this focus of positivity and human behavior grew the perspective of positive deviance and deviant behavior.

The development of POS evolved out of the philosophy of positive psychology. The relationship between POS and positive psychology is best understood through the history of psychology, positive psychology, and positive organizational scholarship, then POS and human behavior in the relationship of individual and organizational change.

Psychology and Positive Psychology

The science and profession of psychology before World War II had three explicit goals: curing mental illness, making the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing high talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Although not formally identified as such, evidence of positive psychology existed with studies of: effective parenting (Watson, 1928), the search for and discovery of meaning in life (Jung, 1933), marital happiness (Terman, Buttenwieser, Ferguson, Johnson, & Wilson 1938), and giftedness (Terman, 1939). These early studies satisfied the last two science and psychology goals of making the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing high talent.

After the war, the Veteran's Administration in 1946, and the National Institute for Mental Health in 1947, were both founded (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Although titled the National Institute for Mental Health, its focus was clearly rooted in a disease model rather than the promotion of mental health, as the title would suggest. Consequently, thousands of psychologists focused their work on treating mental illness. Grant monies and research were focused heavily on pathology. The primary concern in the disease model was repairing damage that hampers human functioning—that is a model of trying to fix what's broke.

These two developments changed the face of psychology in making huge advances in the understanding of and therapy for mental illness. The empirical focus of psychology became focused on assessing and curing individual suffering. This resulted in an explosion of research on psychological disorders and the negative effects of environmental stressors, as well as how best to repair the damage from these disorders

and stressors toward the philosophy and development of prevention. Seligman (1994) reported at least fourteen disorders currently either have cures or methods to produce considerable relief. The negative side of this era in the profession was that psychologists began to view themselves as a subfield of the health professions and it risked becoming a practice of victimology.

The movement on positive psychology initiated by Martin Seligman and colleagues in 1998, was aimed to shift the focus in psychology from dysfunctional mental illness to mental health. This action called for an increased focus on building human strength, creating good lives for healthy people, and fostering the best in people. This was a radical shift of course, as previous efforts were to shore up human weakness, heal people who were psychologically distressed, and the general philosophy of repairing the worst (Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000).

Positive psychology has three areas of focus: *positive emotions* or *experiences* such as contentment, happiness, joy, and hope; *positive individual traits* like strength, courage, compassion, character, and resilience; and *positive institutions* that foster communication, responsibility, civility, work ethic, teamwork and tolerance (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Seligman, 2007). Positive institutions include the experiences and learning from family, school, business, community, and society.

Positive psychology is defined as the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive (Seligman, 2007). Thus, this new psychological approach in its positive tone was not just a study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it was a study of strength and virtue. Treatment wasn't just about fixing what was broke; it was nurturing what was best. The profession began to evolve and

adapt for those who desired to understand the unique problems that human behavior presents.

Historical reasons for psychology's negative focus had stemmed from the defense and damage control efforts of military threat, shortages of goods, poverty, or instability threats on cultures. Thus, conversely it was believed that when cultures are stable, prosperous, and at peace their attention is more freely focused on creativity, virtue, and the highest qualities in life (Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology now views its primary task is to understand what makes life worth living by learning how to build the qualities that aid individuals, communities and societies not just to endure and survive, but to also flourish. This shift has shown considerable popularity and success, while generating extensive research and education (Peterson, 2006; Snyder and Lopez, 2002). It has created a positive companion to the handbook on mental health (American Psychiatric Association, 1994; Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and some validated interventions for improving happiness (Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005).

Positive Psychology and Positive Organizational Scholarship

Positive psychology begins with the assumption that individuals are inherently driven to seek, that which is positive. We typically don't like to be punished or scolded, or be around other individuals that are negative. In the field of science, heliotropism is defined as the tendency in all living systems to seek that which is life-giving and away from that which is life-depleting (Blakenship, 2002; Smith & Darkins, 2005). Heliotropism has been referenced and observed in a variety of disciplines, with examples from the social and physical sciences (Caza & Cameron, 2008). In the fundamental work

of Wheatley (1997), she references a similar understanding saying, "as a living system self-organizes, it develops shared understanding of what's important, what's acceptable behavior, what actions are required, and how these actions will get done" (p. 22). For humans the research shows positivity assists in developing a similar self-organizing structure.

The development of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) evolved out of the desire to focus on positivity within organizations and individual behavior instead of the typified opposite. The first POS conference was hosted, supported, and held at University of Michigan Business School in December of 2001. POS seeks to understand what represents the best of the human condition based on the scholarly research and theory of current authors and enthusiastically invite organizational scholars to build upon and extend the positive organizational phenomena. This first major publication came out of a collection of articles in the book *Positive Organizational Scholarship* by editors Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn (2003) and other colleagues.

The use of POS is inclusive of positive psychology. POS is often described as the organizational equivalent of positive psychology (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Dutton & Sonenshein, 2008; Roberts, 2006). In the initial research review and writing of the book *Positive Organizational Scholarship* (Cameron, et al., 2003) positive psychology scholars were invited to offer insights (Peterson & Seligman, 2003). Therefore, POS presents a lens toward a conceptual foundation for understanding how and why organizational strategies have their effects on human behavior in the workplace, and why certain strategies produce more generative effects than others (Cameron, et.al. 2003). The focus of understanding positive states for individuals benefits the wellbeing

of both individuals and the organization in which they work. The sections following on human behavior and individual and organizational change will be reviewed through the lens of and primary use of positive organizational scholarship (POS).

POS and Human Behavior

POS has an overarching focus on the generative factors of life-building, capability-enhancing, and capacity-creating. It is through these generative factors in the context of organizations that "contribute to human strengths and virtues, resilience and healing, vitality and thriving, and cultivation of extra-ordinary states in individuals, groups, and organizations" (Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006, p. 641).

Humans adapt to changes as they occur to the best of their ability and naturally desire to gravitate toward the "good" life. Unfortunately, due to findings rooted back in the earlier psychology practices on differences between positive and negative events as well as our hard-wired past experiences, human tendency has been to attend to the negative more than the positive (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006). Psychologists have conducted exhaustive literature reviews of psychological research and concluded the perception is that, the bad trumps the good (Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006). The daily societal exposure to crime and suffering from live media and printed press unconsciously reinforces other negative hard-wired experiences and add to the non-positive phenomena continuum. Fortunately, the knowledge base that is developing in regards to positivity has provided a counter-argument. Dutton and et al. (2006) report that it has been found that accentuating the positive over the negative by a ratio of 3:1 in regards to behavior, communications, or emotions enhances the capacities of all individuals involved.

POS values human conditions such as resilience, vitality, thriving, fulfillment, transcendence, courage, flourishing, integrity, and wisdom, as well as other individual and collective strengths and virtues. POS highly emphasizes the importance of such aspects of well-being, citizenship, and health as valued outcomes which are just as important as the organization or business' strong economic performance. It is the interrelatedness of positive emotion, positive meaning, and positive connections that POS views as the core engines of generative and life-giving dynamics in individuals, groups, and organizations (Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006; Spreitzer, & Porath, 2014).

In regards to the individual, Seligman, Parks, & Steen (2004) capture the purpose of positive psychology the best saying,

> the ultimate goal of positive psychology is to make people happier by understanding and building positive emotion, gratification and meaning. Towards this end, we must supplement what we know about treating illness and repairing damage with knowledge about nurturing well-being in individuals and communities. (p. 1379)

The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences of the past that consist of well-being, contentment, and satisfaction; where the future holds hope and optimism, and the present is of flow and happiness (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Flow is the conscious control of positive aspects of human experiences concerning joy, happiness, and creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

POS and the Relationship to Individual and Organizational Change

The leading work of Senge (2006) reminds us how important the individual is to an organization. He said, "the active force is people….[and] organizations learn only

through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organizational learning. But without it no organizational learning occurs" (p. 139). Likewise, others believe change is the process of "altering people's actions, reactions, and interactions to move the organization's existing state to some future desired state" (McNabb & Sepic, 1995, p. 370) and other's understand that organizations change and act through their members (George & Jones, 2001). Change is constant and is something we will contend with many times throughout our lives and in work. Thus, if change stems from the efforts of people, either individually or collectively, then it is POS's intent to explore the psychology of the change process.

POS extends the idea of fostering wellbeing for individuals into organizations. Cameron, et al., (2003) explain "POS draws from the full spectrum of organizational theories to understand, explain, and predict the occurrence, causes, and consequences of positivity" (p. 5). The focus on the generative dynamics of and within organizations is for enabling human excellence which releases latent potential and uncovers hidden possibilities in people and systems that can benefit both human and organizational well-being (Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006). An enhanced focus on the positive activates the broadening and building dynamics between individuals, teams, and the organization.

Ibarra (2002) has continuously reported that work is an important part of people's identity. It's been found where employees desire to be fully engaged in their work and seek to thrive (Loehr & Schwartz, 2003). Therefore, this desire for work to be more than a paycheck where they want to be engaged and thriving has a vital connection to positive organizational scholarship. The idea of engagement in work has been defined as the positive opposite of burnout (Bakker, Van Emmerrick, & Euwema, 2005; Schaufeli,

Martinez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002). Thus the desire to thrive at work is defined as a psychological state focused on "a sense of progress or forward movement in one's self-development" (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005, p. 538) which is encapsulated within two dimensions of personal growth: learning and vitality. Spreitzer, et al., (2005, 2014) report both learning and vitality are believed to be essential components of thriving. Likewise, learning, vitality, thriving, and engagement are those generative positive states and modes of being that can be analyzed and achieved within POS and are valued employee traits for any organization interested in its own and individuals well-being.

Within the context of organizational development and change, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) needs to be recognized too. POS provides a theoretical grounding for AI, an organizational development and change paradigm introduced by David Cooperrider in 1986 (Cooperrider & Sekerka, 2003; Cooperrider, Sorenson, & Yeager, 2000; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006). The core principle of AI is that change involves search and discovery processes that honor, prize, and value the life of the organization or what is called the "positive core" (Dutton, Glynn, & Spreitzer, 2006, p. 641). This methodology of guiding organizational change is based on previous successes and peak performances. Designing a future plan based on the best of the past provides the platform of learning and power for future organizational growth (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). AI has become a widely adopted change practice used in organizations globally, although little empirical research has been conducted on its effects and contingencies (Caza & Cameron, 2008).

Positive Deviance

Along with the investigation and interest of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) into the human behavior of individuals within an organization along with organizational change, POS is likewise interested in the behavioral sciences of people's actions, motives, and behaviors that guide their efforts as individuals and within organizational structures. Not just ordinary actions, motives, or behavior, but *extra-ordinary* levels, that of positive deviance. They are behaviors of positive consequence for the individual themselves, others, and the organization. The Positive Deviance Initiative's Website (www.positivedeviance.org) which was funded and established by the Rockefeller Foundation in 2008, and receives three thousand unique visitors each month (Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010) states the definition as,

> Positive Deviance is based on the observation that in every community there are certain individuals or groups whose uncommon behaviors and strategies enable them to find better solutions to problems than their peers, while having access to the same resources and facing similar or worse challenges. (p.3)

The community aspect applies to a teacher. The teacher is the leader of their classroom (Quinn, Heynoski, Thomas, & Spreitzer, 2014). The community includes their classroom, school and system. Initially, deviance has always been thought of as negative behavior. It's those studies from the early 1900's and on of deviant behavior (Goffman, 1961; Merton, 1938), that of negative behaviors, that later grew an interest in looking at positive behaviors and developing other approaches. These positive deviance approaches are: statistical (Clinard & Meier, 2001; Heckert, 1998), supraconformity (Dodge, 1985; Ewald & Jiobu, 1985; Hughes & Coakley, 1991), reactive (Dodge, 1985; Heckert, 1989),

and normative (Dodge, 1985; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003).

Statistical deviance refers to behaviors that differ from the average experiences, where the majority of the group do not function. They are typically those individuals we could align statistical facts, as data exists for the group, like in sports or academic achievement. Supraconformity or excessive conformity to norms is deviant behavior that extends beyond the bounds deemed average or normal by a similar group. The negative side to this approach is the belief that too much of a good thing can also become problematic, as in leading to an addiction. Reactive deviance is typically been known as the reaction of an audience to a negative behavior, being viewed with a public labeling or notification of disapproval. In regards to positive deviance, the reactive approach can be framed positive being called honorable and leads to the last approach of normative. The normative approach is the focus on the nature of behavior with a constructive view whether it departs from the norm, is positive and considered of honorable ways, that of positive deviance. Other descriptive words that rally around positive deviance are those of excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, resilience, virtuousness, and wisdom (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003).

The implementation of this self-directed behavior of honorable intentions, independent of outcomes that is so important in looking at positive deviance. It is these honorable intentions that correlate to the virtuous process of positive deviance, a specific area of scholarship within POS and the Positive Deviance Initiative's Website that study how some individuals transcend what others perceive as blockades or limitations, perform to extra-ordinary heights, and create transformational change (Bateman &

Porath, 2003; Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010; Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2004). Positive deviance has been described as when one overrides constraining personal or environmental factors and creates extra-ordinary positive change (Bateman & Porath, 2003). This transition serves the person's increasing need to not be a victim or a mere survivor of change, but the constructive creator of high-impact change. Quinn & Quinn (2002) address pursuing our full potential saying, "being extra-ordinary does not necessarily mean obtaining a position of honor or glory or even of becoming successful in other people's eyes. It means being true to self. It means pursuing our full potential" (p. 35). There is also the possibility of reaching a level of perceived greatness (Quinn, 2005).

Theoretical Context and Definition

Early in Lewin's (1951) work on the subject of human behavior, it was determined that the outcome of behavior relied on both the person and the environment. Lewin basically had an equation that represented person (P) plus environment (E) result in (=) human behavior (B). Debates continued over the respective roles and relative importance between the person and the environment in determining behavior. Later, Bandura (1986) incorporated the three elements in Lewin's equation into his social cognitive theory using a triangle. Basically the outcome was the behaviorist perspectives focused on the effects of the environment (E) on human behavior (B) while cognitive perspectives focused on the effects of person (P), as well as including perceptions of the environment (E), on human behavior (B).

In regards to positive deviant behavior under these two models, P and E not only *cause* but also *constrain* behavior and performance (Bateman & Porath, 2003). Thus,

more specifically, the definition of behavior that is of positive deviance or transcendent is when behavior or actions override environmental contingencies or apparent personal limits to create extra-ordinary change in the person (B positively affects P) or in the case of the environment (B positively affects E). As implied earlier, transcendent or positive deviant behavior that produces positive change in the social environment can affect other people, groups, and the organizations—positively. Organizational members may be positively affected by observing virtuousness, as it tends to strengthen human attachments and build social capital (Baker, 2000).

A key feature of positive deviant behavior is that it is predominately self-determined or self-prescribed. The person (P) is in total control of the motivated behavior. Also, positive deviance is neither driven or a coercion; or constrained by environmental contingencies or perceived personal limits (Bateman & Porath, 2003, Deci & Ryan, 1985). In clarifying the relationships and differences of other behaviors, it is important to recognize that positive deviant behavior is when one *overrides* constraining personal or environmental factors and creates outstanding recognizable or extra-ordinary positive change (Bateman & Porath, 2003).

Relationship between Positive Deviance, Resilience, and Self-Determination

Positive deviant behavior can include transcendent behavior, resilience, and self-determination. Transcendent behavior is most commonly synonymous with self-determination. POS seems to have applied the term transcendent behavior as its use for self-determination, yet uses the two interchangeably within the founding 2003 POS text (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003). In self-determination theory three psychological needs—competence, relatedness, and autonomy—are considered essential for

understanding the *what* (i.e., content) and *why* (i.e., process) of goal pursuit (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Thus self-determination and transcendent behavior are a compatible and accepted interchanges.

Positive deviance. Spreitzer & Sonenshein (2003, 2004) add to the definition of positive deviance as intentional behavior that deviates from the norm for the enhancement of the wellbeing of an entity (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003, 2004). Positive deviance is highly recognized as being individuals who take the initiative to find solutions to problems or challenges, where others with similar issues, resources, or knowledge do not, they aren't doomed or discouraged by challenges. Joan Richardson (2004) in her book, *From the Inside Out* mentions positive deviance in her study of six schools and districts across the nation who outperformed surrounding schools and districts with similar student populations. She found the success came from each school having established routines for drawing from the potential already present within their organization, not focusing on what's broke. Basically, accentuating the positives!

Resilience. The term resilience grows out of the research on vulnerable children in psychopathology and developmental psychology (Masten, 2001; Masten & Reed, 2002) and refers to invulnerable or stress-resistant qualities considered to be extra-ordinary personal traits. Resilience is the capacity to rebound from adversity strengthened and resourceful (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003). Even though considered as an extra-ordinary personal trait, resilience isn't synonymous with positive deviance or self-determination. Although a strong relationship can be seen between the traits of positive deviance and resilience, where one who is positive in their approach to a problem or challenge and implements intentional behaviors to solve a problem or challenge this all

leads to one who is also self-determined. The skill of resilience is a survival instinct that promotes the fight element of the fight or flight theory to stress or a problem.

Intrinsic motivation and self-determination. Motives are the reasons that people hold onto when they initiate and perform voluntary behavior. Therefore, motives are believed to often affect a person's perception, cognition, emotion, and behavior (Reiss, 2004). Motivational theories are numerous and have existed for decades. Beginning with the works of Lewin (1936) and Tolman (1932), most contemporary theories of motivation juxtapose that people initiate and persist at certain behaviors to the extent that they believe those behaviors will lead to desired outcomes or goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Some theories have been built on a set of assumptions about the nature of people and about the factors that precipitate action. Noted authors Deci and Ryan (1987) address two of these assumptions saying,

> *Mechanistic* theories view the human organism as passive, that is, as being pushed around by the interaction of physiological drives and environmental stimuli, whereas *organismic* theories tend to view the organism as active, that is, as being volitional an initiating behaviors. According to the later perspective, organisms have intrinsic needs and physiological drives, and these intrinsic needs provide energy for the organisms to act on (rather than simply to be reactive to) the environment and to manage aspects of their drives and emotions. (p. 3-4)

This clear description of the behavioral differences between mechanistic and organismic theories shows the innate energy driven traits have on stimuli. Stimulus from the organismic view does not develop the cause for behavior, but is seen as affordances or opportunities that can be utilized to satisfy needs. Thus, Ryan and Deci (2000) posit

intrinsic motivation positively affects behavior, performance, and wellbeing. Another approach through positivity.

Intrinsically motivated behaviors are innate motives for effectively dealing with their environment. The environment does not provoke incompetent reactions. Intrinsically motivated behavior, based on the need for competence and self-determination, involves undertaking optimal challenges. Psychoanalytic theory refers to this motivational force as independent ego energy and psychologist refer to this non-drive-based motivation as intrinsic motivation, implying that the energy is intrinsic (Deci & Ryan, 1987, 2000). Thus, the view is that intrinsic motivation is based on the organismic needs to be competent and self-determining. Therefore intrinsic motivation and self-determination are necessary concepts for an organismic theory.

The literature within POS also emphasizes intrinsic motivation involves many different feelings of interest, challenge, enjoyment, and *flow* (Pinder, 1998). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) coined the term flow. The term flow evolved out of his decades of research on the positive aspects of human experiences concerning joy, happiness, and creativity achieved through the control of consciousness. Csikszentmihalyi's (1990, 1997, 2003) extensive research of the phenomenon of happiness revealed happiness is a condition to be prepared for, nurtured, and protected privately by each person. The closest one comes to being happy is through learning to control inner experiences, which allow the determination of the quality of their lives.

Bateman & Porath (2003) suggest flow may produce more positive deviant behavior efforts and result in being more successful. Flow arises with challenges that match or even exceed one's perceived ability, and during other conditions in which

autonomy isn't threatened (Csikszentmihaliyi, 1990, 1997). These challenges, which seem to exceed one's perceived ability, are not of any concern for those exercising positive deviant behavior. Repeatedly the literature has shown interrelated characteristics that are prevalent to positive deviant behavior: intrinsic needs (motivation), physiological drives, energy, competence, self-determination, and flow which all are the product of optimal functioning.

McGregor & Little (1998) expressed the outcomes of personal growth, greater energy, and more positive emotions evolved out of goals that fulfilled important needs such as relatedness, competence, and autonomy—thus, transcendent behaviors. Autonomy and competence have been found to be the most powerful influences on intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Self-control and Self-management.

Individual discipline and success requires a certain amount of self-control and self-management to accomplish a task or goal. The same is required for transcendent behavior. Self-control is the act of self-monitoring and keeping the self in check. It includes overruling or inhibiting temptations, inappropriate behaviors, or desires to maximize long-term interests (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). Self-management is a broader technique that allows a person to guide his/her goal-directed activities, progress, and change circumstances over time. Self-management includes the processes of goal setting, self-monitoring, discrepancy checks, action plan, evaluation, feedback, and progress monitoring between adjustments and goals (Karoly, 1993). This list also includes controlling thoughts and resources, focusing efforts, planning, problem solving, and prioritizing situations. Ryan and Deci (2000) claim human achievement is enhanced

through self-management. The earlier works of Colarelli, Dean, & Konstans (1987) found it allows individuals to maximize their talents and build strengths and encourages growth and fosters wellbeing.

Decision-making process. Strategic and tactical choices, and plan adjustments, are effective decision-making processes that facilitate and predict positive deviant behavior. A source of knowledge and guide to action in the decision-making process is rationality, which is the unconditional adherence to reason (Avolio & Locke, 2002; Peikoff, 1991). Decisions that are made without bias and challenge the limits of rationality are more likely to produce successful goals and outcomes. The early works of Langer (1989) explains that accomplishment of transcendent goals is through mindfulness—conscious and thoughtful considerations and creations of new possibilities. Transcendent behavior requires self-control and self-management to overcome distractions and discrepancies in order to accomplish the goal intended of extra-ordinary change. Both rationality and mindfulness "employ skill, ability, and practice to overcome inhibitory biases and provide fuller and more proper use of information" (Bateman & Porath, 2003, p. 130). Positive deviant behavior is more likely to succeed with these guided processes in place.

Positive cognitions. Attitude, or positive cognitions and emotions, have been proven to increase persistence in the face of setbacks and obstacles. Roberts, Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy, & Quinn (2005) found that at "the state of being at one's best, an individual actively employs strengths to create value, actualize one's potential, and fulfill one's sense of purpose, which generates a constructive experience (emotional, cognitive, or behavioral) for oneself and for others" (p. 714). Optimism helps people "see adversity

as a challenge, transform problems into opportunities, put in hours to refine skills, persevere in finding solutions to difficult problems, maintain confidence, rebound quickly after setbacks and persist" (Schulman, 1999, p. 32). The positivity of cognition sets the tone of our mental environment and outlook on possibility.

Like optimism, a strong self-efficacy will likely predict transcendent behavior. Bateman & Porath (2003) posit that "self-efficacy is personal judgment or belief in how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations (Bandura, 1982) and is the most important psychological mechanism for positivity (Luthans, 2002)" (p. 131). Bandura (2000) claims, "unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act" (p. 120). These positive attitudes, cognitions, and emotions can increase the likelihood of individual's both initiating and sustaining efforts toward positive deviant behavior (Bateman & Porath, 2003).

Likewise, these positive behaviors contribute to a person's overall wellbeing. Likewise other traits seem to be apparent such as virtues, wisdom, conscientiousness, courage and creativity.

Virtues. Virtues are those personal characteristics valued to promote individual and collective wellbeing. On Wikipedia alone, there were over 92 listed examples of virtues. It is virtues that contribute to our beliefs, ideas, and opinions. Within the category of virtues a number of constructs that may motivate and facilitate transcendent behavior have emerged in the POS literature. Some of these virtues are wisdom, conscientiousness, courage, resilience, and creativity that also are traits of positive deviant behavior.

Wisdom. Wisdom is considered as the conductor of human development in achieving excellence. Concurrently wisdom attends to our personal and collective wellbeing. Many consider wisdom as the exceptional level of human functioning in regards to intellectual, affective, and motivational aspects (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000). The definition of wisdom in this context is not only referring to cognition, it also relates to behavioral actions and overlaps the definition of positive deviance.

In the earlier works of Baltes (1993, 1999), a list of the seven properties of wisdom were identified from analyzing and synthesizing cultural-historical and philosophical work of the prior ten years. Those properties found were:

> (a) Wisdom represents a truly superior level of knowledge, judgment, and advice; (b) wisdom addresses important and difficult questions and strategies about the conduct and meaning of life; (c) wisdom includes knowledge about the limits of knowledge and the uncertainties of the world; (d) wisdom constitutes knowledge with extra-ordinary scope, depth, measure, and balance; (e) wisdom involves a perfect synergy of mind and character; that is, orchestration of knowledge and virtues; (f) wisdom represents knowledge used for the good or well-being of oneself and that of others; and (g) wisdom, although difficult to achieve and to specify, is easily recognized when manifested. (p.123)

From previous descriptions it can be seen these properties are integrated within transcendent behavior in their levels of excellence.

Conscientiousness. The virtue of conscientiousness is better known under the context of transcendent behavior as a predictor of job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991), and should also predict the attainment of transcendent outcomes (Bateman &

Porath, 2003). One's attention to conscientiousness along side of their work ethics and production is their job performance.

Courage. Courage is the virtue that permits us to face risk and challenges (Worlin, Wrzesniewski, & Rafaeli, 2002). The lack of courage produces a lack of taking risks or accepting a challenge. The virtue of *resilience* is the capacity to overcome adversity, yet more strengthened and resourceful (Sutcliffe & Vogue, 2003). Individuals are not considered resilient if there has never been a significant threat to their development; there must be a current or past hazard judged to have the potential to derail normative development (Masten, 2001). This physical and psychological *toughness* generates energy, although with minimal tension, for successfully problem solving with the zest of a challenge instead of a threat (Dienstbier & Zillig, 2002). Although, others debate to what standard resilience should be judged (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 1999).

Creativity. Creativity is another virtue that may motivate and facilitate transcendent behavior. Unsurprisingly, many people see creativity as a good attribute to possess (Simonton, 2000). Simonton (2000) reminds us that creativity is around us everywhere—our homes, entertainment, work, communities, and the world—and is considered one of the most important and pervasive of all human activities. Insightful problem solving is referred to as creativity where intuitive information processing is thought of as a regular manifestation of the cognitive unconscious (Simonton, 2000). Thus, it was believed the magic behind the talent of sudden, unexpected, and seemingly unprepared inspiration is understood to be subliminal stimulation and spreading activation. Cognitive psychology emerged the term creative cognitive approach (Smith, Ward, & Finke, 1995) where creativity is a mental phenomenon that results from the

application of ordinary cognitive processes (Ward, Smith, & Vaid, 1997). It is visual imagery that functions as the origination of creative ideas (Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1992). Surprisingly, research has amply demonstrated that exceptional talents are less born than made (Ericsson, 1996). Acquiring this form of optimal functioning entails ordinary cognitive processes and is accessible to almost anyone (Howe, Davidson, & Sloboda, 1998).

Summary

Change is not easy, isn't always accepted, and depends on many different variables. What affects one person, won't affect another. Some change is naturalistic and other changes occur voluntarily with or without much conscious effort, while the truly painful change is mandated. As with all individuals concerning change, even some teachers are willing participants to change, some object to the change but comply, and others might feel resistant due to a threat to their autonomy, professional expertise, and identity.

The literature reviewed in this chapter was extensive touching on multiple related topics from individual change, change theories, elements that affect change, and information under Positive Organizational Scholarship in regards to positive deviance. Definitions were clarified to avoid misinterpretation of terms. The coverage of individual change theories presents an understanding the movement throughout change, while being able to compare four similar yet different constructs. These theories and models of change show that knowledge and learning are at the core of change. Without the element of knowing, the recognition for the need for change wouldn't occur; and without the element of learning, the acquisition of skills, attitude changes, new beliefs, and altered

behavior would not evolve. Without continued practice and commitment new behaviors and practices would not become permanent.

In regards to change specifically related to teachers the change literature is primarily related to professional development. The pros and cons of professional development are extensive, but the literature base is lacking on voluntary teacher change and especially with regards to positive deviance. Several systems that should support and affect teacher change were addressed, yet are repeatedly reported to be absent from the processes for promoting change for teacher's individually and of groups of teachers.

Although this study is not formally about psychology, when addressing humans the element of psychology cannot be avoided when discussing behaviors and positive outcomes. Positive deviance, self-prescribed actions, reflective practices, and intrinsic motivation in achieving a changed environment aligns well with psychology in studying why some teacher chose to make a change and what they did to accomplish their goal.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom practices. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

This chapter includes the design and methods used for this study. The design section will include the descriptions of my epistemology, theoretical perspective and research methodology. The second section shows my sample selection, methods, data collection and analysis.

Design of the Study

A qualitative approach was chosen for this study in order to explore the emotional side and personal experiences of the individual change processes (Geijsel & Maijers, 2005) of teachers who demonstrate positive deviant behavior in voluntarily changing their classroom practices. A qualitative approach for this study allows for the voice of teacher to be heard, commentary of that voice to be shared, and analysis across voices to be analyzed.

Epistemology

The epistemology of this study is constructivism. Epistemology is the investigation of what distinguishes justified belief from opinion, or how we know what we know (Crotty, 1998; Glesne, 2006; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002). In constructivism, the focus is on constructing meaning. By sifting through each participant's reality their individual purpose, experiences, and outcomes were revealed. Crotty (1998) emphasizes this is accomplished "out of the unique experience of each of us….[and] the meaning-making activity of the individual mind" (p. 58). It is clear that different people will construct different meanings within the same phenomenon.

The investigation into the phenomenon of positive deviance and teacher change consisted of an investigation into each individual's world and experiences in order to make sense of their personal change of classroom practices. Being teachers, their world is their students, individually and as a class, and their classroom, its overall environment. A constructivist epistemology projects all knowledge is constructed through experiences (Crotty, 1998; Merriam, 2002). Thus, constructivism was used to capture the unique experiences of each teacher in this study. This also included capturing background, individual life events, philosophies, personality and long-term goals. I was cognizant to remember that each participant's way of making sense of their world and experiences is valid and worthy of respect, even if different from other participants' or my view.

Crotty (1998), Lincoln & Guba (2000), Neuman, (2000), Schwandt (2000), among others, agree that constructivism primarily involves the process of an individual's desire to understand their own experiences and the world in which they live and work. My goal was to capture as much as possible about the views of the teachers' related to

their change in classroom practices. Thus a constructivist approach allowed me to capture those questionable facts in which comes first—beliefs then change or change then beliefs. The more important purpose in using this approach was to discover each teacher's meaning making, that of their own individual truths and validity (Crotty, 1998). Creswell (2003) also clarifies:

> …if a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. (p. 22)

In addition, qualitative designs are naturalistic in that they take place in real-world settings and the researcher must be conscientious not to manipulate the phenomenon of the study (Patton, 2002). For this reason, Patton stresses interviews should take place within situations of comfort and familiarity for the participant. All of the teacher participants chose the place and time for their interview. Ironically, all of them chose their own classrooms, definitely a place of comfort and familiarity for all of them—their real-world setting.

Merriam & Simpson (2000) state that "qualitative inquiry assumes that there are multiple, changing realities. Individuals construct reality. Thus in qualitative research the understanding of reality is really the researcher's interpretation of someone else's interpretation" (p. 101). Initially, I heard their reality of a primary critical incident that propelled them into their change effort. I listened to multiple changing realities to capture each participant's interpretation of the change processes they experienced. The realities of each teacher were different in specifics and in many cases consisted of

multiple issues they wanted to address or fix, but yet identical in desired results—improving their classroom practices. The interpretation derived from each participant's data and the constant comparison of data across participants was vital to my identification of similarities and differences.

Methodology

The strategy of inquiry for this study was a basic qualitative design where I desired to "discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, *and* [changed or to *and*] the perspectives and world views of the people involved" (Merriam, 1999, p. 11). Merriam (2002) also refers to this type of study as a *basic interpretive qualitative study*. The use of a basic qualitative method was well suited for this investigation of positive deviant behavior and teacher change. Merriam & Simpson (2000) state, "the improvement of practice comes from understanding the experiences of those involved" (p. 97). Through the interview process, transcribing, and the analysis process, I was able to capture and then clarify with each individual if I'd captured their voice of experience through rich descriptions, emotions, experiences, processes, and meaning. This inquiry strategy of hearing the participant's interpretation of their change processes and clarifying my interpretation of their meaning was essential for understanding their feelings and experiences. The clarity of each individuals meaning was crucial for identifying similarities and differences with fidelity.

The element of learning was another critical part of this study and the interpretive process. Patton (2002) wrote, "Qualitative inquiry cultivates the most useful of all capacities: The capacity to *learn*" (p. 1). Obviously, learning had occurred when the teachers recognized they had a problem they wanted and needed to fix, then they had to

learn what to do, evaluate what they tried, and make changes to what they identified was or wasn't working. Consistently reported by all as an ongoing process. Learning occurred for me as the researcher, in the need to silence my own experiences as a teacher and my knowledge base of teaching. Learning to be appropriately interactive to keep the conversation flowing was crucial. To keep to each teacher's authentic story and their meaning I avoided voicing my own experiences. It was also important for me to avoid interjecting opinions or agreements to keep to their reality. I strived to accomplish Merriam's (1998) quote, "The goal of eliciting understanding and meaning, the researcher as primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the use of fieldwork, an inductive orientation to analysis, and findings that are richly descriptive" (p. 11).

Research Methods

The methods I employed for my sample selection, data collection, and data analysis aligned with my chosen epistemology, theoretical perspective, and overarching methodology.

Sample Selection

Teacher participants of this study were purposefully selected (Patton, 2002). Of Patton's fifteen different strategies for selecting a purposeful sample, I implemented two of them: (1) maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling and (2) extreme or deviant case sampling. These two purposeful sampling strategies supported this study the best.

Maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling. The use of this sampling was applied to include different school settings within each system and across four systems. The study included eight teachers at eight different schools across four systems, each system being represented by two teachers each. The purpose of this cross section

collection was to capture information on each individual teachers' settings of practice, work environments, school leadership, and the school and community cultures allowed for the identification of similarities and differences within a system and across different schools and systems.

The necessity in capturing this information is different school and community cultures set the climate for different settings of practice, work environments, trainings, and school leadership that can result in a variety of outcomes. Research has consistently shown us that collective work in trusting environments allows teachers opportunities for inquiry, reflection, taking risks, and addressing concerns in their own practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1999; Little, 1990). Likewise, Fullan states in an interview with Sparks (2003), "moral purpose is more than passionate teachers trying to make a difference in their classrooms. It's also the context of the school and district in which they work" (p. 58). Fullan also reported to Sparks "effective schools research found that classroom-to-classroom differences in effectiveness within schools is greater than school-to-school variation" (p. 55), but still worth capturing. My findings did not reveal expansive differences between school districts and schools in regards to school or district work or initiatives. Only one teacher revealed her discontent with the lack of school and system initiatives to promote change.

Extreme or deviant case sampling. This sampling involved selecting individuals that were information rich with substantial successes. This sampling strategy consisted of four different methods to secure potential participants; that of student achievement data, nominee or recipient of teacher of the year, instructor recommendation, and administration recognition.

The first method I used was the identification of teachers through significant student growth patterns across three consecutive years in criterion referenced competency testing (CRCT) or end of course testing (EOCT). CRCT and EOCT information by schools and systems is public record as a whole school or system entity, but individual teacher data is not. The local RESA for this four county region, for whom I had worked upon starting this research, receives all testing data from the state per superintendent request for the purpose of the RESA to disaggregate the data. Each of the four system's superintendents gave me permission to look at individual teacher data for the purpose of identifying this three-year growth pattern. CRCT was initially given in first grade through eighth grade and due to the cost progressed to only third through eighth. The EOCT is given at course levels from eighth through twelfth, so teacher participants were limited to those grade levels and within the subjects of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

The second method of extreme or deviant case sampling was the nomination or award of Teacher of the Year at the school or system level. The initial selection process for teacher of the year is through peer nomination and then a vote within each individual school. Each teacher of the year awardee within the same system can then compete for the title and award of system teacher of the year. From there system awardees throughout the state compete for the state teacher of the year award. These teacher awardees are usually recognized as teachers who are outstanding in what they do and have possibly changed something about their practices that brought about this recognition. This sampling method included either nominees or recipients of teacher of the year and/or system, along with the correlation of three years of significant growth in testing data.

The third method of extreme or deviant case sampling selection came from teacher recognition from RESA consultants, adjunct instructors, or college professors on contract with RESA conducting long-term courses. Since professional learning opportunities are offered at the RESA, this provided an opportunity for instructors to identify teachers whom they witnessed had made positive changes over the duration of their course. Only long-term courses, meaning thirty to fifty contact hours, were used in this instance.

Once potential participants had been identified using the three methods above I then contacted and met with the principal or assistant principal of these teacher's school assignments, creating the fourth method of extreme or deviant case sampling. This administrator meeting was primarily a checkpoint of alignment in the data, nomination or award, and recommendations of others, while confirming their additional recognition of this teacher too. This meeting also gave me an opportunity to see if they knew whether this individual had made any voluntary and extra-ordinary changes in their classroom practices.

Once the teacher participants had been identified I began to contact them. I opened my conversation with congratulating them in their student achievement growth model accomplishments over the past three years and teacher of the year accomplishments if applicable. From there the participants were briefed on the study, my research process, timeline commitment, and then a verbal invitation to participate. When the contact was in person, I gave them an invitation letter, consent form (Appendix B) and a demographics questionnaire (Appendix C) to be able to read and look over for making a decision whether to participate or not. If our initial meeting took place on the

phone, I shared the forms electronically. If an immediate agreement to participate wasn't made, I reconnected with them in three days. Upon agreeing to participate, arrangements were made to retrieve the consent form, demographic questionnaire and to set up an interview time and place, if not already arranged. Participant anonymity practices were implemented throughout the complete research process and will continue indefinitely. My research findings are reported with assigned pseudonyms.

Qualitative inquiry consists of relatively small samples for focusing on the depth (Patton, 2002) or saturation (Shank, 2002) of each individual's experience. The participant sample for this study was eight members, with a collection of data through interviews to reach saturation. The use of the two purposeful sampling strategies of maximum variation (heterogeneity) sampling and extreme or deviant case sampling assisted in identifying "information-rich cases" (Patton, 2002, p. 46) and participants of likely positive deviance.

Data Collection

The data from this study contains the stories of teacher change. Whatever strategy is used to collect data should be the source that will yield the best information for answering the research questions (Merriam, 2002). Ruona (2005) reminds us, "The primary charge during qualitative research is to capture, understand, and represent participants' perceptions and meanings *through and in* their own words" (p. 234). Using the primary lens of teacher change, the use of a basic qualitative study captured these teachers positive deviance and the processes involved to change classroom practices.

Qualitative research has three common data sources of interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell, 2003, Merriam, 2002; Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton,

2002). I used interviews as my primary data source. Prior to the initial interview, a brief electronic or copy of the demographic survey was administered to all participants. The survey captured information such as age, gender, how long they have taught, different locations, subjects, grade levels, degrees they hold, and how many professional learning units they acquire during a school year from their school, system, local regional service agency and college classes taken. All of the teachers chose to be interviewed within their own classrooms.

The use of interviews provided the ability "to capture how those interviewed view their world, to learn *their* terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of *their* individual perceptions and experiences" (Patton, 2002, p. 348). In designing questions for the interview guide (Appendix D), I used the method of identifying a critical incident (Flanagan, 1954). I posed questions for the purpose of identifying those critical incidents that propelled them into a self-prescribed teacher change effort and eliciting the processes taken to accomplish their goal. CIT relies on recall of an actual event and encourages participants to tell their story. Memorable situations are explored, as they are more likely to be faithfully recalled, although there is no guarantee (Urquhart, et al., 2003). Tripp (1993, 1994) defines critical incidents:

> …are not "things" which exist independently of an observer and are waiting discovery…but like all data, critical incidents are created. Incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event. (p. 8)

Therefore, critical incidents are not necessarily sensational events, rather may be minor incidents where their criticality is based on the justification, the significance, and the

meaning given to them. These critical incidents can be "marked [sic-as] a significant turning-point or change" (Tripp, 1993, p. 24) or desire that propels one into action.

I utilized an interview guide (Appendix D) to conduct the interviews for this study. Questions were asked from the interview guide, with probing questions being asked where needed to elicit more clarifying information. The guide was used to provide a consistent framework of questions with all participants and a logical sequence to investigate each teacher's process while being able to identify comparisons and contrast in the data later. Even though the interview guide had a specific sequence of questions, I also allowed for the latitude to insert unstructured questions for exploring topic areas that arose that were relevant to the research. Merriam (1998) refers to this combination of unstructured and structured as a "semi-structured interview" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 100). The strategy of using the semi-structured interview guides for a reasonable amount of time being used and ensures certain things get asked of everyone. I deviated from the guide only when deemed necessary. My ultimate goal was to understand participants' points of view, not just to get through the questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, 2003).

Thus, all the participants were asked the same questions, yet interviews ranged from one hour to two hours and transcription pages ranged from fifteen to twenty-nine. Variations naturally occurred with everyone's story being different, the depth of details expressed, and the different comfort level's individuals possess in talking about their personal experiences. The variations in the length of time of the interview had no correlation to the quality of his or her change effort.

Data Analysis

There are many different ways to analyze qualitative data, more approaches than can be dealt with in one book. No matter what approach is used, Ruona (2005) states "…the key to excellent qualitative research is to conduct a rigorous analysis of the data" (p. 234). Qualitative analysis is a process that entails: (1) sensing themes, (2) constant comparison, (3) recursiveness, (4) inductive *and* deductive thinking, and (5) interpretation to generate meaning (Ruona, 2005). The analysis of data is not to start after all the data has been collected and it must start with the very first collection of data and continue throughout (Ruona, 2005; Merriam, 2000).

Sensing Themes

Sensing themes in qualitative analysis is "the process of making sense of the data" (Merriam, 1998, p. 178). Qualitative data analysis involves immersion in the data to process a massive amount of information, and openness and cognitive flexibility to see patterns. The main themes that surfaced in the analysis were critical incidents, processes toward change, difficulties, support, duration of time, promoting change in others, and goal achievement. Multiple sub-topics developed within each of these main topics from continuously revisiting the data.

Constant Comparison

The constant comparison (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton 1990; Strauss 1987; Wolcott 1994) of data is when the researcher "through constantly comparing incident with incident, comparing incident with emerging conceptual categories, and reducing similar categories into a smaller number of highly conceptual categories, an overall framework or substantive theory

develops" (Merriam, 2002, p. 143). It is vital to revisit data throughout the entire analysis process. This was facilitated through the use of constant comparative analysis throughout the coding process, comparison of reported experiences across participants and the reduction of categories to higher conceptual categories. I continually asked myself questions of the data and the findings, such as "How do the themes fit together? What happens if you combine some or slice some apart? What does it mean if you link themes together? What patterns emerge across the themes? What contrasts, paradoxes, or irregularities surface?" (Ruona, 2005, p. 245). This process ends when the categories produce no additional information. The recursiveness of data analysis refers to the process being a simultaneous and repetitive process. This comparison process is done both inductively and deductively.

Inductive and Deductive Reasoning

Within the practice of qualitative data analysis both inductive and deductive reasoning are relied upon. Bogdan & Biklen (2003) describe inductive analysis as "constructing a picture that takes shape as you collect and examine the parts" (p. 6). In qualitative research inductive analysis begins with the attempt to assign codes to the data or in the initial identification of patterns, themes, and categories within the data. The deductive process aims to test a theory through data collection and checks to see whether the data accepts or rejects the theory. My inductive analysis involved thorough interaction with the data to lead to the discovery of patterns, themes, and categories, whereas my deductive analysis involved data being compared to or aligned to an existing framework or theory (Patton, 2002).

Interpretations

Interpretation*s* should generate meaning. This starts with the development of categories, themes, and coding the data, which in turn begins the process of theory building. Themes began to develop through the art of data organization and the use of categories and codes. It is much more than manipulating data. Coffey & Atkinson (1996) say "coding should not be seen as a substitute for analysis" (p. 26) and Wolcott (1994) wisely cautions, "the move from coding to interpretation is a crucial one" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 46). The outcome should be a rich, thick descriptive product where the reader can be transported to the setting and be provided an element of shared experiences through the discussion (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 2002).

Ruona (2005) lists the four general stages of qualitative data analysis:

1. Data preparation— interview transcriptions, observations, notes, etc.,
2. Familiarization—listen and re-listen to tapes, reading and re-reading transcriptions, taking notes, and memos on what is seen and heard,
3. Coding—is a methodical way to organize, discover, and conceptualize what is happening within the data,
4. Generating meaning—from the completion of all the above.

Data Preparation

The data preparation involved several different actions. In listening to the conversation with each teacher I transcribed the interview tape verbatim (Patton, 2002). The transcription was formatted to clearly identify the interviewer and the interviewee by using italics for the interviewer and plain text for the interviewee. Once the interview tape was transcribed, listening to the tape multiple times allowed the capture of key

issues that could have been missed in transcription of: emotions, inflection, pauses, tone, and most importantly—meaning.

In order to become even more familiar with the data the transcription entries were read and re-read while notes were added to the margins of key points, patterns, and themes to become more familiar with the data. This process was repeated with each individual interview. By thoroughly reading the interview transcriptions several times I began to identify emergent themes and patterns (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) within each individual interview and across interviews.

The coding process was conducted through a procedure perfected by Ruona (2005), which was inspired from a method created by Carney, Joiner, and Tragou (1997) using Microsoft Word. In building a six column table (see Table 3.1) the headings provided an organized structure to assign a code(s) to emerging themes, an identification number (ID) to label the different participants, question numbers (Q#) to identify the question number asked on a particular line, turn number (Turn #) identifies the location of that *chunk* of information in the data, the data column is the actual text from the interview, and lastly a notes column to record personal notes, hunches, insights, and such.

Table 3.1

Example of Six Column Coding Table (Ruona, 2005)

Code	ID	Q#	Turn #	Data	Notes
10100	100	11	102	Support for learning is prevalent within our school	Relates to individual teacher support (10200) Relates to admin. Support (10300) Relates to district support (10400)

The chunk of data is the actual statement (data) from the interview and where it actually can be found within the interview. Ruona (2005) refers to this chunk of data as the turn, where others might refer to this location as the line-by-line transcription location within the interview (Misler, 1986). The specific notation of the data "chunk" and including that location in the table allowed for easier access when reviewing interview segments as needed during the analysis process.

Merriam (2002) stated, "the key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world….there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time" (p.3). In this constructivism qualitative research design, I strived to understand the meaning individuals presented about their experiences and their world, while being the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Merriam, 2002). Staying true to their meaning was critical in keeping the intended authenticity of their experiences.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The essence of constructivism is to understand and explain human and social reality (Crotty, 1998; Glesne, 2006; Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002). As referred to earlier, "Qualitative designs are naturalistic to the extent that the research takes place in real world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton, 2002, p. 39). The key is for the design strategies, data collection, and analysis to be of quality and creditability. Merriam (2002) states, "All researchers aspire to produce valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner" (p. 22). While some theoretical debate continues, a consensus on qualitative research criteria for assessing

validity and reliability does exist (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hammersley, 1990; Kvale, 1996; Merriam, 2002). There are some guidelines for dealing with internal validity, reliability, and external validity of qualitative research.

Internal Validity

Internal validity is the process of ensuring that the findings are congruent with reality, meaning how do we know this is true? This predominantly depends on the researcher's interpretation and the related constructs of reality. This process of interpretation occurs for the researcher when and only after the participants' have verbalized their own interpretation (Merriam, 2002; Mishler, 1986; Spradley, 1979). A number of strategies are available to ensure congruent interpretations between the researcher and the participants' intended message.

Two different strategies were used to enhance the validity of this study. The first one is with *member checks* (Carspecken, 1996; Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Merriam, 2002). This process involves having the participants verify what was said, implied, and interpreted. Using this technique allows for the participants to clarify whether the researcher's interpretations "rings true" within transcripts, researcher's code use, and interpretations through constant comparison of the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Corrections to these interpretations can be made before the final analysis takes place, avoiding invalid conclusions. Member checks were conducted with each participant either through hard copies or electronically. Participants were asked to read, edit, and clarify their interview transcripts to confirm that my interpretations within the coding and analysis table of Ruona's (2005) were accurate to their meaning and intent. Participants were asked to

review and edit within a two to three week timeframe to clarify errors, meanings, and edits. I either met each participant in person or personally talked with them on the phone, to correct any items they wanted to address. This process was conducted before the cross analysis took place. Allowing participants to do this validation of interpretation confirmed the credibility of the information being found and reported (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Secondly, a peer review process was utilized. One peer review process was early within data collection. I conducted a peer review with a terminally degreed peer who had also gone through this process with qualitative data. She reviewed three of my transcripts, use of codes, and interpretations. The process in checking for congruency between her responses and reactions to my findings would provide substantive significance to the research validity (Patton, 2002).

Reliability

Assessment and evaluation of qualitative research for reliability refers to assessing the extent to which the research findings could be replicated (Merriam, 2002). In a qualitative study, Merriam (2002) states, "reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences" (p. 27). Therefore, it is understood that the replication of a qualitative study will not have the same identical outcome. Although, Merriam (2002) poses "the more important question for qualitative researchers is *whether the results are consistent with the data collected*" (p. 27). It is understood from these quotes that dependability and consistency are key components to

reliability. Along with the strategies to ensure validity, strategies exist to support reliability.

Triangulation. The ultimate goal was to have consensus between my analysis, those studied, and peer reviewers. This is a strategy of triangulation (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). When the researcher, participants, and reviewers come to agreement the researcher has consensual validation of the substantive significance of the findings. The use of aligning member checks and the peer review of my data analysis findings provided an initial check using analyst triangulation (Patton, 2002).

Audit trail. Another strategy that helps to enhance consistency and reliability is the use of an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, 2000; Merriam, 2002, Patton, 2002, Ruona, 2005). For the purpose of this study an audit trail was developed. An audit trail consists of detailed descriptions of how the collection of the data occurred, how categories and themes were derived, what questions arose out of the data, and how decisions were made throughout the research process. In conducting this audit trail, I kept a research journal throughout the study. The journal captured reflections, questions, and decisions made on problems, issues, and ideas encountered in collecting data. Notes were also taken on biases and assumptions after interviews.

When biases and assumptions did occur I first tried to make a mental note to quiet those thoughts, especially during an interview process. After an interview I included that occurrence in my memoing and comment column of data sheet, to avoid compromising the authenticity of the data and that teacher's reality. The social interaction involved in an interview is filled with many potential meanings (David & Sutton, 2004). Bogdan &

Biklen (2003) stress subjectivity needs to be addressed even before the researcher begins to collect or interpret data. I started this trail immediately after each interview reflecting on what I heard, thought, possible biases, and assumptions. Ruona (2005) refers to this as memoing, with Creswell and Miller (2000) suggesting a research log is essential to monitor and document the rigor of a study. Thus, my memoing was basically a running record of my interaction of the complete data collection, analysis, and interpretation process.

The deliberate development of a subjective statement (see Appendix A) forced me as the researcher to address those areas of bias, assumptions, and perceived understandings of the topic being studied, thus enhancing not only the quality of the research process, but the internal validity of the study. The researcher is responsible and obligated to be aware of such biases and assumptions in order to recognize and avoid them when encountered throughout the research process. This avoidance includes displaying visual demeanors that could reveal my opposition during an interview.

The process of this conscious reflexivity is crucial to qualitative research. In addition to the memoing, I incorporated the use of Patton's (2002) series of triangulated reflexive inquiry (Appendix E): "self-reflectivity…., reflexivity about those studied…., and reflexivity about audience" (p. 495). The use of this adapted reflective inquiry of Patton's was completed soon after the conclusion of each interview. Both of these audit trail items were used to enhance consistency and reliability in capturing and reporting each teacher's reality, as well as a time to check for my own possible bias or influences from my own teaching experiences and opinions.

External Validity or Generalizability

External reliability or generalizability refers to the possibility of transferring the findings from this study to possible further action. Merriam (2002) states, "the most common way generalizability has been conceptualized in qualitative research is as reader or user generalizability" (p. 28). It is actually the readers themselves that determine to what extent the findings from a particular study can be applied to their context. While this is actually out of the researcher's control, it is critical that the researcher provide *rich, thick description* (Creswell, 2003; Denzin, 2001; Merriam, 2002, Patton, 2002) to paint the picture with words not only of the findings and process, but to create an interesting report and validate the claims of the researcher of the data (Glesne, 2006; Merriam, 2002).

This rich, thick description should be the product of the inquiry. The processes involved in this research design were utilized to capture and allow for the interpretation of the participants' perspectives for the researcher to better understand the phenomenon of positive deviance and change in teacher practices. Thus, it is up to the reader to judge whether reported critical incidents, action steps, strategies, tactics, and support systems would apply to their perspective, application, and world.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methodological approaches to this qualitative research design. The methodology included the overviews of and specific details pertaining to the research methods; the data collection process and analysis; and the strategies included to foster a quality and credible research study. Employing a rigorous constant comparative analysis of the data of each teacher and across interviews

while implementing strategies to ensure validity and reliability enhanced the trustworthiness and authenticity of this study.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHER PARTICIPANT DETAILS

Eight teachers were purposefully selected for this study. The participants were from four different school systems and 8 schools. All of them were identified for selection by using one of three, if not all three, criteria components of: (a) three consecutive years of testing data showing significant growth patterns with their students; (b) having been a nominee for or recipient of Teacher of the Year for their school, with the possibility of even going on to receive the system level distinction; and/or (c) were highly recommended by administration, a peer teacher, or someone whom they took a long term course, workshop, training, or college class from.

In the beginning of this study my employment gave me access to teacher performance data. Part of our organizational work for our member systems was to disaggregate testing results by teacher of each school and system within our RESA. Once I identified a potential teacher candidate who fit my criteria I would contact each teacher's school principal or alternate administrator. The purpose of this contact was to inform he or she of my study, then check the alignment of criteria and data for this teacher. I also wanted to affirm they recommended an interview with this individual. I also inquired if they had any knowledge of this teacher making changes in their classroom instruction. Unfortunately, two of these original eight ended up dropping their participation in the study for different reasons.

Shortly after starting my study an employment change occurred to my working in just one system within that same RESA region and I no longer had access to this data

across multiple systems. The third criteria component, being highly recommended for being interviewed for this study, became my alternative approach to obtain participants. I approached my new search by investigating school websites for Teacher of the Year recipient postings and calling principals to find potential participants. With the recommendation of two newly found teacher's I confirmed with their principal the teacher's history of significant growth data, whether they would describe them as innovative, and if they knew of any changes they'd made in their instructional practices. Thus, the addition of these two teachers with this approach returned my total to eight participants.

In initially asking administration about candidates for this study there was always an "Oh yes, sure I have some great teachers." In specifically naming someone I was considering, in all instances the administrators positively confirmed their academic results with students, their innovative ideas in the classroom, instructional engagement with students, strong team member participation, and how much they consistently care for and about students—academically and personally. Ironically, each administrator would add that parents, including peer faculty member parents, would request to have their child in this teacher's class.

All eight teachers had consistent high performing student data. No one taught strictly advanced or gifted students, or courses either. Three of the eight had earned Teacher of the Year during this research project although had previously been nominated, with one of them receiving System Teacher of the Year also. One teacher had previously been nominated twice for Teacher of the Year. Another had been awarded both Teacher of the Year for her school and the system. Two teachers did not report a nomination for

or receiving of an award, but did fit other sampling criteria. Table 4.1 shows the demographic breakdown.

Table 4.1

Participant Demographics

*Teacher Code Names	Age	Gender	Nominee for or Teacher of the Year (TOTY)	# of Years Taught	Grade Level Experiences	# of Certified Areas & Endorsements	Degrees	# of school or system Experiences
Sarah	43	F		21	Elementary	1	B.S. M.ED. Ed. S.	1 school 1 system
Mike	30	M	School & System TOTY	9	Elementary Middle High	4	B.S. M.ED.	3 schools 1 system
Kay	45	F	School TOTY	21	Elementary	3	B.A. M.ED. Ph.D.	3 schools 2 systems 2 states
Lee	64	M	School TOTY	37	Middle High	2	B.A.	5 schools 3 systems 2 states
Iris	48	F	Nominee For TOTY	17	Elementary	2	B.S.	4 schools 3 systems 2 states
June	35	F	School TOTY	14	Elementary	6	B.E. M.ED. Ed.S.	1 school 1 system
Barb	42	F	School & System TOTY	19	Middle High	3	B.S. M.ED. Ed.D.	4 schools 4 systems 1 state
Cathy	41	F		8	Elementary Middle	2	B.S.	3 schools 2 systems 1 state

* Participant Code Names are all pseudonyms.

There were six female and two male teachers with a median age of 44 years. The median number of years in the profession was18 years and their cumulative years teaching totaled 147. By the conclusion of this study, four participants had taught elementary during their career; one had experience in both elementary and middle school;

two had experience serving middle and high school; and one had taught in elementary, middle school and high school within the same system. Seven of the participants remain in the classroom as the teacher of record and the remaining individual had gone on to being an Instructional Lead Teacher for an entire K-5 school. Three hold bachelor level degrees as their highest degree, two hold masters, one a specialist degree, and two held doctorates. One of the master's degree level participants began her pursuit of a doctoral degree last year.

Each participant had a specific change effort that was triggered by some unique event—a critical incident. None of the participants were prompted by anyone to make changes in their classroom or with instruction, although two of them sought administrator advice on their desired change effort. All eight individuals felt as if they would continue to work on their change efforts even though many of them have already spent years trying to perfect their craft. Common statements about teaching or their change effort were "it's an event that really never ends." All eight spoke of the long hours teachers put in planning, grading, posting grades, gathering materials, learning technology, meetings (grade level, department, school, etc.), mandated professional development, data analysis, and handling student management items such as calls home, progress reports, tutoring, and counseling. Other demands included participation in after school events that are either voluntary or mandated. All of them informed me the workweek is more like a 60-70 hour week, not just 40. Several times it was brought up how it saddens them that society still thinks how cushy a teacher's job is (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.), in addition to being off for June, July, and August. Often they would giggle or laugh about such thoughts when in actuality the three-month summer disappeared many years ago. In Georgia, schools

begin with dates ranging from late July through mid-August with school being completed by late May through early in June. Teachers are lucky if they even get two full months off from school in the summer. In addition, many teachers' are mandated, although paid, to attend state trainings, take endorsements, or attend other summer workshops.

The following is an introduction to each participant and their individual change effort. Some testimonial pieces and revelations are included. Chapter 5 will be the culmination of findings. Again, all the participant names are assigned pseudonyms.

Sarah: Test scores were "worst of my entire career."

Sarah was initially identified from strong consistent student performance data from RESA findings. Secondly, she was highly recommended as a potential candidate by an instructor of a long-term course at RESA as having been an outstanding participant. Lastly, her school administrator also recognized her as a strong candidate. Sarah, age 43, has taught elementary school for twenty-one years, teaching all content areas of reading, english language arts, math, science, and social studies. Her passion for education was evident throughout her interview and a follow-up visit. Her desire to build her students' confidence to believe "they can learn" has been her mission ever since she has been in education. She reported her skill in accomplishing this goal has grown out of her change effort that began implementation nine years ago.

Sarah's critical incident occurred after receiving data on her testing results from spring 2005-2006 testing and she was shocked over her math results. She reported, "They were the worst of my entire career." Typically, she said the routine among most of the teachers was to "figure out what happened and then they'd start making excuses to justify what the scores represented." Many times teachers would blame their results on

this particular group of students, the change in curriculum being just too hard, we had too many bad weather days, etc. For Sarah, something clicked and she wasn't going to make excuses this time. She admitted to herself that if "she kept doing what she has always been doing; she was going to keep getting what she got," meaning her current disappointment in her student performance results.

At that point Sarah said, "I made a shift in starting to look at it professionally and looking at my teaching as a whole…" Her reflective process involved a thorough self-analysis of who she was; what she knew and understood of the content; and her teaching practices and the effects on her students. What resonated for her was she was teaching math from the book "cover to cover." She explained using a book in this fashion worked for the prior curriculum in Georgia of Quality Core Curriculum (QCC), but not with the shift to the new Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) curriculum and recently with Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). She confessed she was touching on all the basics and using the book as her instructional tool, but through her reflection finally realized "no thinking was involved." Students didn't really understand the content, didn't retain it, and later couldn't apply what they knew.

Her honest reflection also revealed she doubted her own talents and understanding for teaching math and even back when she was a student herself. Thus, she recognized it would take her perfecting her own understanding and ability in order to be more productive with her students. Lastly, she realized her instruction needed to include more real life examples and relationship connections for students to better understand why and how to apply math. Her critical reflection opened her conscientiousness to her performance as a teacher was the ultimate outcome of student achievement.

Over a five-year timeframe she shifted her teaching from the act of teaching to guiding students. She put structures in place to make students responsible for their learning in all situations—independently, small groups, whole class, during different stations activities of computation, and in using technology. Throughout this timeframe she conducted a continuous process of improving her own math confidence by studying; self-teaching; and learning math at a level to be a better facilitator of the "how's and why's, not just do it this way". She developed a habit of asking methodical questions to make her students think and process the steps for understanding the how's and why's. She eliminated the habit of correcting their steps and giving them the answer. Sarah moved to students developing their skills to prove why they are right and the ability to debate it out with their peers.

Lastly, she realized most of her students weren't going to care about learning math if she didn't make it fun. Fun didn't mean only learning math through an activity that was interesting. Sarah's realization was for math to be fun students needed to become confident and realize "they can learn and do math." More importantly she realized moving through a checklist of content isn't as good as moving slower and students thoroughly understanding it. In the end she made more headway in the curriculum because their foundational learning was strong. She stopped just "covering the content" as she put it.

Throughout this growth process and to the present Sarah is very data driven in not only knowing student achievement, but in recognizing what is working and what areas need attention. Over this lengthy time frame she has learned how to breakdown the standards for knowing exactly what students should learn and how she should build that

pathway. She additionally attempts to develop her students' ability to evaluate their own achievement progress.

For the past three years Sarah has enjoyed sharing her findings of "what works with students" with those curious and interested peers. During this study Sarah experienced being the teacher of record in different grade levels. Currently, she is an Instructional Lead Teacher for her entire school. Her excitement now comes from aiding other teachers in their growth process of perfecting content understanding, instruction, and classroom practices in all content areas.

Sarah rated her 9+-year change effort as a never-ending task. Each year she has tweaked and perfected her instructional practice to get students more involved in their own learning and accountable with her guidance. A key hindrance was heard repeatedly—time. Scheduling changes that affect the amount of time you were "use to" causes difficulties in accomplishing change efforts not only for herself, but for her students, too. Scheduling issues included situations such as a break in the middle of a math class to go to lunch, as well as shortened class periods. These scheduling issues lessen instructional time that typically resulted in a less than optimal consequence. Another difficulty was learning to be more flexible in evaluating learning in the moment and possibly having to abandon lesson plans because it didn't fit where the class was in their learning.

A key aid for Sarah was someone to go to for advice and knowledge. This person was a math consultant she respected. Her second aid was developing a consistent personal habit of reflection on herself, her teaching, and her students needs, etc. The third aid was discovering the benefit of developing student accountability. This

technique changed her whole teaching perspective in how important it was to include the students in that responsibility of learning even though they are young children.

Mike: "I didn't try to copy Ron Clark's ideas."

Mike was first identified through outstanding student performance data from the RESA. School administration additionally recommended him as a prime candidate for this study. Mike, age 30, had nine years teaching experience with five years being in elementary. The school year right after his interview he moved to middle school for two years and currently he has had two years teaching at a high school within the same system. His elementary experiences were the focus in this study, where he taught all content areas of reading, english language arts, math, science, and social studies. His secondary teaching assignments have been in social studies, which is actually the level he's always desired to teach. His ultimate desire is to some day serve in administration. Thus, he sees his experience at all three levels gives him firsthand knowledge of each level's operation and the specific dynamics of each. Mike is highly innovative in his classroom practices and uses lots of technology. It was reported by his principal his peers voice their respect (using the word "love") for him of such talents and his willingness to always help them with technology issues and share ideas. During this study he also earned the honor of both Teacher of the Year at his school and at the system level.

Mike's critical incident for his change effort developed while he was teaching elementary school after a visit to the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta. The Ron Clark Academy strives to prepare students for being leaders of tomorrow by providing quality learning, celebrating success, and incorporating skills for everyday success. These skills where simple behaviors or courtesy protocols of doing or saying things like—hand

shaking, thank you, respect, answering and asking questions, taking responsibility, volunteering, etc. all while having fun, yet learning academics. Before this academy tour, Mike had read a couple of Ron Clark's books. After visiting the academy and seeing how things operated in actual classrooms with students, he knew he needed to try to put some of the ideals he witnessed into practice. Although his academic successes with students were already evident from his test scores, he reflected from this academy visit "the classroom atmosphere was first. I realized that I was very negative, mainly punitive, and disciplining. I wasn't celebrating the kids as much as I thought, as much as I realized I should be."

He first started changing the way he conducted himself in the classroom by celebrating the kids' work a little bit more and rewarding the kids as opposed to being punitive. The next year he switched to the house points system, where the classroom was divided into four groups (houses) and he was surprised how quickly each house became competitive against the others. Both the house and students individually could earn points for behavior and academics. Just this simple technique improved classroom atmosphere, behavior, and academics. Mike claimed before this school tour his "classroom management was non-existent the first year." His management was all done from a very conscious punitive effort and was very stressful. He felt "he couldn't get to academics because he was constantly having to manage behavior", and reported he went home daily stressed and exhausted. In spite of his interpretation of his classroom and feeling like he didn't get to academics, his student data was outstanding. When Mike put other structures in place he found the environment basically ran itself, with him just needing to monitor rather than operating under an "identify and discipline role." The

students even began owning the control of other students in their group or the classroom when someone started to get off track. Students earning points and praise from not only the teacher but also their peers changed the whole environment—behaviorally and academically. He even heard student's saying "they liked his class; it was fair, fun, and friendly", and with some saying "they felt their class was like a family".

Points could be earned for some things like making A's, showing exemplary behavior or work, helping someone learn something they were struggling with, and making improvements in an assignment over a previous attempt. Accentuating the positives in teamwork, earning points, recognitions, celebrations, etc., fostered more positive behavior and academic success not only in the classroom with students, he too enjoyed teaching that much more and found himself being more positive and energetic at the end of the day.

Mike also felt this process of making the classroom a positive learning environment where everyone is accountable for their personal behavior, how they treat others, and learning with others and individually would always be a work in progress. He felt different classroom dynamics always occur with different types of students and that tweaking would constantly be necessary to adapt and so he wouldn't stagnate. After Mike had left his elementary teaching assignment he reported he felt his elementary experiences had made him a much better teacher at the secondary level. He reported that the struggles in elementary in planning; teaching; grading all the subject areas for your whole class; managing different maturity levels and behaviors; and setting classroom routines to foster a positive environment has more than prepared him for older students along with the luxury of only having to manage one content area. Although the three

grade spans are very different from each other, no matter what level one works at, Mike commented, “it is still all about a positive environment.”

Although Mike avoided giving me an actual in rating in his change effort success on a scale of 1-10, he reported his 5+-year change effort as a process that never ends. He said, “It’s still a work in progress”. His reported hindrances were and still are the lack of time and changing life-long habits, like his temper and permanently changing behavior approaches with a more positive tone for himself and with his students. Aids were a supportive administrator, but more than that was his own motivation to accomplish this goal. Mike confessed, “I’ve always had to be the best or something. I’m one of those all-or-nothing.”

Kay: “I’m a lot happier when I’m learning.”

Kay was highly recommended by the Director in the Curriculum and Instruction office as an outstanding and innovative teacher with a track record of making huge gains with struggling students and non-English speaking students. In addition, her student performance data was outstanding, as was the school principal’s strong recommendation. Kay, age 45, has taught 21 years in elementary education experience in two different states and 4 different schools teaching all content areas of reading, english language arts, math, science, and social studies.

Her previous teaching experiences in another state and at different schools have made her experiences in her current system and school difficult. As she basically implied, it’s hard working in an environment where others are resistant to ideas or change, when you know from prior experience how things can be and the work teachers should be doing. The small community dynamics and cultural experiences in her current location

have been more negative then the large system experiences she had in a pervious state. Kay is extremely driven to do her best at anything and everything she does. She insists on getting the best grades in a course or class she takes and in her own students' achievement; she does her best work, always above and beyond what is actually expected; she continuously focuses on growing as a teacher doing whatever and however long it takes; and more importantly she does what's right by children at whatever the cost. In her mention of cost, this was in reference to the loss of time spent with her family.

A frustration she stated comes from others not operating at the same level of commitment and drive she exerts. This frustration swells up in her now and then as anger in the tone and messages she relayed in the interview. She doesn't understand adults not being committed to rise to the occasion, as it's the children that lose. Her discouragement rests with those that have the ability to better education, that being teachers first. She finds it very disturbing that all teachers' aren't made to rise to the appropriate occasion of growing from good to better, and then better to best instructional practices. Thus saying, her main frustration ultimately rests with school administrators, other system staff, and even the superintendent, when they don't facilitate or mandate professional learning for the purpose of improving instruction and student achievement. She was clear in stressing her current system wasn't doing many of the things labeled as best practices that she had experienced eleven years ago in another state.

Her educational passion strongly surfaces in the mention of her heart break over students who get neglected. Her use of neglect means a student who is sweep under the carpet or falls through the cracks academically. She finds this totally unacceptable, then

professes it happens most of the time due to a teacher's lack of attention and their proper performance of their duties. She claims she has partially tamed her fury over the obvious deficit in this community cultural. She ultimately admits, alone she isn't going to be able to change that culture, but at a minimum she can do what is right by her students.

To her surprise, yet definitely a well deserved award from her data, reputation, and tireless dedication, Kay's peers nominated and voted her Teacher of the Year during this study. Ironically, during her interview she had mentioned she strongly voiced the school staff would never nominate her for Teacher of the Year, as she felt her peers viewed her educational ambitions for herself and her students as a threat.

It was evident that Kay is a self-starter and refers to herself as a "learning nerd." Her change efforts are literally continuous. She implements data-driven decision making plans constantly, which can occur in a single moment, by day, week, grading period, and year to year from an individual student to whole class or grade level identified need. She constantly evaluates what each student needs and she definitely doesn't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach. The autonomous and extreme drive she possesses is her innate trigger or critical incident. Kay believes this drive comes primarily from her upbringing and personal experiences. She also stated her level of drive has come with personal sacrifice in spending less time with her family then desired. Although she was quick to say they are supportive of her dedication to teaching. She spends hours to design, plan, and research what needs to be done to obtain better academic results with her students individually and as a class.

Her resilience beliefs and fortitude seem to be deep seeded from her family history of immigrant experiences and hearing family stories throughout her lifetime. In

addition, she had her own childhood experiences in school that were negative, but her spirit was strong and she overcame. Her dad always instilled in her, "anything you want, you can do it. This is the land of opportunities." Ultimately, her continuous change effort each new school year includes fostering the development of resilience within her students saying, "In addition to teaching the content, that's [sic-resilience is] probably more what I teach than anything else." She prefaced her statement on resilience voicing with much conviction that everyone makes mistakes, you need to learn from them, so you pick yourself up, and keep working.

She reported her immigrant family overcame many obstacles and criticism, but they prospered personally and financially. She overcame her own schooling degradation, therefore wants her students' to know they can overcome too, if they try, try and try again. Most of all she wants them to know she cares, she will guide them along, they won't be alone in their efforts of trying, and they will ultimately learn together.

Kay's process involves continuous informal and formal assessing to identify what each student knows, doesn't know, and can't do. Her next steps were to help bridge the gaps of what was keeping them from getting what was being taught. She was very diagnostic in her investigations and reflective in how to help students through the next steps toward success. If an evaluation tool or assessment isn't available she will develop it. It was very obvious she is extremely data driven and reflective in her practices at all times.

Kay rated her change effort attempt also through words instead of a number score saying, "For me, personally, I'm going to continue. I'll never be done. To me it will be a never-ending quest." She did report she was very pleased with her students' achievement

data, as they all showed quality growth. Hindrances mentioned were the difficulties of changing personal habits and behavior when she finds something that she had researched and wanted to try. Another huge hindrance was the lack of time and resources both professionally and personally. Balancing everything from family, work, and her own personal or professional endeavors causes additional conflict saying, "…you're being pulled in so many directions because this [sic-teaching] is not the only thing I do."

Thus, a powerful aid was learning to compartmentalize her life. She learned to do schoolwork just at school even if it meant staying late to accomplish what she needed to do. Then when she went home she committed herself to truly being with the family and not later in the night retreating somewhere in the house to work on schoolwork. Another aid in her change effort was the recognition when things worked and noting it. This technique became her evidence that her efforts were not only paying off, but also a record of things not to forget to keep doing and from year-to-year. She also mentioned she cherished former teachers and college mentors, as well as teacher friends and doctoral classmates she could tap for advice, ask questions of, have discussions with, and seek their opinion or thoughts.

Lee: "I don't consider myself the sharpest pencil in the box."

Lee was initially identified as a potential candidate from the RESA student performance data. He was also identified as a possible participant through recommendations from a school administrator and his department head. Lee, age 64, was the oldest and most veteran teacher of 38 years. His experiences ranged from two states, three different school systems, and six schools. After 38 years, he was still passionate in teaching high school students math. He's taught mainly freshman, but his beginning

years started out in middle school. He admitted he isn't one for kudos. He blushed when I informed him that peers and his administration recognized him in being a great influence on students and having a quality teaching style that engages students. Lee in return was gracious in complementing his school administration in being good supporters, stating together they have "a great working relationship" where they support him and he volunteers with extra curricular activities to support them. Lee was honored to receive the award of Teacher of the Year during the process of this study. During a follow up conversation I congratulated him and his response was quietly humble. He seems like the type of guy who wants to fly under the radar.

The critical incident that propelled Lee's change effort occurred when an administrator told him he was going to observe him teaching with the new Georgia teacher evaluation form called Class Keys. He was told it was a "practice run." Three years prior to this event there had been some faculty meeting talk about how the evaluation instrument was going to change, but no one really knew when the system or state would put it into effect. Surprisingly his quote was, "Well the joke got turned on me in 2012, when finally after 3 years all the 'chit-chat' came to life in the new teacher evaluation instrument," meaning they were finally going to use what they'd been previously, yet only casually talking about.

When he got his carbon copy results of that practice run observation he was stunned, as he had gotten low marks. Considering himself a good teacher he was in shock. Lee had an open and good working relationship with the observing administrator, so he was comfortable approaching this administrator to get clarity of the evaluation prompts, scores, and comments. Shortly after the conversation began it became evident

to both of them the school faculty discussions did not appropriately inform everyone. The realization was the faculty didn't have a complete understanding of standards-based instruction, nor had they seen specific examples or implications of what that should "look like." Lee stated this complete experience was a learning lesson for administration too, that teaching teachers should be no different than what a teacher does with students. All lessons should be clear, contain examples, allow time to practice, and consist of timely feedback.

Not liking to fail at anything and not being a quitter, Lee paid close attention to all the one-on-one guidance the administrator provided. Little by little, he then began to put change efforts in place within his instruction to meet each of the components in the teacher evaluation instrument. Some of those components were things like opening the lesson with a hook to capture students attention, telling students not just what they were going to learn by topic but what specific standard that is along with its meaning, and summarizing the lesson upon closing. He considered these components a change in behavior from what he'd been doing for the last 34 years, but as he said, "I don't consider myself the sharpest pencil in the box, but I do know how to relate to kids, make learning fun, and teach my subject matter, so there weren't going to be anymore unsatisfactory evaluations on me." He was determined to learn and incorporate the components of standards-based instruction within his teaching.

It took time to change his habitual teaching behaviors and he reported that almost 4 years have passed and he is still perfecting new habits to continually get better. He commented that, he hasn't lost his authenticity, the elements have added quality to his practices, he feels he has become even a better teacher from the change, and he values

what he has learned in making the students accountable too. Thus, he not only changed to avoid later unsatisfactory evaluations, but the most impressive part was he saw a change in his students. Improved student performance proved his efforts were well worth the investment and his continuation in perfecting more and more strategies of standards-based instruction.

Lee revealed change seems to get harder as he gets older, especially when it comes to changing his habits. Habits of teaching a particular way for thirty some odd years, he admitted "doing things my way, my routines, my habits, now I was going to have to adapt to new behaviors." Like others have also mentioned, he repeatedly stated how change takes time, with time being such a "valuable commodity, yet can't be purchased and is very hard to capture." He professed teaching is not an easy profession, "the days are long and hard anymore. It doesn't surprise me when I hear of young teachers leaving the profession—it is so much more demanding then when I started 34 years ago." At the close of the interview he said, "Now it's off to grade papers. It never ends." He also added in a follow-up chat, he was glad this experience occurred as the state is mandating the implementation of the revised Class Keys evaluation now named the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) for this 2015 school year.

Lee rated his change effort at a success rate of 8, on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being considered as an extra-ordinary achievement. He commented on his rating of 8, "with room to grow to get to 10—Perfection" while also saying, "I've achieved a higher level of success then I actually thought I would." His points of hindrance were "never enough time to plan, practice, perfect, and do the other teacher duties that are involved in a day's timeframe." Aids to his change efforts were having a copy of the evaluation sheet

components to constantly review, while mastering each one of them one at a time, saying "Biting it off in pieces. Taking it in chunks to master." He also credited his approachable administrator in being willing to work with him as an aid. Lee also added a second time during the interview how it surprised him that administration admitted they messed up. Their admission that they improperly prepared staff made him and others feel more than ever they are a team. This admission also seemed to give him some relief that he didn't totally fail his initial trial run solely on his own accord. Everyone seemed to own the failure.

Iris: "This need forced a year-long personal research project."

Iris was first identified by high RESA student performance data. Secondly, her school's administration stated she would be a prime candidate to participate in this study describing her as being energetic, innovative, and very successful with her students. Her student performance data aligned with this gracious description of her too. Iris, age 47, has taught 17 years in elementary within two different states and four schools teaching all content areas of reading, english language arts, math, science, and social studies. Her love for elementary age children and fostering a positive learning experience for them was how she described her passion for being in education. She reported all of her teaching experiences have been joyous and positive, but like all the other participants stated there is always a need for time. Time is needed to accomplish so many different things. As previously heard from other teachers, she too stated "time can't seem to be captured during the school schedule, thus ends up needing to be taken from personal and family time before or after school, as well as weekends many times." Thus keeping her from her husband and child.

Iris' critical incident came from her conducting a thorough comparison of the traditional teaching model and that of the standards-based model of instruction. The standards-based model had been a topic of discussion within the system and its schools due to a change in curriculum four years earlier, but nothing was actually mandated from that work nor continued. Through recent experiences she had with Special Education students in an inclusion class and their need to have more diversity and differentiation in their instruction, Iris saw the need to fully transition to the standards-based model. In revisiting what she had previously heard about the standards-based model of instruction she wondered if some of the strategies would engage and assist the students to learn better. It was obvious for Iris as she spoke of the traditional model in saying, the "spit and get method" of teaching, that of lecturing and telling students what you want students to get or remember wasn't working. Whereas, her research revealed the standards-based model was a more effective method of hooking students on prior knowledge and exciting them to what they are going to learn, while presenting ways for them to explore, ask questions, discover, and think through different tasks. She'd recently witnessed in her special education inclusion class certain techniques work, so she wondered what research said about standards-based instruction in regards to special needs students. She was driven to perfect her understanding and the techniques needed to fully implement this type of instruction to all of her students, not just in certain settings or with certain types of students.

Being convinced she should take the leap toward standards-based instruction forced Iris into "a year-long personal research project into standards-based teaching models and differentiation for all students, including those with special needs." She

reported, "several hours every week during the school year were spent working on differentiation plans, analyzing student data, and planning for remediation and enrichment." Time wise, Iris spent many weekends and two full summers of countless hours just to create resources, search for materials via libraries and the Internet, and plan activities. In addition, she spent many hours in discussion of the standards-based instructional concept and gleaning suggestions from a professor friend from a prior college experience.

Iris' stages of implementation with students grew with different components and strategies of the standards-based classroom model being tried or added on a continuous basis. Iris claimed the process would never end due to always meeting different individual student needs academically and behaviorally. Other reasons for her continuous process were "periodic state curriculum changes, state assessment changes, school/system/state/national educational reforms, and cutting edge professional learning findings that requires tweaking to planning, instruction, learning tasks, and assessments."

In spite of the grueling learning level, amount of time, and energy needed to accomplish what she has mastered up to this point after her 5 years of commitment, she "strongly believes in standards-based learning and performance tasks, as I see students getting the learning to a level of better understanding for later recall too." Her rubric of success with the standards-based classroom model implementation was "the level of improvement and mastery of her students as they focused on the standards in the classroom."

In stating the level of her change effort accomplishment, Iris referenced the involvement of her extensive research, learning, implementing, and perfecting the craft of

teaching using a standards-based classroom model, she would rate it as a 7 on a scale of 1-10. She stated, "I'm still striving to get to the 8-10 range", which additionally shows she still isn't through with this change effort. Items of hindrance in implementing her continuous change effort is the lack of time for collaboration with others, the amount of time it takes to gather materials that are appropriate for the standards, and finding a good balance between actual teaching and facilitating active investigative learning. Crucial aids were keeping good records and documentation of what was working well and what didn't for each new school year in continuing this process. Quick formative assessments also aided Iris to know where students were in their learning. She also cherished her relationship with a prior professor she had taken classes with to bounce things off of. She later admitted this professor eventually became her mother-in-law.

June: "I made a switch to only novel studies."

June's initial identification for this study came from school administration highly recommending her participation. Both administrators (her principal and assistant principal) reported she always gets good results with students and has a great relationship with her peers, students, and their parents. Through investigating her school webpage bio, it was noted she has twice been nominated for Teacher of the Year, as well as a couple of other academic teacher awards. June, age 35, has taught 14 years in elementary school at the same school teaching all content areas of reading, english language arts, math, science, and social studies. Her passion and commitment to teaching has been with two purposes. One in not only perfecting her teaching in the classroom for her students benefit, but also in continuing her own education through either specific professional development, taking courses, or seeking a higher degree. June currently holds a specialist

degree and has earned five additional certification endorsements in education. She not only attempts to grow her students, she too believes in continually growing herself.

Although June was clear she has constantly tweaked and perfected her teaching, classroom management, and what she asked students to do over the years, but the change effort she shared for this study was different. It was different in that a grade level change in her teaching assignment created a critical incident. This assignment change consisted of advancing three grade levels from primary to intermediate for teaching all content areas, along with including the need for implementing gifted cluster. June's leap in grade levels and the addition of serving formally identified gifted students brought recognition to several needs in her instructional practices. Gifted cluster in Georgia is a heterogeneously mixed class with gifted identified students within that mix. With gifted cluster the teacher has to do academic contracts with those gifted identified students, and provide learning and lessons tailored for their accelerated talent and need to be challenged, while also attending to the needs of all the remaining students.

June's recognition of the pedagogy differences between the primary and intermediate grades triggered her change effort to integrate more projects for experiential learning. Having older students now would allow this approach. Her main focus for change was to switch reading instruction from primarily being of basal reading experiences to novel studies. Basal reading is the use of grade level identified short stories that are typically bound in a book or accessible as sets of books for that grade. Where novels are a long narrative, normally in prose, which describes fictional characters and events, usually in the form of a sequential story. The use of novel studies presents more work for June, but she values the benefits for students to accept that extra work.

June's interview pertained to her change effort conducted with novel studies. Her first year, five years ago, at this grade change experience, she did a little of both in reading the basal and novel studies. Her third year, she switched to using purely novel studies in reading. Her main reason to only use novel studies was to improve student vocabulary. The Lexile® Framework is an educational tool that links text complexity and the readers' ability on a common scale metric known as the Lexile. It is hypothesized that with the improvement of vocabulary student Lexile reading level scores improve too. Each grade level has an identified Lexile reading level range, with the goal for students to be within that range or above that grade level designation by the end of the year.

June voiced the real challenge each year is in always having students at different reading levels, including levels one to two grade levels below with other's above grade level expectation. Her goal is always to try to get students on grade level, but that doesn't always happen. She explained some novel choices aid below reading level students when they see how the story information relates to another content area like the novel *The Winter of the Red Snow*, which goes along with the social studies content of the Revolutionary War. Thus, this was where she recognized how integrating lessons can aid student understanding within two content areas through one activity.

June confessed this change effort wasn't one of the most difficult changes she had attempted in her career. She stated she enjoyed the use of novel studies and it wasn't as if she had to change her philosophy to accept doing novel studies. Doing primarily novel studies required much prep work and that was the area of difficulty. Again, as heard from prior teachers, June also reported there is never enough time to do everything

needed, thus prioritizing what needs to be gotten done first is the only way to manage the lack of time.

The process in changing from the basal reader to novel studies wasn't that she just found a grade level appropriate novel and the class read it. Her starting point as she explained was, "The planning time needed is great. I had to read the novels and study them before I presented them to the students." The year prior to our interview, she said her students read 12 novels. She also emphasized, "the volume of novels read is important because each novel provides rich vocabulary and exposure to literary devices." Additionally, June was keenly aware she still had to value all the other content areas as well, so her planning and pacing was crucial.

In asking June what motivated her to achieve this goal of changing her classroom practice she reported how each year student achievement gets better and better saying,

> Each group of students has their own challenges, but last year's group (12-13) achieved 100% exceeding standards on the Reading CRCT and the majority of them, I think all but 2, maxed out the Lexile levels for their grade. I've taught for 14 years and have NEVER had scores that impressive.

Her awareness was that her practices are worth the effort. If that wasn't enough evidence her efforts were a success, she also delighted in that parents would tell her "that their child enjoys reading because of her class, where they previously had not."

June rated her level of change effort last year at a 10, on a scale of 1-10. Completely changing her instructional practice to novel studies from a history of using the basal reader was bold and risky, even though she had her principal's support and blessing. She claimed her aids in accomplishing her goal were creating a curriculum map

that incorporated both nonfiction and fiction novels. Surprisingly, she stated a hindrance was she herself, in always needing to "do more" and the lack of time to be able to do more.

Barb: "A friend told me about this program."

Barb was initially identified by her student performance data of the RESA and having received Teacher of the Year at both her school and system levels. In contacting administration, they too supported her recommendation in this study. Barb, age 42, has taught for 19 years with experience in both high school and middle school within four different systems and four schools within Georgia. Upon conducting the interview she was teaching middle school and had been at this level and this one school the longest of her career. Since the interview she moved to the high school within the same system for the 2016 school year. Prior to our interview she had just earned her Ed.D. She was reluctant to participate in the study, as she felt drained from all the recent demands of teaching, family and going to college.

As heard numerous times from the other participants, perfecting the classroom environment and instructional practices has been a norm for Barb year after year. As she said, "I believe great teachers are always looking for ways to capture the attention of all their students. Education for the teacher should never end." The particular change effort Barb shared for our interview was triggered from dissatisfaction in student engagement and her overall classroom environment. The tool to aid her in a solution to her problem came from a casual conversation with a teacher friend four years ago. This friend had shared with her a program she had experienced, tried, and liked on techniques for the improvement of the learning environment to promote increased student engagement. Although, this information came mid-year, she was frustrated how this particular school

years' group of teenagers approached learning and acted in the classroom, so she was ready to try anything. Since the information was easily accessible online consisting of YouTube video classroom examples and was free, she decided to investigate further.

Barb reported time was the repeated hindrance to learning, trying, and perfecting the techniques learned for becoming a habit and classroom norms for her and her students. To start, she delved into her own learning process by reading about suggested techniques and watching YouTube video samples of technique used in actual classrooms. Seeing how these techniques actually played out in the classroom in the videos aided her. Viewing the strategy in action helped her understand its use and how it looked in the classroom with students. She knew from experience that trying to change student habits already developed within the classroom mid-year was not going to be easy. Being mid-year, she didn't choose to implement the whole program only bits and pieces that would give her some of the key components she wanted to change such as: controlling students blurting out answers; assistance with fostering sessions of collaborative learning between students; ways to have students share their ideas; a better structure for seat work or tasks to avoid having too much chit-chat; and ways to engage students better. One thing Barb felt she knew, although didn't practice well in her class that the program cemented for her more than ever, was that students like positive reinforcement rather than conflict. She said, "The students want to hear 'thanks (student name) for starting your work'."

Barb's rubric of success was when she saw changes in the climate of her classroom. This wasn't just positive behaviors and reasonable noise levels, but included the improvement in the amount of engaged learning she witnessed and the improvement in classroom test scores. She reported her successes weren't always consistent, saying, "I

did have good days with parts of the program and bad days. I feel if I invested more time into the program and continue to practice a little bit at a time, I could make it better suited for me." She rated her change effort accomplishment only at a 3 out of a scale of 1-10, and would not rate it as an extra-ordinary change effort since she hadn't totally finish the task at hand of implementing the complete program then or up to the present.

Barb repeatedly said she had more work to do on this change effort. Of 100% of the programs availability, she felt she had only mastered 10%. After 1½ years of implementing parts of this program she started her doctorate program and abandoned perfecting and implementing additional strategies. She admitted that she herself held positions of being both an aid and hindrance in the process of this change effort. She felt guilty she started parts and did well with those she implemented, yet failed in achieving only 10% mastery of the program from starting her doctorate program. She felt she would definitely revisit the program again, saying she was still receiving emails on updated information from the site. She was also curious what new things had been added, so she was convincing she was going to continue this personal quest.

Cathy: "I didn't know how to 'train' my students."

Cathy was first identified through the RESA student performance data of strong and consistent scores in english language arts. Secondly, her administration highly recommended her, saying she was one of their best english teachers. It was also stated she was talented in how she could motivate students to write. Cathy, age 41, had eight years experience teaching in both elementary and middle school. During the interview process Cathy was at a middle school teaching one subject and has since gone to another system to an elementary school position teaching all content areas in reading, english

language arts, math, science, and social studies. Cathy's administrator and peer recommendations supported her data findings of being a consistent teacher in getting students to rise to academic success with many students exceeding on state assessments. Staff was saddened and surprised she was leaving at the end of the 2014 school year. Her move was a decision to get closer to her home for meeting family needs, not of any dislike of the system, her school, grade level, or subject area she taught.

Cathy's change effort came out of desperation during her first year as a teacher in feeling that her "classroom environment never 'settled.' The students would come into the classroom with lots of noise that did not go away!" She wanted to make changes in how procedures were handled to achieve what an effective classroom should look like. She asked an administrator if they knew of a good resource to begin her quest and it was suggested she read Harry Wong's book *The First Days of School.* Although she knew she wanted to make a change, her actual critical incident was revealed as, "I was exhausted at the end of the day and there seemed to be so much chaos in my room. I was uncertain if learning was occurring." Ultimately she was worried she'd be seen as a terrible and ineffective teacher, and in hindsight felt that students viewed her as being "too impersonal and mean." She stated early on "I don't feel as if I've ever made a deliberate change effort that was of such a conscious effort." She also admitted she probably felt this way because everything was a new experience being a new teacher. Cathy also added, "There is no telling where I'd be as a teacher today had I not taken on this change effort, as I couldn't have continued trying to manage or personally survive the daily chaos as it was." She knows now from experience that all of her first years chaos wasn't necessarily just her fault, as she has since learned how different each year's

group of students can be, with some groups being very respectful, others very chatty, some with more rowdy students then normal, and so on.

Cathy started her change effort by reading Harry Wong's book. In the very beginning she revealed the book "opened my eyes to strategies that were reasonable and seemed to create an environment of welcome—ness, if there is such a word, and calmness," which she desperately wanted within her classroom. She also admitted, "…reflecting on what strategies and techniques it was describing took some soul searching—did I agree, could I do that, and was I open to that kind of idea working, etc." No matter what she thought, she knew she had to try something! Cathy also admitted change is not easy for her, but she knew she needed to do something or she was going to fail as a teacher and failure wasn't an option. She also knew she would need to be consistent with what she tried and "keep the behavior up, so the change within my classroom became the norm, an expected behavior, and environment."

The first change she put into action was greeting students at her door each period. Cathy would address them individually by name and say something like "I was happy to see them" and "asking them to have a seat quickly." She conducted this behavior daily for two consistent weeks and immediately saw a change in the opening culture of the classroom that allowed her to move easily and quickly into her lesson for the day. She commented "seeing the change made me a believer that there were things that were important for creating a positive classroom environment." From there other numerous techniques were incorporated slowing into her classroom creating permanent consistent behaviors for her as a teacher and her students. Cathy also developed the ability to facilitate those expected behaviors and ground rules in her classroom with the students at

all times. The overall benefit was a comfortable environment where she could evaluate learning was occurring and her feeling more relaxed at the end of the day.

Cathy rated this change effort accomplishment as an 8, on a scale of 1-10. Being a first year teacher, she said it was a tremendous feat to accomplish this along with all the regular tasks of teaching that were new to her such as planning lessons and assignments, grading, meetings, and parent conferences, while appropriately managing all that too. The value in the whole experience was her learning the different dynamics involved in being a teacher to becoming a good teacher.

Cathy claimed this early experience framed her teaching style and she attributes that to her repeated success with students. She rated the difficulty of her change effort initially as a 10 on a scale of 1-10 and 7 years later felt the process had become a "natural behavior for me and my students once they get use to my expectations and routines" during the beginning weeks of school. Cathy mentioned several hindrances in her change effort process. One was the resistance of those "students that are hard to turn around once they have particular behaviors and expectations in place." Another one was she found it hard to be teaching herself from just reading a book and not having visual examples or someone sharing with her how to do certain things. Understandably, the third hindrance was time for planning, teaching, learning, grading, and self. The last hindrance she stated was her own self-doubt. She doubted her ability to make her behaviors consistent and permanent. She worried she would slip back into earlier postures, yet never wanted to return to previously produced classroom chaos or her own exhaustion. Cathy reported only two aids for being able to accomplish her change effort. The first one was actually of her own understanding in saying, "It was so important that I was consistent with my

actions. There are some really savvy students that can derail your intentions really easily. I had to be on my toes on that." Her second aid was her own motivation, knowing first she had to do something and she wasn't OK with failing, as it wasn't acceptable to not be a good teacher or classroom manager.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented introductions of each participant and their change effort description. The change efforts ranged from Mike, Barb, and Cathy focusing on classroom management strategies for creating improved learning environments both academically and behaviorally. Iris and Lee attempted to perfect their instructional practices using the components and strategies of the standards-based model, which are now the standards for the new Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) evaluation used across the state. Sarah's goal was to improve her math instruction by thoroughly developing her own understanding of math, creating better approaches for assisting students in learning math, and most of all to facilitate their own ability to evaluate the progress of their learning. Kay's academic focus was the overall academic improvement of all her students in all subject areas, while trying to instill confidence and resilience in them. June's change effort pertained to conducting novel studies rather than reading traditional basal reader stories for not only improving reading and vocabulary, but for developing the recognition of connections and learning across subject areas.

It was unanimous that time was a limited commodity not only in these teachers' change efforts, but lacking within the regular day demands of being a teacher. Repeatedly it was evident these teachers are driven to continuously attempt to make their classrooms the best environment not only for themselves, but also for students

behaviorally and academically. It was unmistakably noticed these eight teachers were driven, perfectionist, not accepting of failure for themselves or their students, very student oriented, and long term dedicated educators. Not a single teacher every commented on how they couldn't wait to retire, wished they could do something else or were tired of the profession.

The next chapter will reveal the findings related to the three research questions that guided this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom practices. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

Each research question will be presented in separate sections along with the findings. Data figures will be presented for a condensed read of the different themes and codes generated through the constant comparative analysis (CCA) of the data. Data tables will be presented for easier viewing of themes in comparison to each teacher's findings. Appendix G is a table displaying the research questions with findings of major themes, sub-themes, and my reflective notes.

The first section will address the findings of critical incidents that propelled each teacher into his or her own self-prescribed journey of change. A critical incident refers to a trigger event or motivator, such as an event, new information or understanding that springboard's each teacher to desire to change his or her classroom practices.

The second section will identify all the different action steps taken by each teacher to accomplish his or her change effort. Although each teacher's change effort was different and required different actions, there were many overlapping consistencies.

The third section will report support systems that aided each teacher in their change effort along with those strategies and tactics that aided them in their actions for changing behaviors and habits. Strategies are considered as long-term and tactics are short-term aids. Then a summary of the chapter will follow.

Section One: Critical Incidents, Trigger Events or Motivators

The first research question guiding this study was—what propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices? The main propulsion for each of the teachers in this study was an event or situation that provoked him or her into an awareness to proceed to take action on this perceived problem or situation that needed mending. All of the teachers change efforts were everyday commonplace events that any teacher could experience.

These everyday commonplace events ranged from dissatisfaction with situations or events pertaining to: student behavior, state test scores, evaluations of performance, academic needs, curriculum changes, and instructional practices to name a few. These critical incident areas were categorized within five different themes of: self or other activators; results driven; experiences or exposure influences; changes in assignment, environment, education, or best practices; and personal. Sub-categories capture specific areas within each main theme. Each teacher reported as few as one critical incident to three. Surprisingly, in some cases the critical incident(s) identified by each teacher had

been present within his or her classroom environment for years but were finally acknowledged as a problem and the desire rose within them to resolve the particular situation or problem.

Figure 5.1 shows all the coded themes of critical incidents and related events; how many teachers; and which teachers reported that particular finding.

10100—Self or Other Activator

- 10110—Self-Prescribed Desire to Change Instructional/Classroom Practices (All Teachers)
- 10120—Administrative Subliminal Suggestion but not a mandate (1 Teacher-Cathy)

10200—Results Driven

- 10210—Teacher Evaluation (5 Teachers-Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, & Cathy)
  - 10211-Formal Teacher Evaluation Results (2 Teachers: Sarah and Lee)
  - 10212-Self-Evaluation Results (5 Teachers: Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, & Cathy)
    - "Dissatisfaction with own performance" was revealed here.
- 10220—Test Scores (2 Teacher—Sarah & Mike)
- 10230—Environmental Demand
  - 10231-Classroom Chaos & Noise (3 Teacher-Mike, Barb & Cathy)
  - 10232-Grade Level or Team Complacency (1 Teacher-Kay)
  - 10233-Incorrect Assumption of Learning (1 Teacher-Sarah)

10300—Experience/Exposure Influence

- 10310—Professional Learning/Training
  - 10311-System/School Led Professional Learning/Training (1 Teachers—Iris)
  - 10312-Conferenc/School Visit: Learning by Observation (1 Teacher-Mike)
  - 10313-Learning from YouTube or other informal venue (1 Teacher-Barb)
- 10320—Advanced Higher Education/Degree (1 Teacher-Kay)
- 10330—Specific Teaching/Learning Dilemma (1Teachers: Iris)
- 10340—Prior Knowledge (3 Teachers: Kay, Iris, & June)

10400—Changes in Assignment, Environment, Education or Best Practices

- 10410-Curriculum changes (6 Teachers—Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, Iris & June)
- 10420-Classroom Instruction Model Changes (All Teachers)
- 10430-Change in Grade Level (2 Teachers: Mike & June
- 10440-Shortened Class Time (1 Teacher: Sarah)
- 10450-Challenging/Struggling Students (5 Teachers: Sarah, Kay, Iris, June & Cathy)

10500—Personal

- 10510—Realization/Awareness (All Teachers)
- 10520—Daily Exhaustion (2 Teachers: Mike & Cathy)

Figure 5.1 Coding Results: Critical Incident and Related Events

All of the listed items could have been a critical incident, thus not all of the themes listed are necessarily critical incidents. Related events are those areas reported by each teacher as concerns or focus issues that also motivated them in conducting their change effort and are worth mentioning for recognizing the scope of concerns within everyone's change effort. These incidents were identified from the constant comparative analysis (CCA) of all interview data. Critical incidents will be clearly identified in Table 5.1 and addressed in this section for appropriately answering research question one. As seen in Figure 5.1 the number of teachers who reported each critical incident theme and related events ranged from one reporting that particular event to all eight of the teachers. Although each teacher had multiple incidents or related event findings, it is important to understand the number of incidents does not imply one change effort is better or stronger than another.

A comparative view of all critical incidents, related events and teachers is presented in Table 5.1. Those critical incidents that propelled the teacher into action are marked by a check mark (✔) with the X marking other related events. The critical incident(s) is the event(s) that he or she revealed as the key trigger activating their change process while other related incidents were also found to be concerns or areas of focus within their change effort and reported within their data. Critical incidents ranged per teacher from one to three.

In answering the first research question that guided this study, what propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices it's important to readdress what defines positive deviance. Positive deviance has been defined as intentional behavior that is significantly departed from the norm (Robinson &

Bennett, 1995; Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003). Self-prescribing a change effort task for changing classroom practices is being recognized in this study as an act of positive deviance as his or her change effort wasn't mandated by anyone.

Table 5.1

Types of Critical Incidents and Related Events

✔ = Critical Incident X = Related Events	Teacher Sarah	Teacher Mike	Teacher Kay	Teacher Lee	Teacher Iris	Teacher June	Teacher Barb	Teacher Cathy
Self or Other Activators								
Self-prescribed Change Effort	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Subliminal Suggestion for Change								X
Results Driven								
Teacher Evaluation: Formal	X			✔				
Teacher Evaluation: Self	✔	X	X	✔				X
Test Scores	✔	X						
Classroom Chaos / Noise		X					✔	✔
Gr. Level or Team Complacency			X					
Incorrect Assumption of Learning	X							
Experience/Exposure Influence								
Professional Learning		✔			X		X	
Advanced Degree or Higher Education			✔					
Specific Teaching /Learning Dilemma					✔			
Prior Knowledge			✔		X	X		
Changes in Assignment, Environment, Education or Best Practices								
Curriculum Changes	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Classroom Instruction Model Change	X	X	X	X	✔	X	X	X
Change Grade Level		X				✔		
Shortened Class Time	X							
Challenging/Special Needs /Struggling Students	X		✔		✔	X		X
Personal								
Realization or Awareness	X	✔	X	X	X	X	X	✔
Exhaustion at end of Day		X						X
Total Critical Incidents	10	10	9	6	8	7	5	8

Self or Other Activators

The first request in conducting the interview was for each participant to tell me about a time they intentionally and successfully changed a classroom practice(s) that took a considerable amount of time and effort. The second question asked them to identify what trigger event drove or encouraged them to attempt change in their classroom practices? Later probes were asked, "If he or she would say they were self-motivated to achieve this goal of changing their classroom practices?" and "Was this a self-prescribed change effort?" while asking them to explain.

Self-prescribed change effort. All eight teachers reported they conducted a self-prescribed change effort. No one admitted to anyone suggesting or assigning this task to him or her. All of the teachers' answered "yes" to the specific question of "was their change effort self-prescribed?" In addition, individual statements throughout the interview also confirmed this. Lee admitted through his comment about results from a trial run in the use of the new Class Keys teacher observation form,

> I didn't want bad evaluations in the future and I could have done my dog and pony show pretending at each evaluation demonstrating what I needed to do to pass or I could decide to actually change my classroom practices for daily use.

It is important to report that Lee included in other parts of the interview the administrator said nothing negative to him after the initial observation and it was interpreted there wouldn't have been any punitive outcome had Lee chosen not to react to the negative evaluation results. The drive to perfect the meaning of the evaluation tool standards grew to have future evaluative evidence continue to substantiate he is a good teacher.

Iris spoke of her change effort in her personal desire to move toward a standards-based classroom instruction model to better serve all types of students saying, "I was very interested and self-motivated in achieving this type of model." Barb stated directly of her change effort concerning classroom chaos and concerns with students being engaged stated, "I was self-motivated, the school personnel did not prescribe me to change anything about my teaching practices." Whereas, Cathy needed better classroom procedures to control student behavior and the chaotic environment where she admitted,

> I knew I had to do something, I was exhausted at the end of the day and there seemed to be much chaos in my room, I was uncertain if learning was occurring. . . .I was self-motivated to make this change in the way the class period began each day.

Sarah received very disappointing testing results in math and she confessed,

> I had two choices at this point. I could continue to make excuses of why this data looks the way it does or I could really—which I call taking it personally. At some point, I made a shift in starting to look at it professionally and looking at my teaching as a whole. Yes, this idea was totally mine.

Mike, Kay and June answered yes to their change effort being self-prescribed. In clarifying with Mike what he had been describing of his processes toward change I had asked, "And you were self-promoting and doing whatever needed to be done to get there? Mike answered, "Yes." Kay openly replied to the question,

> Well, I don't know necessarily that I've changed what I've done. I think in getting a doctoral degree, it reminded me that no matter how much you know, there's always so much more you can know. It just continued to feed my curiosity towards what it is that I can do so I can improve the instruction in the

> classroom. Every year, it seems I get a more challenging group of students. It's probably because I am being very successful with my students.

June also answered, "Yes, I think it was self-motivation. I know my kids deserved a challenge, and I needed some way for them to improve in reading. I also wanted them to be engaged in reading and to learn to enjoy novels."

No evidence was found that any authority figure within the school or system suggested or assigned a change effort to be conducted by any of the participants. Nor was any evidence found that there would be any consequences to staying status quo.

Subliminal suggestion for change. Only Cathy reported a subliminal suggestion from an administrator. Cathy confessed how poorly she rated her classroom management skills in her first year teaching. Her impression of the quick response the administrator gave when she requested an idea for a resource to aid her to improve her classroom management surfaced her further explanation. She stated, "In asking this administrator about a possible resource, he was quick to answer, so I wondered if he was thinking I definitely needed to do something. Being green, there is much doubt going on in several areas!" I noted her comment and the impression she gleaned from her administrator's response, but no further evidence surfaced to support that her change effort was anything but self-prescribed.

Evidence is clear that each teacher's change effort was self-prescribed. This affirmation supports the identification of positive deviant behavior, but what propelled them to get to this point? All of the teachers had at least one critical incident that generated the urgency to find a solution to an identified problem or situation.

Results Driven Critical Incidents

Results driven critical incidents occurred for four of the eight teachers (Sarah, Lee, Barb, and Cathy). These incidents ranged from formal and self-conducted teacher evaluation results; test scores; and classroom chaos and noise. A formal evaluation is considered as a teacher evaluation conducted by an administrator using a designated form of specific indicators the teacher is rated on while instructing. A self-conducted evaluation is how the teacher perceives his or her own performance. The incident of test scores refers to those results from state testing. Lastly, results driven data includes the perception he or she has of classroom chaos and noise.

Formal teacher evaluation affect. Over the past ten years in Georgia teacher evaluation processes have evolved. Until recently, schools were to conduct evaluations using traditional forms with no collection of data to the state. These generic forms were more of a checklist of items to be rated like appropriate instructional level, promoting engagement, monitoring progress, supporting students, adequate use of time, and appropriate monitoring of student behavior. Then the state progressed to informing and provided training for those interested in using a standards-based teacher evaluation instrument called Class Keys.

This standards-based form was more specific to prompts of best teaching practices measuring how engaged students were, how technology is being used, what students are being asked to do, what level of questions are being asked, are students experiencing learning or just being given information, is the lesson summarized and so on. Still there was no data collected by the state. As of 2014-2015 the renaming of Class Keys along with restructuring the guidelines and frequency of use came the Teacher

Knowledge Effectiveness System (TKES) with standards-based instructional prompts to evaluate during a classroom observation.

Lee was the only teacher who reported an experience with Class Keys as his trigger. His overall change effort was driven by his trial run results on this new teacher evaluation form being used in his system in which the state was proposing to eventually use. Having taught in another state that used generic evaluation forms and what he had also been accustomed to at his current school, he was use to performing appropriately for these scheduled evaluation visits. He commented,

> I have strict classroom procedures, students have to write the notes on the top of their daily work, show work, they can retake tests if done within 3 days of the test being given, so on, stuff like that. When it was teacher evaluation time, I always prepared a dog and pony show, as I've always thought of the process as a joke. I though of it as a joke because why do you want to report to a teacher the day and time you are coming to observe, shouldn't good teaching be happening all the time? Thus come any time.

His system began the use of Class Keys with trial runs, which also contained components of the standards-based model of instruction. He explained the events leading up to this new form being used saying, "Things were talked about in meetings and in-services—like the meaning of a standards-based classroom, doing more hands-on stuff, common assessments, etc. but it was chit-chat to me." Then later he added,

> Well the joke got turned on me in 2009, when finally after 3 years all the 'chit-chat' came to life in the new teacher evaluation instrument. I was told the day and time I was going to be observed on a practice run of this new instrument. The

> administrator came, observed, and left. When I got my carbon copy of the evaluation, I was stunned. I'd never gotten low scores on my evaluations—ever, this time I did. It stirred me to go ask—what do all these comments mean, what are the prompts meanings, etc. Well, hello it was all the prior standards-based conversations that were held but without examples or implications provided. Now I was suffering from truly not understanding.

This event triggered not only his desire to rectify getting poor scores ever again, it revealed emotion. Lee recognizes himself as a good teacher saying,

> I don't like to fail. I felt like I had failed not getting good marks on the new evaluation, and being a veteran teacher, that was not acceptable. I am a good teacher and that form said I wasn't. It really bothered me.

This critical incident was one of his two main triggers. The other critical incident embedded in this was his self-evaluation of his own performance.

Affect from self-evaluation of performance. The affect from self-evaluation of performance came from hearing a teacher being dissatisfied with his or her own performance. Lee and Sarah both reported this theme as a critical incident.

As heard, Lee felt like he had failed. He reported he was stunned with the teacher evaluation results. You could hear his shock and dismay when he talked about it. I asked him if this was a forced change effort or something he was willing to do?. He responded,

> A little of both. The initial evaluation woke me up. I didn't want bad evals in the future and I could have don't my dog and pony show pretending at each evaluation demonstrating what I needed to do to pass or I could decide to change my classroom practices for daily use. These new practices haven't take my

> authenticity from me; they have been elements that have been added to my practices, which have made me a better teacher I think.

Lee's self-evaluation of his own poor performance on the teacher evaluation was his additional trigger to motivate him to change his classroom practices.

Sarah was the other teacher who had a critical incident pertaining to her own self-evaluation of her teaching performance. This became an incident for her when she realized she had an incorrect assumption of her students' learning saying, "My kids would score very well on the end of the unit assessment, and I thought I was fine." Her state testing results revered less than satisfactory academic achievement this one year the "worst of her career." These results confirmed her assumption of her students learning was incorrect adding to the previous statement with,

> That's why I was so shocked when I got these results. But what I realized was that end of the unit assessment only measures what I would compare to a spelling test. You cram for the test and you spit it back out a week later, and I never went back a month later to see if they could still do it. I just assumed they kept it. And I kept moving on to finish the book.

This outcome was devastating to Sarah and added an additional trigger in being disappointed in her own teaching performance. Her self-reflective practices over this incident aided her in revealing all her instructional faults:

> going through the book cover to cover. . . . only touching on the basics. . . . no thinking involved. . . . I was focused on quantity of information I taught not the quality. . . . I needed to quite teaching and telling, but rather guiding them. . . . I needed to do more small group instruction to assist students better in their

> learning gaps. . . . I needed to ask better questions. . . .and I wasn't making students accountable for what they were learning.

Her disappointment or worst yet her admission of ignoring a problem was heard in her voice and tone. Although her scores had not ever been this bad prior, it was painful for her to admit she too in the past had done what her peers are continuing to do saying,

> I did it myself for years. I would look at the testing results and I'd feel sorry for myself. I'd make excuses. And then I would violate the insane rule. I would keep doing what I did and keep getting the same results because it was comfortable. And I think that a lot of teachers never make the shift and looking at it professionally.

Her reflection process revealed she wasn't going to make excuses saying,

> I had two choices at that point. I could continue to make excuses of why this data looks the way it is, or I could really—which I call it, take it personally. At some point, I made a shift in starting to look at it professionally and looking at my teaching as a whole and deciding what do these scores represent according to what I am, my teaching practices in the classroom and the effects that it's having on kids.

Although her initial disappointment occurred from her receiving her "worst of her entire career" state testing results it was her critical reflective practices that stirred her to professionally look at this situation to rectify her instructional practices to improve teaching and learning.

Test score results awakening. Obviously Sarah's change effort all began with her receiving her state test score results. Sarah confessed,

> In 2005-2006, we got our CRCT scores back in the spring and they were the worst of my entire career. As a matter of fact, if you were looking at the graph, they're negative numbers, not positive in any way. These results also compare kids to the region. When I looked at this, I thought as often teacher so with CRCT data or with norm-referenced data, they look at it and they start to immediately figure out what happened and then they start making excuses, "Oh, well, so and so had a bad testing day." And it's all don to justify what these scores represent.

Sarah thought she was doing a good job and that her students were also doing well with learning, as they did well on her classroom assessments. Through her critical reflection of this incident she realized she was not performing classroom practices that would not only make her job easier but would put learning front and center for the students. Even though there is much emphasis on state testing and student achievement data, Sarah commented,

> I don't look at CRCT as the end-all. I look a the data and say, "Where are the holes?" because I really believe that CRCT doesn't---it may tell you a lot about your kids but it mostly tells you about your teaching in the classroom especially those growth charts. When we started shifting to doing the growth added, boy, does that ever say huge, huge things about your teaching and what you're doing in the classroom.

In her earlier admission she use to make excuses about less than pleasing testing results, but kept on doing what she always did and still getting less than pleasing results. Sarah's passion for teaching and doing what is best for her students was evident throughout the complete interview. As she just stated "for some reason in previous years she kept doing

what she had always done", until this particular year's 'worst of her entire career' test results came in. At this point her thinking shifted and it became "personal for her and she decided to approach it professionally." She knew she needed to do something different.

Classroom chaos and noise affect. Barb and Cathy were the only two to have this theme as a critical incident. They both commented on their need for classroom changes through implementing better classroom management techniques. The topic of chaos included student behaviors each wanted to redirect as well as noise. For Barb this was her only critical incident.

Barb's passion for teaching resonated in getting students to learn what was needed to make good grades in her class and on the state test. Her student performance data showed she accomplishes that goal quite well. This critical incident was a surprise for me with that correlating data. Barb initially revealed the problem with classroom chaos and noise seemed to be primarily the group of students she had this particular year. Although she also commented,

> I believe great teachers are always looking for ways to capture the attention of all their students. Education for the teacher should never end. . . . I am always looking for ways to improve my teaching within my classroom and behavior management. The climate of the room is vital.

Being a middle school science teacher she felt she needed better control and wanted to ensure students were engaged in learning. Barb admitted,

> I had some behavior issues in the classroom and wanted all the students to feel as if they were actively part of the classroom. . . . I had a hard time with structure with this particular group of students. . . . Sometimes students need just a change

> to make the classroom exciting and new for the students and teacher to add that missing spark to the classroom.

Barb was also concerned with the noise factor. She was concerned in students hearing her during lab settings and in students responding to questioning, so she wanted to control how she handled students answering questions posed to the whole class saying,

> I wanted structure so that the students knew when I wanted the whole class to blurt out a response or when I wanted them to raise their hand before talking. My class is a very active classroom, students can't get away with just sitting and dreaming of another place to be, but I also don't need a volume level that no one can think in either. . . . Lab times can contain safety issues so it is important students can hear me when I give additional instructions or deliver warnings while they are working.

Being a veteran teacher of nineteen years, this critical incident was five years prior. Since Barb had taught fourteen years at the time of this incident her identified change effort affirmed to me that she most likely didn't have solid classroom procedures or rules in place with her students. Her classroom conduct was probably operated on respect and this particular group of students needed stricter guidelines. This critical incident could have also been a career occurrence that she finally grew tired of this type of behavior particularly with this group of students. Her desire to change this classroom behavior held an additional problem being it was already mid-year and correcting set behaviors after that length of time is difficult to redirect. She was concerned whether to try or not.

Cathy on the other hand reported out on her first year teaching, thus not totally a topic of surprise for a first year teacher. In the beginning of the interview her responses

and tone were of shyness and almost embarrassment in reflecting on how she lacked knowledge of or control over her classroom back then. She confessed of her first year,

> As a new teacher, I did not know how to 'train' my students on daily and /or routine tasks. The classroom environment never 'settled.' The students would come into the classroom with lots of noise that did not go away! This carried over into instruction. I became frustrated quickly and knew that I had to make some changes in how procedures were handled.

When I asked if this was the trigger event that drove or encouraged her to attempt changes to her classroom practices? She responded with, "I knew I had to do something, I was exhausted at the end of the day and there seemed to be so much chaos in my room. I was uncertain if learning was occurring."

This critical incident theme presents quite a different contrast between a veteran teacher and a new teacher. No matter how diverse the timing the recognition of a need arose for both of them and they acted upon that need.

Critical Incidents of Experience or Exposure Influences

Three teachers reported the critical incident theme of influences from experiences or exposures. Mike's incident occurred through professional learning; Kay's through her recent experience in achieving her advanced degree and from prior learning; and Iris from a specific teaching and learning dilemma.

Professional learning or training experiences. A definition of professional learning (PL) is crucial here. In most instances professional learning is typically viewed as a collaborative and organizational structure that promotes for both individual teachers and groups of teachers school or system improvements in teaching and learning. These

structures can include in house or system trainings for individual teachers or group attendance, as well as PL within other settings outside of the school or system. Opportunities of learning can include such things as book studies; introduction and acclimation to a specific program(s); grade level trainings; peer observations; workshops; conferences; and school visits to name a few. These opportunities or experiences can promote enhanced skills, knowledge, attributes, attitudes and behaviors of an individual or staff to improve service delivery in order to meet present and future organizational objectives and individual career development.

Mike knew he had some issues within his classroom he wanted to perfect, but what exactly he was not clear on. His critical incident developed when he experienced professional learning in his attendance of a conference conducted by Ron Clark. Ron Clark is a well-known educator, author, and motivational speaker with experiences in successfully improving academic achievement with disadvantaged students. Ron Clark is also known for his name sake Academy in Atlanta, Georgia. Several times a year he holds conferences for teachers to visit and see his strategies in action. Mike's learning occurred through observations. He witnessed teachers and students in action at the Ron Clark Academy that influenced him in the focus of his change effort. Mike's explanation of his trigger event was described with such pleasure, almost like a little boy in a toy store saying,

> It was visiting the Ron Clark Academy. I'd read Ron Clark's books and he inspired me somewhat, but this was his first teacher conference. I saw some amazing teaching going on and saw the results that they were getting from that and realized that I need to start going in that direction, so it was my trigger.

The experience at the academy made the 'aha' for Mike and he stated,

> It was touring the school and we got to see the teachers teaching and we sat in the classes and listened. They did some workshop stuff with us individually as well but really just walking through the school and seeing the kids and how they interacted with each other and with the teachers. . . . The purpose of this school is that he set it up so that teachers could come in and see excellent teaching.

The tour made him aware of what he needed to change in his classroom saying,

> In visiting this academy, the classroom atmosphere was first. I realized that I was very negative almost in my very first year. It was mainly punitive even in my disciplining. I wasn't celebrating the kids as much as I thought, as much as I realized I should be.

Mike's passion for teaching spilled over in everything he spoke about. He loves the role of teacher and guiding students through the learning processes; the uniqueness of each student and groups of students; making class and learning interesting for students; getting good state testing results; and most of all he cherishes parent requests to have their child in his classroom. In asking him what's your greatest reward from this process [sic-conducting his change effort]? He replied, "I guess it's going to sound strange. Having parents request for their kid to be in my room."

Advanced degree or higher learning opportunities influences. Only Kay reported the critical incident of her recent completion of her advanced degree in a graduate program. She commented,

> I think in getting my doctoral degree, it reminded me that no matter how much you know, there's always so much more you can know. And it just continued to

> feed my curiosity towards what it is that I can do so that I can improve the instruction in the classroom. Every year, it seems I get a more challenging group of students.

Her experiences and learning awakened other realizations and possibilities for her. She commented of her need to move on with her own learning when she said,

> I mean I felt so much better when I went back to school and I started learning. I guess I felt I was falling into that rut because I finished my master's degree and time had gone by. You do start to fall into a rut whether you intentionally mean to or not.

In passionately owning her knowledge and applying what she knows evidence was found that her efforts with her students are always profitable. Her academic achievement results with each student are consistently evident each year, not just in the findings of this study. Throughout the interview, Kay was consistent with her passion for teaching; her extreme efforts at work; her obsessive and compulsive drive for perfectionism; and her intent to continue her change effort for achieving maximum growth with each of her students for the purpose of advancing each student to the next grade level with confidence and the ability to be resilient.

Specific teaching and learning dilemma discovery. It was Iris who reflected on a recent teaching experience that formed one of her critical incidents. She recognized this experience in saying, "At the time I had just finished teaching a year of inclusion and saw the need for standards-based diversity and differentiation between students from SPED to high achieving that existed in my classroom." An inclusion class is where the class is heterogeneously grouped with special education (SPED) needs to high achievers.

This teaching assignment along with her prior knowledge of standards-based instruction began her actions towards a change effort in perfecting standards-based instructional practices for meeting the needs of all her students of all levels of learning. She later admitted,

> As their teacher I have to identify those needs, try to close the gap in their learning, yet they have to learn their current enrolled grade level standards in order to be successful on our state test. . . . Students have a considerable amount of material that is to be mastered, and we are struggling to fine enough daily instruction time to support remediation and mastery for some students.

This commentary of Iris' shows her recognition of the importance of identifying student needs. The added strain of a teaching situation like this is the drastic range of different student abilities. You can hear her ownership in trying to meet each student's need, yet the difficulty in enough time for herself and her students to do it all. For Iris time is needed for her planning, teaching, monitoring, and remediation with students. Her students strive to bridge their own gaps in learning with Iris's assistance in order to master the curriculum for their grade level, to be successful on the state test, and to be appropriately prepared for the next grade.

Time for prior knowledge usage. Kay also acknowledged how influences from prior knowledge or other prior learning exposures aided in forming an additional critical incident for her. Kay's previous teaching experiences at three different schools in another state provided her with knowledge and tools in having the ability to diagnose and treat student gaps in learning. Her knowledge came from experiences from professional learning, collaborative planning, and knowledge sharing. Kay revealed one prior

knowledge influence explaining,

> The woman who was in the building with me was in charge of the special education program. She kind of took me under her wing and taught me not only what I had known through early childhood, but how you can apply that to children with special needs, and how you can write down tasks more simplistically, and how to think in that way because there's always a prerequisite to what you're trying to teach.

Later she described how her previous school experiences in her grade level was resourceful too and she learned much from them saying,

> So we did a lot of sharing. We shared materials and shared ideas. We would get together as a grade level, and I remember sitting there and we would go, okay, what are we teaching? We'd have a unit and we'd identify all the objectives. We'd then discuss how we were going to teach it. . . .Having the teachers together, the grade team, special education teachers, and gifted, we'd get ideas from each other on how you can differentiate instruction.

Her wealth of information from her previous teaching experiences included: grade level and specialty field collaboration; professional learning communities; and professional development.

Along with her college learning I heard throughout the interview uses of items she had learned from these influences such as: anecdotal records, analysis of student needs, baseline data, diagnostic instruments, knowledge sharing, motivation, philosophy of good teaching, remediation tactics, resilience, and response to intervention strategies. Kay also revealed her prior knowledge was also a curse. Her current teaching assignment for the

past fourteen years has been a total culture shift from her prior experiences. During her current employment at one school, Kay has desired to recreate and once again have present in her school surroundings all the positive and teacher building experiences she had in her prior three schools in another states. Whereas her current grade level, school, and even the system seems resistant to change. Numerous comments were made, in fact too many to quote. The following is some of her commentary just within ten minutes of the things she was use to doing that her peers are resistant to here. With much passion and bitterness she stated,

> Some environments that you're in are much more conducive to knowledge sharing than others. . . . So we did a lot of sharing. Sharing of materials and ideas. . . . That's the one thing I think I really miss. I think we're missing it in this school system where I am. I don't see that they're [sic-her peer teachers] making a useful time of their planning as they could. I don't see them pooling their resources and their knowledge. I see more of an attitude like "I've been doing this for years, I know what I'm doing. I don't need any more knowledge." . . . I really wish that we did that. But you can't do that if you don't have people who are willing to take the time to sit down and do it.

Although this wasn't a critical incident for Kay, it was right on the line to being one. The dividing point of these issues was it all pertained to adults, where evidence screams that Kay's priority and focus is always on her students. It is this strong focus on students that resonates for her that her peer teachers are cheating their own students and that is what truly bothers her. Kay is keenly aware she can't change others, saying "it's the school's community culture."

Changes: Instructional Model, Grade Level Assignment, and Class Make-up

Change in and of itself can also create change. Three teachers (Iris, June, and Kay) had a critical incident within this theme. Iris experienced her trigger through needed changes in her classroom instructional model and challenges with students. June's critical incident resulted from a grade level assignment change and Kay reported a critical incident from challenges with students.

Recognizing need for classroom instruction model changes. The theme of classroom instruction model changes was a critical incident for only Iris. With Iris's recent yearlong experience of teaching an inclusion class she realized a change in her classroom instruction model was needed. Prior knowledge from professional learning within her system on the standards-based instruction model gave Iris an awareness this model could work for her diverse range of students. Iris' additional investigation into the standards-based model of instruction revealed to her it would work for her explaining,

> I took a really hard look at the differences between a traditional teaching model and that of a standards based model. This has been an ongoing challenge over the last four years. The traditional model being the teacher prepares what he/she is going to teach/lecture/ or whatever method—typically what most of us call "spit and get method" the information he/she wants the students to get/remember and be able to test well on it vs. the standards based model of briefly hooking them on the prior knowledge, exciting them to what we are going to learn today, and developing a way for them to explore, ask questions, discover, and learn from tasks, their exploration, and discovery.

As reported earlier and also seen in her commentary here this critical incident also

involved challenges with students ranging in complexities from special education to high achieving students. This will be addressed within the theme of struggling students.

Critical incidents brought about assignment change. Change experienced by a teaching reassignment to another grade level or content area creates an automatic trigger. This change creates learning different content standards, changes needed in the mode of instruction also dependent on the age level of the students, and new classroom dynamics depending on the age group of students. Switching grade levels clearly produces changes in curriculum and instruction.

In a grade level reassignment from primary to intermediate, June was quite aware she would need to increase pedagogical demands within her instruction and was an automatic trigger. June's prior knowledge of age appropriate pedagogy gave her a clear understanding to what degree instructional changes could be applied to her new intermediate grade level. She was aware that project based learning was appropriate and well suited to engage students at this grade level, just as her plan to promote novel studies instead of the traditional basal reader. She confessed saying,

> When I switched grade levels and moved from first to fourth grade gifted cluster, I had to make distinct changes in my practice. Because the pedagogy of primary and intermediate grades are so different I began integrating more projects and specifically switching reading instruction from primarily basal to more novel studies.

Gifted cluster is where a teacher has a heterogeneously grouped class with four to seven identified gifted students are included. The teacher develops contracts with each individual gifted student of the challenges and goals they will achieve while present in

her classroom. Many times the teacher will pull these students aside to have small group instruction with them, just as she does with other small groups sessions to conduct lessons and work at their learning level need.

June continued her explanation of the needed change in reading with, "The goal of using only novel studies in the classroom is to improve student vocabulary. My students are generally pretty good readers, they just need to get better, so that's where vocabulary development comes in." She also commented on her prior practices in first grade and how that wouldn't be appropriate now for fourth saying,

> I did teach mostly from a basal in first grade, but I don't think that's a bad practice for young children. There's good literature in those books and they are appropriate for that age. However, I do feel that there is a richness that my students get from ongoing novel studies. Even two years ago, when I was using both novel and the basal, I felt like my students didn't get all the richness of instruction that they received when I switched to only novels last year.

Likewise, June reported on her reading novels with her struggling students clearly expressed,

> The major difficulties come in when there are students in the classroom that are not on grade level. . . . a student reading below grade level has a strong chance that they will not be successful with my novel studies due to their frustration level. While I can differentiate and give them a novel their level to work with, they still become frustrated because they see the level of instruction that the other kids are receiving. It's a real struggle for these students.

June thoroughly understood the difficulties students could have but knew to differentiate.

Challenges with struggling students. Kay's additional trigger is of a more passionate focus of her struggling students. Kay's classroom rosters traditionally consist of struggling students saying, "Every year, it seems I get a more challenging group of students. It is probably because I am being very successful." Later she made a statement that really illuminated her philosophy of teaching, "When I look at these children, I don't look at them as they can't do it. I think that they can do it and we need to figure how."

She later talked about how she realizes with these struggling students she has to build their confidence and develop resilience. She tries to remove that myth young students have of teachers being perfect commenting,

> I never claimed to be perfect, I know I'm not perfect. It's the one thing that I tell my kids. If you look at any good teacher, a good teacher is going to say that a mistake is part of the learning process. . . . It's teaching children resilience. I guess that's my thing because I want them to know, yeah, you don't have it now and you don't get it now. But guess what? You're going to get it because we're going to keep working at it. We're going to keep picking ourselves up. We're going to keep dusting ourselves off and we're going to keep working on it.

Kay's resilience philosophy was developed early in her childhood from hearing stories from her immigrant grandparents and parents. She heard many a story of ghetto struggles ranging from horrid living conditions to hunger along with how they were treated. Likewise she also heard the stories of survival and ultimately rising out of those conditions to become very successful managers, business owners, and reporters with all of them acquiring healthy financial portfolios. Her father always told her, "anything you want, you can do it." Her passion for instilling resilience in students was clearly defined

why in this statement, “So I just think there’s a drive and so it has to be instilled in these children because they don’t seem to come into school showing those behaviors.”

Iris earlier reported her challenge with having such diverse learning levels, special education to high achievers, in her room. The attempt to bridge the gap for each individual learner, while meeting everyone’s diverse need as a class was a trigger for her. She explained,

> There are constant individual needs for each student. As their teacher I have to identify those needs, try to close the gap in their learning, yet they have to learn their current enrolled grade level standards in order to be successful on our state test. . . .Teaching EIP, most of my class of students are strugglers and have deficits in their learning, gaps I need to fill.

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is designed to serve students who are at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level. The purpose of the Early Intervention Program is to provide additional instructional resources to help students who are performing below grade level obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade level performance in the shortest possible time. Thus, a huge challenge for any talented teacher.

The handling of both behavioral and academic needs raises concerns for all teachers. Add the descriptor of students being challenged, special needs, or years of struggling sets the bar even higher in meeting each student’s specific needs while conducting efforts to close gaps in each students learning. All of the teachers in this study seemed to be very cognizant of assisting all students and meeting everyone’s needs. It was a common trait all of them held in their passion and purpose of teaching.

Personal Critical Incidents

Personal critical incidents were those areas that were more of a self or affecting self nature. This incident was of some type of realization or awareness that occurred from the admission of some type of affect from a problem. All the teachers reported some type of realization or awareness to address a particular need, but only Mike and Cathy specifically reported their realization or awareness was from daily exhaustion.

Realization or awareness of a situation or problem. This critical incident is unique as depicting the particular order in which realization or awareness occurred was initially difficult. The constant comparative analysis of the data resulted in Mike and Cathy being the only two whose evidence seemed to show realization or awareness was a main critical incident. From the very beginning each of them recognized they had problems, although Mike wasn't totally clear as to specifically what was the main problem within his classroom and Cathy wasn't totally clear how to solve what she thought was her identified problem.

Mike was aware that he wanted change within his classroom. He didn't really know exactly what those specific changes should be until his visit to the Ron Clark Academy. In spite of his reading Ron Clark's books and being inspired, it was his actual witness of practices in action that his real needs started to come into vision. The academy visit awoke Mike's awareness saying,

> In visiting this academy, the classroom atmosphere was first. I realized that I was very negative almost in my very first year. It was mainly punitive even in my disciplining. I wasn't celebrating the kids as much as I thought, as much as I realized I should be.

Mike realized his approach to negative behavior and academic situations was hindering the class environment. The atmosphere didn't encourage risk taking, collaboration, or feel inviting as he was always reactive responding negatively to the both behavior and academic situations to his disliking. This on guard demeanor also exhausted him each day.

As with Cathy, she was new teacher and was uncertain about many things. She was clear she, "didn't know how to 'train' her students on daily and/or routine tasks." She was aware of chaos in her class but didn't know where to begin or how to fix it. In reading the recommended Harry Wong book that guided her in how to proceed with a possible solution. Cathy's awareness that she needed to find a solution to her classroom chaos also was driven by "not wanting to be seen as being a bad teacher." She also claimed her classroom environment "exhausted her at the end of the day and there seemed to be so much chaos in my room I was uncertain if learning was occurring."

Section One Summary

In answering what propelled these teachers to change their practices the evidence is clear the motion toward acting on a problem began with him or her experiencing at least one critical incident. In using a qualitative approach for this study, I was able to capture the critical incidents from each teacher's story. These identified critical incidents propelled them to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their practices.

Each teachers change effort was self-prescribed along with the admission that no consequences would result from any authority figures if they remained status quo within their classroom instructional practices. Each teacher's critical incident findings were found within four areas: results driven; experiences or exposure influences; changes in

assignment, environment, education, or best practices; and personal with sub-categories included within them. These incidents were the catalyst to conduct his or her change effort.

Section Two: Processes Toward Change

The second research question that guided this study was—what did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices? Up to this point we know each teacher has already identified a problem and are motivated to find a solution. To answer this question this section will identify the actions implemented by each teacher to accomplish his or her change effort. Commentary will be included for capturing each teacher's story of events.

The overarching themes of processes toward change were: learning, efforts applied, personal behaviors or habits, and indicators that change was occurring. Sub-categories within each overarching theme identify specific tasks or processes used. All of the teachers implemented multiple processes in accomplishing their change effort. Sarah, Kay, and Iris experienced the most processes at eleven of the thirteen; Mike and June with ten; Lee at nine, Barb at eight, and Cathy with seven. Even though some of the teachers utilized the same theme does not mean they implemented their processes or strategies the exact same way. Everyone's change effort was unique, yet similar processes were used. Although each teacher implemented multiple processes, it is important to understand the number of different processes implemented does not imply that one change effort is better or stronger then another. No teacher's change effort was necessarily better than another, but some entailed more learning, detailed actions, and lengthier durations of time. Most of the teachers reported their change efforts were a

process that would never end and are literally adding strategies to and still growing their change effort. The following Table 5.2 is a list of themes by teacher of implemented processes. Overarching themes are highlighted in gray with specific themes within that category listed underneath. Each overarching theme will be discussed and specific themes will follow according to each applicable teacher.

Table 5.2

Teacher Results of Processes Toward Change

Processes Implemented	Teacher Sarah	Teacher Mike	Teacher Kay	Teacher Lee	Teacher Iris	Teacher June	Teacher Barb	Teacher Cathy
Learning								
Reading	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Research	X	X	X		X	X		
Professional Learning	X	X		X			X	
Other Learning	X				X			
Prior Learning			X		X	X		
Efforts Applied								
New Practices Efforts Applied	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implementing Student Accountability	X	X	X	X		X		
Personal Behaviors								
Self-Reflection & Self-Talk	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Talking with Others	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Change Effort Documentation			X		X			
Indicators of Change								
Prior Actions to New Actions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Feedback: Formal/Informal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Others Recognition	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Process Amounts	11	10	11	9	11	10	8	7

Change does not occur without the initial thought to do so. Then actions need to be implemented to accomplish change. After each teacher identified their area of focus for their change effort the next approach was to identify what they needed know or learn to accomplish this task. New actions of instruction are performed to develop those practices that are effective and begin to resolve the initial problem.

Learning and developing these new actions involved questioning oneself; changing thinking and beliefs; and support of others. It was feedback of all types that informally or formally evaluated their progress, performance, and success.

Learning to Acquire Knowledge to Achieve Change

Each teacher in this study professed they are always learning to ultimately improve their craft of teaching. Learning is informally and formally prevalent within their lives. Barb spoke of teachers and learning with, "I believe great teachers are always looking for ways to capture the attention of all their students. Education for the teacher should never end." Barb herself is always "looking for ways to improve my teaching within my classroom and behavior management and the climate of the room is vital."

Kay admitted she reads a lot saying, "I'm a lot happier when I'm learning." She later in the interview also referred to herself as a 'learning nerd.' Her constant mode of learning on her own through reading and research along with her progression in degree achievements was strong evidence to her learning nerd comment.

Mike stated, "I've done a lot of research." Mike not only investigated the Ron Clark philosophy of instruction, but researched many other areas too. His research included brain-based learning and environmental changes that affect learning; positive behavior management; classroom procedures and protocols; use of mini-lessons for

different content areas; and reading research on novel stories and reading workshops. Mike dabbled in many different areas to redesign his class to his perfection.

Sarah expressed her philosophy of teachers and their impact on the classroom saying, "I think teachers must understand that they are the number one deciding factor in the culture of everything they teach within the classroom." Either through Sarah's recent critical reflection of her role in the profession of teaching and accountability or her overall philosophy she is keenly aware what happens or doesn't happen in the classroom in regards to learning is within her control.

Iris reported how it is valuable, "to have opportunities for teachers to get together and discuss things that are outside the box and could be revolutionary in the classroom." Even though Iris continued to look into standards-based instruction after her system discontinued professional learning and support of their initial implementation she still continued her quest in researching and practicing what she learned.

Lee revealed, "I always like to help new teachers, they need a mentor or at least someone they feel comfortable going to." This comment is relevant of knowing new teachers need to learn from others and yet he also implied the profession is a give and take profession. I gleaned Lee is appreciative of knowledge sharing and believes aiding new teachers is a form of his sharing knowledge with them where he too can learn from their recent schooling too.

Cathy reported, "Now that I've been teaching awhile, I am always on the prowl to find new things to implement in the classroom for making it easier on me but fun for the students." Then lastly, June said, "I'm always looking for ways to make my class interesting for the students, but most of all I want them to develop a love for reading."

These eight statements show the tone of how: teachers feel they still need to learn; their philosophy of affect teachers have on the classroom; teachers should assist new teachers find their teaching style by mentoring; teachers need opportunities to learn from their peers; teachers don't only teach they read and research on their own, and most of all they enjoy making learning fun for students. All of these acts actually can possess learning.

Reading to learn. Reading in this context is reading books of different types specific to their change effort that may or may not contain research-based practices. Learning through reading occurred for all eight teachers.

Sarah revealed, "I would research and read math books to create a deeper understanding of what I was teaching in math and why I was teaching it so that I could somehow communicate that to my students." During the interview Sarah confessed she didn't think she was a good math teacher until she made this change effort. She even questioned her math ability when she herself was in public school stating as a reflection,

> I wondered if I had a disability in math and nobody ever picked up on it. It was not fun for me because what happened was I'm this type of person that I have to understand what is going on here. I have to understand it or it doesn't stick. Once you move on and I still don't understand, I'm way back here trying to understand this and you're six things ahead of me.

Through her hard work and dedication to be able to understand different concepts in math and how to guide her students in that learning now she said, "I wish someone had taught me math this way."

Mike had read Ron Clark's books before he experienced the on-site visit of the school grasping some ideas for change through the strategies and techniques listed in the

books. Kay revealed she is constantly reading, taking classes, and researching what is current in educational literature saying, "I love books. I'm forever buying books. Half my money goes to books and I read them. That's what I did this summer. You see that you're successful with changes, then you seek more, and then you seek even more."

Lee's follow-up readings were on the verbal explanations his assistant principal (AP) provided him of the teacher evaluation prompts or specific strategies. He spoke of reading saying,

> I'd meet with the AP to talk about the evaluation form grasping at every word in the details of the prompts in what they meant and how they looked in the classroom. I'd have my notes, but I had to read more about it to be clearer to exactly what was meant. Fortunately, there was a manual that I was given access to that helped.

Along with her own selected readings, Iris also had a professor friend who would suggest specific materials to read. She commented about what she read saying,

> I could research forever, but I had a professor friend and I knew her background in teaching. If I wanted some specific information on differentiated instruction she would recommend something or I could have been spending even more time then I already had researching and reading so much stuff.

Different then most teachers readings, June read all the books she was going to have her students read so she could plan and prepare her lessons appropriately. Her reading of the novels was essential to form the appropriate questions to ask, develop students' vocabulary, and to discuss comparisons between stories. She also said, "My learning included reading up on literature circles."

For Barb, even though she used an Internet based classroom management program she also had access to a program guide. She revealed she began, "By watching YouTube videos and reading the handbook of the program." Without the handbook she would not have had the clarity of the program's emphasis of procedures just the YouTube video examples.

Cathy as well learned from reading. Her reading of *The First Days of School* supplied her with ideas and strategies for classroom management. This book is described on the Internet as, "Written to help all teachers 'jump-start' by beginning the school successfully." This book was her tool to 'train her students' for tailoring her classroom structures and routines to calm the chaos and noise. She stated, "Reading the Harry Wong book opened my eyes to strategies that were reasonable and seemed to create an environment of welcome-ness, if there is such a word, and calmness."

Research and studied practices. Even though this sub-category could be collapsed within the sub-category of reading, I felt it was important to be independently addressed. Reading of educational books on strategies and best practices is a great thing and can also contain research depending on the source. I found it interesting that five teachers—Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June, specifically reported time spent on looking up and reading actual research on areas pertaining to their change effort.

Sarah read books and researched in order to learn what she needed to know to improve her instructional practices in math. She said,

> I remember I used to spend hours on research trying to get a better understanding of math. I wanted to facilitate learning better so my students would see what and why they were doing something in math.

After Mike's academy tour he stated,

> I started doing some research into the best practices and that was a big thing, too. So I didn't try to copy Ron Clark's, make a carbon copy of his. So I thought of researching brain-based stuff. I started with little things. I didn't go full force on the brain-based. I changed the lighting in my room for one thing.

He realized the physical changes in his classroom and implementing some of his researcher findings positively affected the environment for both behavior and learning.

Kay is constantly being proactive in her attempts to assist struggling students. She is continuously reading and researching to find additional ways to assist a student in closing the gap in their learning. Her research involves not only peer reviewed journals and Internet searches, but she also researches to find diagnostic tools to aid her in her goal to achieve growth with all of her students. On the topic of assessments she said,

> I want a solid assessment of where they are, what they know, and what they don't know. If I don't have that, then I can't help them. It doesn't matter how many other assessments I have if I don't have those prerequisite skills and know what they can do then I can't help them.

Before ever deciding to conduct her change effort, Iris engaged in a year long personal research project in comparing traditional instruction with the standards-based teaching model and differentiation. Then throughout her change effort she continued to research saying, "The PhD I consulted was also helpful in providing additional insight into successful case studies regarding setting up and executing a standards-based model. She referred me to research to read and other sources of case studies."

June's research involved, "Researching novels that will correlate to other areas of study, like *The Winter of the Red Snow* which goes along with our Social Studies content of the Revolutionary War." Trying to find novels that correlated with other areas of study assisted her struggling readers make connections across assignments and content areas.

Professional learning for improving instruction. Sarah, Mike, Lee, and Barb had different professional learning experiences. Sarah's training came from school arranged professional learning with a math consultant, Mike's professional learning was through a conference that included a school visit; Lee's was sessions of one to one training between him and his administrator; and Barb's was the use of a recommended Internet classroom management program. All four are being considered as professional learning, as each instance benefited the development of the teacher to learn and improve their craft as a teacher.

Sarah reported on her school's arranged professional learning,

> When the consultant came to do those in-service days, there were things that I had been looking for here and there. When the trainer said, 'We don't teach kids how to look at word problems from a whole to part perspective.' Immediately, this light went on and I thought to myself, 'I've been looking for years for something that would work in problem solving that would work every single problem you could ever do.' And I thought to myself, 'Oh, that's it', and I used it and it's working.

Mike's conference and school tour attendance was learning through observation in addition to his prior knowledge from his readings on this particular academy and their

practices. His learning at the academy sparked other curiosities as reported in the research section. His overall learning revealed not only his environment and classroom atmosphere needed to change, but he also came aware of better strategies and practices for engaging students, accountability, and ultimately academic achievement improvements. Ultimately his key learning was his realization he needed to change his own person behavior, reaction to, and approach to negative classroom happenings.

One of Lee's learning areas came from assistance by his administrator. When Lee approached his observing administrator he stating what happened, "The administrator was great, he went over the whole observation form explaining all the components to me and giving me examples." This one to one learning opportunity was his professional learning. Lee also followed up his learning times with reading and revealed that he also had his department he could turn to since the whole school was going through this new evaluation trial run process. Evidence of him accessing other teachers in his department was never revealed so this didn't show in the sub-category of other learning.

Barb's learning began when she mentioned to her friend she had a concern with student engagement and chaos in her room. Ironically, her friend had started the school year using techniques she had learned from an Internet site that addressed this very issue and saying she liked the program she used. Her friend proceeded to tell her about the website program with free downloadable guides and videos. Although Barb wasn't sure she wanted to try something mid-year, she was willing to investigate this resource as she really would like to at least calm her classes down if not resolve her classroom issues completely.

Barb liked the idea of the resource being free and the ease of its use at home or at school. The availability of video clips to learn from and witness what all the suggested strategies and techniques looked like in the classroom with students was also a plus. Barb's learning even through YouTube videos was her individualized professional learning. She reported, "I went to the website and downloaded the free program books. I watched a couple of short YouTube video clips and decided this could possibly work for me." She commented on her process saying,

> I had to watch several YouTube videos and remember the main rules of the program. I then taught my students the main parts of the program. I liked many different parts of the program and there were some parts that I was not successful with or had a complete buy into. I took the parts that I did like and continue to use them in my class today. When I tried this program I was half way through the year and I had a hard time with structure with this particular group of students.

Other Learning. Learning within other contexts existed with two of the teachers (Sarah and Iris). For Sarah, her additional learning continued with her friendship with a math consultant who had conducted training at her school but these extra moments of learning occurred for her. She commented,

> What she told me about basic addition and subtraction is it's best to teach both at the same time. Even more importantly spending the beginning of your year doing exercises with dot cards and getting the students to fully understand addition and subtraction should come first. It took time but wow what a difference in the pace I could go later.

Having this person as a learning resource and to bounce things off of during her change effort was very beneficial to her.

Iris' other learning came from the collaboration she had with her professor friend. This professor not only guided her in her readings and research she was also available for discussions saying, "I also spend many hours discussing a concept and gleaning suggestions from a PhD from a university to gain additional knowledge into the research and valid practices." It was through many of these discussions she would learn on the spot or leave the conversation to ponder over their words, to read or research a little more, then succumb to an understanding or another question.

Prior learning utilized. The category of prior learning was a beneficial process to the three teachers that reported this. Prior knowledge yet unused or practiced can provide an advantage to already having a baseline of possible beliefs and understandings. Kay, Iris, and June reported the benefit of having this knowledge and applying it to their change effort.

As already heard, Kay is a prolific reader and researcher. Along with her recent college work for her doctorate, prior master's degree coursework, experiences in 3 different schools in another state, and her "learning nerd" behavior as she called it, Kay has a wealth of knowledge. Her knowledge has developed her astute ability to conduct all of the following using excerpts from commentary:

> I am very successful and I'm the one that usually gets the self-contained. . . . anecdotal records. . . . figure out where exactly is this child. . . . differentiated instruction. . . . instilling resilience. . . . identify special education issues. . . . Identifying the specific skill or what the specific problem is. . . . I just like to get

> baseline data. . . . motivating the students. . . . instilling resilience

Having had her Master's degree for nine years she felt as if she was "getting stagnate and decided to pursue her doctorate." Her doctoral cohort is still a functioning collaborative group and was a resource for her during her change effort. The new knowledge she acquired rekindled her excitement for why she went into education. Kay revealed an additional learning process was and always has been the influence from prior mentor teachers she had in elementary herself. She said,

> You know what's so interesting is when I wrote my dedication for my dissertation, I had to think back and it was my elementary school teachers. Ms. X, my first grade teacher who loved me after I'd had a very bad experience. . . . And then my third grade teacher, Ms. S. . . . Then my fifth grade teacher.

Her passion and emotion revealed these teachers gave her a model to guide herself by and she reflects upon them often. They are key reminders why she went into education. She is careful to remind herself who to be like and not be like; how to love your students but not cripple them; and how to encourage but not brow beat either.

Iris's system had begun to work on the overarching meaning of standards-based instruction eight years ago, conducting several different supporting trainings and processes over two years. Unfortunately, the person in charge of it left and all the work stopped in the system. Iris commented,

> I participated in county professional development and agreed to be a primary or intermediate representative for a standards-based teaching lab where I could try thing out and allow others to suggest ideas to improve the existing classroom model. . . . I was fortunate to have the mentoring of County personnel who visited

by classroom on focus walks. Sometimes they commented on positives and other times they provided valuable feedback on things that might be improved. . . .

Then the key system facilitator left and the system work stopped.

Although the system stopped their forward progress with this work, Iris did not. She still dabbled in the model of standards-based instruction and continued to research.

June's previous college work for three different degrees provided her with a strong foundation of Early Childhood instructional needs. This allowed her the appropriate understanding to say, "The pedagogy of primary and intermediate grades are so different I began integrating more projects and, specifically, switching reading instruction from primarily basal to more novel studies." Her acquired knowledge from those degrees wasn't completely used afterwards, but the need to use that knowledge was rekindled in her grade level change.

Efforts Applied to Achieve Changes in Instruction

All of the teachers voiced that changing embedded habits since the inception of his or her career was the hardest of all areas within his or her change effort. To change behaviors took different actions. All the teachers processes toward change involved different attempts to find what worked and didn't. Some of those were: experimentation or trial and error; trying learned items; tweaking what was and wasn't working; and implementing learned instructions with a step-by-step process. These are common behaviors for all of us in conducting change. In answering what did teachers do to improve classroom practices their specific actions will be addressed.

New Practices Implemented. Obviously all the teachers used different techniques for implementing and adjusting new practices. For Sarah to improve her

mathematics instruction she commented on one of the hardest behaviors to change during her change effort was the way she asked questions. She explained the impact on students,

> So I think the wait time has had a huge impact on my kids knowing that I expect it, the expectation of them thinking. And so absolutely, the wait time has been a huge change in my teaching of math especially.

Other efforts applied by Sarah taken from her commentary were:

- Planning included real life connections.
- "Creating visuals to assist in students remembering."
- Making sure she included students applying what they learned by presenting different situations to practice that particular application.
- "Lots of methodical questions."
- "Lots of reflective thought" on her instruction and outcomes.
- Diagnosing where students went wrong but teaching students how to develop this diagnostic skill instead of her telling them "This is what you did wrong."
- "Celebrating mistakes" to learn by them.
- Developing a positive attitude about math thus "building confidence."
- Students tracking their own learning.
- More small group instruction and guidance.
- Student collaborative learning.

Mike's overall goal was to improve how he responded to negative situations and to change his classroom atmosphere to a more positive environment while improving academic achievement. His main feat was the change of his own personal behavior of

how he responded to things. Those changes came from Mike's self-discipline and lots of self-talk. Other efforts included putting class structures in place that students knew what he expected. His application of new practices within the classroom with students for achieving his overall goal included:

- Changing some of the classroom's physical environment such as lighting, table groupings, and activity sections.
- Changing the atmosphere through teaching specific routine expectations, playing music and as the teacher modeling positive behavior; "switching to a positive behavior management" approach.
- Changing lengthy instruction times to "more mini-lessons"
- Asking students for their feedback.
- Making "learning fun" by using songs to remember facts, menu math activities, and collaborative student learning.
- Implementing self-directed student activities.
- Having students mentally and physically check off what they have learned from a list of "this is what we will be learning."

Likewise, Kay applied numerous practices to enable her to diagnose and assist all her students in being successful. Her practices included:

- Anecdotal records, observations, and diagnostics processes to know where students were in their learning as well as what specific deficits they had.
- Applying differentiated instruction with all her students.
- Trying to instill student resilience.
- "A mistake is part of the learning process" approach.

- Celebrating “when something good happens.”
- Remediating as soon as a deficit is identified
- Finding different ways to motivate students.

Lee’s change effort was to perfect the model of standards-based instruction in order to never get another failing teacher evaluation again. Even though that was his initial intent he soon became a believer that this model of instruction had some beneficial components. His new instructional practices included:

- “Having an opening to hook students.”
- Explaining what was going to be learned in the lesson.
- Specifically stating the standard before, during and after the lesson.
- “Asking students more thought provoking questions not just memorizing types.”
- Asking students to use the language of standards and content terminology in their verbal explanations.
- More hands-on activities and “summarizing the lesson.”
- “Take baby steps so you aren’t changing too many things at one time that you don’t know what is working and what isn’t.”
- As the teacher I don’t have to own it the students should.

With Iris’ implementation of a standards-based instruction model her new instructional practices included:

- Hands-on activities for remediation and enrichment.
- “Documenting what was working well and what wasn’t.”
- “Documenting student progress and needs.”
- “Briefly hooking students on prior knowledge.”

- "Exciting them to what we are going to learn today."
- "Developing a way for them to explore, ask questions, discover and learn from tasks, their exploration, and discovery."
- Lots of critical reflection about instruction and outcomes.

June's change in grade level assignment desired her to approach reading with new practices that included:

- Integrating more reading projects across other content areas.
- "Reading novels instead of the traditional basal reader."
- Guiding the development of "rich vocabulary" understandings.
- Conducting "literature circles" with students at the same reading level, reading the same novel, and/or of varying levels to glean others perspectives.
- Implementing formative assessments for reading.
- Encouraging students to cite evidence from the text to defend their answers.
- Use occasional audio samples of novels to model expression, support slower readers, and to aid in building vocabulary.

Barb's focus was to improve her classroom environment to eliminate the chaos and noise while engaging students more appropriately in learning. Her new practice of instruction included:

- Teaching "students the main parts of the program" she used from the Internet.
- Setting procedures and routines for overall classroom conduct, "capturing the attention of students," what to do when the teacher poses individual and whole class verbal questions, and structures for lab times.
- Noise control strategies such as flickering the lights or raising her hand while

saying nothing.

Although Barb's list of instructional implementation practices isn't lengthy this isn't to say her efforts weren't as good as the others. Her goal was to accomplish a calmer, quieter, and engaged classroom therefore she possibly didn't need as many strategies.

Cathy's goal was to develop and implement classroom management protocols too. Her list of new instructional practices were:

- "Deliberately changing how I conducted myself."
- Students were met at the door.
- "Positive greetings" were spoken to each student.
- Seating arrangements were changed.
- "Positive praise" was used during class instead of addressing negative situations.
- Basic classroom procedures and routines were set.
- Positive parent communication complementing students on good behavior spread more good behavior when others heard from students their parents were called.

With both Cathy and Barb's efforts of new practices, no matter how many or how few the quality of their implementation not quantity of strategies is what made each of them see results in improving the atmospheres of their classrooms.

Student accountability set in place. The element of student accountability seemed to make a huge change in five of the teachers' change effort progression and success (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, and June). This element also seemed to drastically change learning environments in making students more responsible and taking somewhat

of a burden off the teacher. Students always have the tendency to ask questions of their teachers that they should actually already know themselves like what is my grade and am I passing? When certain accountability measures are in place students know the answers themselves to these questions. The teachers reported these measures made the students more aware of what they needed to learn, where they were in their learning, and what their grades were.

Sarah expanding on the additional purpose of her wait time in asking questions in how students become more accountable saying,

> It's a lot of questioning back to them and me waiting for the answer rather than telling them the answer and having them redo it, redo it, which gets me all the learning and they do not get any learning because they don't correct and find.

Additionally, she reported other student accountability techniques were

> Kids tracking their own learning, figuring out where their deficits are themselves just by me guiding them, coming up with plans for improvement, goals, that sort of thing. We have done all of that this year and it has made a world of difference in their math.

Mike's accountability with his students was reported as,

> Another change that I've made more recently is going to that standards-based idea of instruction. Here are the things that we've got to learn, I'm going to do my best to teach it to you, you got to do your best to try to learn it, and then being able to mentally check off or physically check off that they've learned something is pretty powerful.

In addition, Mike structured his students into four different groups to create what he

called “houses” using a point system for students to earn individual and group points for both behavior and academics. Students not only monitored their own personal behavior but he also witnessed students guiding other students appropriately to avoid losing points or to encourage getting points.

Kay didn’t necessarily have a formal way for her young students to document their progress in learning. Her student accountability was through her trying to instill resilience. She tries to develop students being accountable for their mistakes, learning from them, and developing the ability to move on. Her following philosophy says it best,

> You cannot learn if you do not make a mistake. You absolutely must make mistakes. Once you dust yourself off, pick yourself up, you learn from it. Now, if you’re making mistakes and you’re not learning from it, then something’s wrong. But to me, I welcome mistakes.

Later she explained how she approaches this with students,

> It’s teaching children that I guess that’s my thing because I want them to know, yeah, you don’t have it now and you don’t get it now. But guess what? You’re going to get it because we’re going to keep working at it. We’re going to keep picking ourselves up. We’re going to keep dusting ourselves up and we’re going to keep working on it.

Kay’s effort toward instilling resilience is crucial to her. She has realized students aren’t coming to her with this understanding or belief that you can learn from mistakes and you can try again. Many of the students seem to think if they fail they are done, it’s too late. She discussed, being in a school that is highly economically disadvantaged adds to that misunderstanding or lack of belief as many of these families are just trying to survive.

For some of these families picking yourself up and moving on is a daily struggle never being thought of as a skill or something you'd possibly talk to your child about.

Lee's major point on accountability was voiced as,

> These practices make me more aware of what I am teaching and makes me more aware to make the students know what they are learning. Accountability doesn't just have to be in my court, I can make the students accountable for what they are to learn for a grade, know for a test, and know to pass my class.

He had mentioned how he was surprised to hear students using the terminology of standards and more content vocabulary. He admitted being a seasoned veteran the thinking of "the teacher knows where they are taking the students and the students don't know anything. Now the student sees what it is they are to be learning and are learning."

June also applied several different actions within her assessing student reading comprehension that made students more accountable for their learning. She explained,

> Additionally, I chunk chapters of the novels and do formative assessments such as summaries, comprehension checks, and Socratic questioning to ensure that students are engaged and understanding as we go. Students are encouraged to use evidence from the text to defend their answers as well.

This instructional practice change improved not only her assessment of where students were in their learning, but over time this process grew a clearer understanding for students of all the different connections and meanings in reading.

Personal Behaviors that Supported Change

Change in behavior was one of the hardest parts of all eight teachers change effort. It's personal behaviors that either present conflict or determination to work through the processes to reach one's goal. The personal behaviors addressed in this

section are: self-reflection and self-talk; talking with others; resilience; mediocrity is not acceptable and other teaching experiences. All of these sub-categories of personal behavior were used processes in accomplishing change with his or her classroom practices.

Reflection and self-talk—what's happening and how am I doing? Schein (1985) and Schön (1995) both suggested 'surprises' or a problematic situation simulates a period of reflection. Each teacher's critical incident was the stimulus for beginning reflection. Self-reflection, also termed reflection or reflective practice, was prevalent throughout everyone's commentary and also contained evidence of self-talk. The reflective process was consistent within all eight teachers actions and many specifically used such terminology. Reflection continued throughout his or her learning; experimentations; continuous planning and locating of resources; and implementation of solidified practices.

All teachers spoke of experiences of the past, changes, and new practices. Three of the teachers never specifically used the word reflection, but other evidence revealed the use of reflective practices. Commentary spoken of self-reflective implications by Mike, June, and Barb of began with: (Mike) I realized…, I switched. . . , I wasn't…, I had some difficulties…, I constantly had to manage behavior…, I could have done a lot better with them…, (June) I had to make distinct changes. . . , I did teach mostly. . . , I felt like my students didn't. . . , and I had to come to the realization that I wasn't going to be able to read every book I wanted. (Barb) This program helped me with structure. . . , I still have some weaknesses that I have to address. . . , I just need more practice. . . .

Sarah, Lee, Kay, Iris, and Cathy used the exact terminology of reflection. Sarah said, "I did a lot of reflection. . . . So it's a lot of reflective thought on my part." Sarah's data revealed she reflects a lot throughout her practices of teaching. She not only reflects on her students' results from tests and student learning she was critically reflective of this data as to her ownership of her instructional practices for achieving whatever these results are.

> Lee revealed in perfecting his practices of the teacher evaluation components, I tried to conquer them one at a time or in small chunks, but I constantly kept myself aware by reflecting what those practices were that I was trying to learn and incorporate them into my teachings daily. My reflection of past and present practices was key to keeping me aware of what changes I had to make and yet keep, for making new behaviors.

Whereas Kay stated specifically, "I reflect a lot over lessons, where students are, what they need, and how can I help them. I evaluate data, notes on students and try to figure out what I need to do next to bring them along." Kay is constantly journaling or noting where students are and reevaluating what she needs to do to aid students in their next progression of learning.

Cathy explained of her thinking about the processes she went through in reading the Harry Wong book, deciding what strategies to try saying, "Reflecting on what strategies and techniques the book was describing took some soul searching—did I agree, could I do that, was I open to that kind of idea working." Ultimately, after trying some simple things and seeing these items change the classroom environment for the positive she was a believer this resource would work. She commented, "Reading the Harry Wong

book opened by eyes to strategies that were reasonable and seemed to create an environment of welcome-ness, if there is such a word, and calmness."

And Iris really captured a clear essence of her reflection saying, "Reflecting to the point of being honest with myself and my teaching, being able to admit when I was possibly wrong and adjusting that mistake or error in my teaching or strategy." She specifically used the word reflect and reflection three other times. Iris was consistent in not only evaluating and reflecting her own progress, but also doing checks with her professor friend about her progress.

Self-talk. The finding of consistent reflective practices also revealed the use of self-talk. This reflective self-talk ranged from the extremes of self-doubt to building confidence; and to conversations or reminders in their heads of things they needed to do or be mindful of. Mike spoke of his change effort and his skepticism, "I didn't want to do something and have it completely fail. So after I saw things that were working it became easier for me to be able to change and say, no, I'm going to do it this way because it has worked."

Mike commented that his self-talk was a way to remind himself to stay away from being reactive and negative. He admitted, "I constantly have to pull myself back, think about, and remind myself to focus on the positive. Find something positive. Complement that child sometime today. Find something nice to say."

Kay confessed of having doubt saying,

> Constantly. You constantly doubt yourself, you doubt what you're doing. You just keep pushing through it. I don't know, I guess it's that fight or flight instinct. . . . if there's a wall in front of me, come hell or high water, I'm going to find a way

around it.

Although Kay seems confident in how she conducts her work with students, it is evident self-doubt is always present at some degree.

Lee identified himself not as the sharpest pencil in the box, not liking to fail, and isn't a quitter while revealing, "I also didn't think the students could do this part either and I didn't see the relevance of it, until I realized students need to know what it is they are suppose to be learning—duh!" His realization that the practices within a standards-based model of instruction were working for him and the students started to make him a believer that students could be held more accountable.

Iris on the other hand worried about juggling her home life and had self-talk doubts saying,

> My personal limitations are that of a wife and mother. At the time this transformation began, my son was only six and needed more of my time. It's very difficult to justify sixty to seventy hours of work per week to a six year-old and a husband. Thankfully, I was the only one feeling that it was a problem.

Other similar areas of self-doubt were voiced like could they: stay consistent with their new practices (Sarah, Mike, Lee, Iris, Barb, and Cathy); change his or hers and their students old habits (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, Barb, and Cathy); learn what they needed to know (Sarah, Lee, Iris, June, Barb, and Cathy); and teach a particular subject well enough (Sarah and June).

Talking with others for assistance or affirmation. All of the teachers valued having a person to talk to through their process of change. Many of these conversations prompted change actions to be applied in the classroom or gave affirmations to his or her

thinking. Sarah reported having a supportive administrator and a math consultant friend she could talk things over with. Mike revealed sources for him were peer teachers, supportive team members, his principal, and "close knit group of teacher friends outside of school." Some of his friends are within and outside of the school system saying, "That has been nice just to keep good communication open and stealing ideas."

Kay had several sources outside of her school to have collaborative conversation with. Her main body of contacts was from her college cohort saying,

> Having a network system is probably one of the best things that came out in doing my doctoral program of having people all over, everywhere, people in different counties, people in different positions, all the way from an assistant superintendent down to people teaching early intervention.

She also said her principal was supportive, but she didn't identify her as someone who really assisted her with her change effort.

Lee of course spoke highly of his assistant principal who initially conducted his failing teacher evaluation and then assisted him in learning what he needed to know. He also said, "I have key people I know I can go to that I can count on and who will be candid with me. My department head is one of those people. She aided me at times during this process?"

Iris as heard had her professor friend, whom has been revealed ultimately ended up becoming her mother-in-law. Their relationship professionally is a partnership. Her now mother-in-law aids her but Iris assists her too as she reported, "She and I collaborate and work together on many different educational topics. She publishes educational materials and occasionally asks for input from me since I'm in the classroom."

June's academic talk persons were her principal and other grade team teachers. She commented of her team saying, "My team was important because they knew that my curriculum was novel-based, so they always checked with me before starting a supplementary novel with their classes to make sure I didn't need it immediately." She later included others to talk to were those attending "occasional meetings with the other gifted teachers and we share things."

Barb for her finding of talking with others was her science teacher friend who told her of the Internet classroom management program and a "few good friends that I feel that I can talk to and bounce ideas off of with." Cathy's mentioned, "the administrator that suggested the Harry Wong book" and later mentioned, "grade level and content area teachers in which we have regular meetings. I feel comfortable talking with any of those folk or getting advice from them."

Documenting change effort events. Only two teachers (Kay and Iris) mentioned that they used and valued documenting their change effort events. Kay seems to constantly note where students are in their learning; identifying deficits; writing down what she did for remediation; and keeping great numerical data with assessments and visual observations with both being used to measure growth. She even goes as far as to get others to document as well saying, "I put a notebook in any parent volunteer, para-pro or anybody else's hands that's come into the classroom. I tell them to write down what students are struggling with; and write down what they can and can't do."

Iris commented that documenting her change effort progress of what worked and didn't work was of a great benefit. She stated,

The biggest things that helped me during this process was the documentation of

what was working well and what wasn't so that next year I didn't spin my wheels trying to remember what worked. Additionally, I found a smoother way to document student needs/progress so that time on task and with the students could really be documented on the spot.

Both of these teachers had good ideas of keeping tract of what worked and didn't. For either one of these teachers it would not surprise me if their notes turned into documents for research. Both of them are prolific readers and researchers.

Change is Happening: How They Knew?

Conducting a change effort entails many different facets from learning, trying, tweaking, evaluating, and repetitive practice to sustain new habits. Prior behaviors have to be replaced with new ones and evidence needs to be obtained to know change is happening, but most importantly working. Several categories were identified in this area such as: prior actions are transitioning to new ones, different forms of feedback are informing progress, and others are recognizing change.

Prior actions being replaced by new actions. Numerous actions were applied by all of the teachers. Changing old set behaviors was the hardest part of each teachers change effort. Through his or her plans in how to accomplish their goal changes in prior actions was an inevitable necessity to obtain new actions. The infamous quote of Henry Ford's (born 1863-died 1947) says it all, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got" (www.goodreads.com/quotes/904186). Sarah mentioned this quote in her admission to herself that she needed to change what she was doing or she would continue to reap the same less than favorable testing results that propelled her into her change effort. All of the other teachers also realized change

had to occur in order for his or her identified problem to be at least partially mended if not totally corrected through the application of new behaviors and actions.

For Sarah her actions changed from primarily teaching via the traditional lecture or remember this, do this type of teaching to all the following commentary excerpts:

> I shifted my teaching from me teaching to me guiding. . . . I planned lessons making connection to real life so my students saw how and why we were learning this. . . . I created visuals for them so that it sticks in their mind. . . . I used more methodical questioning. . . . I used lots of questioning. . . . I trained myself to wait for the answers rather then telling them the answer. . . . I made sure students could apply their learning in different situations. . . . I quit planning long term and planned for daily needs, where students were in their learning and what they needed that day. . . . reflecting in the moment where students were in their learning to acquire immediate feedback to adjust instruction if needed. . . . Teaching students how to be diagnostic to find errors in their work and thinking. . . . Kids tracking their own learning. . . . Changing my attitude and their attitude about math. . . . After I became better at math I projected a love for it and my students grasped onto that too.

Lots of behavior and instructional practice changes listed here by Sarah. The best excerpt of all is the last one. Sarah recognized from conducting her change effort it more thoroughly developed her knowledge of content and how to better teach math. Then her own confidence and love for the subject spread to her students. Sarah discovered she was not only able to develop her students' math skills but guide them to be diagnostic in their

own learning and thus more confident too, her ultimate proof change was happening.

Mike was concerned about several issues in his classroom when he first began to think about needing a change. He knew a different atmosphere and better instructional practices were possible. He reported what actions changed for him saying,

> I made some physical changes to the classroom set up. Then I switched to the positive behavior management was my next step. . . . students were being rewarded for their behaviors. . . . The class got slit into four groups and they were switched around every nine weeks. . . . Students earned points for exemplary behavior and they got points for improvement in an assignment. . . . I have classroom routines set up. . . . I use reading workshops and using their individual novels. I'm just doing mini lessons and things. . . . I used songs to reinforce learning certain facts. . . . I include student feedback in how things are going. . . . I developed a math menu of activities. . . . I did more self-directed activities. . . . I quit being the one on the stage and became the coach on the sidelines.

Again, lots of changes to instructional practices with the teacher providing guidance but the students are doing the work and being accountable for that work. Other evidence to tell him things were working was a "big growth in reading motivation" and as he said it, "Ultimately, test scores."

Kay's change effort in reality was not a drastic change as with the other teachers. Her effort was directed toward perfecting her craft as a teacher for helping all students but particularly the struggling learner. She is consistently insistent in starting each school year with two distinct tasks. The first one is "I want to teach the students what my rules are and I want them to know what my expectations are." She is clear in setting classroom

routines and procedures. Her second task is, "I spend the first month just looking at what each kid can do. I collect lots of anecdotal records and do a lot of observations." Her obsessiveness in finding out what students are capable of, what they can't do, identifying why they can't do something, and how to bridge the gap across those findings is why she is so successful with students. Her diagnostic persistence and solution driven approach accounts for how Kay has changed over time from her prior actions. Her skill set and some changed actions can be seen in the commentary excerpts provided in the prior learning section too. Kay's satisfaction that change is being affective is being able to see growth in a student and their ability to be promoted to the next grade with a distinct belief they will be successful as they mastered the appropriate standards to support that promotion.

Lee's action changes had nothing to do with any student concerns, classroom environment issues, or learning problems. His action changes all pertained to his needing to learn and perfect the instructional prompts on his Class Keys teacher evaluation form. This new form that resulted in less then favorable results shook Lee's self-efficacy saying, "I am a good teacher and that form said I wasn't. It really bothered me." Earlier he revealed how he felt about evaluation time admitting,

> When it was teacher evaluation time, I always prepared a dog and pony show, as I've always thought of the process as a joke. I thought of it as a joke because why do you want to report to a teacher the day and time you are coming to observe, shouldn't good teaching be happening all the time? Thus come any time.

He discovered "his dog and pony show" won't work anymore. The components of the standards-based evaluation form within Class Keys were more than his familiar checklist

of acts from previous evaluation processes. He reports what he does now saying,

> Having an opening to hook students, standards being referred to during the lesson, not just posted, and summarizing the lesson at the end. . . . these practices make me more aware of what I am teaching and makes me more aware to make the students know what they are learning. . . . make the students accountable for what they are to learn for a grade, know for a test, and know to pass my class.

Even though Lee's change effort was a personally forced event to avoid getting bad results on future evaluations he admitted, "These new practices haven't taken my authenticity from me; they have been elements that have been added to my practices which have made me a better teacher I think." Although his ultimate focus was on his own betterment, he reaped an overall benefit also with the students and their learning.

Iris' goal to implement the model standards-based instruction into her diverse classroom of learners there was much to learn and practice before she developed sustained actions. She admitted even after her research and having conversations with her professor friend, "It took approximately six months before I felt confident implementing any of the practices directly in the classroom." She later stated,

> I tried to focus on methods for delivering instruction, small groups, and areas that could provide the most benefit early on. Many of the things were hands-on activities created for remediation and enrichment. I also used these things to document student progress and needs. . . . A lot of reflecting has been involved. Reflecting to the point of being honest with myself and my teaching, being able to admit when I was possibly wrong and adjusting that mistake or error in my teaching or strategy.

Iris' later statement on reflection is powerful in hearing her confession of how important her honesty was with herself about her teaching. A definite change in behavior in not accepting student results but assessing one's practice of instruction in regards to those results.

June's change in actions needed to correspond to the needs of her older students. In addressing the content of reading her new actions involved reading all the novels she was going to use with her students. She explained,

> This change was difficult because each novel study requires so much prep work. It goes way beyond cutting out a file folder game or adding an additional activity to each day's plans. I have to read the novels and study them myself before I present them. Last year my students read twelve novels, and we don't have a lot of resources to help with planning, so I wind up doing a lot of that work myself.

Reading twelve novels on top of all the other roles and responsibilities a teacher has seems overwhelming. Her belief that reading novels "provides a richer vocabulary and exposure to literary devices, so my philosophy here is, the more the better" carries over into being willing to do the extra work to reap this benefit. June's evidence of change is happening was the testing results she got from the students the year prior to our interview. She reported, "Last year's group (12-13) achieved 100% exceeding standards on the Reading CRCT and the majority of them , all but two) maxed out the LEXILE levels for fourth grade."

Barb's desire to control the chaos and noise in her room began in using an Internet program. As reported earlier, she watched video clips and then taught her students the parts of the program she liked or had a complete buy into. She also

admitted,

> I took the parts that I did like and continue to use them in my class today. I think I need to go back and try some of the other parts of the program again. Like with all teaching techniques it takes time to master something new.

Although Barb changed some prior behaviors in her attempt to rectify her disappointing classroom environment she also admitted,

> If you were to ask me if I used the program to 100% of its capability, I would say I've mastered about 10% and the parts I do use, I find great success with. . . . I feel that if I invested more time into the program and continue to practice a little bit at a time, I could make it better suited for me.

Barb had explained a year and a half after starting this change effort she started a doctorate program. The two years during her college work she didn't expand on the program and commented,

> It has been almost four years since I have revisited how the programs works, but now that I have recently finished my doctorate, I want to revisit the program and discover the new plans that have been developed in the past four years.

Thus her work on this change effort doesn't seem to be complete although shows thoughts of possibly continuing.

Cathy was excited to find a solution for her classroom management and noise control problems. She was timid in admitting to the problem, but seemed to display an understanding that her dilemma was probably not uncommon for a new teacher. Cathy's lack of set procedures and routines was the ultimate problem in her saying, "I did not know how to 'train' my students on daily and/or routine tasks." After reading,

implementing, and practicing strategies and techniques she read in the Harry Wong book "she began to see things working and my classroom environment changing." She later commented that in the beginning just conducting one simple activity for two weeks of greeting the students at the door, addressing them by name, telling them she was happy to see them and asking them to have a seat quietly changed her classroom environment. She stated,

> This immediately changed the culture of how my students came into class. It shocked me in seeing the change and I guess that made me a believer that there were things that were important for creating a positive classroom environment.

Additional proof of prior actions being changed to new ones was her admission, "This was something that involved me deliberately changing how I conducted myself." She now owns the quality of the environment comes from her control.

Feedback informs progress. Feedback for these teachers came in several forms. Five of them referred to formal feedback, as that of state tests scores or classroom assessments (Sarah, Mike, Iris, and June) or results from being evaluated (Sarah and Lee). Then all of the teachers reported using informal feedback consistently in evaluating their teaching practices and with all of his or her change effort processes. This type of feedback included their own personal evaluation or reflection of how things were going. Observations included what they witnessed happening with students during different strategy implementations. Informal feedback is a very common process for teachers to use and can be as simple as walking around the room observing where students are in learning. Others informal instances are something someone says as well as positive student outcomes.

Sarah reported the use of lots of observing in student learning for her feedback and her classroom assessments. Although her end highlights were her state testing results, her student growth data, and her teacher evaluation score. She more specifically spoke of her teacher evaluation of her instruction saying, "I was going to get the most real constructive feedback I could get. We did it in everything exactly the way we always do it. In math that day, I got the most exemplary marks of anytime." Sarah also used surveys with her students to evaluate their feelings of math in the beginning of the year and repeated that survey at the end of the year too. She also throughout her change effort would ask her students how they felt about something she tried with them. This information allowed her to understand what types of things they responded to more positively then others.

One year during Mike's change effort process he was shocked at how awesome his state test scores were. Although he knew several things went very well that year he still did not understand such results. This prompted him to ask his students saying,

> I sat down with my kids after the scores came back and I said, 'How did this happen? This wasn't supposed to happen. I mean you guys came in, we were supposed to have average scores and that was going to be fine. How did we end up exceeding like this? What has happened?' And they started listing the things that made a difference to them.

He stated their list consisted of: how the florescent lights were adjusted, meaning turned off and lamps were used; songs being used to remember certain facts; reading novels instead of the basal; menu math and 'things they thought helped them' as he said. An awesome testimonial for Mike that his new instructional practices not only resulted in

good scores but students recognized how changes within their classroom affected their testing and learning performance.

In regards to his math menu activities, Mike had a co-teacher for one of his classes who was still doing traditional teaching method with those students she was assisting. While she was in the room she was witnessing how this 'math menu of activities' was going and recognizing 'this is really working'. Mike stated with delight, "She came to me about a month after I'd started and said we need to do this menu of math activities with all our students in how we teach everyday math. So we did."

For Kay the ultimate success is a child being promoted to the next grade but also rewards given at the end of the year. When her students are called out and given rewards by the principal for gains in achievement she knows she has succeeded. She stated, "I was hugging them and then we handed out awards. Tears of joy flow for me and all that help me." Her other feedback is her occasional co-teacher and para-pro when they inform her of the changes they see in students. She also prides herself in subsequent teachers that receive her students and them praising her on what her students know. As heard in the change effort documentation section, Kay's feedback from observations; notes of hers and others; assessments; and hers or others witness of students' ability to apply their learning.

Lee's additional feedback outside of getting good teacher evaluations was witnessing how his students could state the standards; understood what they were learning while using the content terminology more; and students beginning to score better on class quizzes and tests. His ultimate feedback still revolved around his state testing results.

For Iris working with special education students and seeing their success was her feedback of her change effort working. She stated, "My personal rubric was the level of improvement and mastery of my students as they focused on standards in the classroom." For Barb and Cathy, their feedback was the change in their classroom environment. Barb responded, "The climate of the classroom, the behavior and amount of learning taking place, along with students' tests scores were the many different ways I was able to measure success in the classroom." Cathy added, "I could see a positive change in the way the students entered the classroom. It all makes sense as to best practices and reasonable expectations for displaying respect for your students and them to you in return."

The support of June's principal and her questioning June if all was going well after she came through her class was proof of trust and her saying she didn't see anything she didn't agree with. June reported, "Thankfully, she trusts me and my classroom practice; and she just wanted me to be sure I was giving the students everything they needed." June's ultimate success too was state reading test results that proved all was well with her change effort plan—"all but two maxed out the Lexile" and the whole group "achieved 100% exceeding standards on the Reading CRCT."

Section Two Summary

This section identified all the actions teachers implemented to transition old behaviors to new ones. Seven reported their instructional practices had drastically changed from their change effort. Barb was the only one whom admitted she "mastered about 10%" of the program she was trying to learn and implement. Other evidence was found to confirm this same level of need with her following statements,

> It has been four years since I have re-read the program works, but now that I have recently finished my doctorate… I want to revisit the program and discover the new plans that have been developed in the past four years….I think I need to go back and try some of the other parts of the program again.

The processes of what each teacher did to improve classroom practices were numerous. The initial 'to do' for each teacher was learning. Learning occurred throughout several different modes. With the learning came the application of new practices through trying learned strategies; experimentation or trial and error; step-by-step learned process and tweaking what worked and didn't work to make strategies fit their classroom needs. Personal behaviors came into action with reflection and self-talk, talking to others, and for some documenting their change effort results. Indicators that change was happening came from prior behaviors or actions becoming new ones; information from feedback; and others recognizing and reporting their witness to change within their classrooms.

Section Three: Support, Strategies and Tactics that Aided

The final question that guided this study was—what strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts? All of the participants reported having a person(s) of support while conducting their change effort. Strategies and tactics were those actions or situations that aided them in their change effort.

Support

Support was reported by teachers as being that of the following themes: family, educator peers in or out of their school, grade level teams or content departments, administrator,

district leadership, and other educator professional. Support seemed to be an important entity for each persons change effort. As heard earlier, each valued a person to speak to about their efforts. Most of the support was of a particular individual aided each teacher in their needed way with secondary availability from grade level teams, content departments or other educator friends. Oddly, no one reported support from his or her school or system as a whole. Likewise, no one reported regularly offered professional development, tentative scheduled professional development for the near future, or experiences of support following previously offered professional development.

The following Table 5.3 is the reported teacher results on support. Each category will be addressed individually for all those teachers that support entity applies too. As seen in the table each teacher reported at least two support persons with the max of five.

Table 5.3

Teacher Reported Results for Support

	Teacher Sarah	Teacher Mike	Teacher Kay	Teacher Lee	Teacher Iris	Teacher June	Teacher Barb	Teacher Cathy
Support Entity								
Family	X		X		X			
Educator Peers In or Out of School		X	X				X	
Grade Level Team or Department		X		X	X	X	X	X
Administrator		X	X	X	X	X		X
District Leadership					X			
Other Educator Professional	X				X			
Total Support Evidence	2	3	3	2	5	2	2	2

Understanding and support of family. Most of the teachers reported how much time is required of teaching, both professionally and personally. Time is used before and after school, as well as on weekends and even out of their limited summer time. Sarah, Kay, and Iris voiced strong feelings of guilt in their possible neglect of family over their passion and commitment to teaching. Adding their change effort on top of the typical constraints added more stress and doubt for each of them. In spite of their concerns of neglecting their families, all three teachers said family was one of their strongest support systems. Support came from each family in understanding their teacher member's strong desire to accomplish the work needed to be adequately prepared each day to achieve successful student learning and then likewise to accomplish their change effort.

Sarah said of the profession and her family, "With my dedication and devotion to teaching my family knows I'll do what it takes to get the job done, but in the right way. I couldn't do this job without their support and understanding." Ironically, Sarah has four children too. She commented during the interview in talking about teachers needing to hide their personal problems or lack of sleep saying,

> I think a lot of teachers see it as a calling but I think that they must understand that they are the number one deciding factor in the culture of everything they teach within that classroom, their attitude, and if you're having a bad day, you better shut it out. And if you didn't have any sleep last night because your baby got you up three, four times, you better shut that out. I've always done that, even with my kids where I didn't sleep but two hours. I have always, because I decided I am the actor. If I believe it, my kids will believe it. Thus I have to be positive.

Sarah's comment complements her earlier statement that teachers are responsible for setting the tone for their classroom.

Kay spoke of her family and how she has had to learn how to manage needs saying,

> I have my own child, my own family, and my own endeavors that I'm trying to balance. I'm trying to find that balance because I tend to be all or nothing. I think that's one thing I learned with the doctoral program. I needed to compartmentalize my life. I don't leave the school building without having everything done that I need to do and I try not to bring anything home. My family is very supportive of my extreme drive in needing to be an effective teacher.

She also commented she use to take work home and after dinner work to early hours in the morning preparing what she desired to have ready for the next day instead of spending time with her family.

Iris as well shed her doubts in how she is working so much and how do you justify that to a child confessing very passionately,

> My family was very helpful in allowing me to spend as much time working on this [sic-her change effort] as possible. . . . It's very difficult to justify sixty to seventy hours of work per week to six year-old and your husband. Thankfully, I was the only one feeling that it was a problem. They have always been very understanding and supportive.

Family support and understanding was very important for these three teachers.

Support from teacher peers in and outside of school. Mike, Kay, and Barb mentioned other teacher friends outside of their school or system as supporters. Mike

commented, “I have a close knit group of teacher friends outside of school, I mean several other teachers that I’m close friends with in this county and in other schools as well. That has been nice just to keep good communication open and stealing ideas.” He also mentioned a peer teacher within his school with whom he spoke to a lot and felt comfortable talking about his change effort processes. He also stated of some of his curious school peers, “There’s been expressed interest and they would listen and try, but then they tend not to put it into practice.

Kay voiced great fellowship from her doctoral degree cohort. She cherishes these colleagues and values the level of everyone’s knowledge, work ethic, and dedication to education. Barb’s support person was the science teacher friend who informed her of the online program of strategies to better engage her students.

Grade level team or content department support. Mike, Lee, Iris, June, Barb, and Cathy stated they could always turn to their grade level team or department, as each felt he and she had a good working relationship with all of them. For all of them though my interpretation was their grade level team or departments could be relied upon, but no evidence was identified that anyone actually accessed them regularly during his or her change effort. Mike said, “There have been some peers and just supportive team members in this school,” yet really nothing specific was mentioned as support in conducting his change effort. Lee stated, “I have key people I know I can go to that I can count on and who will be candid with me. My department head is one of those people. She aided me at times during this process in talking with her about specifics?”

Iris commented of the grade level team, “We also have weekly collaboration meetings to plan, discuss what’s working and what’s not, and to analyze student data,”

but this wasn't in reference to her change effort. She did elaborate that at these times when appropriate she would share with her team things that were working in her quest to move to a complete standards-based instruction model. June said twice in her interview her team was great and her grade level is a great support saying they meet and she also "meets with other gifted teachers and we share ideas."

Barb commented her science department peers were her best go to people at school, but she mostly referred back to her science teacher friend who recommended the Internet classroom management program to her. She said, "There's not really a support system in my school. I have my few good friends that I feel that I can talk to and bounce ideas off of with." Cathy spoke of her team and content peers saying, "We have team meetings and content area meetings. I feel comfortable talking with any of those folk or getting advice from them."

Administrator support. Six of the eight teachers Lee, Mike, Sarah, Iris, June, and Cathy named specifically an administrator that was a support person to them. Lee praised the assistant principal who evaluated him and supported him in his learning of the evaluation prompts without displaying judgment, along with his approachable demeanor. Mike, Sarah, Iris, and June each named their own principal's as their cheerleader, along with being the one who would question them on progress, problems, and whether all that they were doing was appropriate for reaping what they hoped for and in the best interest of student achievement. All four of them really did mean someone to cheer him or her on as none of them had evidence their principal's actually assist them in their change effort.

Mike said, "I have a supportive administration so I was able to go and approach them and say I want to make some changes and they are perfectly fine with it." Sarah

praised her principal in encouraging her and in conducting teacher evaluations for her to give her authentic feedback of her new change effort strategies. Iris said she got regular support from her grade level team, "We have weekly team meeting with administration to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and needs." Then lastly, Cathy named the administrator who recommended the Harry Wong book as her support person, although she never elaborated specifically how exactly he was a support. As with Mike, Kay, and June, he was probably an encourager.

Support from the district level leadership. Iris was the only one who named a district level support person. She identified a curriculum specialist who is no longer in her system. She accredited him with starting the learning across her system of the standards-based model classroom, but with his leaving the progression with the work stopped in the system, but obviously not for Iris. When Iris volunteered after professional development with this curriculum specialist to be a representative for a primary or intermediate standards based teacher lab she was impressed at how involved he got. She also complemented him in being willing to talk more on the topic saying he was very approachable and even came to her classroom to observe and talk.

Other educator professional supports. Sarah named a consultant in mathematics who was her support person and guided her through different questions, concerns, and content in mathematics. Sarah commented of her consultant friend,

> Having someone like her that you can go to or email and say, 'Hey, I'm thinking about doing this. What do you think?' has been huge. Huge to have someone, to know that you have someone there that does not judge, but encouraging saying things 'like that sounds great and think about this too.'"

Iris' support person outside of her establishment was a prior professor, who had also become a personal friend and eventually her mother-in-law. As told before, she was of a great assistance to her and she also revealed, "She and I collaborate and work together on many different educational topics. She publishes educational materials and occasionally asks for input from me since I'm in the classroom."

Strategies and Tactics of Aid Toward Change

Strategies and tactics were those recognized actions or elements the teachers put in place that aided them with their change effort. Strategies implemented were considered as long term approaches and tactics are short term.

Sarah's change effort for improving her math understanding of content and better ways to teacher certain content revealed several things that aided her. Table 5.4 shows her long-term strategies specific to math. The remaining strategies and tactics supported her in developing hers and her students positive attitudes, confidence, buy-in for activities she did with them, making students accountable for their learning, learning from mistakes and collaborating together to learn.

Table 5.4

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Sarah

Sarah	
Strategies	Tactics
• Doing dot cards daily with students to build numeracy for addition and subtraction understanding • Using model drawing for word problems • Developing positive attitudes in math • Building confidence • Student tracking their own progress • Student collaborative learning and working	• Student surveys on how the feel about math • Student surveys on how something they experienced went • Small group check ups on content, progress, and answering questions • Celebrating mistakes to learn by them

Mike desired to transition his negative approach to irritating or unacceptable behaviors to more of a positive behavior management style. He also wanted his classroom environment to be a more positive and soothing atmosphere where students were not only accountable for their learning but also their behavior. Table 5.5 shows Mike's long-term strategies changed the physical environment, made students more accountable and learning fun, while Mike himself needed to keep his old negative habits at bay. His short-term tactic was simply getting more rest so he was physically and emotionally reenergized for each day. Mike reported as he implemented and perfected new classroom practices he found his daily energy level wasn't as stressed and drained, although he still tried to pay attention to keeping himself energized to stay more positively balanced.

Table 5.5

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Mike

Mike	
Strategies	Tactics
• Changing the classroom physical environment—florescent lights to lamps, large classroom to small groups, and activity stations, and brought music into the room • Dividing students into four working groups called houses for competing for behavior and academic points • Organizing Self-directed Activities • Developing Math Menu Activities • Keeping up my own motivation and positivity	• Trying to personally "bring a little bit more energy into class"—yes more sleep to be more thoroughly rested. (This could be in both areas)

Kay's continuous plan as a teacher is to be able to diagnose where students are in their learning, recognize deficits, figure out what they need, remediate, and monitor their

progress with learning frequently. Table 5.6 shows Kay's strategies and tactics that aided her in her continuation of her diagnosis and treatment plans for every student in her class.

Table 5.6

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Kay

Kay	
Strategies	Tactics
• Knowing I'm successful in what I do. That makes me seek out more ways to continue to be even more successful • Constantly remembering my elementary teachers. Who to be like and not be like. • Instilling resilience and confidence in my students	• Periodic student check points of where they are in their learning, what deficits, deciding what do I need to do, and remediate • Constantly reading and researching different things • Trying things I learn

Lee's desire to learn the model of standard-based instruction for the teacher evaluation instrument reveals in Table 5.7 the three key aids he found to be helpful during his change effort.

Table 5.7

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Lee

Lee	
Strategies	Tactics
• Touching base with my AP for support. Have someone you can go to who will be honest, not being judgmental, and will earnestly help you.	• "Biting it off in pieces. Taking it in chunks to master." With standards-based instruction, learn one standard at a time. • Taking baby steps in the process. Doing or changing too many things at once you aren't sure which is really working.

Iris's attempt to completely change her instruction to the model of standards-based instruction to meet the needs of all her students in Table 5.8 shows her strategies and tactics that aided her in her efforts. She found documenting her process and progress

as a great benefit from year to year in continuing her work. Short-term tactics provided her with needed feedback in knowing how instruction, learning, and student growth was progressing.

Table 5.8

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Iris

Iris	
Strategies	Tactics
• Documentation of my change effort processes of what worked well and what wasn't	• Quick formative assessment ideas • Computer programs like Study Island and IXL • Quick Real time data

The following Table 5.9 shows June's three reported aids for accomplishing her task of implementing novel studies with her students. June's aids consisted of specific planning and an instructional tool.

Table 5.9

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for June

June	
Strategies	Tactics
• Creating reading curriculum maps to fit the CCGPS standards • Incorporating nonfiction and fictional into mapping and pacing guides	• Using audio portions of novels to help model expressions and assist with building vocabulary. This is also an aid to time management.

Barb's desire to re-engage her students, control the noise and chaos was aided the following strategies and tactics listed in Table 5.10. Most of her aids were tactics she conducted with the students to promote a positive environment, where one strategy encouraged collaborative learning between the students and the other was Barb trying to

be cognizant of sustaining successful implemented parts of the classroom management program.

Table 5.10

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Barb

Barb	
Strategies	Tactics
• Sustaining successful parts of the classroom management program • Students sharing ideas and teaching each other aided in long term plans	• Using the T behavior chart, which shows what behaviors should look like and sound like (examples of behavior). • Using positive reinforcement by demonstrating with students through a teacher vs. student game • Killing the students with love and positivity

Cathy as well desired to learn some classroom management skills to implement procedures and routines for a calmer and quieter classroom, as well as having an environment that she could assess that learning was occurring. Table 5.11 shows those aids that Cathy identified.

Table 5.11

Strategies and Tactics That Aided Change for Cathy

Cathy	
Strategies	Tactics
• Consistency with my actions	• Reading the Harry Wong book, *First Days of School* in sections • Putting something in place immediately upon finishing a section of reading. • Baby steps aided me tremendously.

All of these aids assisted each teacher in the way they needed. The simplicity or complexity made no difference it was an aid he or she identified that was useful.

Section Three Summary

Of the three teachers that spoke of family as being a crucial support to them the emotions and guilt seem to still run high even though their families are supportive. Not being with children and spouses; working late at night; working on weekends; and even using portions of their summers is definitely dedication just within the roles and responsibilities of a normal school year. Add his or her change effort to those so-called "normal duties" and now they are on extreme overload.

Evidence of support was found but mostly of an individual basis with a one to one approach. Seven of the eight teachers spoke of having an individual they could go to, ask questions of, get assistance from, and have conversations "to bounce things off" with. The other teacher (June) reported her grade level team as her go to, but the majority of her evidence revealed she worked primarily on her own.

The evidence of no scheduled or impending professional development or identified school and system supports was surprising. Ironically, none of these factors affected these teachers conducting their self-prescribed change efforts with many of them still continuing on this journey. Each teacher reported some aids of long-term strategies and short-term tactics. To some degree these aids supported his or her change effort accomplishments.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to answer the three research questions that guided this study to uncover the findings. Section one provided the critical incidents that propelled positive deviant teachers into changing their classroom practices. The findings in the first section of this chapter is teachers are propelled to change instructional

practices when either a critical incident awakens the desire or a particular existence is finally recognized that he or she is now intolerable of and a desire is aroused to fix this problem.

Section two identified the actions these positive deviant teachers took. The overall findings of what actions are taken revealed: teachers engage in some form of learning to gather an understanding of what they need to do; they then apply new practices through many different types of application processes; personal treatments are applied to guarantee fidelity of their interpretation of a practice or of the research; and possible indicators of change are evaluated.

Section three addressed the supports teachers had; and the aids of strategies and tactics they applied for accomplishing their change effort goal. The finding for the area of support revealed all eight teachers preferred or only accessed one key person of support. In all eight cases this person was also an educator and titles ranged from consultant friend, assistant principal, teacher friend(s), doctoral cohort member(s), to a professor friend. Only one teacher named her grade level team as her support instead of one specific person. Also reported in this section were the long-term strategies and short-term tactics implemented by each teacher that aided in his or her achieving change with instructional practices. These reported aids varied in number and rigor due to each teacher addressing their identified need for his or her individual change effort goal.

The next chapter will present the conclusions for this study, report out implications, and provide future research suggestions along with questions.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore what stimulates and supports teachers to engage in the positively deviant behavior of an individual change process to improve classroom practices. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?

These questions captured the findings of what critical incidents stimulated the teachers into an awareness of a need for change in his or her classroom practices; the processes taken to improve and achieve those desired changes; and the strategies, tactics, and support systems that aided them in their journey. The final question to be answered for this study is what conclusions were drawn from the big ideas that foster a positive deviant teacher to engage in change efforts concerning their classroom practices? This chapter consists of a summary of the study, conclusions, implications for practice, implications for future research and a chapter summary.

Summary of the Study

The eight teachers in this study were purposely selected by criteria that would aid in the initial identification of a teacher likely displaying positive deviant behavior.

Qualitative research was the best approach for this study in order to capture personal expressions and experiences through hearing his or her realities in their processes toward change in their classroom practices. Interview data was analyzed using the technique of constant comparison analysis (CCA). The repetitive analysis revealed similarities and differences in critical incidents, processes and outcomes reported by each teacher. Aligning the initial criteria for purposely selecting teachers along with the findings in the study on processes taken by each teacher aided in a more adequate identification of which teachers authentically displayed positive deviant behavior.

The definition of positive deviant behavior used in this study of teacher change reveals characteristics that describe this level of behavior. Those positive deviant behavior characteristics are those of intentional behaviors; uncommon behaviors and strategies; a display of even extra ordinary behaviors from the norm or varying significantly from the norm; and achieving results of better solutions to problems. The uniqueness that is key to describing positive deviant behavior in this study is that a teacher's identified problem is typically the same or similar to that of another teacher's who has the same availability of resources, but they choose not to react.

Although teacher change is a prolific topic in education studies, research and literature, the majority of times it is within the context of professional development. The inclusion of positive deviance in education literature and in regards to teacher change is in its infancy beginnings. The identification of five of the eight teachers displaying positive deviant behavior was key to answering the final question to this study. The constant comparative analysis process allowed me to formulate an answer to what conclusions were drawn from the big ideas.

Conclusions and Discussion

I drew three conclusions from this study. The first conclusion is emotions are a key stimulus in recognizing a problem and engaging in attempts to change. The second conclusion is that a strong positive self-efficacy and self-determination achieve effective change processes and positive deviant behaviors. The third conclusion is that teachers who engage in behaviors of positivity and positive deviance reap more classroom gains and personal satisfaction in his or her work and life.

Conclusion 1: Emotions are key stimulus to recognizing a problem and engaging in attempts to change. A definition of emotions is crucial here. According to Keltner and Ekman (2000), the widespread definition of emotions is referred to as "brief, rapid responses involving physiological, experiential, and behavioral activity that help humans respond to survival-related problems and opportunities. Emotions are briefer and have more specific causes than moods" (p. 163). When the teachers in this study experienced something that shook his or her emotions the need to change also surfaced.

Emotions were aroused by each teacher with the following statements being said, (Sarah) "The worst scores in my entire career;" (Mike) "My stress level was through the roof;" (Kay) "I go home and I cry" in worry and in celebration of her students; (Lee) "I'm a good teacher and that form said I wasn't. It really bothered me;" (Barb) "I had a hard time with structure with this particular group of students;" (Cathy) "the classroom with lots of noise that did not go away;" (June) "I switched grades. . . . I had to make distinct changes in my practice;" then to as simple as Iris finally realizing she was ready to make the transition to a standards-based model of instruction particularly for her special education students saying, "I saw the need." For each teacher the arousal of their

emotions over his or her critical incident provoked the desire to address their identified problem or need.

For Sarah, Mike, and Barb they identified and corrected a problem that had been in existence in their classroom for years. Ironically, this particular moment their emotions peaked on his or her problem and the desire to resolve it. Sarah revealed her reflective process on her testing results this particular year revolved around her addressing her teaching. She took a professional look at her instructional practices. Both Mike and Barb tired of their classroom environments and resolved to alter these issues while improving student achievement. Barb wanted to address strictly the chaos in her room with this particular group of students and accomplish getting them reengaged. Mike desired to address not only his instruction but change the classroom learning environment, the way students learned through different experiences, classroom collaboration, and accountability.

Likewise, these attitudes of accepting a need for change for something that has been happening in his or her classroom or the recognition of a problem reflects the research that has demonstrated a teacher's sense of professional and personal identity is a key element in their motivation and commitment to change (van Veen & Sleeger, 2005). All these teachers displayed a strong respect for their professional and personal identity that obviously added to their motivation and commitment to their change effort. Different emotions consistently exist in the structural condition of being a teacher, but change also adds to the element of his or her relationship with their students. A risk explained by Bullough (2005) saying, "To teach is to be vulnerable…to be vulnerable is to be capable of being hurt" (p. 23). All of the teachers reported some type of doubt in conducting their

role as teacher and their specific change effort. Thus, this role of vulnerability was present during their change effort attempt and within their role of just being a teacher.

Emotions play an integral role to intrinsic motivation and for the successful resolution of an issue. Kotter & Cohen (2002) confirms changing the behavior of people is never the central issues of strategy or structure, that people change their attitudes when their emotions are touched by the experience of new things. Attitude, or positive cognitions and emotions have been proven to increase persistence in the face of setbacks and obstacles. Obstacles in reference to this study would be those critical incidents that created a concern or challenge. These teachers identified a problem, thus emotions got triggered. This trigger of emotions in the recognition of a problem drives the desire to set action to motion, thus motivation. It is the intersection of emotion and cognition that Lang & Wagner (2011) believe the learning process for adults takes place, while a certain presence of motivation, incentive, or self-regulative readiness are also required.

Dutton and et al. (2006) report that it has been found that accentuating the positive over the negative by a ratio of 3:1 in regards to behavior, communications, or emotions enhances the capacities of all individuals involved. This is obviously what Kay is doing in focusing on the positive of her work and aiding her students to be successful instead of how negative her school culture is. It also seem that emotions in her dissatisfaction of grade level team complacency and the overall culture of her school community seem to drive her. It was amazing to hear her stories and know she has continued to stay in her dissatisfied environment for over ten years with available options near by. Although her emotions are negative toward the environment her intrinsic drive is revved up with a thought process and the behavior of, “I’ll show you I know what I’m

doing by getting great achievement results with my students." So in Kay's case her negative emotions motivate her with positive behaviors and practices that produce her proud rewards in each individual child being much better then when they came to her, plus ready for the next grade. It would be remised of me in not recognizing the positivity this evidence reveals how she turns her focus to her work and her students. She and other teachers (Sarah, Mike, Lee, Iris and June) also expressed other situations of positive behavior, optimism, or the "glass is half full" type responses and reactions to other negative findings. The philosophy within is their classroom seems to be all is well and when it isn't they will fix it.

The complexity of individual change itself involves: identifying a need for change, emotions, a plan, time to learn, practice, evaluation of efforts, needed adjustments, and, most of all, time and patience. The same six teachers strongly displayed these actions and behaviors. They also showed virtuous behaviors as well. Virtuous behaviors are considered attractive and self-reinforcing, and tend to (a) reinforce and accentuate positive emotions, (b) reinforce interpersonal connections and social support networks, and (c) positively affect performance outcomes (Baker, 2000; Fredrickson, 2002). McGregor & Little (1998) expressed the outcomes of personal growth, greater energy, and more positive emotions evolved out of goals that fulfilled important needs such as relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Autonomy and competence have been found to be the most powerful influences on intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Attitude, or positive cognitions and emotions, have been proven to increase persistence in the face of setbacks and obstacles. Roberts, Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy, &

Quinn (2005) found that at "the state of being at one's best, an individual actively employs strengths to create value, actualize one's potential, and fulfill one's sense of purpose, which generates a constructive experience (emotional, cognitive, or behavioral) for oneself and for others" (p. 714). Optimism helps people "see adversity as a challenge, transform problems into opportunities, put in hours to refine skills, persevere in finding solutions to difficult problems, maintain confidence, rebound quickly after setbacks and persist" (Schulman, 1999, p. 32). The positivity of cognition sets the tone of our mental environment and outlook on possibility. These positive attitudes, cognitions, and emotions can increase the likelihood of individual's both initiating and sustaining efforts toward positive deviance (Bateman & Porath, 2003). Likewise, these positive behaviors contribute to a person's overall wellbeing.

Conclusion 2: A strong positive self-efficacy and self-determination achieve effective change processes and positive deviant behaviors. A definition of self-efficacy was given as the strength of one's belief in the ability to complete tasks and reach set goals (Bandura, 1997, 2001; Ormond, 2006), as well as approaches to goals, tasks, and challenges (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Self-efficacy influences decisions, actions, and experiences (Bandura, 1997). It is also considered as a goal-oriented theoretical approach to understanding motivation. Self-efficacy mechanisms or characteristics (Bandura, 2006; Bandura & Locke, 2003) contribute to an adults' capacity to learn new skills and contributes to their personal development in an agentic manner (Bandura, 2001). The 'development in an agentic manner' refers to that of making choices through cognitive processes. These cognitive elements of human agency and perceived self-efficacy play a pivotal role in setting goals; the level of evaluative

standards; making choices after processing experiences and actions; and control of beliefs (Caprara & Cervone, 2003; Orom & Cervone, 2009).

The recognition that one is failing or succeeding at a goal or task has substantial implications for ongoing and future actions related to performance and mastery (Ehrlinger & Dunning, 2003). Through the view of positive organizational behavior (POB) within the frameworks of positive organizational scholarship (POS) of Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn (2003) self-efficacy includes the areas of confidence, hope, optimism, and resiliency (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). The selected teachers in this study as a whole all presented a positive self-efficacy in their first descriptions of their passion for the profession and in continually trying to perfect their craft as a teacher. The second evidence of a positive self-efficacy was in their self-prescribed assignment of his or her change effort. Third, the common factor in everyone's change effort was each teacher's belief in his or her ability to accomplish their goal through learning, designed tasks, and conquering challenges along the way. Although confidence is included within the overarching definition of self-efficacy these teachers also were also found to possess the areas within POB's inclusion of hope, optimism, and resiliency. Several teachers even used the term resilience and others spoke other words with meanings of resilience. Teachers had hope and optimism they were capable of improving their classrooms through improved classroom practices.

The teachers in this study all displayed behaviors or characteristics as listed in the two previous paragraphs, with five of them (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June) conducting above average behaviors and lengthy time framed change efforts. These lengthy time frames weren't that these teachers were struggling to be accomplished they were

approaching their change effort as a "never ending task" constantly building and perfecting it. The self-efficacy of these eight teachers was strong at the time of the interview. Was it strong upon their initial identification of a problem possibly not, but obviously overtime their self-efficacy has grown and evidence of state testing showed consistent and repetitive positive state testing outcomes. The elements that separated three teachers (Lee, Barb, and Cathy) from the other five was the difference in the difficulty or rigor required and imposed to conduct his or her change effort to achieve their set goals; his or her evaluation of their work; the choices he or she made after evaluating progress; and his or her control of beliefs (Caprara & Cervone, 2003; Oram & Cervone, 2009).

Self-efficacy perceptions have been found to impact psychological mechanisms on developmental outcomes, as doubt and disbelief in capabilities even after learning something may fail to put their knowledge to practice (Williams & Williams, 2010). Even though Mike and Cathy were both using researched strategies, Mike shared his transition from doubt to belief saying, "After I saw things that were working it became easier for me to be able to change and say, no I'm going to do it this way because it has worked." Cathy as well explained, "Reflecting on what strategies and techniques it was describing [sic-the book she was using] took some soul searching—did I agree, could I do that, was I open to that kink of idea working." Barb expressed a strong self-efficacy yet also struggled to meet her goal accomplishment at the level of the others. Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, Iris, and June all had evidence of humbling yet strong self-efficacy perceptions and self-determination actions in the classroom and in conducting their change effort.

Developmental outcomes, such as learning are influenced by self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006). It seemed clear the self-efficacy perception, psychological mechanisms of motivation, and learning didn't allow three of the teachers (Lee, Barb, and Cathy) to maximize their change efforts as the other five performed. It seems as if they learned the minimum to get by, Lee with the teacher observation tool; and Barb and Cathy in addressing some but not all of their identified classroom management issues. Lee has evidence he is a good teacher so his self-efficacy is in alignment although his change effort seemed totally on being able to get better grades on his next observation not necessarily expanding more instructional practices outside of the form specifics. Barb and Cathy seemed to only partially conduct their change effort in correcting some classroom management issues with both of them also having good student achievement data. Their learning processes and application of techniques weren't as extensive as the others either.

The five teachers (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June) whose change efforts were of a higher level of achievement relates to other literature and theories that promote the capacity of personal agency (Bandura, 2006); self-regulation (Heckhausen & Dweck, 1998; Lang & Heckhausen, 2006; Stine-Morrow, Miller, & Hertzog, 2006); and critical behaviors of self-monitoring and outcomes of self-satisfaction (Bandura & Cervone, 1983) that all contribute to a higher level of self-efficacy functioning. Also in agreement, others have found the deployment of all these behaviors relate to and are critical to the areas of self-control, self-directed motivation, and the realization of individual potentials (Cantor, 2003; Kross & Mischel, 2010).

Research confirms that individuals who set learning or performance goals acquire higher skills and self-efficacy than those with no goals (Bandalos, Finney, & Geske,

2003) or those who are told to at least "do your best" (Brown & Latham, 2002). My study found that five of the eight teachers who seemed to possess a higher efficacy and drive set a more challenging goal and also reported he or she would remain committed to their goal (Bandura & Locke, 2003; West, Dark-Freudeman, & Bagwell, 2009). Thus a congruent balance was found across their self-efficacy, level of goal challenge, and commitment.

For the teachers in this study their workplace is the classroom, thus their changed instructional practices not only enhanced their self-efficacy through achieving success while several their environments even improved. Their self-determination consisted of their motivation to make these changes, while their self-efficacy supported the confidence they needed to know they could accomplish this goal. Self-determination theory (SDT) is the general theory of motivation and the choices individuals make of their own free will without any external influence or interference. Simply put SDT is focused on the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-endorsed and self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The studies of intrinsic motivation led to the formation of self-determination theory. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to take action when someone deeply cares about something (Wrzesniewski, 2003), where one has the inherent tendency to pursue novelty and challenges while exerting ones energy to explore and learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The outcome of such efforts have also been more recently been reported in research that motivation indicates when steady, measurable progress is recognized by teachers exercising these behaviors their performance greatly improves and their workplace satisfaction peaks (Amabile & Kramer, 2011).

Findings within my study revealed similar results. All of the teachers were possessed an intrinsic motivation to conduct his or her change effort with no external influences. All also shared a tremendous passion for the profession of teaching, thus caring deeply about the success they have with students and their academic achievement. For Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June they voiced a need for a rationale or grounded research of strategies or techniques to feel more confident of something he or she had learned was going to work. The simple promotion in the value of an assignment, task or strategy with students held a positive effect for both students and teachers in being more motivated to try or even continuing to proceed with their efforts. Internal motivators that help adults solve problems in their life, such as increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, and the opportunity to self-actualize, tend to be more powerful motivators (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). Intrinsic motivation is associated with curiosity, exploration, spontaneity, and interest (Müller & Louw, 2004). This motivation can be residing within the person or get energized out of an activity, it positively affects behavior, performance, and desire for wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2002).

It was through work by Deci and Ryan (2000) in differentiating between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; and the proposal of three main intrinsic needs that self-determination became being named. Those needs for acquiring self-determination were said to be that of competence, autonomy, and relatedness, while being universal, innate and psychological (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The competence need refers to the need to experience capable and competent controls over the environment, as well as the ability to predict outcomes. Individuals who consider themselves autonomous are more likely to initiate their own actions, where others who are influenced by external circumstances are

more likely to succumb to peer pressure instead of being more self-directed. The relatedness need is that of satisfactory experiences and involvement with others of similar self-determined traits.

The theoretical basis of self-determination theory in practice within education revealed students who are given a rationale with a lesson showed greater interest, work ethic, and determination then those that did not (Jang, 2008). I close my conclusion on self-efficacy and self-determination with a statement of Ryan and Deci (2000). This statement describes the teacher participants of this study. The five teachers (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June) I found to possess high levels of self-efficacy and positive deviance displayed exceptional effort, agency, and commitment. Ryan and Deci (2000) said,

> The fullest representation of humanity show people to be curious, vital, and self-motivated. At their best, they are agentic and inspired, striving to learn; extent themselves; master new skills; and apply their talents responsibly. That most people show considerable effort, agency, and commitment in their lives appears, in fact, to be more normative than exceptional, suggesting some very positive and persistent features of human nature (p. 68).

Conclusion 3: Teachers who engage in behaviors of positivity and positive deviance reap more classroom gains and personal satisfaction in work and life. The teachers in this study all held a high regard for the profession of teaching and no one voiced burnout, commented they could hardly wait to retire or wished they could do something else. The evidence of positive behaviors and positive thinking was prevalent. All eight possessed a sense of control over their worlds or the fortitude to investigate a solution to a situation to regain control. All eight revealed critical incidents that propelled them to

conduct their change effort, yet under the philosophy of positive deviance and positivity, the decision to resolve his or her identified problem could be considered as a transition toward a positive trigger (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Their decision to resolve their problem was with a positive behavior or actions of positive deviance with all change efforts being self-prescribed. No one spoke of anyone pressuring him or her to change or consequences if they did not.

All of the teachers in this study voiced the desire to have good relationships with their students, results of satisfactory student academic achievement, and respect or accolades from their educational peers, all brings additional approaches of enjoyment or 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). Good relationships with their students and academic success came through six of the teachers voicing school is no longer primarily about creating workers and test takers, but about nurturing a pleasure in learning (Wolk, 2007). Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, Iris, and June made reference to providing guidance and trying to influence students to develop a pleasure for learning, thus also building confidence. The culture within their classrooms and their instructional practices drastically influenced this possibility. All of these teachers spoke of wanting learning to be fun, yet five of them (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, and Iris) also had evidence of making students accountable for their learning as well.

It's the 'flow' experiences where individuals, especially these teachers, show total absorption or engagement in their work, while enjoying it. This total absorption or engagement is referred to as highly conscientious individuals. Highly conscientious individuals display job characteristics of being careful and thorough in how they conduct their jobs, while being goal-oriented, hardworking, and well organized (Demerouti,

2006). This was particularly seen to be characteristics of six of the eight teachers (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Lee, Iris, and June). This type of conscientiousness has been found to correlate with a work ethic and belief that positive results are yielded from hard work and sustained effort (Christopher, Zabel, & Jones, 2008). Thus, conscientiousness augments 'flow' and job performance, like individuals who show high efficacy within-role and extra-role job performance (Fredrickson, 2001). Extra job performance in regard to this study was his and her self-prescribed change effort. This 'extra job' added more work to his or her plate, where the conscientiousness of conducting it and achieving some level of success also added to their flow and individual satisfaction of job performance.

Kelchtermans (2005) states a teacher's success with change, "the degree to which teachers succeed in their actions will determine the kind of specific emotions that are felt" (p. 998). The element of success or failure in the role of being a teacher no less conducting a change effort brings the topic of vulnerability, an element of no escape in the everyday role of being a teacher. This success or failure also influences their professional identity where Lasky (2005) defines as "how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others" (p. 901).

The teachers' in this study all voiced the elements of Kelchtermans' (2005) identity encompasses self-image (the way teachers present themselves as teachers), job motivation (teachers' reason for entering and remaining in the profession), future perspective (teachers' expectations for the future), self-esteem (teachers' appreciation of their own job performance), and task perception (the everyday jobs a teacher completes). All these elements add to the success these teachers had with conducting his or her change effort, improving students achievement and instructional practices. Thus, each

teacher's thoughtful actions again reflects back on emotions, that of his or her emotional involvement and moral judgment. These identity elements and witnessing strong changes within their classrooms allowed for the development of understandings in different instructional practices and a feeling of ownership, that which Darby (2008) also expresses that can happen in times of reform when teachers believe and implement what they learn.

Similarly, it's been said that emotions occur from the product of the interaction between the individual and the social environment where the individual's goals and wellbeing are viewed as relevant by-products (Oakley, 2000). The enjoyment of better student relationships and classroom collaboration; witnessing environments and student achievement improvements; and accomplishing change effort goals all contributed to these teachers overall wellbeing and self-satisfaction. Having calmer classrooms for Mike, Barb, and Cathy eliminated stress from their daily classroom experiences and allowed for a more relaxing after school perspective for enjoying their evening, other social events, friends, and family. Achieving the goal of improved or new instructional practices in a particular content like reading for June and math for Sarah added performance satisfaction for the two of them, while mastering the standards-based instructional model did for Mike, Lee, and Iris. Likewise, the perfection of Kay's diagnostic processes pleased her in improving student success.

The focus on students and their achievement was key to all eight teachers dedication to teaching. Broody (2008) said it most succinctly, "Teacher reflection at its best is not ultimately about the teacher at all but about the student" (p. 506). The five teachers (Sarah, Mike, Kay, Iris, and June) that conducted and achieved a higher level of

success with his or her change effort displayed this level of engagement using discourse comparisons of evidence and actions that aided them in improving their classroom practices for enhancing student achievement and knowing what others were thinking. Sarah used surveys with her students to ask how something she tried with them and how they felt about the experience. Mike developed a process and checklist for students to assess what they were learning and what they had learned. Kay would talk to other person's who would come into her room to assist while journaling where student were in their learning. She would debrief with everyone to make sure she understood their notes. Iris' standards-based instructional practices included documenting what was working and wasn't in her instructional practices implementation. Her practices included documenting where students were in their learning. June used more short reading assessments to have checkpoints of data to know where her students were in understanding what they were reading and if they could cite textual evidence from their reading. All these acts of feedback not only informed teachers of students' achievement progress, but in several cases the students were involved in providing their opinions and experiences.

Implications for Practice

The one conclusion of this study that emotions are a key trigger or stimulus in recognizing a problem and engaging in attempts to change holds a powerful implication for practice. Trainers, administrators, schools, and systems need to include the element of emotions in their planning for opportunities for professional learning, professional development and professional learning communities. Creating a hook, as a strategy heard

within standards-based instruction to possibly spark teachers emotions could be a useful idea.

The implications for practice in regards to positive self-efficacy and self-determination seem to be effective traits in successful change processes and promoting positive deviant behavior. Implementing practices to facilitate teachers' positive self-efficacy and self-determination behaviors could be the way to grow more and more teachers' in trying change efforts and hopefully being successful at it. Self-efficacy is a self-regulated event or skill. As a school or system, opportunities should exist to foster a positive self-efficacy. New teachers having mentors; grade levels having time to collaborate and share knowledge; and administrators or other school leaders conducting 'no penalty or consequence' classroom walk-thru opportunities to provide both positive and corrective feedback to the teacher are a few ways. These ideas allow a teacher to have support, collaboration, and feedback as well as informal learning opportunities that can aid in one's self-efficacy staying in tack, being challenged, and flourishing.

Implementing change through a self-determination process or theory allowed each teacher their autonomy, choices, and motivation in their self-directed process of their change effort. Being independent within each teacher's change effort allowed for choices of their own decision, selection, and implementation. Their autonomy and self-directed process was a strong part of the motivation in their change effort decision, processes, and success. The promotion of this theory to teachers could attract attention in knowing its characteristics and the benefits for promoting more change. The idea of being able to be autonomous in their effort and in their choices, with no external consequences with appropriate effort could be an incentive.

The framework of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) approaches its studies, theories, literature reviews, and identification of best practices of organizations and individuals within them through the significance and phenomena in the power of positivity. The focus on positive behaviors within these organizations and of individuals within them grew the term positive organizational behaviors (POB). The mission of both POS and POB is to seek to understand what represents and approaches the best of human conditions for the development in understanding such a phenomena through three concepts used within their title—positive organizational scholarship. The inclusion and extension of capturing and embracing positivity within the arena of education, classrooms, teachers, and students can only result in more reported positive outcomes.

We know the culture of an organization, no matter the field, impacts employee attitudes, production, and retention. Schools and school systems are no different. On the topic of teacher change professional learning (PL) seems to be the key approach but the literature base is saturated in how PL is in flux with numerous suggestions yet isn't creating the change desired across the nation. This study was conducted on individual voluntary change for the ultimate goal to identify what fosters the actions of positive deviant behavior in teachers to engage in change efforts concerning their classroom practices. In acquiring a better understanding of what fosters his or her actions to be put into motion is crucial for assisting other teachers in attempting change. These findings could also be used to assist in recognizing those who would be prime candidates to assist with promoting change through some of these methods.

Implications for Future Research

Implications for future research consist of the expansion of studies of individual teacher self-prescribed change; positive deviant teachers; the use of positivity in education; and teachers and self-determination practices. Future research through the framework of positive organizational scholarship (POS) and positive organizational behavior (POB) in regard to the phenomena in the power of positivity needs to also expand into studies regarding teacher change and education. The news and media is saturated with negative reports of all topics with education even taking its own hits. Reports of positivity events, practices, and individuals implementing positive deviance needs to be displayed. Education is the pathway to changed communities, cultures, institutions, organizations, and societies, but we must not miss the evidence in the power of positivity in this educational pathway.

Changes in the field of education are exhausting everyone in education. Although as heard in the literature it is teachers' who are ultimately responsible for change occurring within the classroom. Many teachers, young and veteran, are becoming very disenchanted with all the changes and the demands within education now. Those that voluntarily attempt and achieve change need to be investigated and most of all celebrated. More research needs to be conducted on individual teacher self-prescribed change, as in this study. Those teachers achieving change in their classrooms, the experiences of their processes, and the knowledge they gained from their change effort needs to be shared. The possibility of fostering other's change could arise from this information and the celebration of their accomplishments.

Chapter Summary

Schön (1973) over forty years ago profoundly captured the purpose of learning within organizations and of its members. The same is starting to be seen in the literature of the teacher, their classroom, and their students in being an organization and the teacher highly effective teacher is the leader (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011). The specific areas addressed and found within this study were of critical incidents, emotions, self-efficacy, self-determination, positivity, and positive deviance are almost all revealed in his following statement,

> A learning system. . . must be one in which dynamic conservatism operates at such a level and in such a way as to permit change of state without intolerable threat to the essential functions the system fulfills for the self. Our systems need to maintain their identity, and their ability to support the self-identity of those who belong to them, but they must at the same time be capable of transforming themselves (Schön, 1973, p. 57).

Change is hard. For teachers, changes in education are continuous and adaptability to those changes is a must. In some instances, changes are needed in instructional practices with some being of voluntary choice and others mandated requirements. The need for change can be individually self-prescribed, mandated by authority, or facilitated through an initiative of professional development.

As found in this study the presence of emotions sets the first stimulus of action into motion. A critical incident stirs those emotions, then with the presence of a positive self-efficacy and the actions of self-determination precipitate the learning, planning, and experimentation processes toward change. The existence of positive deviant behavior

promotes the confidence, beliefs, energy, and drive this change effort can be accomplished. The element of positivity being existent within relationships, conducting instructional practices, assigning lessons and working together benefits both the teacher and the students collaboratively. Although the quality and rigor of his or her change effort can vary, each individual teacher holds the control over what level their needs must be achieved to accomplish their specific goal.

Research needs to continue within all the facets of positive deviant teacher behavior and change. A better understanding of these processes and procedures can aid in accomplishing this pathway as an individual or for those facilitating such within formal professional learning settings. For me as the researcher and also as an educator, this study has opened my eyes to how sensitive the line of implementation, practice, feedback, and sustainability are to the actions, beliefs, knowledge, motivation, positivity, rationale, reflectivity, self-efficacy, and self-determination in accomplishing change. All these elements are critical to achieving change individually or in a group. One other key component that needs to be remembered is what an instructor in the classroom or a trainer in professional development might intend and self-reflect as their perceived reality, may not be what the audience is experiencing or feeling, no less needing.

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APPENDIX A

SUBJECTIVITY STATEMENT

In conducting this study of positive deviant behavior and teacher change, my personal subjectivity related to this study is I have been a classroom teacher. In looking at teacher change, I would confess I always tried to be the best teacher I could be. I tried out new strategies, took professional development and college classes to expand my knowledge of how students learn, tried to improve my content knowledge, was cognizant in the use of best practices for instruction, and even changed schools in order to find the philosophical fit to my practices. In understanding positive deviant behavior, I am compelled to divulge I have always achieved what I have set out to accomplish with most of them being self-directed. I have also become extremely self-motivated over the past twenty-five years. Although different challenges possess different obstacles, I have always risen to the occasion, with trying to obtain my doctorate degree being the hardest and most difficult goal of all. Thus, I will need to be cognizant of my beliefs and experiences. In not keeping aware of this would cloud my interpretation of meaning in not allowing me to really hear and interpret what the participants are actually telling me of their beliefs, needs, and experiences. It is imperative that I assess my biases and assumptions frequently throughout the research process to ensure the fidelity of participant meaning with my interpretation.

In addition to my beliefs and experiences, I am aware of my own motivations, strengths, weaknesses, and needs for support or affirmation in the journey of my different change processes. That is not to say those are the same elements that others should or could also have, so my personal awareness and understanding has to be periodically checked to make sure I listen and hear what the participant is saying, not what I did or

felt during my change efforts. Likewise, I can't assume my self-reflective practices in recognizing my strengths, weaknesses, and needs are a practice my participants are cognizant of performing. Nor should the assumption be that others are motivated to the level of being self-directed in their learning, desires to change, and in their motivation.

As far as the philosophical beliefs in the value of qualitative inquiry, I have strong convictions that naturalistic inquiry, qualitative methods, inductive and deductive analysis, purposeful sampling, and the application of holistic thinking are critical for authentic interpretations. Only by employing quality and credible actions throughout this research process can begin to answer some of the questions related to an ongoing phenomenon on transcendent behavior and teacher change. Yet, I am aware that my limited experience with interviewing and data analysis could question my credibility as a researcher. Therefore, it is crucial that I consistently engage those strategies that perform a check and balance of my biases, assumptions, and foster congruency within the data interpretation, final analysis, findings, and reporting process.

APPENDIX B

Positive Deviance and Teacher Change

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled "Positive Deviance and Teacher Change" conducted by Sharon C Quintero from the Department of Adult Education at the University of Georgia (706-542-3343) under the direction of Dr. Wendy E. A. Ruona, Department of Lifelong Learning, Administration, & Policy at the University of Georgia (706-542-4474).

The specific aim of this study is the exploration of individual self-directed change in teacher's classroom and instructional practices that has resulted in increased, outstanding, or extra-ordinary outcomes in student performance and achievement over time. It is the self-directed approach and achieving outstanding or extra-ordinary outcomes when others might believe it can't happen that defines positive deviance. If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to do the following things:

1) Read the Research Study Information Letter and Invitation
2) Agree to participate in the study by completing a consent form
3) Fill out a brief questionnaire of demographic questions (i.e., age, gender, years of experience, subjects taught, etc.)
4) Participate in a one-on-one, private interview with the researcher in a location of my (the participant's) choice
5) Respond to further questions and/or confirm researcher's interpretation from the interview in a personal meeting sometime in the next few (2-4) months.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at anytime without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

I understand there will be no compensation of any kind for participating in this study.

The possible benefits for me are the recognition of my accomplishment and what I might discover by engaging in the reflective process of the interview. An additional benefit could be an additional awareness of the value of trying to attempt change and the beneficial outcomes.

No risk is expected in participating in this study, except for the possible discomfort of talking about myself and my accomplishments.

No individually-identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be used, shared with others, or appear in any documentations or reporting outcomes or publications. I understand that I will be assigned an identifying number and

this number will be used on all information I fill out or to identify any articles related to my data for this study (tapes, audio files, transcripts, etc..)

I understand that all materials will only be kept no longer than a period of 5 years as needed to facilitate the researcher completing the dissertation and pursuing publishing of the findings. Afterwards all materials will be destroyed.

The researcher/investigator will answer any further questions I have about the research at anytime, now or during, the course of the project.

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____ _____

Sharon C. Quintero (Researcher) Signature Date
Telephone: XXXXXXX
E-mail: XXXXXX

_____ _____

Name of Participant Signature Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX C

Demographic Questionnaire

This brief demographic survey will be provided to participants for completion and to be brought back with them for the scheduled interview.

Participant An Assigned Code

Age:_____

Gender: F M

How long have you taught? _____

What subject areas or endorsements do you **currently have on your** certification?

What do you **currently** teach?

What grade level(s) does this involve?

Where have you taught? (State, City, School, and length of time)

1.

2.

3.

What subjects have you taught?

What grade levels have you taught?

What degree(s) do you hold? (supply degree, area, and year obtained)

1.

2.

3.

On average how much professional learning (hours or PLUs) do you participate in

through your system, a college, or local RESA during a school year?

List any awards or honors have you earned:

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Research Question #1: What propels teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?

1.1 Tell me about a time you extra-ordinarily changed a classroom practice?

- Probe: What made this change extra-ordinary?
- Probe: What difficulties did you experience?
- Probe: How were these challenges different from other difficulties you've encountered?

1.2 How would you describe your thinking in deciding to attempt this change?

- Probe: How is this thinking different from your prior thinking?
- Probe: What propelled this change in thinking?

1.3 How would you say your behavior positively affects you as a person?

1.4 How would you say your behavior positively affects the environment?

Research Question #2: What did teacher engaging in transcendent behavior do to improve classroom practices?

2.1 What process did you go through to change _____?

- Probe: How did you begin? What did you do?
- Probe: What did you experiment with for perfecting this change effort?
- Probe: What learning did you pursue or undergo to help you? Anything difficult?

2.2 Would you say you were self-determined to achieve this goal of changing your classroom practices? Explain.

- Probe: Did you ever think there were any personal limitations to you achieving your goal? If so, can you explain what those limitations were?
- Probe: How did you rise above the doubt in your capability?
- Probe: Were there ever any perceived environmental constraints? Explain.
- Probe: How did you know you had achieved the level of change desired? How did you evaluate it? How did you know it would "stick"?

Research Question #3: What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals enacting transcendent behavior in organizational contexts?

3.1 What strategies (long term plans/behaviors) aided you in your change process?

- Probe: What strategies hindered you?

a. What tactics (short term plans/tricks) aided you in your change process?

- Probe: What tactics hindered you?

b. Who was important for aiding your successful change process? Anyone hinder?

- Probe: Are there any support systems in your school that you regularly participate in?

APPENDIX E

TRIANGULATION REFLEXIVE INQUIRY

Adapted from Patton, 2002, p. 495.

1. Self-reflexivity
    a) What do I know?
    b) How do I know what I know?
    c) What shapes and has shaped my perspective?
    d) How have my perceptions and my background affected the data I have collected and my analysis of those data?
    e) How do I perceive those I have studied?
    f) With what voice do I share my perspective?
    g) What do I do with what I have found?
2. Reflexivity about those studied
    a) How do those studied know what they know?
    b) What shapes and has shaped their worldview?
    c) How do they perceive me, the inquirer? Why? How do I know?
3. Reflexivity about audience
    a) How do those who receive my findings make sense of what I give them?
    b) What perspectives do they bring to the findings I offer?
    c) How do they perceive me?
    d) How do I perceive them?
    e) How do these perceptions affect what I report and how I report it?

APPENDIX F

September 24, 2014

Overview of Eight Interviews

Initially there were 12 potential participants. Four participants dropped for different reasons. One participant dropped after she found out she was pregnant and husband was getting a duty change out of state. She felt best just pulling out with all that was going to be happening in her life over the next seven months. Another individual dropped after getting a major job offer with the state after being retired only a month. Two other participants initially agreed, but then never returned contact after trying to set up an interview location and time. Only one of these participants had returned their demographics information and none of them had yet returned their consent form.

All eight of these remaining participants were highly recommended by administration to be interviewed, as their results with students academically was and remains outstanding, with additional compliments being said as to how much they care for students. Four out of the eight participants have received Teacher of the Year recognition by their peers and an additional one has been nominated twice. The median age was 44 years with their combined educator years being 151 years in the teaching profession, with four who have uniquely served elementary, one having experience serving in both elementary and middle school, two with experience serving middle and high school, and one who has gone from elementary to middle school to lastly the high school. Seven of the participants remain in the classroom as the teacher of record and the remaining individual has been promoted to Instructional Coach for the entire school K-5.

All eight of the participants interviewed were all in consensus that their role is to meet the needs of their students and all seemed dedicated to helping students believe they can learn, if nothing else but through at least trying. All of them were impassioned to get the struggling student to experience and recognize they are capable and they can learn. All were very passionate to the profession of teaching and had strong comments of "not being a quitter"," not liking to fail", "dedicated", "family background of strong work ethics", "determined", "love for teaching", and most of all "caring about kids".

All eight shared the hunger to continually learn and try new things to make their instruction, classroom, and academic success even better. They all had what seemed like engrained upbringing of good work ethics and positive attitudes toward their jobs. All of them were in agreement that the priceless commodity of time is overwhelmingly lacking. Yet, there doesn't seem to be any solutions for that embedded in the data that is another study. Even in light of many societal behaviors that can occur—jealousy, small town cultures, outsider attitudes from community or staff that could have been seen as a threat, they all still persevere to do what's—right, better, best, etc. for their instruction,

classroom, and for the students. Six of the eight reported numerous times of accomplishing the above through the dedication of personal time outside of their paid day and spending personal money, with the ultimate dedication coming from their families supporting their time and efforts even if it took their presence away from their family time.

It is hard to not jump to conclusions after hearing these individuals stories, sharing their trials and rewards from their massive efforts, and their passion for their profession that the success to most teacher change is: the individual's dedication to education in believing "all students can learn", an overwhelming positive attitude, continuously being open to learning new things, a strong work ethics—not afraid of hard work, and last but not least the desire to always improve. Six of the eight were extremely vocal repeatedly in regards to these areas in their multiple areas of change in their instruction and classrooms, whereas the other two were a little more reserved in their more singular areas of change toward more classroom management issues. One admitted to being distracted from continuing the attempted and accomplished change effort that year onto subsequent years to being in college for earning a doctorate degree. Again, all eight had state testing data over multiple years that showed they always get results with their students.

All eight individuals interviewed had strong work ethics, along with all having positive attitudes, even in spite of two experiencing negative cultural issues either from grade level peers, school peers, or the community from being the "outsider" or "newbie". Their positive attitudes enveloped the belief that all students can learn in which they all felt students deserve, the right too, to have someone show them they can. These teachers displayed the belief that if those struggling students were in their classroom, they would take the role to empower those students to recognize they can learn, can do the work, and can even get better grades. They all agreed that not all students will learn at the same level or depth, these teachers all believed everyone is capable of learning though. The power of success in the classroom is truly guided by the actions, quality, and beliefs of the teacher. Actions would refer to how a teacher reacts to all situations, in which then students conclude how they feel or respect that teacher. Quality can pertain to such things as content knowledge, a liking of their subject matter and projecting that pleasure while teaching, a respect of students, interaction with students, setting expectations yet making learning fun, and good classroom management were mentioned. Beliefs seem to be the check test between actions and quality to see if they jive. All three areas seem to need to be congruent to triangulate appropriately. A short coming or over kill of one area seems to throw the balance of actions, quality, and beliefs out of kilter for student buy-in. As these teachers spoke of buy-in, they agreed it takes student buy-in to get them to participate, be a team member, trust you, listen, try, have respect for the teacher, follow classroom procedures, etc.

The interviewees all verbalized and seemed to possess the traits of being passionate about being a teacher, a passion for their content area(s), a compassion for students and a keen understanding to their differences and needing to meet their differences, and a strong commitment to life-long learning and willingness to do what it takes. Only three of the eight has not pursued further college experiences, yet many educators pursue advanced degrees to get a larger pay raise outside of the traditional pay scale step or number of years pay increase. All of them also vocalized a love of continued learning, be it of their own content area, new teaching strategies, other classroom management ideas, or updating their knowledge of technology uses in the classroom to state a few.

All these teachers believe they are truly the change agents in their classrooms for each individual student. It takes a quality teacher, who cares for the differences in students, wanting all students to learn, and a passion for what they do and teach to accomplish this feat. Within the societal times now of broken or lost homes and jobs, extra-curricular involvement in and out of school, peer pressure over numerous different vices, and light speed advances in technology that all affects family and society daily, no less the educational classroom too.

All the administrators that recommended or acknowledged interviewing these individuals declared these teachers all have wonderful relationships with their students. It was also divulged that many parents constantly request their child or children to be in these teacher's classes, as do fellow teachers of their own personal children. All these teachers too have test data that is superior to their peers, and no they do not teach only high achievers, advanced or gifted students, nor are they only teaching advanced or honors courses. All these teachers had heterogeneous classrooms.

APPENDIX G			
Research Questions:	**Major Themes/Findings** * = bullet symbol	**Sub-Themes** * = bullet symbol	**Reflective Notes** * = bullet symbol
1. What propels teachers to engage in positive deviant behavior to change their classroom practices?	A specific trigger event sets the idea in motion— *test scores, *teacher evaluation, *classroom chaos, *realization students aren't getting it, student needs, *learning from a conference, *workshop, *college course(s) for advanced degree, *state or grade level curriculum changes, *exemplary school visit, *instructional methodology changes, *being moved or moved to another grade level *Just can't stand getting stagnant, *I get bored doing the same thing all the time, *I'm a learning nerd, *I like change, *I like to challenge myself constantly, *I'm not a quitter, *Don't tell me I can't do something or it won't work, *I am not satisfied to fail or be unsuccessful *I don't like mediocrity, same ole same ole	*Classroom assessment results *Individual student needs *Different Learning Experiences *Work ethics characteristics *Personality, personal high expectations or their ownership of an event or their own perception of the situation of not being good enough, self-driven/self-prescribed everything from—disappointment, upset, anger, sadness, happy, demands, expectations *The Norm changes (setting, curriculum, behavior, needs, materials, etc.), so thoughts of "now what" surface	*None of the participants reported anyone telling them they had to change. *Curiosity of "what if I tried this", seems to flow with all participants *All expressed their propulsion (Trigger Event) came from either: *personal interpretation of high stakes test results, yet no repercussion if they did nothing, their own ownership of problem *Learning something, curious *The norm changes in curriculum or instructional practices *Personality traits of strong work ethics from upbringing, *Never satisfied with performance, needing to always get better or be better at what they do no matter on what level or topic or event *These folk are hard on themselves, hold themselves very much accountable for their student success *Very passionate about teaching and their profession *Care, but not to the level of changing their actions, when others don't seem to

			like or approve of them, their methods, etc. Peer pressure isn't a component. *Humble-quotes- not the sharpest pencil in the box, it might take me time, I struggled in school, etc. *Yet, confident—not a quitter, don't like mediocrity, I'll always do what's right for my kids,
Research Questions:	**Major Themes/Findings** * = bullet symbol	**Sub-Themes** * = bullet symbol	**Reflective Notes** * = bullet symbol
2. What did teachers engaging in positive deviant behavior do to improve classroom practices?	*Researched, read, learned, studied, *Practiced, *conducted trial & error experiments, repeated efforts to cement habit, *Evaluated what was working and not, *Reflected on everything constantly, *Analyzed data continuously *Asked students what they thought of something tried with them, *Check out other resources—people, places and things for input and reassurance in consistent information *Baby steps, small increments of change so not too many things are involved to not know what is working and isn't (don't implement too many variables at one time) *Tweaking what seems to be working to get to perfection *Self-talk, confidence building, learning from mistakes *Identifying practices/trials that don't work & why	*Data driven *Recognizing a need for change. *Knowing something needs to be learned and practiced to promote this change *Identify resources that are needed, if any *Tap others for help *Don't change too much too fast *Reflect regularly *Never forgetting about the students, their needs and feelings	*Very resourceful and know where to get the information they need * Willingness to try anything to improve * Don't necessarily need to believe in strategy before trying *Willingness to learn, with behavior characteristic of always wanting to be learn *Willingness to ask others *Understand mistakes aren't a failure, they are learning points if you do something about it *Allowing process to take time, no major success happens overnight *Realizing reflective analysis in all areas is powerful *Recognizing the inclusion of students in accountability works for everyone
Research	**Major Themes/Findings**	**Sub-Themes**	**Reflective Notes**

Questions:	* = bullet symbol	* = bullet symbol	* = bullet symbol
3. What strategies, tactics, and support systems are important for individuals displaying positive deviant behavior in organizational contexts?	*Approachable Admin--Asked for help to learn what was needed to assist in my change, was accepting and willing without displaying judgment, *Although not organizational context-family support and understanding to the need of dedicated time and commitment is crucial *Peer, admin, prof, college colleague support/sounding board/ and feedback *Time to---collaborate, talk, discuss, investigate, try, evaluate, assess, & analyze individually and collaboratively with others *Acknowledging change efforts that are working and making them a habit, then allowing collaborative sharing of such and expecting others to try *Consistency of management/admin with everyone in acknowledgement, not just nice to X when they try something and not to Y when they try *Allowance of time to test out the waters—trial and error, acceptance of not achieving perfection immediately *Being consistent and persistent with efforts	*Admin holding everyone accountable at the same level *Promotion of shared success to encourage then eventually mandate change in others *Support comes from all levels and different venues—peers, home, and outside resources *Learning is not absent from change efforts. *Belief in how change works is still like the chicken and the egg, for some it comes by knowing something will work and for others in seeing it works. *Teachers need to see how and what things look like, just like students.	*Recognition is nice but not necessary for these folk *They realize though that others need kudos, with some folk needing it a lot *Don't like hearing whole faculty criticism when a situation applies to one or a few—address them is their philosophy *Being an Admin to Teacher is no different to being a teacher to students—everyone is different and everyone has needs—students and adults *Allotted time to share, talk, discuss and truly listen is crucial *Lack of collaboration creates the environment of isolation—with solving problems, ID solutions, everyone being consistent, and actually accomplishing change *These folk didn't feel they needed mentors, but feel so many other folk like that crutch or even need it in learning and for sure in required change efforts *Everyone had some kind of support