Instructional Coaches and the Development of Relational Trust

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INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONAL TRUST

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Educational Leadership.

by
Kristin Adams Schulze
December 2016

Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

The position of instructional coach has become common in elementary schools, arising from calls for increased student achievement that originate from education policy and changing curriculum standards. Research in regards to the effectiveness of instructional coaches positively impacting classroom teaching is abundant. A key factor in the coach’s ability to positively impact classroom instruction is the coach’s interpersonal skills and ability to establish relational trust with classroom teachers. This trust is necessary to make changes in teachers’ practice, yet little is known about how coaches establish this trust with teachers. Therefore, this study will extend the literature by filling in the gap of much needed information regarding how instructional coaches establish trust with classroom teachers as well as providing practical suggestions for instructional coaches as to best practices for trust development with classroom teachers.

In this study, a single site case study with multiple embedded units of analysis was implemented to identify the ways in which instructional coaches build trust with teachers. The qualitative research methods utilized throughout the research process included interviews, observations, and document and artifact analysis.

The findings of this study provide practicing instructional coaches strategies they can employ to develop trusting relationships with teachers. The findings also suggest methods school districts and building level principals can utilize to support coaches in the development of trusting relationships. Furthermore, the findings of this study affirm the previously established literature base regarding the development of trust.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter Sophie Schulze. The pride I feel in completing this dissertation and earning this degree pales in comparison to the joy I feel in having had a part in raising a person as wonderful as you. Thank you for standing by mommy’s side throughout this whole journey! I love you more than anything or anyone in the whole wide world.
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I would be remiss if I didn’t thank my family, namely my mom Jan Amacher, my dad and stepmom, Dick and Kristin Adams, as well as Sophie’s dad, Will Schulze and grandmother Priscilla Schulze for their help and support with Sophie throughout this process. I could not have done it alone.

Finally, I’d like to acknowledge my dear friend Nancy Oates, whose spirit is still as present as ever, though she may no longer be with us here on Earth. Nancy, there is no way I could have made it through the last few years without your friendship.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Page**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER

### I. INTRODUCTION

- Background of the Study ........................................... 1
- Statement of the Problem ......................................... 3
- Purpose of the Study ................................................ 5
- Significance of the Study .......................................... 5
- Positionality ............................................................. 6
- Conceptual Framework ............................................ 8
- Research Question ................................................... 11
- Definition of Terms ................................................. 12
- Summary ................................................................. 13

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Introduction ............................................................ 14
- The Instructional Coach ............................................ 14
- An Examination of Trust ......................................... 36
- Summary ................................................................. 44
Table of Contents (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Context</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradigmatic Orientation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of the Researcher</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Selection</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing Trustworthiness</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. FINDINGS</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Coach Responsibilities</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. DISCUSSION</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Study</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of the Findings</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for Practice</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Future Research</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents (Continued)

APPENDICES ............................................................................................................. 138

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A:</th>
<th>Clemson University IRB Approval</th>
<th>139</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>School District Approval</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C:</td>
<td>Academic Specialist Phone Script</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:</td>
<td>Building Principal Phone Script</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E:</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Phone Script</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F:</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Interview Protocol</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G:</td>
<td>Principal Interview Protocol</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H:</td>
<td>Teacher Interview Protocol</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>Data Collection Planning Matrix</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J:</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Observation Protocol</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K:</td>
<td>Principal Observation Protocol</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L:</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Survey</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:</td>
<td>Round Three Data Table</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES ............................................................................................................ 178
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Instructional Coaches</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Types of Instructional Coaches</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Definition of Trust</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Meadow Spring Teacher Satisfaction</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Meadow Spring Student Achievement</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Teacher Participants</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Themes at a Glance</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Emerging Themes</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Research Findings</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Theme Frequencies</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Logic Model for Conceptual Framework
Case Study Design
Logic Model for findings
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The position of instructional coach is relatively new in the history of education in the United States, emerging in the 1970s and 1980s, (Joyce & Showers, 1996) in response to the “need for new models of clinical supervision and teachers’ professional development” (Matsumara et. al, 2009, p. 657). The position of instructional coach did not begin to become embedded in the United States’ educational system until the turn of the twenty-first century, which was marked by several federal initiatives including the Reading Excellence Act of 1999, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, with its subcomponent, the Reading First Initiative, as well as the reauthorization of the Individuals’ with Disabilities Education Act in 2004 (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009; Shidler, 2009). These pieces of legislation called for greater student achievement and alternative measures of special education qualification, all of which led to greater pressure on teachers to help students perform.

As these policies were enacted, many school districts’ answers to the call for increased accountability was often to have an instructional coach assist teachers in meeting the ever-increasing demands. As Mangin (2007) reported, “The implementation of school-based instructional teacher leadership roles, also known as coaches or content coordinators, has been hastened by standardized testing and research demonstrating the benefits of situated professional development” (p. 320). Additionally, many districts
have utilized instructional coaches to aid with the implementation of the Common Core Standards (DeNisco, 2015).

While there is no universal definition for instructional coaches, definitions typically focus on an experienced teacher leader assisting a colleague as they attempt to incorporate best instructional practices into the classroom teachers’ repertoire (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009; Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Simply put, instructional coaches work with teachers to improve their teaching practice with the goal of ultimately improving student achievement.

Given that one of the primary goals of instructional coaches is the professional development of teachers, an examination of best practices in regards to teacher professional learning is critical. Mitchell and Sackney (2011) proposed that professional learning will have the greatest impact when colleagues supportively collaborate with one another. This supportive collaboration implies the need for interpersonal skills in order to sustain positive interaction, specifically the interpersonal skills of the instructional coach, as their work is rooted in relationships. Brady (2007) suggested that effective site-based professional learning requires the establishment of trusting relationships and open communication, and that furthermore, the coach should establish and maintain the trust and respect of the teachers. Routman (2014) purported that individuals cannot learn from people they do not trust, and recommended getting to know teachers on a personal level before beginning to work with them.

The current study defines relational trust through Bryk and Schneider’s (2002) theoretical framework in which relational trust is viewed an organizational property that
it is created through the reciprocal exchanges amongst members of a school community. Bryk and Schneider (2002) suggest that relational trust is three-tiered, consisting of the intrapersonal level, the interpersonal level, and the organizational level.

One specific element of the organizational level that impacts the coach’s ability to develop relational trust is the school principal. The school principal will play a role in the coach’s ability to develop trust since the principal plays a large role in establishing the level of trust in the building (Routman, 2014). Youngs and King (2002) proposed that effective principals can create high levels of teacher capacity by building structures that promote teacher learning and by establishing trust. Furthermore, Bryk and Schneider (2002) suggested that principals influence trust through their respect and regard for teachers as well as through their personal integrity and professional competence. Given the fact that the principal has a powerful impact on the level of trust in the building, an examination of the principal is important to this study.

**Statement of the Problem**

Trust is a significant element in school reform efforts as well as a critical element in the instructional coach-teacher relationship. Tschannen-Moran (2001) found that in schools where there was greater trust, there tended to be a greater amount of collaboration, stating that “when trust was absent, people were more reluctant to work closely together, and collaboration was more difficult.” (p. 327). Flaherty (2005) suggested that relationships are the foundation of coaching and that these relationships are composed of mutual trust, freedom of expression and respect. Lyons and Pinnell (2001) reiterated this sentiment stating, “the trust staff developers bring with them into
their classroom is the foundation on which their coaching is based” (p. 141). Anderson, Feldman & Minstrell (2014) noted the significance of relational trust with the instructional coach finding a one-sided model of relational trust between teachers and coaches stating, “teachers need to discern (and coaches need to display) respect, competence, integrity and personal regard in order for teacher-coach work to happen” (p. 15). Given the necessity of trust in the instructional coach-teacher relationship, the need for trust in school reform and more specifically, the need for trust in regards to changing teacher practice, an examination of how the instructional coach develops trust with teachers is essential.

Researchers have already made calls regarding the need for inquiry in and around the significance of trust. For example, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2000) proffered that the development of faculty trust is an area in need of inquiry. Furthermore, Tschannen-Moran (1999) recommended working toward a better understanding of trust by examining how trust develops. More recently, Hernandez, Long & Sitkin (2014) stated that “future scholars should seek to continue to test more complex, embedded models of how trust arises and is influenced by leaders” (p.1885).

My study is significant in that it will fill a gap in the literature on trust in schools. Bryk & Schneider’s (2002) seminal work focused on the trust embedded within the relationships: school professional and parents, teacher and principal, teacher and teacher as well as teacher and student. However nowhere in their work is the relationship between the instructional coach and the teacher (a relationship whose professional efficacy is rooted in trust) addressed.
Another specific gap arises from Tschannen-Moran’s (2001) work on collaboration, which found that the level of trust is directly correlated to the level of collaboration. This study assessed trust and collaboration for principals, teachers and parents. The role of the instructional coach, whose efficacy is contingent upon both trust and collaboration, is a key missing component in this study. Given that trust is a fundamental and necessary component of the instructional coach and classroom teacher relationship (Routman, 2014) coupled with the fact that research varies as to the initial level of trust between two individuals (Lewicki et al, 2006), it is critical to study the development of trust in this relationship.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the instructional coach’s development of relational trust through an examination of the intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational factors contributing to its development. Specifically, I investigate the interpersonal relationships of instructional coaches and teachers, the organizational factors (namely, the school principal) that either promote or hinder the development of trust, and individual teachers’ intrapersonal discernment of whether or not to trust the instructional coach based on the coach’s behaviors and actions. The findings of this study will be important to the practicing instructional coach, as such practitioners will be able to glean recommended best practices to aide in the development of trust with their teachers.

**Significance of the Study**

This study builds upon the work of others who have studied trust in educational settings. In addition to adding depth to the corpus of literature surrounding relational trust, this study extends the research to a particularly promising approach to educational reform and changing teaching practice, that of utilizing instructional coaches to improve teaching practice.

This study is particularly timely and relevant to the context in which it takes place in that South Carolina’s Read to Succeed Act required a literacy coach position in every elementary school (Stephens, 2014). Furthermore, this study will leave the practitioner with a toolbox of strategies that can be used to develop relational trust with the teachers with whom they work. Additionally, this study will address a gap in the literature as it extends the study of trust in the school setting and relates it to the instructional coach.

It has been well established that instructional coaches must have trust with the teachers with whom they work (Routman, 2014; Aguilar, 2013; Brady, 2007). Additionally, there is a broad collection of literature regarding the development of trust (Lewicki et al, 2006, Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Swinth, 1967; Serva, Fuller & Mayer, 2005, Louis, 2007, Joseph & Winston, 2005, Abrams et al, 2003, Whitener et al, 1998). Yet, there has been no study regarding how the instructional coach, a position whose very foundation is grounded in trust, develops this important entity.

**Positionality**

Positionality is the researcher’s position (social, ideological, and locational) in relationship to the research project (Glesne, 2011). Glesne states “researchers cannot control positionality in that it is determined in relations with others, but they can make
certain choices that affect those relationships” (p. 157). It is important for researchers to be aware of their positionality as it will allow the researcher to determine how his or her subjectivity may shape the research process and their respective interpretations of the content (Glesne).

Given the significance of addressing one’s positionality in regards to how it impacts the research process, I would like to discuss my positionality now. I believe that truth is many and is dependent upon the experiences and interpretations of the individual. This belief caused me to choose a qualitative research design. In regards to my personal autobiography, I have been employed as an instructional coach for over two years. When beginning the dissertation process, I initially wanted to study principals and how their interpersonal skills and relationships with others promote school success and position them as more effective leaders. I wanted to study this because of my experiences as a teacher, having worked for both principals that treated me with friendly, collegial respect and others who treated me as more of a means to an end. Having been employed by different types of leaders, I feel that I have worked more effectively and been a more successful teacher under the leaders that have treated me with collegial respect and been more personable.

Upon discussing my research interest with my committee chair, he suggested that I look at how this topic relates to instructional coaches, as this would be more applicable to my professional work. I was excited about his suggestion and quickly moved in that direction. I then discussed my new direction with another former committee member, who suggested that I look at the trust literature as opposed to research on interpersonal
skills. It was at this juncture that I began delving into the literature on both instructional coaches and trust. As I read more and more, I discovered how crucial trust is to the instructional coach.

As I further delved into the corpus of scholarly work on instructional coaches and trust, I was impressed by the principal’s influence on the coach’s effectiveness. This correlated with my experiences as an instructional coach, as much of what I was tasked to do in my role by my principal did not align with the intentions and best practices of the position in the scholarly research. These experiences interacted with the literature I was reading and caused me to incorporate the principal into the organizational level of my conceptual framework, which I will now discuss.

**Conceptual Framework**

Byrk and Schneider (2002) developed a multilevel theory of relational trust, in which trust is defined as an organizational property of a school community rooted in the interpersonal social exchanges amongst that school’s community members that is founded both on beliefs and observed behaviors. Bryk and Schneider suggested that trust grows when there is a match between individuals’ expectations and obligations and in turn diminishes when individuals do not meet the expectations the other individual holds about their role obligations.

Bryk and Schneider’s definition of relational trust posited that the discernment of others is a foundational element of daily interpersonal exchanges. These discernments take place at the intrapersonal level, the most basic level of relational trust, and are comprised of cognitive activity in which individuals seek to ascertain the intentions of
Bryk and Schneider (2002) propose four basic criteria for trust discernment as being respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity. These discernments occur within the interpersonal level and result in important consequences at the organizational level, with relational trust functioning as a resource for school improvement.

Bryk and Schneider suggested several organizational benefits of relational trust. First, relational trust helps to moderate the vulnerability that individuals feel as they confront the demands associated with new practices. An additional organizational advantage is that relational trust allows reform to occur more quickly as participants in reform are able to unite around a plan of action. Bryk and Schneider also offered that settings with strong relational trust “benefit from understandings about role obligations that are routinely reinforced in day to day behavior. Individuals understand what is expected of them and the consequences that may ensue if obligations are not met” (p. 33). A final advantage of relational trust in the school setting is that it helps to maintain an ethical mandate amongst community members to advance the best interests of children.

In essence the Bryk and Schneider’s framework of relational trust is based on two levels with the discernment of trust occurring in the intrapersonal level that is based on the social exchanges that occur at the interpersonal level. These researchers suggested that when trust is present, advantages and benefits are then extended to the organizational level.
My conceptual framework utilizes all elements of Bryk and Schneider framework, however I have redefined the organizational level as one that impacts the interpersonal level and can in turn potentially impact the development of trust. I focus on the building principal at the organizational level as there is an abundance of research as to the principal’s impact on the school environment, and, more specifically the instructional coach (Symonds, 2003, Mangin, 2007, Neufeld & Roper, 2003, Heineke and Polick, 2013). Additionally, Bryk and Schneider defined the school principal as “the single most influential actor in a given school community” (p. 26) and suggested that “Principals exercise considerable authority that directly affects teachers. Typically, they control major aspects of teachers’ work conditions” (p. 29).

In this study, I seek to understand how instructional coaches develop trust with classroom teachers. I examine the intrapersonal level of this framework by investigating how trustworthy the instructional coach is deemed to be by classroom teachers and focusing in on factors that have helped teachers to develop trust in the coach. In this study, I seek to understand how instructional coaches develop trust with classroom teachers. I examine the intrapersonal level of this framework by investigating how trustworthy the instructional coach is deemed to be by classroom teachers and focusing in on factors that have helped teachers to develop trust in the coach.

**Figure 1.1**

*Logic Model for Conceptual Framework*
Organizational Level: The level of the building principal, which impacts environment and roles and responsibilities

Interpersonal Level: The level in which social interactions occur that are impacted by role relations

Intrapersonal Level: The cognitive level in which an individual discerns the intentions of others as being trustworthy or not

Increased collaboration between instructional coach and teachers because of relational trust

Increased implementation of best instructional practices by teacher

Increased student achievement

Adapted from: Bryk & Schneider, (2002); Symonds, (2003); Mangin, (2007); Neufeld & Roper, (2003); Heineke and Polick, (2013)

Research Question
Given that trust is necessary for collaboration to occur and the efficacy of instructional coaches is rooted in trusting relationships with teachers, this study seeks to answer the following research question.

*How do instructional coaches build relational trust with teachers?*

**Definitions of Terms**

The following terms are used throughout this paper and are defined here:

Intrapersonal level – “The cognitive context in which an individual discerns the intentions of others as being trustworthy or not” (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 22)

Interpersonal – The level in which social interactions occur that is impacted by role relations. The trust developed in this level is impacted by each party meeting the others’ expectations about their roles and obligations, with trust diminishing when individuals’ behavior is not consistent with expectations of role obligations. The intrapersonal level is embedded within this level (Bryk & Schneider, 2002)

Organizational level – The level in which interpersonal relationships are nested. For the purposes of this study the building principal will be studied due to his or her significant impact on the school environment and specifically the instructional coach (Symonds, 2003, Mangin, 2007, Neufeld & Roper, 2003, Heineke and Polick, 2013)

Relational trust - the trust that develops as a result of the interpersonal interactions within an organization (Louis, 2007)

Trust - The level to which a person is willing to make himself vulnerable to others as well as to rely upon others (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) as well as the degree to
which an individual is confident in and willing to act based on the words and actions of another (McAllister, 1995)

Instructional coach - an individual who collaborates with teachers to assist them in choosing and implementing research-based instructional strategies which will help students learn more effectively (Knight, 2007)

In chapter two of this dissertation I review the literature related to instructional coaches and trust. In chapter three I present research design, data collection and data analysis. In chapter four, I detail the findings that emerged from this study. I conclude this dissertation with chapter five in which the implications of the findings from this study are discussed.

Summary

This chapter provided a rationale for the necessity of a study on the development of trust between an instructional coach and a classroom teacher. In this chapter I provided a brief background to the study, proffered a statement of the problem, explicated the purpose and significance of the study, and delineated the conceptual framework on which the study is based. Furthermore, I provided my research question and definitions of key terms. The results of this study will offer valuable insight to the practicing instructional coach as to how they can best develop trust with classroom teachers. Additionally, this study will benefit scholars as it will affirm the existing research base on trust as well as substantiating the body of literature on instructional coaches.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter I provide a review of the literature relevant to the study. I present an overview of the literature related to instructional coaches and trust. I begin the chapter with a brief explication of key policy drivers behind instructional coaching. I then provide a definition of the instructional coach position, fully detailing this role, followed by an overview of variations in the position. I then offer a rationale for the effectiveness of instructional coaches, as well a discussion on instructional coaches and change and the need for coach interpersonal skills. Next, I provide a brief overview of organizational factors effecting the instructional coach, focusing in on the principal’s impact on the instructional coach and trust. I conclude this chapter with a synthesis of the trust literature, as I define trust and detail research relating to the significance of trust as well as the development of trust. I address the conceptual framework in specific sections of this chapter. Specifically, I address the organizational level of the framework when I review the literature on the principal’s impact on instructional coaches and trust, the interpersonal level of the framework in the section entitled the need for instructional coach interpersonal skills as well as the sections on variations in the instructional coach position and instructional coach’s roles and responsibilities. I address the intrapersonal level of the conceptual framework (specifically meaning factors that might cause an individual to discern another as trustworthy) in the section on the development of trust.

The Instructional Coach
Policy Context

Instructional coaching has arisen as a form of professional development largely due to federal legislation, such as No Child Left Behind, which requires districts to develop and implement school improvement plans that include professional development for schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress for two or more years (Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Shidler, 2009). Additionally, the Reading First Initiative under No Child Left Behind suggested the use of coaches as a means to provide professional development to support students in economically disadvantaged schools as well as those schools in which many students struggle with reading (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009).

Coaching has been utilized as a method for professional development in several large cities’ public schools, including Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Dallas (Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Additionally, several reform initiatives such as America’s Choice, the Breaking Ranks framework and High Performing Learning Communities implement instructional coaching as a key component to successful reform (Kowal & Steiner, 2007). Additionally, standardized testing (Mangin, 2007) and the implementation of Common Core Standards (DeNisco, 2015) have encouraged the utilization of instructional coaches as a source of professional development to build and support teacher capacity.

Defining the Instructional Coach Position

There is no one particular definition for an instructional coach (Denton & Hasbrouck, 2009; Kowal & Steiner, 2007; Taylor, 2008). Jim Knight (2007) described the instructional coach as a person who “collaborates with teachers so they can choose and implement research-based interventions to help students learn more effectively” (p.
13). Most definitions focus on the role of a coach as being a person who helps teachers incorporate best practices into their teaching repertoire (Kowal and Steiner, 2007) or as an on-site professional developer (Knight, 2004). Neufeld and Roper (2003) define coaching as “school based professional development designed in light of the district’s reform agenda and guided by the goal of meeting schools’ specific instructional needs” (p. 4). For the purposes of this study, the instructional coach is defined as an individual who collaborates with teachers to assist them in choosing and implementing research-based instructional strategies which will help students learn more effectively (Knight, 2007).

The instructional coach position is different from most school positions. This position of teacher leadership has several distinctions including the fact that these teacher leaders typically bring with them some specialized knowledge about teaching (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Another unique aspect of this position is that the instructional coach typically functions outside of school authority, and such being the case it is important for the instructional coach to develop trust with teachers (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Trust is important for the instructional coach to have with teachers, as coaches are typically encouraging changes in teaching practices, and relational trust tempers the vulnerability teachers feel as they face demands in changing practice (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

**Variations in the Instructional Coach Position**

The position of Instructional Coach is varied in many ways, from hiring requirements to the roles and responsibilities of the coaches. Additionally, the ways in which coaches understand their position and spend their time is varied (Duessen et al,
2007). Poglinco, Bach, Hovde, Rosenblum, Saunders, and Supovitz (2003) captured the variety of responsibilities associated with the instructional coach position when they stated, “There is no single, detailed job description for coaches…a good deal of uncertainty in the minds of principals, teachers and coaches about the role and responsibilities of the coach” (p. 13). The instructional coach position carries with it differing job responsibilities, variation in how time is allocated, as well as different requirements to become a coach.

**Differing coach responsibilities.** Instructional coaches carry a wide range of responsibilities (Knight, 2004, Symonds, 2003; & Poglinco et al, 2003; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). These responsibilities are detailed in Table 2.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Responsibility</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with both individual and groups of teachers</td>
<td>Symonds, 2003; Knight, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in joint lesson planning with teachers</td>
<td>Neufeld and Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-teaching in classrooms</td>
<td>Poglinco et al, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in Formal observations of teachers and providing feedback</td>
<td>Poglinco et al, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing teacher lessons</td>
<td>Symonds, 2003; Neufeld and Roper, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in informal one-on-one contact and conversations with teachers</td>
<td>Poglinco et al, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring new teachers</td>
<td>Neufeld and Roper, 2003;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variations in time allocation. Given the wide range of potential responsibilities that a coach may have, it logically follows that coaches will vary significantly in how they allocate their time. Duessen et al (2007) conducted a study of how instructional coaches funded by Reading First in four different states spent their time each day. While the Reading First coaches were asked to spend 60 – 80% of their time working with teachers, they reported that they were only able to spend 28% of their time working with teachers. Twenty-five percent of their time was spent working with data, and the remainder of their time was spent in meetings, student interventions, documentation, and other tasks. These researchers found four categories of coaches based on how they spent their time. Coaches who primarily focused on connecting data and instruction were identified as data-oriented coaches. Teacher-oriented coaches primarily viewed themselves as professional development providers for teachers, spending between 41 and 52 percent of their time with teachers. Other categories of coaches were managerial
coaches who spent a large amount of their time keeping up with paperwork and facilitating meetings, and student-oriented coaches who spent more time than any other group of coaches working directly with students.

Position requirement variations. Additional variations with the instructional coach position occur with the requirements needed to hold the position as well as the titles given to those in the position. The requirements for coaches are not clearly articulated (Roller, 2006; Frost & Bean, 2006). In a 2005 survey conducted by the International Reading Association that surveyed reading and literacy coaches the only common requirement was that coaches have at least a Bachelor of Arts degree and a teaching certificate (99% and 97% respectively). Along those same lines, only 37% of the coaches reported that a Masters Degree was required, while a mere 19% reported the requirement of a Masters Degree in Literacy. (Roller 2006). This same survey reported a great deal of variance in position titles, with labels including literacy coach, reading coach, collaborative professional development teacher, curriculum coach, and instructional coach. Given the wide range of educational background that is required for coaches, it is plausible to assume that there will be a great deal of variation in the competence and abilities of coaches.

Differing types of coaches. Additional variation in regards to instructional coaching occurs with the types of coaches. Garmston (1987) identified three main categories of coaches as technical coaches, collegial coaches and challenge coaches. Both technical and collegial coaches have increased collegiality and professional conversations as a main goal. Technical coaches focus more on teachers attaining specific skills, while
collegial coaches are focused more on assisting teachers in refining their teaching practice. Cognitive coaching is an example of collegial coaching (Garmston, 1987). The America’s Choice schools have utilized a technical coaching model, as the coach takes more of an expert role when working with teachers (Poglinco et al, 2003). Challenge coaching often involves teams of people that are focused on solving ongoing problems related to instruction.

Poglinco et al, (2003) add peer coaching as another model, in which two or more teachers work together to develop their professional skills. Showers and Joyce (1996) state that this model is unique in that it should eliminate feedback and the one teaching is the coach and the observer is the learner. Furthermore, Neufeld and Roper (2003) delineate two categories of coaches as being change coaches and content coaches. Change coaches are defined as those with a focus on the whole school and organizational improvement. These coaches focus on examining the use of resources and developing the leadership skills of teachers and principals. Content coaches, which will be the focus of this paper, are those that are focused on improving teachers’ practice in specific content areas such as literacy or math. Table 2.2 references the differing types of coaches.

Table 2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Instructional coaches</th>
<th>Functions &amp; Responsibilities</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data-Oriented</td>
<td>Spend average of 45% of time on data related tasks</td>
<td>Duessen et al, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-oriented</td>
<td>Spend between 41-52% of time with teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Spend a large amount of time with paperwork and facilitating meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Oriented</td>
<td>Spend more time than any other group of coaches working directly with teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Focus more on teachers attaining specific skills</td>
<td>Garmston, 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial</td>
<td>Increased collegiality and professional conversations as main goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focuses more on assisting teachers in refining their teaching practice (ex. Cognitive coaching)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Increased collegiality and professional conversations as main goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often involves teams of people that are focused on solving ongoing problems related to instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Coaching</td>
<td>Two or more teachers working together to develop their professional skills</td>
<td>Poglinco et al, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The individual teaching is the coach, the observer is the learner</td>
<td>Showers &amp; Joyce, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Coaches</td>
<td>Those with a focus on the whole school and organizational improvement</td>
<td>Nuefled and Roper, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on examining use of resources and developing leadership skills of teachers and principals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Coaches</td>
<td>Focus on improving teachers’ practice in specific content areas such as literacy or math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale for Coaching**

**Effectiveness of Coaching.** The relationship between instructional coaching and student achievement has mixed findings. Neufeld & Roper (2003) stated that there is no proven link between coaching and student achievement. However, more recent studies
have found that instructional coaching does have a positive relationship to student achievement. Shidler (2009) found a significant correlation between the time coaches spent in teachers’ classrooms and their respective students’ scores on letter recognition.

While there may not be an established direct link between instructional coaches and student achievement, this is not to imply that the position is without benefits. Symonds (2003) lists several main benefits to literacy coaching (which is one specific subtype of instructional coaching). Symonds’ report details how three Bay Area school in California utilized literacy coaches in professional development. The findings from Symonds’ report include benefits such as aiding in the development of a collaborative teacher culture, helping teachers become more receptive to change, providing support for new teachers and increasing teacher implementation of new instructional strategies.

More benefits regarding coaching arise from Neufeld and Roper (2003). These researchers were commissioned by the Aspen Institute’s Program on Education in a Changing Society to write a paper describing coaching and the challenges that are associate with implementing this strategy. Neufeld and Roper (2003) state that coaching leads to an increase in teachers’ instructional capacity, which they cite as a pre-requisite for student learning.

Vanderburg and Stephens’ 2010 study on literacy coaches and teachers that were a part of the South Carolina Reading Initiative, teachers credited their coaches with helping them to try different instructional techniques, using more authentic assessments, basing their teaching on research-based best practices and creating a more student-centered curriculum. This type of risk taking, which ultimately results in improved
teacher capacity is unlikely to happen if there is no relational trust between the instructional coach and classroom teacher (Aguilar, 2014; Routman, 2014; Neufeld and Roper, 2003).

**Instructional coaching as effective professional development.** Given that instructional coaching is a form of professional development (Aguilar, 2013; Kowal & Steiner, 2007) and that coaching also meets many of the established criteria for effective professional development, an examination of key features of effective professional development is critical to the discussion of instructional coaches. Professional development is the means through which the knowledge and skills of educators are increased, and the likelihood of a school district reaching its goals and objectives is increased (Rebore, 2012). Birman, Desimone, Porter and Garet (2000) identified six features of effective professional development as being:

- reform oriented as opposed to traditional workshop format
- increased duration, in terms of both time span and total contact hours
- collective participation (meaning that groups of teachers from the same, school, department or grade level attend together)
- focusing on content
- promoting active learning
- fostering coherence

These tenets of effective professional development align with what Neufeld and Roper (2003) purport to be the principles of coaching at its best: grounded in inquiry,
collaborative, sustained, connected to and derived from teachers’ work with students and related to explicitly improving teaching practice.

Reform structured professional development refers to trainings that diverge from the traditional workshop structure and may include activities such as study groups or mentoring (Birman et al, 2000). This type of professional development is significant to the work of the instructional coach in that it is similar to the structure in which he or she operates. Reform programs offer activities like study groups, mentoring and coaching and often occur during the school day as opposed to the workshop format which includes offerings like conferences, institutes and courses (Garet et al, 2001).

Reform structured trainings should occur in close proximity to teachers’ work environments, as it has been found that helping teachers prepare for instruction provides results that are most easily correlated to practice (Penuel et al, 2007). This aligns with instructional coaching as many of these positions are housed at individual schools. Neufeld and Roper (2003) recommended that effective coaching should be connected to and derived from teachers’ work with students. Guskey and Yoon (2009) spoke to the significance of this reform structure when they proposed that all educators need follow-up and assistance as they try to implement new curricula and instructional practices, which is a type of training that would occur on the job as opposed to an outside setting typical of workshop formats. The close proximity of instructional coaches provides them with the ability to provide needed follow-up and assistance.

There is a significant amount of research on the importance of the duration of professional development, both in terms of contact hours and time span. Sustained
intensive professional development offerings are more likely to positively impact teachers than shorter trainings (Garet et al., 2007; Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Program, 2006). Additionally, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2000) found that the more time teachers spent in professional development, the more likely they were to report that their participation improved their teaching a great deal. In other words, teachers felt more prepared for instruction as they spent more time in professional development. Also related to duration, is time specifically devoted to planning. Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, and Gallagher (2007) found it important for teachers to have time to plan implementation. Garet et al’s (2007) finding corroborates the significance of this key feature as they found that ongoing professional development is more likely to impact teachers than trainings of shorter duration. The instructional coach is an effective response to the call for increased duration of professional development, as instructional coaches are usually on-site and have easy access to provide teachers the increased duration necessary for effective professional development. Additionally, Neufeld and Roper (2003) support this tenet by stating that effective coaching should be sustained.

Collective participation speaks to the importance of teachers attending trainings with colleagues from their school, department, or grade level. When teachers are able to attend with their peers, they are better able to integrate what they learn into classroom instruction as they are allowed to discuss pertinent concepts and problems that might come up during the training and discuss the specific needs of students (Birman et al., 2000; Garet et al., 2007). Instructional coaches are able to provide for collective
participation when they work with content area teams or specific grade levels. This feature of effective professional development is in alignment with the feature of effective instructional coaching stating that coaching should be collaborative.

Effective professional development should be focused on content knowledge, and should avoid general teaching strategies as teachers typically do not find these trainings to be effective (Birman et. al 2000). When teachers are more comfortable with academic content, they are more likely to incorporate varied teaching strategies (Penuel et al, 2007). Instructional coaches are able to meet this tenet of effective professional development as they provide on site content specific training to teachers.

Much like the young learners they instruct, teachers also learn best when engaged in active learning experiences. Active learning can include observing and being observed; planning classroom implementation; reviewing student work; and presenting, leading and writing. (Birman, Desimone, Porter and Garet, 2000). Furthermore, these authors find that teachers whose professional development involves more active learning report increased knowledge, skills and changed classroom practice. Many of these active learning strategies are in direct alignment with the varied roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches.

In order for professional development to be effective it is important that the training fits into a unified vision with district, school, teacher and student goals. Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, and Gallagher (2007) studied the effects of different aspects of professional development and the impact these characteristics have on teachers’ knowledge and their ability to implement the inquiry-based science program under study.
Penuel et al noted the importance of coherence in teachers’ professional development experiences, stating that professional development should be connected to goals and other school activities and aligned with state and district standards and assessments. Staff development activities are more likely to be effective if they fit into a larger coherent picture of more professional development opportunities (Birman et. al, 2000). Instructional coaches are able to provide coherent support to teachers that directly aligns with school and district goals.

**Instructional Coaches and Teacher Change**

A primary goal of the instructional coach is to improve teaching practice. This improvement in practice implies the need for change. Instructional coaches are critical factors in supporting the process of changing teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, which are crucial elements in sustained change to teaching practice. Boudah, Logan, and Greenwood spoke to the importance of relationships to the change process when they proffered “Change takes time, intensive work and ongoing honest relationships”, (p. 302). The process of change must be implemented in an atmosphere of trust (Richardson, 1990). Furthermore, Aguilar (2013) stated “an essential feature of coaching is that it uses relationships between coaches, principals, and teachers to create the conversation that leads to behavioral, pedagogical and content knowledge change” (p.9).

There are different models as to how the change process occurs. One such model suggested by Guskey (2000) is conducive to the idea of the instructional coach as a change agent. Guskey (2000) purports that teachers change their beliefs and attitudes after they see success that arises from changes to their teaching practice. In Guskey’s
model, change of belief takes place mainly after implementation occurs and student achievement is increased. This model necessitates the need for continued follow up and support of classroom teachers. The instructional coach can be a key factor in giving classroom teachers the lasting support they need to create sustained positive changes in their teaching practice.

Furthermore, other researchers have noted the significance of teacher leadership in supporting teacher change. Huberman’s research (1981) as cited in Fullan (1985) supports the need for instructional coaches to support teacher change. Huberman studied teachers as they implemented Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) and noted that almost every teacher attributed the success of the ECRI program to strong administrative support and the helping teacher, with valuable activities being noted as teachers as being frequent in-service meetings in which teachers could commiserate and collaborate with one another.

Trust, which is central to the instructional coach position is also critical to the change process. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) suggested that building trust with colleagues is foundational to the change process. Boudah, Logan and Greenwood, (2001) report that high levels of trust and honesty are key factors in changing teachers’ practice. Rousseau and Tijorwali (1999) found that employees trust in management is one factor that affected individuals’ reason for change.

**The Need for Instructional Coach interpersonal skills**

The importance of coaches’ interpersonal skills cannot be overstated. Knight, (2007) spoke to the significance of instructional coaches and relationships when he
stated, “Coaching is about building relationships with teachers as much as it is about instruction” (p. 33). Thus, an examination of the need for the instructional coach’s interpersonal skills is necessary. A report by the Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat (2007) stated that a coach’s effectiveness is determined by the relationship between teachers and coaches. Many of the coaches in the America’s Choice schools researched by Poglinco et al (2003) emphasized the importance of having a strong collegial relationship with classroom teachers as they tried to implement new strategies into their classroom teaching practice. The significance of a coach’s interpersonal skills is echoed by Ertmer, Richardson, Cramer, Hanson, Huang, Lee, O’Connor, Ulmer, and Um (2005). These researchers examined the perceptions of 31 peer coaches to determine the skills and characteristics that coaches perceived to be necessary. When asked what was the most important characteristic of coaches, the coaches studied most frequently cited people skills. The coaches in this study defined people skills as being comprised of sub-skills such as “building relationships, establishing trust and credibility, and having respect for others” (p. 61). Additionally, Knight (2004) identified the importance of coaches’ interpersonal abilities amongst other qualities such as flexibility, being a good listener and being likable.

The ability to develop relationships is important for instructional coaches as well. One specific example of a reform initiative that values instructional coaches and more specifically their ability to develop relationships that promote improved teacher capacity is that of the Pathways to Success Project in Topeka Kansas (Knight, 2004). This project provided teachers with staff development through the placement of full-time instructional
coaches in six middle schools and three high schools. In selecting candidates for the position of instructional coach, staff for Pathways to Success in Kansas City (Knight, 2004) included questions to assess candidates’ people skills and flexibility as well as their relationship building skills. Knight addressed the importance of relationships between teachers and instructional coaches, when he stated, “Instructional coaches found that the most efficient way to create change is to spend time creating meaningful relationships that generate successes” (p. 5).

The interpersonal skills required for coaching pave the way for partnership between the instructional coach and the classroom teacher. Ideally, this partnership will be based upon relational trust between the two parties. This trusting relationship will ultimately allow for increased collaboration between the two individuals. Furthermore, this collaboration could potentially lead to the teacher’s increased instructional capacity.

**Instructional Coaches and Trust**

“There is no coaching without trust. A teacher…will not reveal areas that she’s struggling in, or share beliefs that might be holding her back, until she absolutely trusts you; trust defines a coaching relationship” (Aguilar, 2013, p, 40).

In her book, Read, Write, Lead, Routman (2014) continually referred to the need for teachers to have trusting relationships, stating, “without colleagues we trust for support, we are unlikely to fully participate in a manner that benefits our students or us” (p. 15). Furthermore, Mitchell and Sackney (2011) purported “without trust and respect, people divert their energy into self-protection and away from learning” (p.11). Routman
(2014) also stated that trust allows people to be vulnerable and take risks, and noted that individuals cannot learn from those they do not trust.

Neufeld and Roper (2003) cited that one of a coach’s primary roles is to help establish a safe place in which teachers can work to improve their practice without fear of evaluation or criticism. Additionally trust supports cooperation between parties (Hwang & Burgers, 1997; Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995) and given that oftentimes changes in teaching practice are dependent upon teacher cooperation, or more specifically, collaboration with the instructional coach, it is necessary that relational trust exists between these two individuals. Teachers need to trust coaches without fear of punitive reporting to the principal (Brady, 2007). Trust is important and significant in that it allows people to take risks (McAllister, 1995). Routman stated, “Foremost among all leadership qualities is the ability to form, nurture and sustain trusting and respectful relationships. Without those trusting relationships, not much of significance will happen for school-wide achievement and a healthy school culture” (p. 185).

Guiney (2001) also referenced the need for trust, proffering the need for coaches to have trust building skills and to engage in situations that establish trust with teachers. Levin & Cross, (2004) found that benevolence based trust consistently matters in knowledge exchange and competence based trust matters most when the tacit knowledge is exchanged.

Aguilar (2013) offers several tips based on her experience as a coach, that other instructional coaches might use to build trust with what she refers to as clients, or in this case, classroom teachers. These techniques are not research based, and I seek to confirm,
renounce and/or elaborate upon her recommendations as appropriate through the provision of a solid research-based foundation this study will provide. Aguilar suggests that coaches do the following in order to develop trust:

- Plan and prepare for meetings with teachers in order to demonstrate competence
- Cautiously gather information about client so as to not be potentially negatively biased
- Establish confidentiality with client, assuring them that communications between you and classroom teacher will be kept in confidence
- Listen, paraphrasing what the teacher has said so they know that they have been heard
- Ask questions to express interest in the teacher
- Look for personal connections
- Validate the teacher’s experiences
- Be open about yourself and your personal and professional experiences
- Explicitly ask teachers for permission to coach them
- Keep your commitments to teachers, being careful not to overextend yourself

The Principal’s Impact on Instructional Coaches and Trust. Despite the fact that there are multiple potential organizational factors, this research will focus on the principal as the key element in this level of the framework. Symonds (2003) delineated several factors at the organizational level which can potentially impact the effectiveness
of the coach position, including: professional development for coaches, a clearly
developed position description and clearly communicated rationale for the position,
structured collaboration time during the school day and structured coordination with the
principal.

The current study will focus solely on the significance of the principal as an
organizational factor, as principals are very influential to the success of any instructional
coach. For example, principals are key in setting the school culture and teachers will be
cognizant of whether or not the principal supports the coach (Symonds, 2003). If that
support is not there, it will be hard for the coach to collaborate with teachers (Symonds,
2003). Symonds also acknowledged the significance of the principal’s impact on the
coach, when she noted that principal-coach communication is one of the most important
components in a successful coaching model. Furthermore, other researchers have
suggested that the principal sets the tone for trust in a school building more than any
other stakeholder (Routman, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2007a). Bryk and Schneider,
(2002) found that principals’ respect and regard for teachers as well as their professional
competence and personal integrity were associated with relational trust among all adult
school members.

A review of the research related to principals, instructional coaches and trust can
also cause one to infer that the principal is a key factor in aiding or hindering the
development of trust between teachers and instructional coaches. Mangin (2007) when
examining the conditions that cause principals to support the work of teacher leaders,
found a link between the principal’s support for a teacher leader and their combined
knowledge of the role and interaction with the teacher leader. In her study, Mangin found that the principals who were more knowledgeable about the instructional coach role communicated with teachers about the teacher leader, and identified the leader as a resource for instructional improvement and delineated clear expectations for teachers to collaborate with the teacher leader. Communicating this expectation is significant in that high quality leaders have been found to delineate a clear course of action and establish high expectations that in turn positively impacts the school (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). If these findings are true, then the inverse of this situation, an unsupportive, uninvolved principal who does not expect teachers to collaborate with the instructional coach could be troublesome to the coach’s development of trust with teachers. It stands to reason that an instructional coach in a school without a supportive principal who has established a trusting environment will in turn have a more difficult time gaining the trust of teachers and collaborating with them.

Principals can also impact teachers’ decisions to trust the instructional coach through the information that they share or choose not to share with teachers. Coburn (2005) found that “principals can directly impact what teachers find themselves making sense about as they shape access to some policy messages and not others” (Coburn, 2005, p. 499). Given this finding, it is logical to conclude that teachers whose principals clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach will be better positioned to trust the coach as their views of the position based on the message received from the principal will potentially align with the actions of the instructional coach. Furthermore, Bryk & Schneider (2002) said that trust develops when role relations and expectations are
Poglinco et al (2003) reaffirmed the importance of the principal to the instructional coach when they stated “the amount and type of support provided to the coach by the principal appeared to be a critical facilitator or barrier to coach effectiveness” (p.22).

Neufeld and Roper (2003) offer several practical suggestions for the principal and the instructional coach to ensure the coach’s success. These researchers recommended that principals respect coaches’ roles and not direct them to spend time with other school needs, such as being a substitute teacher or proctoring exams. Based on this research, it can be inferred that an administrators’ diversion of coaches’ responsibilities could potentially leave the classroom teacher wondering how the coach allocates their time and leave the teacher questioning the coach’s integrity, thereby making it more difficult for the coach to establish trust. Additionally, these researchers suggested that administrators should recognize that coaches and principals conversations about teachers’ work might cause tensions between the coach and teachers. Furthermore, Heineke and Polnick (2013) provided five recommendations for principals to support instructional coaches:

- Principals should define the coach’s roles with the instructional coach (they report that coaches who have the widest array of responsibilities do the least amount of coaching)
- Administration should make the parameters of the instructional coach’s roles and responsibilities clear to faculty, which can prevent the coach’s time being allocated to non-instructional tasks
• Principals should guard the coach’s role and responsibilities, ensuring that the coach is never seen as an evaluator, so that teachers feel free to communicate with the coach without fear of their conversation going back to administration

• Principals should facilitate collaboration with the coach by providing for time in the school day for teachers and coaches to work together

• Principals should hire prepared coaches

**Summary**

In this portion of the paper, I reviewed the literature on instructional coaches as I defined the position and explained variations in the position ranging from differences in time allocation to varying coach responsibilities. I also provided a rationale for coaching, explaining the effectiveness of this position and explaining the coach’s role in the teacher change process. Two key elements of the conceptual framework were addressed in this section of the paper. The interpersonal level of the framework was addressed as I reviewed literature relating to the instructional coach’s need for interpersonal skills as well the section on the coach’s roles and responsibilities and variances in the position. The organizational level of the conceptual framework was addressed in the section reviewing the principal’s impact on the instructional coach and trust.

**An Examination of Trust**

**Defining Trust**

Much as there is no one particular definition that fits the role of the instructional coach, there is no one particular definition that applies to trust. Most definitions of trust
include the element of vulnerability. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) defined trust as the level to which a person is willing to make himself or herself vulnerable to others as well as to rely on others. Tschannen Moran (2014) elaborated on this definition, defining trust as “one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent” (p. 19-20). Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) define trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” (p. 712). Additionally, these researchers suggest that an individual’s trustworthiness is based on that person’s ability, benevolence, and integrity.

Abram, Cross, Lesser & Levin (2003) define interpersonal trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable” (p. 65) and purport that there are two dimensions of trust that encourage the creation and sharing of knowledge. The first dimension is that of benevolence, in which a person cares about another person’s wellbeing, and the second being competence, in which a person believes another has the expertise to accomplish what they are talking about.

According to McAllister (1995) trust is the degree to which an individual is confident in and willing to act based on the words and actions of another. Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998) define trust as an attitude from the trustor to the trustee that comes from the trustors’ beliefs about the trustee based on observations of the trustees’ behavior. There are three facets involved in this attitude, first, the belief that the trustee will act benevolently, secondly a willingness to be vulnerable knowing that the
trustee may not fulfill their obligation and finally, the knowledge that there is a level of
dependence in that the actions of one party are influenced by the other. Louis (2007)
defines trust as “the confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice,
friendship, or other sound principle, of another person or group” (p.2). Louis (2007)
further elaborates on the concept of trust, identifying two main types, relational trust and
institutional trust. Institutional trust is defined as the expectation that appropriate
behavior will occur within any given organization based on its institutional norms,
whereas relational trust is the result of interpersonal interactions within an organization.
This paper focuses on relational trust, incorporating elements from all cited definitions of
trust (See Table 2.3 for all definitions of trust). As previously defined in chapter one,
relational trust is the trust that develops as a result of the interpersonal interactions within
an organization (Louis, 2007).

Table 2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tschannen-Moran &amp; Hoy (2000)</td>
<td>The level to which a person is willing to make himself of herself vulnerable to others as well as to rely on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tschannen-Moran (2014)</td>
<td>One’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAllister (1995)</td>
<td>The degree to which an individual is confident in and willing to act based on the words and actions of another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayer, Davis &amp; Schoorman (1995)</td>
<td>“The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trust, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” (p. 712)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an individual’s trustworthiness is based on that person’s ability, benevolence and integrity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abram, Cross, Lesser & Levin, 2005  “The willingness of a party to be vulnerable” (p.65)

Whitener et al, 1998  An attitude from the trustor to the trustee that comes from the trustors’ beliefs about the trustee based on observations of the trustees behavior an involving three facets:
1- the belief that the trustee will act benevolently
2- a willingness to be vulnerable knowing that the trustee may to fulfill their obligation
3- the knowledge that there is a level of dependence in that the actions of one party are influenced by the other

Louis, 2007  “the confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship, or other sound principle, or another person or group” (p.2)
   a) institutional trust is the expectation that appropriate behavior will occur within any given organization based on its institutional norms
   b) relational trust – the result of interpersonal interactions within an organization

**Significance of Trust**

School leaders need to have stakeholder trust to be successful (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The cultivation of this trust by the principal has been linked to increased teacher capacity (Cosner, 2009) and an increased likelihood of high-quality implementation of improvement efforts (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Additional benefits of trust are that it may have a positive impact on school climate and that it has been found to be an indirect means of improving instruction (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Trust leads to more knowledge exchange between employees and increases the likelihood that the knowledge will be implemented (Abrams et al. 2003). Bryk & Schneider (2002) elaborated on the significance of trust by proffering that it:
Reduces the sense of vulnerability that school professionals experience as they are asked to take on the new and uncertain tasks associated with reform…trust acts as a catalyst for change processes that instrumentally connect to improving academic productivity. (p. 116)

In 2020, Vanderberg and Stephens conducted a study centered on teachers in South Carolina who worked with literacy coaches as part of the South Carolina Reading Initiative with the goals of understanding what coaches did that was helpful to teachers and identifying how teachers’ practices and beliefs changed because of the coach. This study (Vanderberg & Stephens, 2010) reiterated the significance of trust, stating that they viewed the coach-led study group as a place in which they could go for support and could feel safe to share their thoughts on teaching.

**Development of trust**

While trust is not necessarily an automatic entity between two people, it can be developed. Research is mixed as to the level at which initial trust begins. In their review of initial trust literature, Lewicki et al (2006) reported some theorists proposed that trust begins at a zero level when there is no prior information available, and others suggested that initial trust may begin at moderate-high levels. Consistent among the research is the fact that trust is dynamic, with the level of trust fluctuating rather than remaining static (Lewicki et al, 2006). Research points to several factors that play into how trust is developed between two individuals. However, lacking from the corpus of literature is specific, research-based information regarding how instructional coaches build trust with classroom teachers.
Trust grows as expectations are continually met (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). More specifically, trust grows as individuals expose themselves to one another, making themselves vulnerable and risking loss and in turn are met with acceptance at each exposure. Swinth (1967) found that two interdependent individuals can build trust as they expose themselves to one another in a situation in which an individual risks personal loss, and they are in turn met with acceptance at each exposure which does not cause a loss to the trusting party. An individual’s perceived ability factors into one’s decision on whether or not to take risks. Serva, Fuller and Mayer (2005) in a study on the development of trust between teams of people found that perceived ability is a predictor of trust, and that this trust is predictive of risk-taking.

The development of trust varies depending on the power dynamic in the relationship of the involved parties. Tschannen-Moran (2014) suggested that “the responsibility for trust establishment rests more heavily with the one with the greater power” (p. 66 – 67). Louis (2007) recommends that school leaders pay attention to the relationships they build with teachers which encourage the teachers to become more confident in the administrator as a person, and this in turn builds a foundation for trust. Additionally, employees who perceive that the leadership in their organization is servant-led are more likely to have high levels of leader trust than organizations whose leaders are not perceived to be servant-led (Joseph & Winston, 2005). Tschannen-Moran (2014) asserted “school leaders can promote trust by demonstrating benevolence: showing consideration and sensitivity for employees’ needs and interests, acting in a way that
protects employees’ rights and refraining from exploiting others for personal gain” (p. 23).

The general literature provides research regarding the development of trust. In 2003, Abrams, Cross, Lesser and Levin, conducted interviews in twenty organizations to determine ways in which trust develops. Abrams et al (2003) found several actions and behaviors that impact trust, including:

- Acting with discretion
- Demonstrating consistency between words and actions
- Having deep communication frequently
- Utilizing two-way communication
- Employing fair and transparent decision making
- Implementing shared vision and language
- Holding individuals accountable for trust
- Building personal connections
- Giving away something of value
- Communicating one’s expertise as well as limitations

Whitener, Bordt, Korsgaard, and Werner’s 1998 literature review and analysis examined the types of behaviors on the part of managers that may build trust, incorporating the context in which these behaviors occur. Whitener et al (1998) identified five categories of behavior that influence employee perceptions of managerial trustworthiness. Those five categories are:
• Behavioral consistency, or the predictability of the managers’ actions based on past actions

• Behavioral integrity, or the consistency between what the managers says and does

• Sharing and delegation of control (trust is higher when employees are satisfied with their level of participation in decisions)

• Communication (employees trust managers when they see that managers communicate accurate information, share their reasoning for decisions and are forthcoming with information)

• Demonstration of concern (acting in a way that protects employees interests and refraining from exploiting others for the benefits of ones interests)

Key to understanding both of these lists of characteristics is the involvement of the interpersonal nature of trust. Central to the development of trust, is the fact that this intangible entity must be nested within a relationship. Abrams et al’s (2003) study focuses on interpersonal trust as a central part of relationships that promote effective knowledge creation and sharing in organizations. Whitener et al’s (1998) analysis stated that “trust is not merely an attitude held by one party toward another but exists in the parties’ relationship” (p. 514)

Additionally, Routman (2014) offers several recommendations based on her professional work experiences. Routman has a wide variety of professional experiences including classroom teacher, Reading Recovery teacher, language arts coach and staff developer. Routman’s first recommendation is to celebrate teachers, acknowledging what
they have done well or attempted to do well. Routman also recommends letting yourself be known, allowing teachers to see and know your human side by sharing stories and seeing teachers outside of the classroom setting. Another recommendation for establishing trust is to become a better listener and to listen without judgment. A fourth recommendation from Routman is to be able to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty, meaning that you as a leader are willing to change course when it’s necessary, and that you welcome divergent thinking. Final recommendations from Routman for leaders in establishing trust are nurturing resilience in both teachers and students as well as demonstrating fairness to faculty members.

It is the hope of this study to provide a solid research based foundation to corroborate Routman’s recommendations and to extend the general trust literature making it specifically applicable to the unique position of the instructional coach and classroom teacher.

Summary

In this review of the literature, I have defined the role of the instructional coach as well as the variations that oftentimes occur within the position. I highlighted the coach as a model for effective professional development that serves to aid the process of teacher change. This change however does not occur within a vacuum, rather it is nested inside a relationship that is fostered by the instructional coach’s interpersonal skills. The coach/teacher relationship ideally will encourage the development of trust, which in turn will positively impact the teacher’s willingness to collaborate with the coach. The development of this relational trust is however impacted by organizational factors such as
site-based administration. I concluded this section of the paper with a discussion of the literature related to trust, by defining trust, discussing the significance of trust and providing an overview of theories related to its’ development. It is essential that further empirical research be carried out to determine how the instructional coach, whose efficacy is contingent upon relational trust, develops this entity. While there has been a great deal of research on the development of trust and the importance of trust in the school setting, there has yet to be a research-based study on how instructional coaches develop trust with classroom teachers. This study will provide a research-based foundation for practitioner recommendations on the development of trust between the instructional coach and classroom teacher and fill the gap that is currently in the literature.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to affirm the existing research base regarding trust development and to add a research-based foundation to practitioner recommendations for the development of trust between teachers and instructional coaches. To date, there has been no research-based foundation as to how instructional coaches, a position whose very efficacy is rooted in trust, can develop relational trust with teachers. Additionally, this study seeks to extend the literature by examining the development of trust in the unique relationship between instructional coaches and teachers. This single case study with embedded units of analysis begins to address this gap in the literature by answering the question:

*How do instructional coaches build relational trust with teachers?*

In this section, I describe the research design and methods I used in this study. I begin with an introduction to the study context, which is followed by the research question. I then provide a rationale for the use of a qualitative research design, and move on more specifically to a discussion on the use of case studies. I then move on to highlight my paradigmatic orientation and the role I as a researcher played. These sections are followed by a description of the sample selection process and study participants. I then follow these components by detailing data collection and data analysis. I end the chapter with a discussion of the steps I took to increase the trustworthiness of the study, as well as possible limitations to the study.

Study context
The district in which this study took place is a large school district in the southeastern United States. It is comprised of 101 schools and centers located in urban, rural, and suburban settings. The school district has 76,000 students and 50 elementary schools. The district employs 5,008 teachers. More specifically related to this study, each elementary school has an onsite instructional coach. Also pertinent to this study are the academic specialists employed by the district. Each academic specialist focuses in a particular content area. These individuals are located at the central office. These specialists provide professional development at both the district and the school levels and work to ensure that best practices and quality instruction are in place through their work with both instructional coaches and teachers.

This study took place at one particular elementary school, Meadow Spring Elementary School, in Glenwood County School District (both pseudonyms). This school has approximately 750 students ranging in age from three-year-old kindergarten to fifth grade. Faculty include two administrators (a principal and assistant principal), an instructional coach, fifteen support staff, and fifty-four classroom teachers. At the time of the research, the current principal, Carl Miller, had been in place for approximately one year. He replaced an interim principal who served for approximately seven months, after replacing the previous principal who was moved to another position in the district.

An important component of the study context is that of the school environment, which can be measured through indicators like teacher turnover, percent of teachers satisfied with the learning environment and state test scores. All of these indicators can
be found on the state report card. Other aspects can only be noted through observation and interviews to provide more depth to the context.

The instructional coach was in her second year at the time the study was conducted. She inherited a rather tumultuous environment. Taylor provided specifics to the background of the school environment stating that she was hired by the previous principal in April 2014. A climate committee came in at the end of September/ beginning of October of 2014 and the principal was moved to another location in Glenwood County in October 2014 to serve the remainder of the year as an assistant principal. At that point, an interim came in, serving from October 2014 to May 2015, until Mr. Miller was hired in May 2015. The previous instructional coach requested and was granted a transfer to another Glenwood County School District for the 2014 – 2015 school year. Taylor stated that the previous instructional coach and the former principal had a major “falling out” which contributed to some of the internal strife which remained in the building.

The learning environment scored more positively in 2015 under the helm of Mr. Miller and when Taylor was serving as instructional coach. As can be seen in Table 3.1, on the 2015 South Carolina Report Card, Meadow Spring Elementary School had 85.1% of teachers returning from the previous year. In 2014 89.1% of teachers from previous year returned and in 2013, 86.3% of teachers from the previous year returned. Additionally the percentage of teachers stating they were satisfied with the learning environment on the school report card was 97.8% in 2015, 89.1% in 2014, and 91.9% in 2013. The percentage of teachers satisfied with the social and physical environment was 97.8 in 2015, 95.5% in 2014, and 96% in 2013.
Table 3.1

*Meadow Spring Teacher Satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers returning from Previous year</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers satisfied with learning Environment</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers satisfied with social and physical environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Meadow Spring Elementary school would not necessarily be categorized as a high achieving school, the school was not in danger of failing, as exemplified by the test scores on the report cards. As can be seen in Table 3.2, 66.8% of Meadow Springs Elementary students scored Read on the 2014 ACT Aspire for English, compared to 66.8% of students in like schools, 72.8% of students in the district and 67.9% of students statewide. The school’s reading scores on ACT Aspire were somewhat lower with 25.6% of students scoring Reading, compared to 44% of students in the district, 31.4% of students at like schools and 37.2% of schools statewide. Writing scores for the school were lower than the district but higher than like schools with 19.4% of students performing at the Ready level compared to 28.5% of schools in the district, and 24.4% in the state. Math scores were somewhat lower than the county and like schools, but higher than the state, with 48% of students scoring Ready, compared to 54% of students in the district, 52.1% of students in like schools and 46.7% in the state.

Table 3.2
### Meadow Spring Student Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of students scoring ready in English</th>
<th>Percentage of students scoring ready in Reading</th>
<th>Percentage of students scoring ready in Writing</th>
<th>Percentage of students scoring ready in Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meadow Spring Elementary School</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenwood County School District</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Schools Like Glenwood County</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research Question

Good research questions are a key component of case studies. Research questions provide the initial building blocks for the topic to be studied. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) defined the central question as a broad question that seeks to explore the primary concept or phenomenon in a study and recommended no more than one to two central questions. The overarching question for this study is How do instructional coaches build relational trust with teachers?"

### Qualitative Research

The interpretive nature of my research question and the research question’s emphasis on teachers’ meaning making of trust development support a qualitative research design. Glesne (2011) defined qualitative research as “a type of research that focuses on qualities such as words or observations that are difficult to quantify and that lend themselves to interpretation or deconstruction” (p. 283), while Creswell (2009)
defined qualitative research “as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The research process involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the participants’ setting” (p. 232).

Given the previously stated definitions, qualitative research is appropriate for my research. Qualitative research lends itself to interpretation (Glesne, 2011; Creswell, 2009). This tenet of qualitative research holds true for my research design as well. Much of this current study was designed to focus on individual teachers’ interpretations of what makes their instructional coach trustworthy. The examination of this topic is in essence a way of exploring the social problem (Creswell, 2009) of what makes us trust another individual, or more specifically, what makes a teacher trust an instructional coach. This decision of whether or not to trust an individual is made internally at the intrapersonal level of the conceptual framework and is a cognitive activity. The fact that the ultimate decision of whether or not to trust another individual is made internally means that individuals may likely have different interpretations of who they trust and why they decide to trust any given person.

Glesne (2011) further elaborates on qualitative research, offering that this type of study focuses on things that are difficult to quantify, such as observations or words. The data collected in my study is in alignment with this precept of qualitative research, as my data is comprised of words transcribed from interviews, observation field notes and collected artifacts.
My research question called for a design that needed to be conducted in the participants’ natural setting, the elementary school, so that I could observe authentic interactions between the instructional coach and the teachers that might promote the development of trust. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) stated that while qualitative research can be conducted in a variety of ways, most types of qualitative research share certain characteristics, such as being conducted in a naturalistic setting, as was the case for my research study. Furthermore in addressing my research question, I had no need for any type of standardized instrumentation. I used myself as the researcher, to gather data through interviews, observations and artifacts, as is typically the case with qualitative research design (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

**Case Studies**

The case study is one example of qualitative research methodology that is rooted in an interpretivist paradigm (Glesne, 2011), meaning that there can be many truths and realities that are dependent on the individual (Sipe & Constable, 1996). A case study is defined as the in-depth study of a case, with the definition of a case varying from an individual, to an event, to a group of people, with each case being “a bounded integrated system with working parts” (Glesne 2011, p. 22), that is bound by time and place (Creswell, 1998). This tenet of case study research is applicable to my design in that my case is bound the seven participants (instructional coach, principal, and five teachers) who worked at Meadow Spring Elementary during the 15 – 16 school year. Yin (2014) summarily defined case study by stating it is “a study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and in its real-world context” (p. 237). My research design meets
this criterion in that it studies a contemporary phenomenon (the development of trust between the instructional coaches and teachers) in the real world context of Meadow Spring Elementary School.

Yin (2006; 2014) recommended using the case study method when research addresses a descriptive or explanatory question, as well as when the researcher has little to no control over events, and the study is about a contemporary (not historical) phenomena (Yin, 2014). Case studies typically utilize how and why questions (Yin, 2014). Since my central question is explanatory in nature (“How do instructional coaches establish relational trust with teachers?”), takes place in a contemporary setting, and I, as the researcher, have no control over behavioral events, case study as a research technique is well suited for this study. Case study research assumes that the context as well as other factors related to the case being studied are crucial to understanding the case (Yin, 2014). An advantage of a rigorous case study is that it allows the researcher the opportunity to explore the phenomenon through a variety of lenses, which allows for a fuller understanding of the phenomenon to emerge (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

One important element of case study research is to define the “case” or the “unit of analysis”. According to Yin (2014):

A ‘case’ is generally a bounded entity (a person, organization, behavioral condition, event, or other social phenomenon), but the boundary between the case and its contextual conditions – in both spatial and temporal dimensions – may be blurred…the case serves as the main unit of analysis in a case study” (Yin, 2014).
The case in this study is the instructional coach’s development of relational trust with individual teachers. (See Figure 3.1).

**Embedded Case Design.** There are multiple types of case study design (Yin, 2014). This case study will utilize a more complex, embedded design as it involves subunits of analysis in an overall holistic case, (Yin, 2014, 2006). The development of trust between each individual teacher and the instructional coach function as sub-units of analysis which comprise the primary case of the development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers. Baxter and Jack (2008) speak to the strength in utilizing subunits of analysis:

The ability to look at sub-units that are situated within a larger case is powerful when you consider that data can be analyzed within the subunits separately (within case analysis), between the different subunits (Between case analysis) or across all of the subunits (cross-case analysis). The ability to engage in such rich analysis only serves to better illuminate the case (p.550).

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, there are five units of analysis, those being the trust development between the instructional coach and each of the teachers in the research process. In alignment with the benefits delineated by Baxter and Jack (2008), I will analyze data at individual subunits, in this case teachers, as well as between and across subunits, providing a more detailed analysis. These units of analysis are embedded within the context of Meadow Spring Elementary School. I designed the case study to include multiple teachers as embedded units of analysis as the instructional coach will in theory interact with each teacher somewhat differently and therefore the development of trust
between the coach and the teachers will vary. Including these embedded units of analysis allows for a thicker, richer description of the overall development of trust between the instructional coach and the teachers.

**Figure 3.1**

*Case Study Design*

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**Paradigmatic orientation**

It is important for researchers to clearly define their paradigmatic orientation, as Glesne (2011) stated “A paradigm, then is a framework or philosophy of science that makes assumptions about the nature of reality and truth, the kinds of questions to explore
and how to go about doing so” (p. 5). There are many different paradigms to which an individual can align him or herself. Paradigms include the positivist, deconstructivist, and critical theory orientations as well as the interpretivist perspective (Sipe & Constable, 1996). Beliefs associated with the different paradigms range from the positivist orientation, in which adherents purport that reality is an object and there is one truth, to the interpretivist perspective in which truth is many and there are many realities based on the individual (Sipe and Constable, 1996).

I align myself with an interpretivist paradigm, and believe that reality is socially constructed (Glesne, 2011). My interpretivist orientation lends itself to the particular qualitative approach, the case study, which I will employ in my research. Since I am an interpretivist and I believe that there are many realities which are unique to different individuals I have constructed my case study to include these varied realities. My case study includes varied perspectives (five teachers, the instructional coach, and the principal) to cover the potential multiple realities which could be involved in answering the question of how the instructional coach builds trust with teachers.

**Role of the Researcher**

Since qualitative research is interpretative in nature and typically involves the researcher spending a good deal of time with research participants, a host of ethical and personal issues come into play regarding the role of the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Creswell recommends that the researcher “explicitly identify reflexively their biases, values, and personal background, such as gender, history, culture, and socioeconomic status that may shape their interpretations formed during a study” (p. 177).
Reflexivity is a solution to dealing with the biases that qualitative researchers carry with them into their work. Glesne (2011) defines reflexivity as “critical reflection on how a researcher, research participants, a setting, and a phenomenon of interest interact and influence each other” (p.284). More specifically, Creswell recommended that the researcher include statements about his or her past experiences that will allow the audience to better understand the aspects of the study as well as the researcher’s interpretation of the phenomenon. This being the case, one role I will take as a researcher will be to explicitly state my background and potential biases in my reporting.

In order to address one’s positionality, researchers should practice reflexivity. “Reflexive thought assists in understanding ways in which your personal characteristics, values, and positions interact with others in the research situation to influence the methodological approach you take, the methods you use and the interpretations you make” (Glesne, 2011, p.159). As previously stated in Chapter one, when I proffered my positionality, I have been employed in the school district in which I conducted my research previously as a teacher, and currently as an instructional coach. Furthermore, the instructional coach who is the primary focus of this study is a colleague of mine, with both of us having begun our careers as instructional coaches in Glenwood County School District at the same time (Glenwood County is a pseudonym as are all other names for people or places in this study).

These facets of myself as a researcher could result in the possibility that some interviewees may not have been as forthcoming for fear of information returning to their place of employment. In order to compensate for this and offset this potential
disadvantage, it will be of the utmost importance that I develop trust and rapport with my interviewees. To negate the effects of this potential barrier, I placed a great deal of significance on the beginning of my interviews, as the way a researcher starts an interview can have a powerful effect on the quality of rapport a researcher develops with an interviewee (King & Horrocks, 2010).

One particular practice I employed to build rapport with my interviewees is that of beginning with simple questions (Kings & Horrocks, 2010). For example, I began my interviews by asking interviewees to describe their professional education experience, be it teaching or otherwise.

An additional concern related to my role as a researcher is that I may carry some of my concerns regarding the position with me into the study. In my current work situation, I am often pulled from what I view to be my primary job responsibilities (i.e., observing teachers, developing trainings, modeling lessons) by my principal to engage in more trivial pursuits such as decorating for school celebrations or making treat bags for teachers, as well as serving as a substitute in teachers’ absence. This could cause me to overstate the impact of the organizational role (in this context, the principal) on the instructional coach’s ability to develop trust with teachers. In order to compensate for this potential limitation, I employed member checking in which I review my findings with research participants to confirm accuracy, as well as utilizing a neutral third party to review findings in order to ensure that findings are not biased by my perspectives.

An additional aspect of my role as researcher is that of an observer. The observer functions along a continuum, ranging from mostly participation, to mostly observation.
On the participant-observer continuum, I will function as *observer as participant*, primarily working as an observer, but also having some interaction with study participants (Glesne, 2011). For example, as I observed Taylor, I also infrequently interacted with teachers engaging in brief, cordial conversation, or occasionally helping Taylor with tasks such as arranging books for the book fair.

**Sample Selection**

Qualitative researchers typically use purposive sampling in which there is a great deal of intentionality regarding research participants based on specified characteristics (Patten, 2012). Sample selection for this study was a multi-step, purposive process. All of the steps in the sample selection were geared toward the selection of a critical case of an instructional coach who has been successful in establishing trust with teachers, along with the instructional coach’s principal, and five teachers at the instructional coach’s school. The ultimate goal of the sampling process was to end with 7 participants, to be comprised of one instructional coach, one principal, and five teachers with varied levels of teaching experience.

The first round of sample selection involved contacting five academic specialists within Glenwood County School District. Glenwood County School District employs academic specialists specific to content areas (English and Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science) as well specific to academic level (elementary school, middle school, and high school). These academic specialists are charged with providing professional development to their respective audiences and working with instructional coaches to build teacher capacity in specific content areas. The five academic specialists
contacted included three females and one male who worked with elementary school
teachers and instructional coaches to improve reading and writing instruction, as well as a
female who worked with instructional coaches and teachers to improve math instruction
in elementary schools.

I began my sample selection with these academic specialists as they have the broadest
and deepest knowledge of the type, quality and quantity of work that elementary school
instructional coaches were engaged in throughout the district. After having garnered IRB
and district approval, (see appendices A and B) I made contact with each of the five
academic specialists using a phone script (See appendix C) and asked them the following
two questions:

1- Can you think of one or two coaches who have done a good job building trusting
relationships with teachers?

2- Can you tell me about (Insert Coach’s Name) and how he or she has done a good
job building trusting relationships with teachers?

After contacting the five academic specialists, a total of nine instructional coaches
were nominated, with one coach being nominated twice, and two coaches being
nominated from the same school.

The next step in the sample selection process was to contact the elementary school
principals of nominated instructional coaches to affirm the coach as skilled at building
trust through the principal and ascertain the principal’s willingness to use their
elementary school as a research location. This process was done through the use of a
phone script (see appendix D). Eight elementary school principals were contacted and
asked first whether or not they affirmed their instructional coach as skilled at building trust, and secondly, if they could explain how the coach had done a good job of building trust with teachers. Out of these eight principals, six principals affirmed their coach’s trust building skills and their willingness to participate, with one principal declining to participate in the study, and another principal not responding to attempts to contact until after the site selection for this study had been made.

When contact was made with Mr. Miller, principal of the selected site, he affirmed, that yes Taylor has done a good job of building trust with teachers, stating that she was “making headway.” When asked how Taylor has done a good job of building trusting relationships, Mr. Miller replied that she is “true to herself. She has the belief that if she behaves professionally, people will see that. Teachers respect and trust her based on her predictability.” After completing this phase of the sample selection, six instructional coaches remained as potential options for this study.

The third step of the selection process in this study involved contacting the instructional coaches, using a phone script to ensure uniformity (see appendix E). This phone conversation involved providing coaches with an overview of the study, and asking them to tell a little bit about their experience as an instructional coach as well as to explain their thoughts on trust and the instructional coach position. Coaches were also asked to list any opportunities to observe their work with teachers as well as everyday interactions. Finally, instructional coaches were asked to affirm their willingness to participate in the study.
Out of the six coaches, contact was made with five coaches, with one coach not responding to email until after the sample selection was made. Out of the remaining five coaches, two coaches were eliminated due to limited observation possibilities, and another two were eliminated because they had worked in the same school as a teacher, prior to becoming an instructional coach. The time frame in which to conduct this study was very tight, as I did not receive IRB approval until late April 2016, and I needed to conduct my research in May of 2016 prior to the end of the school year while allotting time for the state standardized testing that would eliminate several days for observations and interviews. Thus it was important to proceed in a timely fashion. Furthermore, given that the focus of this study is on the development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers, I felt that selecting coaches who had worked in the same site as teachers prior to becoming a coach could potentially shift the focus to the changing nature of trust as opposed to the development of trust, which was the intended focus of the study.

Taylor Smith was selected as the instructional coach for this study for a variety of reasons. First, she came to this school with no pre-established relationships with the participants or any of the teachers in the study. Additionally, Taylor was nominated by two different academic specialists and had multiple opportunities for me to observe her in a variety of formats in the limited time frame I had to work.

The final round of the sample selection involved selecting the teachers. The instructional coach was asked to nominate five teachers with whom she felt she had worked towards developing a trusting relationship. Taylor emailed ten different teachers at her school to ascertain their willingness to participate. Out of these ten emailed, five
teachers were selected based on the timeliness of their responses and their varied levels of experience and teaching positions. The timeliness of response was important as there was a very narrow window in which I was able to conduct my research. Taylor’s development of trust with the five selected teachers served as the embedded units of analysis in this case study design.

**Study Participants**

This research included the instructional coach, Taylor Smith, the principal, Carl Miller and five teachers with varying levels of experience who filled different teaching positions throughout the school. The teachers were nominated by the instructional coach, based on the criteria of them having developed a trusting relationship with the coach, as well as their willingness to participate. Anna George, one of the selected teachers, is a white female who was in her first year of teaching. Another white female teacher, Elizabeth Adams, the school’s art teacher, was new to the district, but had several years of experience out of state. A third teacher, another white female, Addie Moffitt, who taught second grade, was a veteran teacher with a total of fourteen years both in and out of Glenwood County School District. A fourth white female teacher, Isabelle Randolph, who worked as one of the school’s Resource/Inclusion teachers, had four years of experience, both in and out of Glenwood County. The fifth teacher selected in this study was a white female, who taught kindergarten and had approximately 12 years of experience, all in Glenwood County at Meadow Spring Elementary school. Selected teachers represented a variety of departments and grade levels as well as varying levels of experience (see table 3.1).
Table 3.3
*Teacher participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Name</th>
<th>Department/ Grade Level</th>
<th>Years Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Adams</td>
<td>Art Teacher</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna George</td>
<td>ED-Neuro</td>
<td>First Year Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelle Randolph</td>
<td>Resource/Inclusion Teacher</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addie Moffitt</td>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Moore</td>
<td>K5</td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the time of the study, Taylor Smith was in her second year of working as an instructional coach at Meadow Spring Elementary School in Glenwood County, marking her tenth year in education. Prior to working as an instructional coach at Meadow Spring Elementary, Taylor taught in a regular, fifth-grade coed classroom for two years, and then piloted a single gender female fifth grade classroom in a neighboring school district for four years. After this she worked as a math interventionist in the same school. As a math interventionist, Taylor served small groups of math students during the school day in addition to providing professional development in math school-wide.

Mr. Miller, principal of Meadow Spring Elementary School, had a wide variety of professional experiences. At the time of the study, Mr. Miller was in his thirty-first year of education. Prior to becoming principal of Meadow Spring, Mr. Miller worked in another southern state for thirty years, twenty-nine of which were at the elementary school level, one of which was at the central office level. Mr. Miller was a teacher for seven years, an assistant principal for five years, and had seventeen years of experience as an elementary school principal. His teaching experience included two years as a physical education teacher and five years as a fourth-grade classroom teacher. At the central office level, he served as the director of federal programs immediately before coming to Meadow Spring, overseeing Title One (the federal program that funds school
districts to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students) and Title Three (the federal program that provides funding for personnel and materials that are used to teach non-English speakers how to speak, read and write English), as well as Special Education. Mr. Miller served as valuable source of information, helping to triangulate the data in this study.

**Data Collection**

Yin (2006) suggested that good case studies have multiple data sources. This being the case, I collected a variety of data through observations and interviews with multiple people in varied positions. I also collected a variety of documents and artifacts to round out the data collection. In utilizing varied sources, I followed Yin’s (2006) recommendation to triangulate the data. Additionally, I employed memo writing as I was collecting data, to record thoughts as they occurred and so that what was clear to me at any given moment would remain clear when I worked with the data at a later point in time (Glesne, 2011). Consistent with qualitative research approach, data analysis was an ongoing process.

**Interviewing**

Interviews were the primary form of data collection for this study and were audio recorded. I conducted semi-structured interviews, meaning that they contained a pre-established set of questions, that I had written prior to the interview, (see appendices F, G, and H for interview protocols) yet they were also open-ended so that I could pursue new lines of questioning based on leads that arose during the interview (Glesne, 2011;
King and Horrocks, 2010). I utilized flexibility in interviewing in order to respond to various topics that emerged through the course of the interview (King & Horrocks, 2010).

I conducted interviews with the instructional coach, the principal, as well as the five teachers (see Appendices F, G and H for respective interview protocols). Interviews were scheduled at a time convenient to the individual, with teacher interviews primarily taking place in teachers’ classrooms at the end of the school day. Interviews covered a variety of questions, following the recommendations of Kings and Horrocks (2010) and included:

* Demographic questions
* Experience/ behavior questions
* Opinion/ values questions
* Feeling questions
* Knowledge questions

Interview questions were created to center around the conceptual framework based on Bryk and Schneider’s (2014) work which guided this study. Questions focused on the different levels of this framework, including the organizational level, the interpersonal level and the intrapersonal level. Questions focused on the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach (interpersonal level) and the relationship between the instructional coach and the principal (organizational level) as well as the teachers’ relationship with and trust in the instructional coach (interpersonal level) and factors that either contributed to or detracted from teachers development of a trusting relationship with the instructional coach. Additionally, interview questions were based on
the literature review and devised using an adaptation of Lecompte’s (1994) table (see Appendix I) in which I developed a planning matrix to determine what I needed to know, why I needed to know it (or how it related to the literature), what kind of data would answer the questions and where or from whom I would find this data.

**Observation**

Although interviews were the primary form of data collection, observations were also an important source of collecting data in this study. I observed the instructional coach on six different occasions over a three week time span in May 2016. I focused on her interactions with teachers, observing specifically for examples of trust-building behaviors (See Appendix J for Instructional Coach Observation Protocol). Observations took place over the three-week period at different times of the day (both during the school day and after school) and ranged in duration from thirty minutes to approximately three hours. I followed Glesne’s (2011) recommendations for observations, ensuring that I noted the setting, and described it in detail with words and sketches. I studied the participants in the setting, making note of their age, gender, ethnicity, their behaviors and those they interacted with as well as their nonverbal behaviors, including their gestures (Glesne, 2011). Additionally, I noted the event in which observations took place, ensuring that I differentiated between whether the observation was a special event or a daily event.

I conducted informal, unscheduled observations on the principal. These observations of Mr. Miller were recorded on the Principal Observation Protocol (see Appendix K). Due to the nature of the elementary school setting and the varied responsibilities of the
school principal, I did not anticipate collecting a great deal of data from principal observation, however, I was able to observe the principal for approximately one hour in a school leadership meeting and then incidentally through my time spent at the school conducting interviews and other observations.

The observations took place throughout the elementary school in a variety of different forms, which I purposefully chose basing my decision on varied formats and settings within the elementary school context. These observations included the times when:

- I shadowed the instructional coach as she interacted with teachers walking through the halls of the elementary school.
- I observed Taylor led a professional development “One Hour Wonder” for interested teachers on Word Walls.
- I attended a leadership meeting involving the Instructional coach, principal and the Assistant principal.
- I observed Taylor lead an interview team for the literacy specialist position at the school.
- I observed Taylor organizing and facilitating a free book fair sponsored by a local philanthropic agency at the school.
- I attended as Taylor led a new teacher End Of Year celebration.

Artifacts and Documents

Artifacts and documents (Yin, 2014, Creswell, 1998) also served as case study evidence and were used to triangulate the data. Artifacts collected included:
• photographs of post-it notes the instructional coach placed on student work on hallway displays
• a poster chart with faculty council norms posted in the instructional coach’s classroom
• handouts from a training session provided by the coach
• reflection page for new teacher end of year celebration,
• two completed classroom visit forms
• leadership meeting agenda
• tally sheets and comments for teacher survey of the instructional coach’s performance
• Completed grade level minutes were collected from Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, Fourth Grade, and Fifth Grade. The grade level minutes form contained a designated space labeled “Questions/Comments for the IC”.
• Two completed I “See” – Classroom Visit observation forms were collected. The “I ‘See’” form contained a spot for the instructional coach to document the time she was in the classroom completing the observation, a space to answer the question “What are the students doing?” and another section to record “Kudos” or positive aspects of the observation. Additionally, the form had a space where the IC talked to three students and asked “Could the student tell me what you (teacher) wanted him or her to learn from this work? If not, what did the student say?”
Handouts from the professional development session led on May 19, 2016 included an activity in which teachers would learn new words, and a note-taking form for teachers to record takeaways for the session. At the End of the Year New teacher celebration, which was observed on May 25th a handout was collected that had teachers list “3 accomplishments you are proud of this school year, 2 aspirations for next year and 1 student success.”

A key artifact was that of the instructional coach survey. This survey is administered by all second year instructional coaches in Glenwood County School District to their teachers. This survey functions as part of the instructional coach’s evaluation during their formal observation year with the school district. The survey includes fourteen statements with which teachers can strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or mark as N/A. Examples of statements included on the IC survey are “This instructional coach provides leadership to improve the instructional program in the school”, “This instructional coach is knowledgeable of content standards.” and “This instructional coach models mutual respect.” The survey also allowed for teachers to make comments regarding the instructional coach’s performance (see Appendix L).

**Data analysis**

Although data analysis was ongoing, as is typical of qualitative research, the first formal step in the data analysis was transcribing all audio-recorded interviews. These recordings were transcribed by a third party vendor. In order to make data easier to manipulate, I also typed the observation field notes, so that key pieces of data could
easily be coded. All data (interview transcripts, field notes, and artifacts) were uploaded into NVivo.

I utilized an emergent coding process for the data analysis of my research study. In keeping with the process of emergent coding, I read the texts several times (Stemler, 2001) using the data to be coded to create a coding scheme (Dahlsrud, 2006). As I was coding the data, I remained focused on my research question, *How do instructional coaches build relational trust* as well as the three levels of my conceptual framework (the interpersonal, intrapersonal, and organizational levels) to discern codes that would be helpful in addressing the focus of the study.

My first cycle of coding was a combination of inductive and deductive coding. The coding was inductive in that I looked for repeated patterns in the data, remaining open to codes that varied from what I had ascertained from the literature base. However much I tried to avoid an a priori set of codes, it was difficult to set aside the frameworks and theories that guided my research (Glesne, 2011). The coding was also deductive in that I could not set aside the knowledge I garnered from the literature review and I found codes emerging that aligned with previously established findings regarding the development of trust. At the end of this first cycle of coding, twenty top-level codes emerged with trust being comprised of twelve sub-codes and Roles and responsibilities being comprised of five sub-codes. Saldana defined sub-codes as “a second order tag assigned after a primary code to detail or enrich the entry” (p. 267). For example, the twenty top level codes included: changing perception of the IC, IC non-evaluative, IC role perception, IC strengths, IC weaknesses, Not enough time, Positive Attitude, Positive
environment, presence, previous IC Experience, previous situation, principal IC communication, Principal IC Relationship, principal support, Relationship, respect, roles and responsibilities, Seeking IC, Trust, Why partner with coach (see table 3.2 for a full list of codes and themes that evolved through the analysis process). Roles and responsibilities included five sub-codes including: administrative, general responsibilities, teacher perception of role, Teachers’ IC shoulds, and work with teachers. Trust was comprised of twelve sub-codes including: Two-way communication, competence, concern, confidentiality, consistency, expectations, non-judgmental/ non-evaluative, paraphrasing conversations, personal connection, predictability, sharing and delegation of control, and validation and celebration.

During the first round of coding, I deductively recoded the data, focusing on Taylor’s strengths and weaknesses as reported by Taylor, her principal, and the teachers. I looked for similarities in both strengths and weaknesses as described by the participants, and attempted to conceptualize how these qualities might be connected to the other codes that had emerged from the data. For example, I found many qualities reported by the teachers and Taylor describing Taylor’s strengths and weaknesses that were similar in nature and connected to one of the final themes from the data of competence. Some of Taylor’s strengths as reported by teachers were “thorough (Follows up on her to-do list)”, “excellent memory”, “spreading self too thin”, and too busy/ does too much.” These qualities aligned with qualities that Taylor self-reported such as being detail-oriented, and tending to overdo things for others. These pieces of data all ultimately fell in line with competence, “the quality of being competent; adequacy; possession of required skill,
knowledge, qualification or capacity” (dictionary.com), as Taylor’s attention to detail and continually doing for others in performing her job are characteristic of competence.

I began the second round of coding with the twenty top-level codes and seventeen sub-codes. During this round of coding, I initially focused on moving pieces of data and deleting codes in order to strengthen the codes that I had. For example, as I began Round two of coding, I merged the data under changing perception of IC to Teacher perception of IC. I also deleted the top level code of IC Non-evaluative and combined that data with the sub-code under trust of Non-judgmental / non-evaluative. I also deleted the codes “not enough time” and “Positive environment”. I used analytic memo writing throughout the analysis process. I chose to engage in this process to elucidate my thinking as I engaged in the analysis process and to serve as a reference in the write-up phase of the data analysis. Saldana (2013) described analytic memos “as somewhat comparable to researcher journal entries or blogs – a place to ‘dump your brain’ about the participants, phenomenon, or process under investigation by thinking and thus writing and thinking even more about them” (p.41). Excerpts from my analytic memo writing during Round 2 of data analysis dated 6.18.16 include: “I need to add to POSITIVITY information about Taylor not complaining – I think this is an emerging theme from the data.” And “I think I am going to delete Previous IC experience, because I don’t believe that it is having an impact on whether or not the teachers’ trust the current IC”.

During Round two of data analysis I took another pass at the data, going through interview transcripts and observation field notes, searching for data that would potentially support the elements of trust-building that were listed as sub-codes (two-way
communication, competence, concern, confidentiality, consistency, expectations, non-judgmental/non-evaluative, paraphrasing conversations, personal connection, predictability, sharing and delegation of control and validation and celebration). As I went through the data I deleted some codes such as expectations, personal connection, and predictability. At this point in the analysis, I moved personal connection to relationship and it personal relationship, and moved the data under predictability to consistency. I also moved concern to personal relationships, noting in my memo writing “I’m wondering if this isn’t really a part of PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS – because showing concern and doing these sorts of things helps to develop a personal relationship which leads to trust.”

In round two I also recoded the data in a pass during which I focused specifically on data in transcripts related directly to trust, focusing in on the answers to three particular questions from the Teacher Interview Protocol (“What does trust mean to you, How important is trust to you?”, “What makes you decide whether or not you trust another person?”, and “Please talk to me about the level to which you feel you can trust your IC to hold certain things {i.e. questions, concerns, etc.} in confidence.”) At the end of Round two, I was left with eight top level codes: competence, confidentiality, celebration/validation, consistency, non-evaluative/non-judgmental, personal relationship, positivity, and Present. On 6.22.16, after listing out these codes, I noted in my memo writing “I think these are my themes for moving forward into round three of data analysis.”
In the third round of data analysis, I developed a table (See Table 3.2), which details the themes that emerged from the data, each source of data, as well as the frequency in which each theme was noted.

Table 3.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes at a Glance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addie Moffitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelle Randolph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents/Artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this point in the data analysis, I again went through the data ensuring that I had pulled all key pieces of evidence to support each theme. Additionally, in the third round of data, I took another pass at all of the data specifically, seeking out evidence to support the emergent themes from Round three. To ensure that all evidence was collected and supported each theme, I recorded all of this information in a Table (see appendix M) noting the theme, key pieces of evidence and the sources for the evidence. The steps I took in round three of data analysis served to ensure that I had accurately represented all themes, and that each theme had substantial evidence to support it.
Finally, a fourth round of analysis took place while I was writing the fourth chapter. During this fourth round, three of the themes were combined into one, leaving me with a total of six themes that lead to the development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers. Celebration/validation, non-evaluative/ non-judgmental were merged with the theme positivity. I decided to combine these three themes, as they were in essence all speaking to specific aspects of positivity. For example, Taylor’s non-evaluative and non-judgmental nature contributed to positivity, as did her celebration and validation of teachers. Table 3.3 details the codes that emerged after each round of coding.

Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2</th>
<th>Round 3</th>
<th>Round 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Themes Present</td>
<td>Changing perception of IC</td>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>developing personal relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC Non-Evaluative</td>
<td>confidentiality</td>
<td>confidentiality</td>
<td>exhibiting competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC Role Perception</td>
<td>celebration/validation</td>
<td>celebration/validation</td>
<td>maintaining confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC Strengths</td>
<td>consistency</td>
<td>consistency</td>
<td>creating and sustaining a positive environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC Weaknesses</td>
<td>non-evaluative/non-judgmental</td>
<td>non-evaluative/non-judgmental</td>
<td>staying consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>personal relationship</td>
<td>personal relationship</td>
<td>being present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>positive attitude</td>
<td>positivity</td>
<td>positivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive environment</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>Previous IC experience</td>
<td>previous situation</td>
<td>Principal IC communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principal relationship</td>
<td>principal Support</td>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp;</td>
<td>Roles and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking IC</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why partner with coach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enhancing Trustworthiness
In order to ensure that my research is credible, I utilized different techniques to ensure the reliability of my work. Trustworthiness is a concept utilized by some researchers to demonstrate the plausibility and credibility of their work, since it cannot be deemed true if reality is socially constructed (Glesne, 2011). Creswell (2009, p. 191-192) delineated eight techniques to make research more trustworthy.

1. Member checking
2. Data triangulation
3. Prolonged time in the field
4. Peer debriefing
5. Negative case analysis
6. Clarification of researcher bias
7. Rich, thick description
8. External audit

Kyburz-Graber (2004) defined four standards which should be strived for in order to reach general research criteria of objectivity, reliability and validity. Kyburz-Graber (2004) recommended:

- Utilizing a theoretical basis as a reference point for interpreting data
- Triangulating the data through multiple data source
- Establishing a chain of evidence with traceable evidence
- Fully documenting Research from case study is including details of how the report is compiled
I strived to meet these criteria by grounding my research in a conceptual framework rooted in Bryk and Schneider’s (2002) work on relational trust and triangulating my data through multiple sources (interviews with different individuals, document collection and analysis, and participant observation). Additionally I strived to prove the trustworthiness of my study by establishing a chain of evidence (Appendix M) and fully documenting the details of the case study as I engaged in the research process. I extensively documented the case by keeping records detailing contact with possible participants throughout the sample selection process, audio-recording and note taking during interviews, utilizing field notes during observations, and storing all artifacts and transcriptions electronically using nVivo as well as in a data collection notebook.

Additionally, throughout the process, I utilized member checking to determine the accuracy of my findings as I strived to provide a rich, thick description of my findings. For example, I discussed my initial findings informally with Mr. Miller upon seeing him at a district workshop during the summer of 2016. Mr. Miller was positive regarding the developing themes and did not negate any of them. Member checking was also done with Taylor, when I shared my fourth chapter with her as we worked together to present the findings of this study to new instructional coaches with in the school district in the Fall of 2016. During a conversation, Taylor affirmed that she thought the themes were accurate and representative of her experiences. Member checking was again conducted in September of 2016 when I emailed a final list of themes to Mr. Miller. Furthermore, peer debriefing was employed throughout the process as I met with my committee chair frequently to discuss data collection, data analysis and emerging results.
Limitations of the Study

Glesne (2011) emphasized the importance of representing study limitations: “Part of demonstrating the trustworthiness of your data is to realize the limitations of your study” (p.212). Despite my attempts to ensure the credibility of this study, I acknowledge that my study has limitations.

One of the primary limitations of this study is the short duration of time in which this study was conducted. In order to compensate for this limitation, I conducted multiple observations at the school. These observations were scheduled in different settings, formats and times in the elementary school in order to provide the broadest perspective possible.

Additionally, there is the possibility that some interviewees may not be as forthcoming for fear of information returning to their place of employment. In order to compensate for this and offset this potential disadvantage, I placed a great deal of significance on developing trust and rapport with my interviewees, following the previously cited recommendations of King and Horrocks (2010) such as beginning interviews with simple descriptive questions. Another limitation of the study is the fact that the teachers selected for this study were all based on personal recommendations from the instructional coach. While this particular limitation could not be completely adjusted for, the triangulation of data through multiple observations, multiple interviews and artifact collect work to ensure that the data collected was trustworthy.

Conclusion
In this section I described the research design and methods I used in this study. I began with my research question, followed by a review of qualitative research and then more specifically a rationale for selecting case study as a research design. I then defined my paradigmatic orientation and the role I played as the researcher. This was followed by a description of the study context and sample selection. I followed these components by detailing steps in the data collection and data analysis process. I ended the chapter with a discussion of the steps I took to increase the trustworthiness of the study, as well as possible limitations to the study. In Chapter 4, I will present the findings that resulted from this research.
CHAPTER 4

Introduction

In this chapter, I will share the findings from my research at Meadow Spring Elementary School as to how the instructional coach builds relational trust with teachers. It has been well established that instructional coaches need to create and maintain trusting relationships with teachers (Routman, 2014; Aguilar, 2013; Brady, 2007).

This chapter begins with an overview of the context in which the coach worked to develop trusting relationships with teachers. This context includes the coach’s responsibilities along with her relationship and communication with the principal, as this connects to the organizational level of Bryk & Schneider’s (2014) framework. The chapter finishes with the six major themes that emerged from this research and corresponded with the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels of Bryk and Schneider’s (2014) framework:

• developing personal relationships
• exhibiting competence
• maintaining confidentiality
• creating and sustaining a positive environment
• staying consistent
• being present

The primary data sources for the findings were interviews, however, observations and artifacts were included as well. Interviews were conducted with five teachers, the instructional coach, and the principal. Six observations were held over three weeks in
May of 2016. The observations took place at various times of the day and included the coach in varied settings throughout the elementary school performing different job functions.

**Instructional Coach Responsibilities**

Taylor’s responsibilities were wide and varied. Evidence for understanding these responsibilities was collected through interviews with the teachers, the principal and Taylor herself, as well as from observations and documents. Some of Taylor’s more administrative responsibilities were evidenced through observations. They included test coordination and organizing a schoolwide book fair. This book fair was funded by a local community organization and allowed all students to receive eleven free books. On May 4th, 2016, Taylor was helping to check in testing materials for make-up students from the state-wide test. On May 24th, Taylor worked with the school’s literacy specialist to organize books for the book fair and help students make their book choices when it was their class’ turn to participate. Additional administrative type duties reported by Taylor during her interview include making badges for staff members, copiers, and copy accounts for teachers.

The teachers listed a wide array of duties for Taylor in their interviews. Taylor’s responsibilities as reported by teachers included leading vertical team meetings, attending grade level meetings, facilitating professional development, checking to make sure that teachers have what they need, coordinating staff meetings, analyzing data, and regular teacher duty (which in Taylor’s case consisted of helping with car dismissal after school daily). Taylor’s work specific to teachers involved helping them develop and write their
annual goals, setting up computer programs for teachers to implement with students, ensuring that teachers have the necessary resources to teach students, helping new teachers, by facilitating their classroom observations and overseeing new teacher meetings, and helping teachers get their online gradebooks set up.

In this section of the chapter I provided an overview of Taylor’s job responsibilities. Taylor’s wide and varied job responsibilities occurred in the context of a supportive relationship with her principal that was characterized by frequent two-way communication. In the next section, I will explain the relationship between the principal and the instructional coach.

**Principal Relationship**

The relationship between the principal and the instructional coach is a significant factor to be examined in the development of trust between teachers and instructional coaches for many reasons. First, the amount of support the principal gives a coach is correlated with coach efficacy, meaning the more support a coach receives from a principal, the more effective the coach will be (Poglinco et. Al, 2003). When you couple this fact with the finding that principal and coach communication is a critical component of the relationship between the two (Symonds, 2003), it can be theorized that coaches and principals must have a positive relationship characterized by communication in order for a coach to be effective. Furthermore research suggests that the principal sets the tone for trust in the building more than any other stakeholder (Routman, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2007a). Bryk and Schneider (2002) suggested that the principal’s competence and integrity coupled with their respect and regard for teachers is associated with the level of
relational trust amongst all adult school members. When all of these factors are combined, an examination of the principal and more specifically the principal’s relationship with the instructional coach is critical.

The principal and the instructional coach at Meadow Spring Elementary had a strong relationship characterized by clear, frequent communication and principal support. Both the principal and the instructional coach agreed that their relationship was a good one. Mr. Miller best summarized it in his interview when he stated, “had I not had her, it would have been an impossible year for me. That’s probably the most accurate way to say it. Without her it would have been a nightmare.” Taylor affirmed Mr. Miller’s belief in the quality of their relationship, stating, “We have a really good relationship just because he’s allowed me to get comfortable with a lot of things and then I can take them and run with them.” This section of the chapter detailed the relationship between the principal and the instructional coach. I will now detail the communication which occurred within the relationship.

**Communication**

The relationship between the principal and the instructional coach was characterized by clear, frequent two-way communication. Both Mr. Miller and Taylor stated that they communicated daily, either face-to-face, through email or text. In his interview Mr. Miller addressed the content of their communication:

Well, we talk about personnel and personnel needs. We talk about school needs as far as academics go, grade level and faculty dynamics, PD needs. She’ll bring issues to me, questions to me a lot about things that she’s thinking about or what
she’s working on… I don’t know that there’s anything especially with school we don’t talk about. I treat her like she’s the third wheel in the administrative team because she is.

Mr. Miller addressed the fact that their communication is two-way, with him listening to Taylor in his interview when he said, “I certainly listen to her opinion about a lot of things. I think she’s very insightful and I’d be foolish not to listen to her.” During the May 16th leadership meeting, Mr. Miller’s and Taylor’s communication was evident. The conversation between the two was very collegial with an equal give and take as the two discussed resumes and hiring for the Literacy Specialist position that was open at their school for next year. Additionally, Mr. Miller listened to Taylor as she offered input on a teacher she had recently observed.

All of the teachers interviewed stated that the principal expected and encouraged teachers to work with Taylor if they needed something. Eva Moore, stated “I think he expects us to work a lot with her. She’s at all of our meetings. She’s at all of our trainings. I think he sees her being a vital part of working.” When asked how the principal communicates these expectations, Eva replied, “I guess just having her there. And having her available to us”.

This section described the nature of communication between the instructional coach and the principal. The next section will describe how this communication enabled the principal and the coach to convey a consistent message to staff, as well as to describe how Mr. Miller supported Taylor in her role as an instructional coach.

Support and Consistency of message
Mr. Miller and Taylor’s relationship was supportive in nature, with the principal providing support to the instructional coach. Both Mr. Miller and Taylor spoke to his support of her in her role as instructional coach. In his interview, Mr. Miller explained how he demonstrates his support of Taylor:

Well, I don’t contradict her in front of teachers. I try to give her the platform for being a significant instructional leader on our campus. When she can send out emails that’s pertinent to instruction, I’ll let her do that. There’s probably a cost in that to me because maybe I’m not providing instructional leadership, but my personality is such that I don’t have to be the biggest voice in the room. I would rather utilize her and my assistant principal as integral parts of the team. There’s enough for me to talk about than not talk about. When she does PD for the most part I’m there. I think it’s just my presence and them seeing and hearing my message that I support or I’m behind her…

Mr. Miller’s support of Taylor was confirmed through observations as well as during Taylor’s interview. For example, on May 19th, when Taylor was leading her professional development session, Mr. Miller came into the media center where the session was being held and stayed for approximately five minutes, sitting and casually talking with the teachers. The teachers seemed comfortable and were not put off by his presence, which denoted a level of familiarity with Mr. Miller’s presence at such meetings. Taylor referenced Mr. Miller’s supportive nature in her interview, “He’s so supportive. I think he supports me by…we’re speaking the same message…He definitely supports me that way.”
The relationship between Taylor and Mr. Miller was also characterized by the two ensuring that they convey a consistent message to teachers, as well as being marked by frequent communication. In his interview, Mr. Miller stated:

I’m behind her when she speaks, it’s as if you’re hearing the voice come from me. That’s what I want to be for the AP, just that I know when any of the three of us talk, you’re really hearing from all 3 of us…We communicate all the time. Because she's so hungry to continue to get better and better, I know we can communicate through email and text and face-to-face. I know if we're off campus and I send her a text or I send her an email, I know I'm not going to have to wait long for her to respond because she listening for that stuff.

Taylor addressed Mr. Miller’s mention of the leadership team speaking the same message in her interview when she stated, “We’re speaking the same message. I think if you don’t speak the same message, that inadvertently communicates that you’re not on the same page. He definitely supports me in that way.”

Taylor further elaborated on their intentionally communicating a consistent message in her interview when she mentioned how the leadership team sat down and discussed the things they believed to be key to education and decided to celebrate those things when they saw them. Taylor stated:

We just noticed that if we are on the same page and we value the same things in a lot of ways, it gives the teachers more calming sense expectation. They don’t feel like they’re chasing twenty different hats. They feel like we’re on the same page,
we’re speaking the same message and we’re all doing it for the kids, and they can feel comforted in that.

Taylor also discussed the frequency of their communication in her interview when she stated, “He checks in with me daily. He's either face to face talking to me or sending me emails. He's very clear, which is one thing I really appreciate.” Taylor and Mr. Miller worked intentionally to ensure that they were communicating the same message to teachers. In order to do this, they communicated frequently with one another.

In this section of the chapter, I provided an overview of the context in which the findings occurred. This context involved the instructional coach’s job responsibilities and her relationship and communication with the principal. While this section of the paper provides depth and context to the research study, none of the aforementioned elements directly aided in answering the research question of *How do instructional coaches build relational trust with teachers.* The next section of the paper delves into the findings of how the instructional coach built trusting relationships with teachers.

**Findings**

In this section I provide an explanation of evidence for the themes that emerged from the analysis of data collected. Six major themes emerged after data analysis. These themes (developing personal relationships, exhibiting competence, maintaining confidentiality, creating and sustaining a positive environment, staying consistent, and remaining present) are described in Table 4.1 and used to organize this section of the chapter.
### Table 4.1

**Research Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing Personal Relations</td>
<td>The personal relationships that the instructional coach developed with teachers greatly contributed to teachers’ trust in her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibiting Competence</td>
<td>The instructional coach’s knowledge and ability to successfully perform her job responsibilities aided in the development of teacher’s trust in her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Confidentiality</td>
<td>The instructional coach’s intentionality about maintaining confidentiality and being transparent when she needed to move information forward helped to promote the development of teachers’ trust in her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating and Sustaining a positive environment</td>
<td>The instructional coach’s creation and sustenance of a positive environment that celebrated teacher successes, was non-evaluative and non-judgmental of teacher performance, her positive attitude and her abstinence from participating in any negative conversations and gossip contributed to teacher’s trust in her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying Consistent</td>
<td>The instructional coach’s consistent behavior promoted teacher’s trust in her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Present</td>
<td>The instructional coach’s visibility in the school building and attendance at meetings, trainings, etc. helped to promote teachers’ trust in her.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 details the sources from which the themes emerged. All major data sources are listed (individual teacher interviews, instructional coach interview, principal interview, document and artifacts). For example, elements of creating and sustaining a positive environment, were noted in nine out of ten possible data sources. In the remainder of this chapter I will discuss the findings that emerged from the data analysis in the order in which they were presented in table 4.1. I will present an overview of each finding and then I will detail specific evidence that supports each finding by source.
Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Confidentiality</th>
<th>Creating and Sustaining a Positive Environment</th>
<th>Consistency</th>
<th>Personal Relationship</th>
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Developing Personal Relationships

Taylor’s ability to develop personal relationships with the teachers greatly contributed to the teachers’ trust in her. The theme of personal relationships emerged from observations, interviews with all of the teachers, and the instructional coach interview.

In her interview, Addie Moffitt spoke a great deal about her relationship with Taylor offering several statements that alluded to the strength of their relationship. For example, she said “It was constructive criticism. I wanted it. I needed it and I wasn’t scared to ask her for help, just that trust, that relationship” and “All the instructional coaches that I’ve worked with have had that, the way of making you feel comfortable and you can talk to them, and I think it is. It’s all about trust.” Addie also stated, “I guess when I trust someone, I see them more as a friend than a coworker or an acquaintance. There’s things that I could tell Taylor that I would not tell other people, because I trust her” and “I feel like I have developed more of a friendship with her than just a coworker”.
In her interview, Addie referenced how Taylor builds relationships with all teachers when she said, “She is really good about popping in and talking to teachers, and she would just stop and talk, and that was nice, just to have somebody to talk to. Then she listens, and she tries to help you if you want the help” and “She was really good at listening. She’s really good at putting notes in your boxes, birthday cards, and handwritten, not like a generic birthday card that you get. She hand writes everything.” Addie also provided a more specific example of her personal relationship with Taylor when she stated, “I had surgery, and she brought me dinner. Even after I said, ‘You really don’t have to do anything,’ she still did”.

When asked what kind of things helped to develop a positive relationship between her and Taylor, Addie responded:

I think conversation, just having that conversation, stopping and talking, checking in, just seeing how your day goes. It’s nice when somebody comes through the door and they want to, “Are you okay? Do you need anything today?” versus, ‘I’m going to come in and watch this lesson. Then, you’re like, ‘Oh, here we go again…it’s just nice and she’s great. I know that she’s so busy and she always seems to stop and take time for everybody.

Addie best summarized the nature of her relationship with Taylor when she stated, “I feel like I have developed more of a friendship with her than just a coworker.”

Elizabeth Adams also spoke about her relationship with Taylor. When asked how she would describe her current relationship with Taylor, Elizabeth replied, “Wonderful. I feel so welcome to go and talk to her any time that I need to.” Elizabeth also referenced
the personal nature of her relationship with Taylor when she stated, “In private too, you
talk to her about how you’re having personal things go on outside of the classroom and
she’s so open to listening and talking to you and saying keep me updated…”

Isabelle Randolph discussed the personal nature of her relationship with Taylor
when she said:

She is approachable, very. She’s one to listen and process before she speaks. She
doesn’t pose that authoritative role. I don’t feel like she even wants it. She really
just wants you to feel comfortable with knowing that you can come and ask any
question whether it be…I talk to her on a personal child/mom basis, question from
that end of the spectrum to well into my teaching career about things like that.
She’s very open on any level…I would say the personal mom level. Our
daughters were born on the same exact day a year apart. That alone (helped her
trust Taylor more, the personal relationship).

In her interview, Isabelle mentioned that initially she viewed Taylor as more of
an administrator, stating:

I will say at first I did think of her more an administrator. I think that’s just
because of my experience and because at the beginning of the year we did this
first introduction meeting type thing with the school with all the teachers and she
sat up there with Mr. Smith (the principal at the time when Taylor first came to
work at Meadow Spring Elementary School) and Ms. Jones (the assistant
principal at the same point in time), and so you thought of her more, ‘She’s an
administrator. You’re going to have to treat her that way,’ Because the way I treat her and talk to her is totally different than Mr. Miller and our AP.

When asked what made Isabella change the way she viewed Taylor, she replied, “She’s personable. She’s very personable. Very easy to talk to.”

In her interview, Eva Moore described the evolution of Taylor’s relationships with teachers:

I don’t know if this needs to go out or be publicized or anything, the instructional coach that left before she came was just greatly loved. So she had some big shoes to fill. I felt bad for her. Because I felt like she came into a difficult situation. We lost a principal, got a new principal. She was here after our coach left, who was a friend to everybody, too. My heart went out to her. That’s just hard to come into a new job, to be in a leadership role. And probably people that weren’t as excited because they wanted the other person. They went through the whole principal change. She’s been through a lot with us. But she’s been her. I think she did a great job holding her own and establishing those relationships even though it was not easy.

Eva Moore then succinctly addressed the importance of a personal relationship in developing trust when she stated, “I guess we have built up that relationship that I trust her because I believe what she says.”

Anna George also discussed the nature of her relationship with Taylor. When asked how she would describe her current relationship with Taylor, Anna replied, “Great. Very positive relationship. I definitely feel like I can rely on her”. In her interview, Anna
also said, “I love her. She’s so sweet. She’s very understanding and encouraging. You can tell she’s always trying to be as helpful as she can. I know she’s always asking me, what can I help you with? Let me know anything I can help you with.” as well as stating “She’s supportive. Very supportive of me.” When asked if her relationship with Taylor had changed at all over the course of the year, Anna discussed the evolving nature of their relationship, stating, “I think it’s just grown. As we’ve gotten to know each other and as it’s just become stronger as we’ve worked with each other. I’ve seen how supportive she is.” When asked, if there were any specific examples of things that might have helped to develop a relationship or trust with Taylor, Anna replied:

Well early on in the year, I was having a lot of trouble with one of my students. I would talk, she would give me as much support as she could about, with it. I would talk to her about it. She told me that I could go down there if I need to anything. I could call her for any help.

Taylor’s personal relationship with teachers was also affirmed by Taylor’s interview, the instructional coach survey, and several observations. Taylor affirmed her intentionality in developing personal relationships when she said, “I found that just by starting those more in-depth relationships that other people are like, ‘Can you help me with this?’”

Taylor also discussed the evolving nature of her relationships with teachers during her tenure at Meadow Spring Elementary School when she said:

The beauty of it is that I was able to keep my head up enough and work on the relationships first so that I got my bearings and everything else could fall into
place. I would say things have really...they’re so different from the beginning. They’re just immensely different. I feel different when I walk into the building now.

The instructional coach survey provided a great deal of insight into the nature of Taylor’s relationships with all teachers. As previously stated, the instructional coach survey is a tool administered by all second year instructional coaches to the teachers at their school that evaluates them on their job performance. One hundred percent of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the instructional coach “models mutual respect.” On the instructional coach survey, one teacher comment spoke to Taylor’s relationships with teachers. This comment simply stated, “She makes sure we feel important.” Another teacher commented:

I really have enjoyed having Taylor as our instructional coach. She goes the extra mile and assists us everyday. She makes sure we feel important. Taylor understands the trials we go through everyday because she has been there. I appreciate the respect she shows us as teachers.

Observations of Taylor working with teachers also documented her personal relationship with them. These observations evidenced Taylor’s easygoing nature, light-hearted humor, and personable nature with teachers. These qualities were witnessed through many events, whether it was hugging a teacher who was walking down the hall (5-4-16), asking a teacher how she was feeling prior to beginning a professional development session (5-19-16), joking around with teachers during meetings (5-19-16; 5-24-16; 5-25-16), or discussing a range of topics during the end of year new teacher
celebration (5-25-16) which ran the gamut from hiking, couponing, weight, food, and cookie stores. For example, on May 24, 2016, Taylor led a group of teachers in selecting resumes for the literacy specialist position that would be open at Meadow Spring Elementary School for the upcoming school year. Taylor’s personable nature was observed when she joked around with the teachers as they affably asked questions, such as “How much does this pay?” because of the large number of resumes received for the position. Taylor engaged in the light-hearted banter offering forth humorous comments inferring that some of the teachers might be stepping off the committee because they may want to apply for the position due to the large amount of interest in the position.

Taylor’s easygoing interaction with faculty members was also observed earlier on May 24, 2016. Taylor was setting up the school-wide book fair with another faculty member and she joked around that she was going to call in sick on Friday. Her humorous comments were also observed at the end of the year new teacher celebration on May 25th. When asked by one of the teachers how she stays so skinny, Taylor replied, “Baggy shirts and heels. It’s an optical illusion.”

Taylor’s ability to develop personal relationships with teachers was key to the development of trust between the teachers and her. The significance of a personal relationship was noted in all teacher interviews, multiple observations, as well as in the instructional coach survey.

**Exhibiting competence**

One theme that emerged was that of exhibiting competence. A simple definition of competence is “the quality of being competent; adequacy; possession of required skill,
knowledge, qualification or capacity” (dictionary.com). In this study, exhibiting competence refers to the fact that the instructional coach’s knowledge and ability to successfully perform her job responsibilities aided in the development of teacher’s trust in her. The instructional coach’s competence was referred to in the interview with the principal, the instructional coach interview, three of the five teacher interviews (Anna George, Addie Moffitt, and Isabelle Randolph), and was noted in both the instructional coach survey as well as instructional coach observations conducted in this study.

One hundred percent of teachers taking the instructional coach survey, either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements that suggested their belief in the coach’s competence:

- assists in use of appropriate educational tools to enhance or extend instruction
- is knowledgeable of content standards
- helps interpret content standards
- provides the opportunity to learn best practices that can improve student learning
- develops beneficial professional development opportunities

Furthermore, teacher comments on the instructional coach survey referred to teachers’ belief in Taylor’s competence. Teacher comments on the survey included:

“Taylor is an asset to our school. She provides so much support and guidance to our school everyday”, “Taylor is a great IC. She is professionally knowledgeable, and most helpful”, “She has a wealth of knowledge”, and :

Our Instructional Coach is extremely helpful to me in my current role. She helps us interpret data and test scores in order to identify struggling students that would
benefit from extra interventions and also provides relevant professional development opportunities. She is always open to help teachers in any way she can!

Taylor’s competence was observed on many occasions over the course of this study. On May 19, 2016, Taylor conducted a professional development training, in which she guided teachers through a series of activities to further their knowledge on word wall words. It was evident that Taylor was both well-prepared and well-versed in the content for the subject area, as she had prepared hand-outs and activities for the teachers, and she could easily answer teacher questions and refer to her experience with the subject matter. Taylor’s materials (a PowerPoint, three interactive word wall game stations, and a note taking handout) were prepared and set out prior to the meeting. During the training session, Taylor spoke to her experience with the subject matter as she referenced games she used in the classroom to aid students in mastery of word wall words. She also showed and referenced the books she used to plan the professional development at the beginning of the session.

Several teachers referred to Taylor’s competence in their interviews. Addie Moffitt stated:

She’s my math guru. I wanted to do guided math groups in my class, so I went to her because I knew she did that previously. She’s been awesome to talk to about, ‘What do I need to do? Where should I start? What did you do with your other kids? How many days a week did you do that?’ I don’t know. Just getting all those questions answered. She’s pretty good at any of those things that we need.
Anna George and Isabelle Randolph also spoke of Taylor’s competence in their interviews. Anna stated, “I feel confident in her, trusting her because I feel like she’s very knowledgeable in what she’s doing”. Isabelle said:

She stresses to make sure everything’s in order. She doesn’t want anything to go wrong. Every single professional development or staff thing, she has planned and pre-planned and gone over it again, looked at the PowerPoint and has it setup and has gone through it to make sure all the links work before we even get there…She has a lot behind her education wise, where she’s taught, things she’s taught and her memory, my word, she’s got an excellent memory. She remembers everything she’s ever done.

Both the principal, Carl Miller, and Taylor, referenced her competence. In his interview, Mr. Miller stated, “her knowledge base [makes people trust her]”. In her interview, Taylor stated, “I like to do it and I like to do it well. I’m detail oriented…I just try to make sure I don’t go in anything unprepared. That’s maybe because I’m detail oriented.” When asked what helped the teachers to trust her more, Taylor replied, “being knowledgeable. Yeah, because I think that a lot of times they just want someone to give them a quick answer. I can tell them what they need to know, where to find it, that sort of thing.” Taylor’s detail oriented nature was also evidenced in her preparation for sessions that she led.

Minutes turned in from various grade levels’ meetings also spoke to Taylor’s competence. Completed grade level meeting minutes were collected from kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade. These minutes served
as documentation of grade level discussions during their meeting times. The grade level minutes form contained a space with “Questions/Comments for the IC”. Comments from the fourth grade meeting on January 5, 2016 stated that the IC “answered concerns regarding writing prompts.” In the grade level minutes form from the second grade meetings on October 19, 2015 and 21, 2015, documented this grade level’s collaboration with Taylor. “We started to discuss our next math unit (on the 19th) but tabled the discussion until Wednesday because we needed to talk to Taylor. Today we worked with Taylor on mapping out our lessons for our next math unit, Relating Addition and Subtraction to Length.”

Many of Taylor’s qualities that were found throughout this study through observations, interviews, and document collection attested to Taylor’s competence. Her attention to detail, her experience as a teacher, her knowledge base which she utilized to answer questions, and her preparation for her work with teachers are all characteristic of Taylor’s competence. Taylor best summarized the importance of competence in her interview when asked what helped the teachers trust her more. Taylor promptly replied, “Being knowledgeable”. Taylor’s competence contributed to teacher’s trust in Taylor.

**Maintaining confidentiality**

A third theme that emerged is that of maintaining confidentiality. The instructional coach’s intentional maintaining of confidence and being transparent when she needed to move information forward helped to promote the development of teachers’ trust in her. This theme was noted in observations, artifacts, all teacher interviews, and the instructional coach interview.
All teachers interviewed referenced their belief in Taylor’s maintaining confidentiality. When asked what made her decide whether or not to trust someone, Addie Moffitt stated:

I have to feel comfortable with them and I have to know that things I tell them are going to be kept in confidence, unless necessary. Obviously, there’s some things she can’t keep in confidence. It’s nice to know that I can go and vent to Taylor, and then not get back to admin. It truly sometimes…it’s a venting kind of day. You just need to vent…It’s nice to know that when I do go to her, that I don’t have to worry about it getting back to admin. Taylor, she definitely doesn’t say things that don’t need to be said.

Anna George expressed similar sentiments in her interview, stating, “I can trust her completely. I mean I have talked to her about things that to me are, were completely confidential kinds of things. I think she’s just shown that to me because she’s so supportive. If anything she’ll just listen to you.” and “I did tell her things and kind of like issues that I was having in confidence. She was just real supportive of me and pretty much just listened because there was no real solution.”

When asked to what level she felt she could trust Taylor to hold things in confidence, Elizabeth Adams replied:

The highest level possible. I know when she saw the compare and contrast, she was like ‘Can I share it with the school when we have the meeting?’ I was like ‘If you promise not to use my name.’ I wasn’t really wanting to be put on the spot. So she did. She said I saw another teacher doing this and it was really cool, but
she didn’t mention names or anything, so she didn’t violate that request…In private too, you talk to her about how you’re having personal things go on outside of the classroom and she’s so open to listening and talking to you and saying keep me updated and you know you don’t have to worry about her telling anybody. I feel 100% that I can trust her in any scope of it.

Eva Moore also stated, “I have gone to her with confidential things…. I went to her with something that I didn’t go to anybody else about the school. I didn’t go talk to anybody else about it with the whole school, but I went to her”.

Taylor affirmed her intentionality about maintaining confidentiality. In discussing a situation in which a teacher came to her discussing wanting to change grade levels, Taylor said, “That was a conversation between us. She still asked me to keep it confidential and I did.” Taylor also stated, “If you’re using me as a sounding board, you just need to talk, it’s just you and me, and I’m keeping it confidential, then we’re good to go.”

Taylor directly addressed the concept of confidentiality in her discussion of trust during her interview, when she said, “For me, I know that I’ve maintained trust when I have maintained professionalism. Same thing with confidentiality. I don’t think trust always means confidentiality because there are times when someone tells me something that I have to tell someone else.”

Taylor’s intentionality regarding maintaining confidentiality was also observed at a new teacher end-of-year celebration meeting on May 19, 2016, during which one of the attending teachers waited until the end of the meeting, after two of the other new teachers
had left, to share with Taylor the reason that her arm was bandaged. Taylor had asked the teacher earlier in the meeting why her arm was covered with a large bandage. The teacher evaded answering the question during the meeting while other teachers were present. At the end of the meeting, after two of the new teachers had left, the teacher confided in her that the reason her arm was covered was because the principal had told her to cover it. The teacher stated that she didn’t know why another male teacher didn’t have to cover his tattoos. Taylor responded supportively, but remained neutral, replying, “I know before Mr. Miller, the principal here asked everyone had to cover their tattoos and they were hostile about it, which I get,” and also saying, “I don’t know that I wouldn’t just ask him”. Additionally, Taylor’s confidentiality was noted in artifacts. Taylor had faculty council norms posted in her room, with one of the norms being, “maintain confidentiality when asked”.

Taylor’s intentionality in maintaining confidentiality was evidenced primarily through teacher interviews, when teachers were asked what made them trust someone and the degree to which they felt they could trust Taylor to maintain confidential information. Maintenance of confidentiality was also noted in observations. Taylor maintained intentionality unless she felt it was imperative to move information forward, in which case she was transparent about the process. Taylor’s attention to confidentiality aided teachers in developing a trusting relationship with her.

Creating and sustaining a positive environment

The instructional coach maintained a positive environment. The instructional coach’s creation and sustenance of this positive environment, which celebrated teacher
successes, was non-evaluative and non-judgmental of teacher performance was a crucial component of teachers’ trust in her. Her positive attitude and her abstinence from participating in any negative conversations and gossip contributed to teacher’s trust in her. Different facets of this theme were noted in four out of the five teacher interviews, the principal interview, the instructional coach interview, artifacts, the instructional coach survey, and instructional coach observations.

Celebrating and Validating Teachers. The instructional coach’s intentional efforts to focus on the positives with teachers, to validate their efforts, and celebrate their successes aided in the development of trust in teachers. Taylor’s celebration and validation of teachers was noted in instructional coach observations, artifacts and teacher interviews.

One of the artifacts noted in school visits, was that of post-it notes on hallway displays and student work. In her interview, Addie Moffitt commented about how this validated teachers:

I love how she used to walk around the school and leave post-it notes on the kids’ work, with a comment. As a teacher… the kids love that, but as a teacher, it’s like, ‘I feel validated sometimes with the activities.’ Even just talking to her, I’m like, ‘I did it this way. Do you think that’s okay?’ She’s like ‘Yeah, that was good.’ or ‘Yeah, Try to do it this way next time.’ She’s always…I get lots of validation from her.

Taylor also discussed this means of celebrating teachers in her interview:
One thing I’d make a goal for myself, at least monthly is to spend time in the hallways and then I take a sticky pad with me and a pen and I go literally room to room to room and I look at their hallway display. I look at what standard it matched to, I look at how well the kids did with it. If it’s not something that I can celebrate as a board, then I go in and I focus in on one kid’s piece and then I write a personalized sticky note on every single board, at least one. That’s another way that I just try to make sure that I’m giving feedback instructionally, but I’m also filling the kids’ bucket and also filling the teacher’s bucket at the same time, but also let them know that, ‘Hey your student work is valued,’ and what that quality work looks like. We’ve made an intentional point to celebrate certain things that we know are lacking.

These post-it notes were noted as a collected artifact for this research. The post-it notes included comments such as, “Great preparation for test-taking!” and “Incredible way to show how division works with a unit fraction and a whole number”.

Taylor elaborated on her intentional positivity in her interview. “I want to come to school and be happy everyday. There are a lot of days where it’s not a happy day or a happy moment in the day, but I just try to always go back and go, ‘Okay, but this happened. This was awesome that this happened.’ I just try to restart everyday new and that’s a challenge that I put on myself.” In her interview, Taylor also discussed an anonymous positive network she started at the school saying:

I actually even have a little network that’s behind the scenes that is like a few people that we pick someone different every month or two to write an anonymous
positive note. They have no idea who does it. I just try to do things like that. I think you’ve got to love being at work. If you don’t love being at work, I don’t know how you coach anybody anyway. We were in a place where I don’t know that anybody loved being at work. We’ve really had to work on that. You got to want to be here before I can even begin to do my work. Those are just some things.

Eva Moore also addressed Taylor’s celebration and validation of teachers. When discussing the coaching cycle she participated in with Taylor and one of the academic specialists, Eva stated, “Having them come in and see you teach. They might tell you something you’re doing wrong. But it also lets you know when you’re doing something right. I was really nervous going into it, but yes, it validated what I was doing.”

Another key artifact, aside from the post-it notes, that evidenced Taylor’s celebration and validation of the teachers is that of the teacher observation form. This form had a space labeled “kudos” in which Taylor could record positives noted in the classroom during her observations. One completed observation form dated 12-3-15 contained the following under the kudos heading, “It’s very clear that your expectations have been communicated and that your students know what to do! Transitions are smooth and they were all on task! I love the way you previewed vocabulary.” Another teacher observation form dated 10-26-15 contained the following under kudos, “I absolutely loved being in your classroom! Your students’ knowledge of expectations is evident in the way they worked at each station.”
Taylor also discussed the celebratory aspect of her teacher observation form in her interview, stating:

I might tell them, ‘I like your classroom environment,’ but on my feedback form I’m naming the things in the environment that I really like. I love the collaborative groups. I love the talks that you encourage when you asked them to do this, that and the other. Once I give those strengths, I then talk to at least three kids in the room…I’m going to provide feedback and I’m mainly going to look for strengths. I think a lot of times if you can find their strength, then it will open up the doors for the weaknesses. I try to separate that very clearly.

Taylor was observed celebrating teacher successes. On May 4, 2016, upon passing a teacher walking down the hallway, the teacher shared that her project was fully funded and Taylor cheerfully clapped for the teacher. On May 24th, when Taylor led a group of teachers in reviewing resumes for the literacy specialist position for which they were hiring, her validation of teachers was evidenced. During this observation, one teacher printed out interview questions, but was hesitant to share them with the others. Taylor said, “Why? I’m so proud of you!” and again, restated, “I’m so proud of you.” On another observation on May 25, 2016, Taylor held an end of year celebration for first year teachers, as well as teachers who were new to the school. At this event Taylor celebrated with teachers as they shared their successes, which they had listed on a handout that had teachers list “3 accomplishments you are proud of this school year, 2 aspirations for next year, and 1 student success”. During this same observation, Taylor demonstrated positivity as she complemented one teacher on her acceptance into graduate
school. Her celebration of teachers was also witnessed when one teacher said, “I can’t think of another accomplishment,” to which Taylor promptly replied, “I can…let me think of one.”

This section of the paper explained how Taylor’s celebration and validation of teachers contributed to a positive environment. The next section of the paper will detail how being non-judgmental and non-evaluative also aided in the creation of this environment.

**Being non-judgmental and non-evaluative.** The instructional coach’s intentionality about being non-evaluative and non-judgmental of teachers through both her interactions with and observations of teachers promoted teacher trust in her. Taylor’s non-evaluative, non-judgmental nature was referenced in her interview, collected documents and artifacts, as well as in interviews with three of the teachers.

One particular example of this aspect of creating and sustaining a positive environment is the teacher observation form which Taylor used when completing classroom visits. This form was partially non-evaluative in nature, and contained space for non-evaluative feedback, in which Taylor would record what she observed and write down students responses to the question “Could the student tell me what you (teacher) wanted him or her to learn from this work? If not, what did the student say?” On a form dated 12-3-15, Taylor recorded the responses of three students. Beside student 1, Taylor noted “separating ‘asking’ from ‘telling’ independently” and “this one goes in the asking because the word ‘do’ asks”. On the same form, in the section labeled “What are the students doing?” Taylor’s recorded response was completely non-evaluative, as she
noted, “Working on reading stations: 1) Scrabble spelling (adding values), 2) Candy cane poem (rhyming words/ picture to describe), 3) asking/ telling (Speaking each) 4) Cause/ Effect (sorting) 5) Brainstorming (Should Santa shave?) and 6) Guided reading with teacher. Taylor referenced this form in her interview, discussing components of it that were non-evaluative:

We try to stay true to evidence. I don’t talk about things that I can’t tangibly… I then talk to at least three kids in the room. I try to get varying levels, varying backgrounds so that I’m not getting the same sample size, then I ask them, ‘what are you learning today?’ I see what they communicate back to me and I actually write a verbatim on the form so that the teachers are seeing. They might tell me later on ‘that kid had no idea what they were doing because they were out for five minutes.’ It’s a really good pulse check because it allows me to somehow see how well the content is going across without being evaluative. I’m just literally taking it from student evidence.”

Taylor also stated, “I try to be in their rooms to just know that my observation is completely different from [the administrators]. I’m not evaluative.” The teachers also valued Taylor’s non-evaluative nature. Addie Moffitt stated, “I wasn’t scared to go to her and ask for help, and I wasn’t scared of what she felt of my answers, whether they were stupid or ‘I guess she’s on the right track’, or ‘Oh Lord, she needs a lot of help right now.’ I wanted her feedback, so I didn’t take it as criticism.”

Eva Moore also commented on this theme in her interview. In discussing why she decided to participate in a writing coaching cycle, she stated:
I knew she wouldn’t come in here and judge me harshly. If there was anything
that I needed to work on, it wouldn’t be judgmental and in a way to put you down.
She’s here to make you better, and I do feel like that’s what she’s here to do. I
think now that [Taylor and district level academic specialist] were here to help
and not be judgmental and put you down.

Isabelle Randolph discussed a time in which Taylor was not judgmental of her
difficult students the year prior. “She was not judging, [she] just stood at the door, eyes
and ears, helped us look at time, that sort of thing, which was nothing, nothing in her job
description of what to do”.

This section of the paper delineated how Taylor’s non-judgmental and non-
evaluative disposition towards teachers aided in her development of trusting
relationships. The next section will explain how Taylor’s demonstration of positivity
also aided in the creation of relational trust.

**Demonstrating positivity.** The positive attitude of the instructional coach and her
abstinence from participating in any negative conversations and/or gossip about others
helped teachers to develop trust in her. This theme was evidenced in both the principal
and IC interviews, three of the five teacher interviews, the instructional coach survey, as
well as being noted in documents, artifacts and observations

Three teachers referenced Taylor’s positivity and abstinence from gossip and
negativity in their interviews. Elizabeth Adams offered several statements supporting
Taylor’s positivity throughout her interview. She said, “It was helpful hearing her
positive feedback.” and:
I think one of the first new teacher meetings we had when we started was really cool, because they had like a drop in the bucket. Here’s what I’ve seen from you and they went straight to building us up instead of trying to say this is what you need to improve upon already. We shared what was going great in our classroom and they shared…Taylor, Mr. Miller, and Ms. Smith…they would share some things that they saw that were really great in the classroom, just by observing us. We never once felt like we needed to protect ourselves. We felt like this was the safest environment and I’ve never been at a school where it felt so lifted up. It was a really neat experience.

Elizabeth also stated:

Even in the middle of the year and you are starting to get bogged down and you’re feeling tired, they’re still lifting us up and sharing…and then instead of pointing out to us our weaknesses, they asked us if there’s anything that we need. They worded it as ‘What do we need’. So we could talk about if we had a weakness ourselves. Maybe we noticed that there was a class that we were struggling with or a subject that we’re having a hard time with and we would share that and then they would say, what can we do to help you with that.

and

I’ve never ever heard her speak badly about anybody. Not a single teacher or parent or even administrators. Sometimes when you do this for so long, you can hear the frustrations. I’ve never heard her complain about any frustrations. It’s never, this is so long. Why are we doing this, or anything. She’s like okay let’s
see what we can do to...when we were doing the talent show...she brought food for us so it didn’t feel like it was so long. She’s so positive. She doesn’t look at it as a negative. When you see something positive like that and you don’t hear people talking negative, there is trust there. You know that if you go to her and say that you’re frustrated, you know she’s not going to go and tell somebody else that you said that.

When asked what made her trust another person (in general, and then more specifically the instructional coach), Elizabeth replied:

Listening through conversations you can hear who’s talking about how to make things better versus who’s talking to just complain. You tend to lean more towards those people that are talking about positive versus complaining. Then you know if they’re complaining about that, what if they complain about you or what’s going on. You pick up on that.

Isabelle Randolph stated:

Speaking about the trust thing, there have been many times when I have voiced my stressed emotion of 33 kids on my case load and all of these things that are required of you. There are some days when I’m like...You can vent back. You know what I mean? She just takes it. She just takes what you’re talking about and listens to you. She’s like, ‘It’s okay. We’ll figure it out.’ It’s literally like she takes it on. She doesn’t bust back.

Eva Moore echoed Taylor’s positivity by simply stating, “She’s never in a negative mood.” and “She’s never, I’ve never seen her crumble. No, she’s never. She’s
not anybody that’s going to be complaining or whining.” Eva also stated, “She’s so sweet and energetic and just always positive and “how you doing and has a smile.”

Taylor discussed her intentionality in remaining positive in her interview:

I want to come to school and be happy everyday. There are a lot of days where it’s not a happy day or a happy moment in the day, but I just try to always go back and go, ‘Okay, but this happened. This was awesome that this happened.’ I just try to restart everyday new and that’s just a challenge that I put on myself.

and

I would say that would be one of my strengths because I think about last year and how hard last year was and I think that’s the only thing that got me through everyday. I would just come in and no matter what happened the day before, I always came out with a smile on my face and tried to pretend like nothing was going on…I’ve always tried for professionalism. I’m not going to gossip. I will not do that.

Carl Miller, principal reiterated the views expressed by Taylor and the teachers in his interview. “I think she’s always smiling with them.” “When she’s talking to them and with them, she’s real positive, she’s encouraging.” “She has not bought into any negative behavior. She’s not going to be out here talking to one teacher about another teacher. Any thoughts that she has negative about anybody, she’s going to keep to herself or between us….she’s predictable and upbeat.”

Taylor’s positivity was also noted in observations, artifacts, the instructional coach survey, and during the observation in which a classroom teacher shared that she
had her arm covered with a bandage because the principal didn’t want her tattoo to be visible. Taylor listened to the teacher and remained neutral, not making any disparaging remarks towards the principal and encouraging the teacher to talk to the principal. The faculty council norms posted in Taylor’s room reflected her intentional positivity. Two of the expectations listed on the norm chart included “hearing everyone’s opinion without judgment” and “sharing decisions to others with a positive focus”. Additionally, one of the teacher comments listed on the instructional coach survey stated, “She has such a positive attitude in everything that she does.”

Comments noting Taylor’s positivity were also listed on the instructional coach survey. For example, one teacher commented, “[Taylor] has been instrumental in helping me as a new teacher at this school. She has such a positive attitude in everything that she does and will go the extra step any time I have asked her for help.” Another teacher commented, “Her charisma is contagious! Everyone loves to see her positive smiling face every day!”

Creating and sustaining a positive environment played a large role in the teachers’ development of trust in Taylor. This positive environment was multifaceted, consisting of Taylor’s celebration and validation of teachers, her ability to remain non-evaluative and non-judgmental as well as her ability to demonstrate positivity by abstaining from engaging in any negative conversations or gossip.

**Staying consistent**
The instructional coach’s consistent behavior promoted teacher’s trust in her. Taylor’s consistent behavior was noted in observations, as well as referenced in her own interview, the interview with the principal and one of the teacher interviews.

When asked what makes people trust her, Carl Miller, principal replied, “Her predictability. She’s very predictable and upbeat.” Eva Moore echoed similar sentiments when she stated, “She sticks to her word. She’s always there. She’s been reliable and dependable. She always seems to be the same,” and “She’s very consistent”. When asked what helped to develop the positive relationship she has with Taylor, Eva replied, “I don’t think anybody could come in and have that perfect relationship right off the bat, because time builds up the trust, and you have to see that consistency in people.” In her interview, Taylor discussed her intentionality in remaining consistent:

I’ve never come and acted differently from one day to the next and backlashed or done something that is not characteristic of me and I really think that’s been the quickest relationship builder. It’s just maintaining constant and then knowing what to expect. It’s not scary.

Taylor also discussed consistency when asked what trust means to her in her interview, stating “I think trust is also consistency. I think people trust you and they know what to expect.”

Taylor maintained the same, positive, upbeat collegial demeanor in all observations throughout the study. Taylor was observed six times throughout May 2016. In all of these observations the same easygoing, positive, and upbeat demeanor was observed in her interactions with teachers. For example, on May 24, 2016, Taylor was
setting up the school-wide book fair with another faculty member and she joked around that she was going to call in sick on Friday. Taylor’s easy going lighthearted nature was also observed later in the day on the May 24th, when she led a group of teachers in selecting resumes to interview for a literacy specialist position for the upcoming school year and she joked around with the teachers as they asked questions.

Taylor’s consistent demeanor and behavior was evidenced throughout all observations. Additionally, Eva Moore spoke a great deal about Taylor’s consistent nature and the significance of consistency in developing trusting relationships in her interview. Taylor discussed her intentionality in being consistent in her interview as well as the importance of consistency in building trust. Mr. Miller also discussed Taylor’s consistency in his interview. Taylor’s consistency was key in the development of trusting relationships with teachers.

**Being present**

The instructional coach’s visibility in the school building and attendance at meetings, trainings, etc. helped to promote teachers’ trust in her. Taylor’s presence was noted in all five teacher interviews and also referenced by Taylor in her own interview.

In her interview, Anna George stated, “Yeah I mean she just, she’s always… She’ll check in on me too which I feel like not a lot of people are like yea, I’m just going to leave them be down there or whatever’s going like.” When asked what helped to develop a positive relationship with her and Taylor, Addie Moffitt discussed Taylor’s presence, mentioning how she is present with teachers by checking in on them “Just having that conversation, stopping and talking, checking in, just seeing how your day
It’s nice when somebody comes through the door and they want to know, “are you okay? Do you need anything today?”

Elizabeth Adams also discussed Taylor’s visibility in the building. When asked how Taylor spends the majority of her time, Elizabeth Adams replied, “Running around. I don’t ever see her at her desk. She’s always walking around checking to make sure everybody has what they need.” Elizabeth further discussed Taylor’s presence when she was asked what helped to develop a positive relationship between her and Taylor, replying:

I think the fact that she is very present. Doing so may different roles. She’s helping set up for any after school parent/teacher, she’s there with the big programs. We did a talent show and she was a part of it. A staff talent show, so they saw that different side of her. She’s willing to give in any capacity. Not just to help the teachers, but to help the students too. And help the parents as well. (in discussing building trust with teachers).

Eva Moore also discussed Taylor’s presence:

She’s been with us through all the training that we go through with [the district academic specialist]. She sat in with us on a math meeting earlier in the year. If we have any virtual professional developments, she sits with us. She doesn’t just send them to us. She goes through it with us. That’s comforting to have her there.

Eva also stated in her interview, “I don’t know how she does it, but she’s always available” and “She’s always there.”
Eva further discussed the significance of being present when she was asked what sorts of things helped to build up trust with a person over time. She replied, “Being with somebody. She’s present in meetings and any time you need her. “I think just her being present. Just being at our meetings. Always around. Always available”. When asked what helped to build a positive relationship between her and Taylor, Eva mentioned presence over time, stating, “Again, I think that’s a time thing. I don’t think anybody could come in and have that perfect relationship right off the bat.”

Isabelle Randolph mentioned Taylor’s presence and availability when she stated: She stays late every single day, every single day. If you even call or email and say, ‘Look, we need to sit and talk,’ she absolutely makes it a plan and she writes it down. She will stay anytime and every time that you need.

Isabelle also discussed Taylor’s presence in the sense that she is fully focused and present with her full attention, stating:

Some meetings you sit, you have administrators who’ll pop up their computer and will start responding to emails when there’s a PowerPoint presentation going on. I don’t know. Taylor is notepad ready. She takes notes at every single meeting, everything. Even if it’s her own professional development, she will stop, write down something and keep going, every single time. She’s 100% present.

Taylor referenced her intentional presence and availability to teachers in her interview, stating, “Yes, I have a lot of managerial tasks, but I try not to eat that up in my day when my teachers are here and the kids are here. If I’m sitting in this room all day, I think it sends a message, so I have to find that Happy medium.” When asked how she
spends her time, Taylor replied, “Probably running all over this building. It’s just running,” and:

My day, I would probably say I’m in my room maybe a total of two hours just during the school day all day long. Then I would say I’m out and about from that point either in the front office and rooms or in the hallways. I try to be out so that no one thinks that I’m just shut away and not accessible.

Taylor also said:

I think out in the building too I never really realized how much of a contact person you are for not only classroom teachers but related arts and for guidance. You have the opportunity to make both of those or all of those parties relevant to one another. I just try to be out and accessible.

Conclusion

This chapter began with an overview of Taylor’s responsibilities as an instructional coach and a discussion of her relationship with the principal to provide insight into the context within which Taylor developed trusting relationships with teachers. Interviews with teachers, the principal, and Taylor, along with artifacts and observations provided the data from which the six themes emerged as to how Taylor developed trusting relationships with teachers. Taylor’s ability to develop personal relationships, her demonstrated competence, maintenance of confidentiality, creation and sustenance of a positive environment, her consistency and her availability and presence in the school all helped teachers to develop a trusting relationship with her.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

Introduction

In chapter four, I provided a presentation of data and results from the study. This chapter consists of a summary of the study, discussion of the findings, implications for practitioners, and recommendations for future research. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the study’s findings in light of the the established knowledge base regarding instructional coaches and trust.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how instructional coaches build trusting relationships with teachers by asking *How do instructional coaches build relational trust with teachers?* Investigation of this question was centered around a conceptual framework primarily based on Byrk and Schneider’s (2002) work on relational trust in schools. This conceptual framework purports that trust develops through three different levels; the interpersonal context, the intrapersonal context, and the organizational context (as illustrated in Figure 5.1). The findings from this study are aligned with their respective level of the conceptual framework in Figure 5.1. I will use this figure to guide the discussion for the remainder of this chapter.

Figure 5.1

*Logic Model for findings*
Using this framework, the research question was examined through the use of a case study in which the development of trust between an elementary school instructional coach and five different teachers was analyzed. I determined school selection based on the nominations of five academic specialists within the school district who suggested instructional coaches whom the academic specialists perceived as having been successful in establishing trusting relationships with teachers. Data was generated through interviews, observations, and artifact collection. Analysis of data resulted in the following six themes:

- Exhibiting Competence
- Maintaining Confidentiality
- Creating and Sustaining a positive environment
- Staying consistent
- Remaining present
• Developing Personal Relationships

A unique finding to this study is that instructional coaches remaining present help to develop trust with teachers. While this theme, of presence can be inferred from Bryk and Schneider’s (2002) conceptual framework, given that one must be present to take part in the daily social exchanges that occur at the interpersonal level, this finding is new to the trust literature as well as the research regarding instructional coaches.

Discussion of the Findings

In this section I will discuss the relationship between the results of this study and their connection previously established literature. My conceptual framework presented in chapter one, and illustrated by Figure 5.1 will guide the discussion on the study’s findings. According to this model, the development and maintenance of trust occurs when parties in a relationship have compatible expectations regarding one another’s roles and responsibilities and these expectations are in turn fulfilled. In this framework, I suggest that trust is three-tiered, consisting of the intrapersonal level, the interpersonal level and the organizational level.

This study suggests interconnectedness between the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels of the conceptual framework. In order for the cognitive activity of trust discernment to occur at the intrapersonal level, some sort of a relationship must be present at the interpersonal level. Based on the findings of this study, I propose that the coach’s presence along with the development of a positive relationship at the interpersonal level, promotes the discernment of the coach as trustworthy at the
intrapersonal level, which in turn leads to the overall development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers.

The findings from this study reaffirm the existing literature base, adding a research-based foundation to practitioner recommendations and further extending the corpus of scholarly research. Additionally, these findings highlight the significance of the interpersonal context in regards to the finding of the coach’s remaining present.

Intrapersonal Context

The intrapersonal level of relational trust consists of discerning the intentions of others. Bryk and Schneider (2002) propose four basic criteria for trust discernment at the intrapersonal level as being respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity. Four major themes relating to the instructional coach’s development of trust with teachers emerged within this context. The four emergent themes at the Intrapersonal Level of trust are:

- Exhibiting competence
- Maintaining Confidentiality
- Creating and Sustaining a positive environment
- Staying Consistent

**Exhibiting competence.** One finding at the intrapersonal level is that the instructional coach’s knowledge and ability to successfully perform her job responsibilities aided in the development of the teachers’ trust in her. Competence as a means of developing trust is mentioned throughout the literature. Taylor’s competence was alluded to in several teacher interviews such as when Addie Moffitt referred to
Taylor as her math guru and mentioned going to her for help in starting guided math groups because Taylor was so knowledgeable about the content.

This finding extends the corpus of scholarly research, furthering the work of Tschannen-Moran (2014), and Abram, Cross, Lesser & Leven (2003) by studying the development of trust in the unique context of the instructional coach and teacher relationship. Tschannen-Moran (2014) mentioned competence in her definition of trust which is defined as “one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent” (p. 19-20). Furthermore, exhibiting competence relates directly to the conceptual framework, as Bryk and Schneider (2002) purported competence to be one of the tenants of the discernment of an individual’s trustworthiness at the intrapersonal level.

Abram, Cross, Lesser & Levin (2003) also address the significance of competence in the definition of interpersonal trust. Abram et. al (2003) define interpersonal trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable” (p. 65) and purport that there are two dimensions of trust that encourage the creation and sharing or knowledge. The first dimension is that of benevolence, in which a person cares about another person’s wellbeing, and the second being competence, in which a person believes another has the expertise to accomplish their stated objectives.

Not only does the finding of competence extend the scholarly literature, by illustrating how an individual’s perceived competence promotes trust development in this context, but it provides a research-based foundation for practitioner recommendations. For example, Aguilar (2013) recommended that instructional coaches plan and prepare
for meetings with teachers in order to demonstrate competence. This particular practitioner recommended technique was documented by Taylor and contributed to teachers’ development of trust in her.

Maintaining confidentiality. The instructional coach’s intentionality about maintaining confidentiality and being transparent when she needed to move information forward helped to promote the development of teachers’ trust in her. For example, as referenced in chapter four, a teacher came to Taylor wanting to discuss that the principal had asked her to cover her tattoos. Taylor maintained this teachers’ confidentiality when the principal came in the midst of their conversation. She also encouraged the teacher to discuss her concern with the principal. This finding is aligned with the previously established literature. For example, Aguilar (2013) recommended that instructional coaches establish confidentiality with clients, assuring them that communications between the classroom teachers and the coach will be kept in confidence. Brady (2007) also addressed the significance of confidentiality upon asserting that teachers need to trust coaches without fear of punitive reporting to the principal.

Creating and sustaining a positive environment. Creating and sustaining a positive environment is a multifaceted theme which refers to the instructional coach’s intentionality in celebrating teacher successes, being non-evaluative and non-judgmental of teacher performance, demonstrating a positive attitude and her abstaining from participation in any negative conversations and gossip contributed to teacher’s trust in her. Celebrating teacher success, and being non-evaluative and non-judgmental were
reflected in the literature, while demonstrating a positive attitude and refraining from negative conversations and gossip are an addition to literature base.

The findings related to creating and sustaining a positive environment were primarily reflected in the experiential, non-research based work of Routman (2014) and Aguilar (2013). For example, Aguilar suggested the instructional coaches validate the teacher’s experiences. Routman recommends that coaches celebrate teachers, recognizing what they have done well. Routman (2014) further suggests that coaches listen without judgment.

**Staying Consistent.** The instructional coach’s consistent behavior promoted teacher’s trust in her. This finding aligns with Whitener et al’s (1998) categories of employee perceptions of managerial trustworthiness. Whitener et al found that the behavioral consistency, or the predictability of manager’s actions based on past actions as well as behavioral integrity or the consistency between what the manager says and does positively influences employee’s belief in managerial trustworthiness.

A great deal of the development of trust occurs in the intrapersonal context. Factors that helped the teachers to discern the coach as trustworthy and facilitated the development of trust between the coach and the teachers included the coach exhibiting confidence, maintaining confidentiality, creating and sustaining a positive environment, and staying consistent.

**Interpersonal Context**

The discernment process of whether or not teachers decide to trust the coach is nested within a relationship between the two parties. This relationship comprises the
interpersonal context. At the interpersonal level, two findings emerged that were supportive of the instructional coach’s development of trust with teachers, that of remaining present and developing personal relationships.

**Remaining present.** The instructional coach’s visibility in the school building and attendance at trainings, and other meetings helped to promote teachers’ trust in her. Taylor’s visibility and presence was significant in that it was noted in all five teacher’s interviews and referenced by the instructional coach herself. This particular finding is unique to this research study and is not directly reflected in either the practitioner or research-based literature. However, despite the fact that presence is not explicitly mentioned in the trust literature, the significance of it can be inferred. For example, Bryk and Schneider (2002) stated that “discernment of the intentions of others is a fundamental feature of day-to-day interpersonal exchanges” (p.21). In order for these interpersonal exchanges to occur, and the positive personal relationship to develop between the coach and the teacher, the instructional coach must be present. This study sheds light on the context in which these interpersonal exchanges can occur, and provides suggestions as to how instructional coaches can be present in their school setting. To remain present, instructional coaches may want to remain visible in the school building, by dropping in and casually talking to teachers, leading professional development sessions, or attending trainings and meetings with teachers as demonstrated by the instructional coach in this study.

**Developing Personal Relationships.** The personal relationships that the instructional coach developed with teachers greatly contributed to teachers’ trust in her.
The significance of personal relationships is widely reflected in the literature, in both general trust development and more specifically the development of trust related to instructional coaches and teachers, as well as in both practitioner recommendations as to the development of trust and research based studies, Knight (2007) speaks to the significance of trust when he states “Coaching is about building relationships with teachers as much as it is about instruction.” (p. 33). Additionally, Knight (2004) identified the importance of coaches’ interpersonal abilities amongst other qualities such as flexibility, being a good listener and being likable. Routman (2014) also spoke to the significance of developing personal relationships when she stated, “Foremost among all leadership qualities is the ability to form, nurture and sustain trusting and respectful relationships. Without those trusting relationships, not much of significance will happen for school-wide achievement and a healthy school culture” (p. 185).

Furthermore in her recommendations to instructional coaches, Aguilar (2013) suggested that coaches look for personal connections as well as being open about themselves and their personal and professional experiences. Abrams et al (2003) also recommend that building personal connections is essential to the development of trust.

A 2007 report by the Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat stated that a coach’s effectiveness is determined by the relationship between teachers and coaches. Additionally, many of the coaches in the America’s Choice schools researched by Poglinco et al (2003) emphasized the importance of having a strong collegial relationship with classroom teachers as they tried to implement new strategies into their classroom teaching practice.
The significance of a coach’s interpersonal skills is also echoed by Ertmer et al (2005). These researchers examined the perceptions of 31 peer coaches to determine the skills and characteristics that coaches perceived to be necessary. The most frequently cited important characteristic by coaches in their study was that of people skills. The coaches in Ertmer et al’s (2005) study defined people skills as being comprised of sub-skills such as “building relationships, establishing trust and credibility, and having respect for others” (p. 61).

This study affirms the practitioner recommendations for instructional coaches to develop relationships with teachers (Aguilar, 2013; Routman 2014) and extends the general literature on trust (Abrams et al, 2003) by situating it in this unique context. This study examine the development of trust between the instructional coach and the teacher, operating under the premise that this trust will increase collaboration between the two parties, which in turn will lead to more implementation of best practices and ultimately improve student achievement.

**Organizational Context**

Bryk and Schneider (2002) purport that relationships are in turn impacted by the “institutional structure of schooling” (p.22) as well as the unique aspects of the individual school community. Bryk and Schneider also suggested that organizational factors can be key in the development of relational trust. For the purposes of this study, the organizational context was focused on the principal’s impact on the instructional coach’s ability to develop trust with teachers.
While many elements of the relationship between the instructional coach and the principal were aligned with previously established best practices from the literature, the organizational context, or more specifically the principal, did not directly impact the instructional coach’s development of trust in this study. Two recommendations from the literature regarding best practices for instructional coaches and principals, consistent coach and principal communication and principal support of coach were noted in the organizational context of this study. For example, Symonds (2003) referenced the principal’s impact on the coach when she noted that principal and coach communication is one of the most important components in a successful coaching model. This consistent communication was evident in observations and was referenced by both the principal and the instructional coach in this study. Mr. Miller referenced their communication in his interview, stating, “We communicate all the time. Because she's so hungry to continue to get better and better, I know we can communicate through email and text and face-to-face. I know if we're off campus and I send her a text or I send her an email, I know I'm not going to have to wait long for her to respond because she listening for that stuff”.

Taylor also mentioned their frequent communication in her interview when she stated, “he checks in with me daily. He's either face to face talking to me or sending me emails. He's very clear, which is one thing I really appreciate. “

Despite the fact that the literature states that principal support is a critical factor in coach efficacy (Poglinco et al, 2003), the principal in this situation was very supportive, and the instructional coach’s relationship with the principal was positive and correlated with aspects of the literature, no evidence was collected to suggest that the principals’
support impacted the instructional coach’s development of trust as suggested in the conceptual framework. The lack of evidence occurred despite the fact that I asked questions to specifically seek out ways in which the principal supported the coach.

**Implications for Practice**

This study was concerned with the development of trust between an instructional coach and classroom teachers. It is imperative that Coaches build trusting relationships with the teachers. Without these trusting relationships, teachers won’t reveal areas in which they are struggling and are less likely to fully participate or take risks (Routman, 2014) as people will be more focused on self-protection (Mitchell and Sackney, 2011). In theory, collaboration with the instructional coach should result in improved teaching practice, which in turn should result in increased student achievement. This study has implications for a variety of practitioners: instructional coaches, principals, and District level administrators.

Themes that are of particular importance to the instructional coach are the development of a personal relationship, exhibiting competence, maintaining confidentiality, creating and sustaining a positive environment, staying consistent and being present.

First, the importance of developing a personal relationship cannot be overstated. All of the teachers interviewed in this study spoke to their personal relationship with the instructional coach, with teachers asserting that they viewed Taylor more as a friend than a coworker. Practical suggestions that might help practicing instructional coaches as cited in this study include visiting classrooms and talking to teachers about both academic and
personal subject matters, as well as personal communication such as putting notes in teacher mailboxes, and giving birthday cards. For the principals, this finding has implications as well. Principals should recognize that it will be important for instructional coaches to develop relationships with teachers and should respect this and not ask coaches to do something that might hinder the relationship, such as compromising confidentiality. Principals and districts should also seek to hire individuals with strong interpersonal skills as this will be important in developing relationships with teachers. It is recommended that districts and principals incorporate interview questions into their hiring practices that ascertain how potential instructional coaches seek to establish personal relationships and more specifically, how they plan to develop trust with teachers.

The finding that Taylor exhibited competence has implications for the practicing instructional coach as well as principals and district level administrators. The responsibility for implementing this finding lies with the principals, district level administrators and instructional coaches. Initially, principal and district level administrators should seek to hire instructional coaches that have the education and experience to be competent professionals. This implication is especially pertinent, as there is a great deal of variance in the hiring requirements for instructional coaches (Roller, 2006). Furthermore, principals and district level administrators should ensure that instructional coaches are provided with the training and resources remain current in their field so that they can continue to be competent. Instructional coaches also must
work to ensure that they stay current through their own professional development and readings, as well as staying informed with district policies and practices.

Maintaining confidentiality is significant to instructional coaches in regards to developing trust with teachers. Coaches must maintain confidentiality and be forthright in communicating with teachers when they need to move information forward to other individuals. Instructional coaches who do not maintain confidentiality run the risk of hindering the development of trusting relationships with teachers. This finding is significant to the instructional coach, but is also important to the building principal. Principals should recognize that confidentiality is going to be a key element in the development of the trust that allows instructional coaches to work with teachers to improve their practice and ultimately positively impact student achievement. Principals should respect this boundary and not expect coaches to break this confidentiality with teachers unless necessary.

Creating and sustaining a positive environment is a multifaceted finding that has many layers of implications for practicing instructional coaches. First, coaches should work to celebrate and validate teacher successes. Taylor did this by leaving positive notes on hallway displays and listing teacher strengths on observation forms.

Another aspect of this finding is that instructional coaches should be non-evaluative and non-judgmental of teacher performance. A simple way for coaches to demonstrate this quality is ensure that teacher observations are factual in nature, listing observations. This element of creating a positive environment has implications for building principals and district level administrators as well. Since it is important for coaches to be non-
evaluative and non-judgmental, principals and district administrators should not expect or allow coaches to serve as evaluators of teachers. Finally, coaches should strive to demonstrate a positive attitude and refrain from participating in any negative conversations and gossip.

Staying consistent leads to teachers’ trust in instructional coaches. Coaches should work to demonstrate consistent behavior, as a lack of predictability will deter from the development of trust. The implementation of this finding rests with the individual instructional coach.

Finally, coaches should work to remain present as this will help teachers to build trusting relationships with instructional coaches. Coaches can work to “be present” by being visible in the building and attending meetings and trainings with teachers. This finding has implications for building level principals and district administrators. Building level principals should recognize the importance of coach’s presence and not divert the coach’s time into other more managerial tasks, (possibly test organization and administration) that will remove coaches from their work with teachers and make them less visible. District level administrators might want to consider implementing specific policies regarding the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach so that the position is not misused. Additionally, district administrators may want to have an individual that coaches tier up to so that they can bring up concerns regarding inappropriate use of their time.

**Recommendations for Future Research**
The goal of this study was to determine how instructional coaches develop trusting relationships with teachers. Data was collected at one elementary school and was centered on one instructional coach and five teachers. The site was selected based on nominations from five district academic specialists. Five district academic specialists were contacted and asked to nominate instructional coaches who had done a good job building trusting relationships with teachers. It is recommended that future research focused on the development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers involve more sites with both coaches that have been successful and unsuccessful at building trusting relationships. Non-examples, or situations that have deterred the development of trust between teachers and coaches may provide more illumination as to what helps to develop trust in this relationship and to answer the research question of how do instructional coaches build trust with teachers?

Additionally, more research sites in which the relationship between the coach and the principal is examined will help to shed more light onto the principals’ role in development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers. While no evidence was collected from this study to support the principal’s influence on the development of trust with teachers, I would argue that there is still a strong likelihood that the principal does influence trust development, as exemplified by the changes in school climate. The principal and instructional coach inherited a tumultuous school environment which was marked by division between the previous coach and principal. Teacher satisfaction with the school environment improved after the previous principal and instructional coach left and Mr. Miller and Taylor Smith took their place. Furthermore, The coach and the
principal in this study had a strong and positive relationship. As suggested in regards to the coach and teacher relationship, looking at negative cases, or sites in which the principal and the instructional coach do not have a positive relationship may provide more clarity as to the principal’s role in the instructional coach’s development of trusting relationships with teachers and help to answer the question *How do principals impact the development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers?*

An additional area for research may be to look at the changing nature of trust as individuals transition to different roles, by studying coaches who were previously employed at the school as a teacher. This study focused on an instructional coach who was relatively new to the school, who at the time of the study was in her second year of employment at the research site. The instructional coach had been employed as a teacher elsewhere before becoming a coach at the research site. Studying instructional coaches who were previously employed at the school as a teacher will help to illuminate the changing nature of trust, and how trust in an individual changes as the individual changes roles.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study build upon the work of previous researchers who have studied trust and the instructional coach position. Additionally, these findings provide a research-based foundation for previously established practitioner recommendations. The findings from this particularly case study revealed that the levels of the conceptual framework having the most significant impact on the development of trust between the instructional coach and the teachers were the intrapersonal and interpersonal level. The
coach’s relationships with teachers and the coach’s behaviors which teachers observed had the biggest impact on the development of trust.

A contribution of this study to the literature is the finding that instructional coaches remaining present helps to develop trust with teachers. This finding is new to the trust literature as well as the research regarding instructional coaches. This study suggests interconnectedness between the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels of the conceptual framework, with the coach’s presence along with the development of a positive relationship at the interpersonal level, promoting the discernment of the coach as trustworthy at the intrapersonal level, which in turn leads to the overall development of trust between the instructional coach and teachers.
Appendix A

Clemson University IRB Approval

Dear Dr. Klar,

The Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the protocol identified above using exempt review procedures and a determination was made on April 21, 2016 that the proposed activities involving human participants qualify as Exempt under category B1 based on federal regulations 45 CFR 46. Your protocol will expire on February 28, 2017.

Please find attached the approved consent document(s) to be used with this protocol.

Dr. Klar, please note that your training expires in June. Please let us know when you have completed the CITI training course "Group 1 Investigators Conducting Social and Behavioral Science Research (SBR) at Clemson University" available at www.citiprogram.org, and we will update the file. More information on the CITI training is available at http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/training.html.

The expiration date indicated above was based on the completion date you entered on the IRB application. If an extension is necessary, the PI should submit an Exempt Protocol Extension Request form, http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/forms.html, at least three weeks before the expiration date. Please refer to our website for more information on the extension procedures. http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/guidance/reviewprocess.html

No change in this approved research protocol can be initiated without the IRB's approval. This includes any proposed revisions or amendments to the protocol or consent form. Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects, any complications, and/or any adverse events must be reported to the Office of Research Compliance immediately. All team members are required to review the IRB policies on "Responsibilities of Principal Investigators" and "Responsibilities of Research Team Members" available at http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/regulations.html.

The Clemson University IRB is committed to facilitating ethical research and protecting the rights of human subjects. Please contact us if you have any questions and use the IRB number and title in all communications regarding this study.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth

B. Elizabeth Chapman '03, MA, CACII
IRB Coordinator
Clemson University
Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
223 Bracket Hall
Voice: (864) 656-6460
Appendix B

District Approval to Conduct Research

Schulze, Kristin

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 12:10 PM
To: Schulze, Kristin
Cc: [Redacted], Hans Klar
Subject: RE: Updates and Permission to Proceed with Dissertation Research

Kristin—

If your applied research for your dissertation only requires adult participation, which is voluntary, then an RDSA is not required. Dr. McCreary and I have discussed and you can proceed with your study as intended.

Best Regards,

[Redacted]
Research Specialist
Accountability & Quality Assurance
Appendix C

Academic Specialist Phone Script

Kristin Schulze Doctoral Research
Phone Script for Contacting District Academic Specialists

Use this script when contacting district academic specialists to enquire about potential instructional coaches. Scripts are in bold.

Hello, I’m Kristin Schulze, and I’m a doctoral student at Clemson University and an instructional coach at Gateway Elementary School. I am calling you to ask for your assistance in helping me to identify successful instructional coaches who might be willing to participate in my doctoral research study. I am looking for elementary school instructional coaches who have done a good job at building trusting relationships with classroom teachers. Can you think of one to two coaches who have done a good job building trusting relationships with teachers?

Can you tell me a little bit about _____________ and how he or she has done a good job at building trusting relationships with teachers. Do you have any questions about the study?
Answers to most questions can be found on the information letter which will be given to all participants before the study begins. Refer to this when answering questions.

Conclude conversation with:
Thank you for your help. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 864-201-8744.
Appendix D

Building Principal Phone Script

Kristin Schulze Doctoral Research
Phone Script for Contacting Elementary School Principals

Use this script when contacting elementary school principals asking for verification of instructional coach trust building and willingness to participate in study. Scripts are in bold.

Hello, I’m Kristin Schulze, and I’m a doctoral student at Clemson University and an instructional coach at Gateway Elementary School. Your instructional coach, __________, was nominated by one of our district academic specialists as a coach who has done a good job at building trusting relationships with teachers. Would you agree that __________ has done a good job at building trusting relationships with teachers?

If answer is yes, proceed to next section. If answer is no, skip to concluding statement.

Thank you. I’d like to take a minute to briefly explain my study and see if you might be willing to participate. I am seeking to identify how instructional coaches build trusting relationships with classroom teachers. In order to do this I plan on selecting one elementary school where I will interview the principal, the instructional coach and five different teachers. Additionally, I would like to shadow the instructional coach throughout the school day as they interact with teachers. This observation will not interfere with the coach’s job responsibilities, nor will it interfere with instructional time. The interviews will be scheduled with each respective person at a time so as to not interfere with job responsibilities or instructional time. Would you be willing to participate in this study?

If answer is yes, proceed to next section. If answer is no, skip to concluding statement.

Thank you. I will contact you within the next week to notify you of your study selection status. I appreciate your willingness to participate. Do you have any questions about the study?

Answers to most questions can be found on the information letter which will be given to all participants before the study begins. Refer to this when answering questions. Conclude conversation with:

Thank you for your help. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 864-201-8744.
Appendix E

Instructional Coach Phone Script

Kristin Schulze Doctoral Research

Phone Script for Contacting Elementary School Instructional Coaches

Use this script when contacting elementary school Instructional Coaches asking for IC willingness to participate in study. Scripts are in bold.

Hello, I’m Kristin Schulze. I’m a doctoral student at Clemson University and an instructional coach at Gateway Elementary School. I’m conducting a research study to better understand how instructional coaches build trusting relationships with classroom teachers. This study has been approved by Clemson University and Greenville County Schools. You have been nominated by one of our district academic specialists and confirmed by your principal as a coach who has done a good job of building trusting relationships with teachers. I’m calling to ask you a couple of quick questions and to see if you would be willing to participate in my research study.

Can you tell me a little bit about your experience as an IC?

What are your thoughts on trust and the IC position?

I’d like to take a minute to briefly explain my study. I am seeking to identify how instructional coaches build trusting relationships with classroom teachers. In order to do this I plan on selecting one elementary school where I will interview the principal, the instructional coach and five different teachers. Additionally, I would like to shadow the instructional coach throughout the school day as he or she interacts with teachers, for a period of time not to exceed 7 hours. This time can be spread out over a couple of days or can take place all in one day. This observation will not interfere with your job responsibilities, nor will it interfere with instructional time. The interviews will be scheduled with each respective person at a time that does not interfere with his or her job responsibilities or instructional time. Would you be willing to participate in this study?

If answer is yes, proceed to next section. If answer is no, skip to concluding statement.

Thank you. I will contact you within the next week to notify you of your study selection status. I appreciate your willingness to participate. Do you have any questions about the study?
Answers to most questions can be found on the information letter which will be given to all participants before the study begins. Refer to this when answering questions.

Conclude conversation with:

**Thank you for your help. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 864-201-8744.**
Appendix F

Instructional Coach Interview Protocol

IC Name ______________________________________________________

School________________________________________

Date________________________ Time _____________________ Interview Location

_____________________________________

1. Tell me a little bit about your work experience in education.
   a. How long have you been here?
   b. What grades have you taught?
   c. Where else have you worked?

2. What is your role as the IC?
   a. Responsibilities
   b. Where do you spend most of your time?

3. Where do you feel the IC should spend most of his or her time?

4. Has your perception of the IC changed over time?
   a. If so, how?

5. Talk to me about times in which your time and energy as an IC may be diverted into other situations that help the school run more smoothly (i.e., times in which you may be required to do things that are not necessarily a part of your job description).

6. How would you describe yourself? Specifically, how would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

7. What expectations does your principal have for you to work with teachers?
   a. How does your principal communicate these expectations?

8. What expectations does your principal have for you about sharing your work with teachers and your perceptions of their performance with him or her?
9. Talk to me about the ways in which you work with teachers?
   a. How do you prepare for these meetings?
   b. When does your work with teachers usually occur?
   c. How does your principal support your work with teachers?

10. Can you tell me about a time when you were successful partnering with a teacher?
    a. What made it successful?

11. Can you tell me about a time when you were less successful partnering with a teacher?
    a. Why do you think this collaboration wasn't as successful as you would have liked?

We've been talking a lot about the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach as well as what makes for successful and unsuccessful collaboration with teachers...now I'd like us to shift gears and discuss developing relationships and trust with teachers.

12. How would you describe your current relationships with most teachers?
    a. How do your relationships with teachers differ from one another?
    b. What do you think causes the difference in those relationships?

13. How have your relationships with teachers changed from when you first worked here?
    a. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) negatively impacted the development of a positive relationship between you and teachers?
    b. Can you give an example of something that either helped to develop your relationships with teachers or something that hurt the development of relationships with you and the teachers?
    c. Can you talk about the development of trust with each individual teacher you nominated?

14. What does trust mean to you?
    a. How important is trust to you?

15. How would you describe the current level of trust between you and the teachers?

16. How has the level of trust between you and the teachers changed from when you first came to work here?
    a. What types of things (actions/behaviors and situations) do you think caused the teachers to trust you more?
       i. Can you give a specific example?
b. What types of things (actions/behaviors and situations) do you think caused the teachers to trust you less?
   i. Can you give a specific example?

c. Can you talk to me about the development of trust with each specific teacher you nominated?

17. Where would you like the level of trust to be between you and the teachers?
   a. What do you think would help you to get to that level of trust?

18. Talk to me about your relationship with the principal. How often do you communicate? What do you discuss? In what ways do you communicate?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me today? If you think of something you would like to share you can contact me at 864-201-8744 or email me at kristinadamsschulze@gmail.com. If I should need clarification regarding something we discussed today, is it okay for me to contact you? If so, what is the best time and way for me to do so?
Appendix G

Principal Interview Protocol

Principal Name _______________________________ School _______________
Date _______________________________ Time _______________________
Interview Location _______________________

1. Please tell me a little bit about your work experience in education.
   a. How long have you been in this position?
   b. What positions have you held previously?

2. What do you see as the role of the IC in this school? What responsibilities does he or she have? Where does your IC spend most of their time?

3. How would you describe your coach? Specifically, how would you describe his or her strengths and weaknesses?

4. Please talk to me about times in which the IC’s time and energy may be diverted into other situations that help the school run more smoothly (i.e., times in which the IC may be required to do things that are not necessarily a part of his or her job description?)

5. Where do you feel the IC should spend most of his or her time?

6. Please talk to me about your first experience of working with an IC.
   a. Has the way you view the position of IC changed since you first worked with a coach?
      i. If so, how?

7. Please talk to me about the ways in which the IC works with teachers here at your school.
   a. When does your coach work with teachers?

8. What expectations do you have for your teachers to work with the IC?
   a. How do you communicate these expectations?
   b. How do you support your IC’s work with teachers?

9. Please talk to me about the communication between you and your IC.
   a. How often do you communicate with your IC?
   b. What types of things do you discuss?
   c. In what ways do you communicate?
10. What expectations do you have in regards to the IC communicating to you about teachers? (i.e. their positive and negative experiences with and perceptions of working with teachers)

We've been talking a lot about the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach as well as what makes for successful and unsuccessful collaborations with teachers...now I'd like us to shift gears and discuss relationships and trust as they relate to your IC.

11. How would you describe the IC's current relationships with most teachers?

12. Please think back to when your IC first came to work here... How would you describe the relationships between the IC and the teachers when he/she first came to work here?
   a. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) helped to develop positive relationships between the IC and teachers?
   b. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) negatively impacted the development of a positive relationship between the IC and teachers?

13. Please talk to me about your relationship with your IC?
   a. Has your relationship with your IC changed since you first began to work together?
      i. If so, how?

14. What does trust mean to you?

15. How would you describe the current level of trust between the teachers and the IC?

16. Please think back again to when your current IC first came to work at your school... How would you describe the level of trust between your IC and teachers when he or she first came to work here?
   a. What types of things do you think made teacher trust the IC more?
      i. Can you give a specific example?
   b. What types of things made the teachers trust the IC less?
      i. Can you give a specific example?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me today? If you think of something you would like to share, you can contact me at 864-201-8744 or email me at kristinadamsschulze@gmail.com. If I should need clarifications regarding something we discussed today, is it okay for me to contact you? If so, what is the best time and way for me to do so?
Appendix H

Teacher Interview Protocol

Teacher Name________________________________  School __________________
Date ________________________________Time ______________________
Interview Location ________________________

1. Please tell me a little bit about your teaching experience.
   a. How long have you been here?
   b. What grades have you taught?
   c. Where else have you worked?

2. What do you see as the role of the IC?
   a. What responsibilities does he or she have?
   b. How does your IC spend most of his or her time?

3. Where do you think the IC should spend most of his or her time?

4. How would you describe your coach? Specifically, how would you describe his or her strengths and weaknesses?

5. Please tell me about your first experience of working with an IC.
   a. Has the way you view the position of IC changed since you first worked with a coach?
      i. If so, how?

6. Please talk to me about the ways in which the IC works with teachers here at this school?
   a. When does this work take place?

7. Please talk to me about the expectations your principal has for teachers to work with the IC?
   a. How does he or she communicate these expectations?

8. Please talk to me about a time when you and the IC partnered together successfully.
   a. What made it successful?

9. Can you tell me about a time when you and the IC partnered together less successfully, or when it wasn’t the most positive experience?
   a. Why do you think this collaborations wasn’t as successful as you would have liked?
We’ve been talking a lot about the roles and responsibilities of the instructional coach as well as what makes for successful and unsuccessful collaborations with teachers...now I’d like us to shift gears and discuss relationships and trust as they relate to your IC.

10. What does trust mean to you?
   a. How important is trust to you?

11. What makes you decide whether or not you trust another person?

12. Please talk to me about the level to which you feel you can trust your IC to hold certain things (i.e., questions, concerns, etc.) in confidence.

13. How would you describe your current relationship with the IC?

14. Please think back to when you first came to know your IC. How would you describe your relationship with the IC when he or she first came to work here?
   a. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) helped to develop a positive relationship between you and the IC?
   b. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) negatively impacted the development of a positive relationship between you and the IC?
   c. Can you give a specific example of something that either helped to develop your relationship with the IC or something that hurt the development of a relationship between the two of you?

15. Please talk to me about the level of trust in your relationship with your IC now. How would you describe the level of trust between you and your IC when you first came to know him or her?
   a. What types of things made you trust the IC more?
      i. Can you give a specific example?
   b. What types of things (actions/behaviors/situations) made you trust the IC less?
      i. Can you give a specific example?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me today? If you think of something you would like to share, you can contact me at 864-201-8744 or email me at kristinadamsschulze@gmail.com. If I should need clarifications regarding something we discussed today, is it okay for me to contact you? If so, what is the best time and way for me to do so?
### Appendix I

**Data Planning Matrix * Adapted from Lecompte (1994)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework Level</th>
<th>What do I want to know?</th>
<th>Why is it important?</th>
<th>Principal Question</th>
<th>IC Interview Question</th>
<th>Teacher Question</th>
<th>Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal</strong></td>
<td>How do different stakeholders perceive the position of IC (definition/expectation/experience)</td>
<td></td>
<td>What is the role of the IC? Responsibilities? Where does your IC spend most of his or her time?</td>
<td>What is the role of the IC? Responsibilities? Where do you spend most of their time?</td>
<td>What is the role of the IC? Responsibilities? Where does your IC spend most of his or her time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do different stakeholders expect from the IC?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where should the IC spend most of his or her time?</td>
<td>Where should the IC spend most of his or her time?</td>
<td>Where should the IC spend most of his or her time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do various stakeholder expectations differ from the observed reality of IC roles/responsibilities &amp; distribution of time</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you observe the IC spending most of his or her time? (Prompts: What seems to be the reality of the primary roles and responsibilities of IC?)</td>
<td>How do you spend most of your time? (Prompts: What seems to be the reality of the primary roles and responsibilities of IC?)</td>
<td>How do you observe the IC spending most of his or her time? (Prompts: What seems to be the reality of the primary roles and responsibilities of IC?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk to me about your first experience of working with an IC…Has the way you view the position changed since you first worked with a coach? If so, how?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Talk to me about your first experience of working with an IC…Has the way you view the position changed since you have become an IC? If so, how?</td>
<td>Talk to me about your first experience of working with an IC…Has the way you view the position changed since you first worked with a coach? If so, how?</td>
<td>What has the researcher observed the IC doing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal:</strong></td>
<td>What makes for successful/unsuccessful collaboration?</td>
<td>Collaboration is the goal of a trusting IC/Teacher relationship. These questions will allow to see if some elements of trustworthiness actions and behavior are what made for successful collaboration.</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal:</strong></td>
<td>What happens in a relationship/partnership that makes it successful?</td>
<td>Talk to me about the ways in which the IC works with teachers. Talk to me about the time for teachers and coaches to work together.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Researcher</strong></td>
<td>Talk to me about the ways in which you work with teachers? How do you prepare for these meetings. Talk to me about the time for teachers and coaches to work together.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tutor</strong></td>
<td>Can you tell me about a time when you were successful partnering with a teacher? What made it successful?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Teacher</strong></td>
<td>Can you tell me about a time when you partnered with someone unsuccessfully? Why was it unsuccessful?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Researcher</strong></td>
<td>Can you tell me about a time when you and the IC partnered together unsuccessfully, or when it wasn’t the most positive experience? What made it unsuccessful?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Inte**            | What is the status of the “Coaching is about” | **Tutor**
| **personal**        | How would you describe | **Researcher**
|                     | **Teacher**   | **Researcher**
<p>|                     | <strong>Researcher</strong>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>relationship between the IC and the teachers? How has this relationship changed over time?</th>
<th>building relationships with teachers as much as it is about instruction.&quot; (Knight, 2007, p. 33). Poglinco et al. (2003) emphasized the importance of having a strong collegial relationship with classroom teachers as they tried to implement new strategies into their classroom teaching practice. Trust develops within a positive trusting relationship.</th>
<th>the IC’s current relationships with most teachers?</th>
<th>How would you describe your current relationships with most teachers? How do your relationships differ from one another? What do you think causes the difference in those relationships?</th>
<th>your current relationship with the IC?</th>
<th>describe your current relationship with the IC?</th>
<th>observaton of IC/Teacher interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe relationships with the IC and teachers when he/she first came to work here?</td>
<td>How would you describe your relationships with teachers when you first came to work here?</td>
<td>What types of actions/behaviors/situations helped to develop a positive relationship between IC and teachers?</td>
<td>What types of actions/behaviors/situations helped to develop a positive relationship between you and teachers?</td>
<td>What types of actions/behaviors/situations negatively impacted the development of a positive relationship between you and IC?</td>
<td>What types of actions/behaviors/situations negatively impacted the development?</td>
<td>What types of actions/behaviors/situations negatively impacted the development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>What is the status of trust between the IC and the teachers? How has this trust changed over time?</td>
<td>Determine factors that positively and negatively impact the development of trust in IC teacher relationships</td>
<td>How would you describe the current level of trust between the teachers and the IC?</td>
<td>How would you describe the level of trust between you and the teachers when you first came to know them?</td>
<td>Talk to me about the level of trust in your relationship with your IC now...</td>
<td>What types of things do you think made teachers trust the IC more? Can you give a specific example?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>How much support does the principal provide the IC?</td>
<td>Principal encouragement of teacher/ IC collaboration and support of IC is more likely to lead to successful, trusting collaborative relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk to me about the expectations you have for your teachers to work with the IC. How do you communicate these expectations?</td>
<td>Talk to me about the expectations your principal has for you to partner with the teachers? How does your principal communicate these expectations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangin (2007) found a link between the principal’s support for a teacher leader and their combined knowledge of the role and interaction with the teacher leader – also, principals who were more knowledgeable about the IC role communicate</td>
<td>How do you support your IC and their work with teachers?</td>
<td>How does your principal support you and your work with teachers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can you talk to me about times in which the ICs time and energy may be diverted into other situations that help the school run more smoothly? (i.e., times in which the IC may be required to do things that are not necessarily a part of his or her job description?)</td>
<td>Can you talk to me about times in which your time and energy as an IC may be diverted into other situations that help the school run more smoothly? (i.e., times in which you may be required to do things that are not necessarily a part of your job description?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk to me about the expectations your principal has for teachers to work with the IC. How does he or she communicate these expectations?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Can teachers trust the coach to hold information in confidence and not have it punitively reported to teachers?</th>
<th>Determining current level of trust Teachers need to trust coaches without fear of punitive reporting to the principal (Brady, 2007)</th>
<th>What expectations do you have in regards to IC communicating to you about teachers? (i.e., their positive and negative experiences in working with teachers)</th>
<th>What expectations does your principal have in regards to you communicating with him or her about teachers? (i.e., their positive and negative experiences in working with teachers)</th>
<th>Talk to me about the level to which you feel you can trust your IC to hold certain things (i.e., questions, concerns, etc) in confidence?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>How are the coach’s interpersonal skills (flexibility, likeability, being a good listener)</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills are often cited as an important characteristic/ quality of coaches (Ertmer et al., 2005; Knight, 2004)</td>
<td>How would you describe your coach? Specifically, how would you describe his or her strengths and weaknesses?</td>
<td>How would you describe yourself? Specifically, how would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?</td>
<td>How would you describe your coach? Specifically, how would you describe his or her strengths and weaknesses?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J

Instructional Coach Observation Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time:</th>
<th>Location:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Participants:  

| Context (Meeting, Event, in passing, personal conversation): |

**Observational Focus** (Instructional Coach – behaviors leading to the development of trust) – Circle observed behavior noting specific example in the column to the right

- Acting with discretion / confidentiality
- Consistency between words and actions
- Two-way communication
- Fair and transparent decision-making
- Shared vision and language
- Building personal connection
- Giving away something of value
- Communicating expertise and limitations
- Behavioral consistency
- Sharing and delegation of control
- Demonstration of concern
- Celebrating teachers
- Share stories about yourself
- Listening without judgment
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Meeting Preparation
- Demonstration of competence
- Paraphrasing conversations with teachers
- Asking questions of teachers

158
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looking for personal connections with teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Validate the teacher’s experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honoring commitments to teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dialogue and Actions Observed:**

### Appendix K

**Principal Observation Protocol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time:</th>
<th>Location:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants:</th>
<th>Context (Meeting, Event, in passing, personal conversation):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Observational Focus** (Principal – behaviors impacting the development of trust between IC & teachers) – Circle observed behavior notating specific example in the column to the right

- Communication with IC (note frequency with tally marks and record any specific conversation content)
- Demonstration of support for IC
- Demonstration of knowledge of IC position
- Communication with teachers about IC
- Identify IC as a resource for instructional improvement
- Establish clear expectations for teachers to collaborate with IC
- Parameters of IC Role are made clear to faculty

**Dialogue and Actions Observed:**

Adapted from: Heineke & Polnick, 2013; Mangin, 2007; Symonds, 2003
Appendix L

Instructional Coach Survey

Tally Sheet for the Teacher Survey

Directions: Use this sheet to tally the number of responses received on the Teacher Surveys that were submitted. Then include the tally sheet with the survey summary in the portfolio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This instructional coach…</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Provides leadership to improve the instructional program in the school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assists in developing and implementing the school improvement plan.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assists me in interpreting and using data.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assists me in the appropriate use of instructional technology to enhance and extend instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Assists me in the appropriate use of educational tools to enhance and extend instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Is knowledgeable of content standards.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Helps interpret content standards.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provides instructional resources and materials.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Models the use of research-based strategies.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Provides opportunities to learn best practices that can be used to improve my students’ learning.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Develops beneficial professional development opportunities.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Communicates with me effectively.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Is committed to improving our school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Models mutual respect.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comments:

Our instructional coach is extremely helpful to me in my current role. She helps us interpret data and test scores in order to identify struggling students that would benefit from extra interventions and also provides relevant professional development opportunities. She is always open to help teachers in any way she can.
3/10/2016 1:35 PM  View respondent's answers

She is a GREAT addition to the family. She works every single day and gives it 110%. She is extremely dedicated and will make sure that every respondent is met. She makes time to sit down and talk with anyone that has questions or concerns. She is involved with the kids and is a mentor to many students. Her charisma is contagious! Everyone loves to see her positive smiling face every day.
3/10/2016 12:27 PM  View respondent's answers

I really have enjoyed having [redacted] as our instructional coach. She does the extra mile and assists us everyday. She makes sure we feel important, understands the trials we go through everyday because she has been there. I appreciate the respect she shows us as teachers.
3/10/2016 11:11 PM  View respondent's answers

[redacted] is the best thing that has ever happened to our school. She is a wealth of knowledge and is always helpful.
3/10/2016 12:49 PM  View respondent's answers

[redacted] has been instrumental in helping me as a new teacher at the school. She has such a positive attitude in everything that she does and will go the extra step anytime I have asked her for help.
3/10/2016 12:48 PM  View respondent's answers
Comments:

163

Showing 12 responses

I wish that our IC would be able to spend more time in the classroom rather than facilitate chores between admin and teachers.
3/22/2016 2:58 PM  View respondents answers

Our IC is fantastic in EVERY way! We are so lucky to have her at our school.
3/21/2016 3:38 PM  View respondents answers

Super
3/14/2016 11:35 AM  View respondents answers

Help within the classroom, such as model lessons, might also be beneficial to some.
3/14/2016 11:29 AM  View respondents answers

[Redacted] is a supportive and helpful Instructional Coach.
3/14/2016 7:11 AM  View respondents answers

[Redacted] is an asset to our school. She provides so much guidance and help everyday.
3/13/2016 8:07 PM  View respondents answers

[Redacted] is a great IC. She is professional, knowledgeable, and most helpful.
3/13/2016 5:45 PM  View respondents answers
### Appendix L

#### Round 3 Data Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>• IC Survey – 100 % of teachers taking survey either agreed or strongly agreed that Taylor assists in use of appropriate educational tools to enhance or extend instruction – is knowledgeable of content standards – helps interpret content standards – provides the opportunity to learn best practices that can improve student learning – develops beneficial professional development opportunities</td>
<td>IC Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher comments on survey: “Taylor is an asset to our school. She provides so much support and guidance to our school everyday.” “Taylor is a great IC. She is professional, knowledgeable, and most helpful.” “She has a wealth of knowledge.”</td>
<td>PD Handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PD Handouts prepared for training on 5.19.16</td>
<td>Addie Moffitt interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “She’s my math guru. I wanted to do guided math grades in my class, so I went to her because I knew she did that previously. She’s been awesome to talk to about, &quot;What do I need to do? Where should I start? What did you do with your other kids? How many days a week did you do that?&quot; I don’t know. Just getting all those questions answered. She’s pretty good at any of those things that we need”</td>
<td>Anna George interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “I feel confident in her, trusting her because I feel like she’s very knowledgeable in what she’s doing”</td>
<td>Carl Miller int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “her knowledge base” (makes people</td>
<td>Isabelle Randolph int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor Smith Int</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
trust her)

- “She stresses to make sure everything’s in order. She doesn't want anything to go wrong. Every single professional development or staff thing, she has planned and pre-planned and over it again, looked at the PowerPoint and has it setup and has gone through it to make sure all the links work before we even get there,” “She has a lot behind her, education wise, where she’s taught, things she’s taught and her memory, my word, she’s got an excellent memory. She remembers everything she’s ever done. “

- “I like to do it and I like to do it well. I’m detail oriented.” “I just try to make sure I don’t go in anything unprepared. That’s maybe I’m just detail oriented.” “Being knowledgeable. Yeah because I think that a lot of times they just want someone given a quick answer. I can tell them what they need to know, where to find it, that sort of thing.”

| Confidentiality | Teacher waited until after other teachers had left to share with Taylor the reason that she had her arm bandaged was because principal wanted her to cover tattoo  
Faculty Council norms posted in Taylor’s room stated “maintain confidentiality when asked”  
“ It’s nice to know that I can go and vent to Taylor, and then not get back to admin. It’s truly sometimes. It's a venting kind of day. You just need to vent.”  
“I can trust her completely. I mean I have talked to her about things that to me are, were completely confident. Kinds of things. I think she’s just shown that to |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.25.16 obs</td>
<td>Faculty Council Norms</td>
<td>Addie Moffitt interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna George interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
me because because she's so supportive. If anything she'll just listen to you.” “I did tell her things and kind of like issues that I was having. In confidence. She was just supportive of me and pretty much just listened because there was no real solution kind of thing. “

- “The highest level possible. I know when she saw the compare and contrast, she was like can I share it with the school when we have the meeting. I was like if you promise not to use my name. I wasn't really wanting to be put on the spot. So she did. She said I saw another teacher doing this and it was really cool, but she didn’t mention names or anything, so she didn’t violate that request” “In private, too, you talk to her about how you’re having personal things go on outside of the classroom and she’s so open to listening and talking to you and saying keep me updated and you know you don’t have to worry about her telling anybody. I feel 100% that I can trust her in any scope of it”

- “I have gone to her with confidential thing...I went to her with something that I didn't go to anybody else about the school. I didn't go talk to anybody else about it with the whole school, but I went to her.”

- “That was a conversation between she and I. She still asked me to keep it confidential and I did.” (discussing conversation with teacher who wanted to change grade levels). “If you're using me as a sounding board, you just need to talk, it's just you and me, and I'm keeping it confidential, then we're good to”
| Celebration and Validation | • in passing teacher walking down the hallway, teacher shared that her project was fully funded, Taylor clapped for teacher  
• celebrated successes for first year teachers  
• EOY teacher celebration form asked teachers to list 3 accomplishments and 1 student success  
• Post-its on hallway displays celebrating teacher and Student Successes  
• I love how she used to walk around the school and leave post-it notes on the kids’ work, with comment. As a teacher ... The kids love that, but as a teacher, it’s like, "I feel validated sometimes with the activities." Even just talking to her, I’m like, "I did it this way. Do you think that’s okay?" She’s like, "Yeah. That was good." or "Yeah. Try it this way next time." She’s always ... I always get that validation from her.  
• discussing coaching cycle on writing “it validated what I was doing”.  
• “One thing I’d make a go for myself, at least monthly is to spend time in the hallways and then I take a sticky pad with me and a pen and I go literally room to room to room and I look at their hallway display, I look at what standard it matched to, I look at how well the kids did with it. If it’s not something that I can celebrate as a board, then I go in and I focus in one kid’s piece and then I write a personalized sticky note on every |
| --- | --- |
| | 5.4.16 obs  
| | 5.25.16 obs  
| | EOY teacher celebration form  
| | Hall Display Post-it  
| | Addie Moffitt interview  
| | Eva Moore Int  
| | Taylor Smith Int |
single board, at least on” “That's another way that I just try to make sure that giving feedback instructionally, but I'm also filling the kids' bucket and also filling the teacher's bucket at the same time, but also let them know that, "Hey, your student work is valued," and what that quality work looks like. We’ve made an intentional point to celebrate certain things that we know are lacking.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consistency</th>
<th>Carl Miller int Eva Moore int Taylor Smith int</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Her predictability,&quot; (makes people trust her) “she's very predictable and upbeat.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;She sticks to her word. She's always there. She's been reliable and dependable.&quot; “She always seems to be the same.” “She’s very consistent.” “And you have to see that consistency in people” ( to develop relationship and trust)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor discussed that she doesn't want to do for one teacher what she can’t do for all. “I'm never come and act differently from one day to the next and backlash or do something that is not characteristic of me and I really think that's been the quickest relationship builder. It's just maintaining constant and then knowing what to expect. It's not scary.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Evaluative / Non-Judgmental</th>
<th>Teacher observation form Addie Moffitt interview Eva Moore interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher observation form lists kudos and what children said they were learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wasn’t scared to go to her and ask for help, and I wasn't scared of what she felt of my answers, whether they were stupid or &quot;I guess she's on the right track,&quot; or &quot;Oh Lord, she needs a lot of help right now.&quot; I wanted her feedback, so I didn't it as criticism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Relationship</td>
<td>Taylor hugged teacher walking down the hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor asked teacher how she was feeling prior to beginning PD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor joked around with teachers about how much literacy specialist position paid due to the number of applicants for position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taylor joked around with reading interventionist that she was going to call</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- “I knew she wouldn't come in here and judge me harshly. If there was anything that I needed to work on, it wouldn't be judgmental and in a way to put you down. She's here to make you better, and I do feel like that's what she's here to do.” (in discussing what made her decide to participate in writing coaching cycle)
  “I think knowing that they were here to help and not being judgmental and put you down”

- “She was not judging, just stood at the door, eyes and ears, helped us look at time, that sort of thing, which was nothing, nothing in her job description of what to do.” (Taylor was not judgemental of teachers’ difficult students year prior)

- “I try to be in their rooms to just know that my observation is completely different from theirs. I’m not evaluative. I’m going to provide feedback and I’m mainly going to look for strengths. I think a lot of times if you can find their strength, then it will open up the doors for the weaknesses. I try to separate that very clearly”
in sick Friday due to amount of work in book fair

- During EOY teacher celebration Taylor and teachers discussed all sorts of personal things such as cookie store near one teacher’s house, hiking, couponing, weight, food and one teacher shared that she had her arm covered because principal didn’t want her tattoo to be visible

- Teacher comment on survey “She makes sure we feel important”

- “It was constructive criticism. I wanted it. I needed it, and I wasn’t scared to ask her for help, just that trust, that relationship. “ “All the instructional coaches that I’ve worked with have had that, the way of making you feel comfortable and you can talk to them, and I think it is. It’s all about trust.” “I guess when I trust someone, I see them more as a friend than a coworker or an acquaintance. There’s things that I could tell Taylor that I would not tell other people, because I trust her.” “I feel like I have developed more of a friendship with her than just a coworker” “She is really good about popping in and talking to teachers, and she would just stop and talk, and that was nice, just to have somebody to talk to. Then she listens, and she tries to help if you want the help.” “She was really good at listening. She’s really good at putting notes in your boxes, birthday cards, and handwritten, not like a generic birthday that you get. She hand writes everything. “ “I had surgery, and she brought me dinner. Even after I say, 'You really don’t have to

5.25.16 obs
IC Survey
Addie Moffitt
inter

Elizabeth
Adams
int

Eva Moore
int

Isabelle
Randolph
int
do anything." she still did." “

I think conversation. Just having that conversation, stopping and talking, checking in, just seeing how your day goes. It nice when somebody comes through the door and they want to, "Are you okay? Do you need anything today?" versus, "I'm going to come in and watch this lesson. Then, you're like, "Oh, here we go again." It's just nice and she's great. I know that she's so busy and she always seems to stop and take time for everybody."

- In private, too, you talk to her about how you're having personal things go on outside of the classroom and she's so open to listening and talking to you and saying keep me updated and you know you don't have to worry about her telling anybody. I feel 100% that I can trust her in any scope of it

- "I guess we have built up that relationship that I trust her because I believe what she says"

- “She is approachable, very. She’s one to listen and process before she speaks. She doesn’t pose that authoritative role. I don’t feel like she even wants it. She really just wants you to feel comfortable with knowing that you can come and ask any question whether it be ... I talk to her on a personal child/mom basis questions from that end of the spectrum to well into my teaching career about things like that. She’s very open on any level." “I would say the personal mom level. Our daughters were born on the same exact day a year apart. That alone. (helped her trust Taylor more – personal relationship)"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positivity</th>
<th>5.25.16 obs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Council Norms in Taylor's room listed expectation of hearing everyone's opinion without judgment &amp; Share decisions to others with a positive focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher comment on survey – “She has such a positive attitude in everything that she does”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher observation form lists spot for “kudos”</td>
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<td>“I think she's always smiling with them” “When she's talking to them and with them, she's real positive, she's encouraging.” “She has not bought into any negative behavior. She's not going to be out here talking to 1 teacher about another teacher. Any thoughts that she has negative about anybody, she's going to keep to herself or between us” “, she's very predictable and upbeat.”</td>
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<td>“It was helpful hearing her positive feedback” “I think one of the first new teacher meetings we had when we started was really cool, because they had like a drop in the bucket. Here's what I've seen from you and they went straight to building us up instead of</td>
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“I found that just by starting those more in-depth relationships that other people are like, "Can you help me with this?" “I also give every teacher a birthday card and place candy in their box.”
trying to say this is what you need to improve upon already. We shared what was going great in our classroom and they shared ... Taylor, Mr. Miller, and Ms. Smith ... they would share some things that they saw that were really great in the classroom, just by observing us. We never once felt like we needed to protect ourselves. We felt like this was the safest environment and I’ve never been at a school where it felt so lifted up. It was a really neat experience.” “Even in the middle of the year and you are starting to get bogged down and you’re feeling tired, they’re still lifting us up and sharing ... and then instead of pointing out to us our weaknesses, they asked us if there’s anything that we need. They worded it as “What do we need”. So we could talk about if we had a weakness ourself. Maybe we noticed that there was a class that we were struggling with or a subject that we’re having a hard time with and we would share that and then they would say, what can we do to help you with that.” “I've never ever heard her speak badly about anybody. Not a single teacher or parent or even administrators. Sometimes when you do this for so long, you can hear the frustrations. I’ve never heard her complain about any frustration. It’s never, this is so long. Why are we doing this, or anything. She's like okay let's see what we can do to ... when we were doing the talent show ... she brought food for us so it didn't feel like it was so long. She's so positive. She doesn't look at it as a negative. When you see something positive like that and you don't hear people talking negative, there is trust there. You know that if you go to her and say that you’re frustrated, you know
she's not going to go and tell somebody else that you said that”

• “She's never in a negative mood. She always seems to be the same.” “She's never, I've never seen her crumble. No, she's never. She's not anybody that's going to be complaining or whining. She just keeps going. She's a little Energizer bunny.”

• “Experiences. Your experience with how they handle situations, listening to them talk on a daily basis. Are they talking about others? Are they relaying information that probably shouldn't be shared? Experiences. “ (in discussing what makes you trust someone) “peaking about the trust thing, there have been many times when I have voiced my stressed emotion of 33 kids on my case load and all of these things that are required of you. There are some days when I'm like ... You can vent back. You know what I mean? She just takes it. She just takes what you're talking about and she listens to you. She's like, “It's okay. We'll figure it out.” It's literally like she takes it on. She doesn't bust back. There are some days like Lila was sick. Her little girl was sick the other day and literally she walked in and go home, go home. You need to be a mother first. I know she takes and take and takes and takes. She does.”

• “I want to come to school and happy everyday. There are a lot of days where it’s not a happy day or a happy moment in the day, but I just try to always go back and go, "Okay, but this happened. This was awesome that this happened." I just try to restart everyday new and
that's just a challenge that I put on myself." “I would say that would be one of my strengths because I think about last year and how hard last year was and I think that's the only thing that got me through everyday. I would just come in and no matter what happened the day before, I always came out with a smile in my face and try to pretend like nothing was going on.” “I've always strive for professionalism. I'm not going to gossip. I will not do that.” “I put positive notes up on the board, that sort of thing,”

| Present | “Yeah I mean she just, she's always ... She'll check in on me too which I feel like not a lot of people are like, yea, I’m just going to leave them be down there or whatever's going like.”
| Present |  | “Just having that conversation, stopping and talking, checking in, just seeing how your day goes. It nice when somebody comes through the door and they want to, "Are you okay? Do you need anything today?"”
| Present | “Running around. I don’t ever see her at her desk. She’s always walking around checking to make sure everybody has what they need” “Running around. I don’t ever see her at her desk. She’s always walking around checking to make sure everybody has what they need” “I think the fact that she is very present. Doing so many different roles. She’s helping set up for any after school parent/teacher, she’s there with the big programs. We did a talent show and she was a part of it. A staff talent show, so they saw that different side of her. She's willing to give in any capacity. Not just to help the teachers, but to help the students, too. And help the parents as well.” (in discussing building trust with Anna George interview
| Present | Addie Moffitt interview
| Present | Elizabeth Adams int
|  | Isabelle Randolph int
teacher)

- "She’s been with us through all the training that we go through with Christy. She sat in with us on a math meeting earlier in the year. If we have any virtual professional developments, she sits with us. She doesn’t just send them to us. She goes through it with us. That’s comforting to have her there.” “I don’t know how she does it, but she’s always available” “She’s always there” in building trust, “Being with somebody. She’s present in meetings and any time you need her.” “I think just her being present. Just being at our meetings. Always around. Always available. Again, I think that’s a time thing. I don’t think anybody could come in and have that perfect relationship right off the bat.” (Taylor’s presence helping to develop relationship)

- “She stays late every single day, every single day. If you even call or email and say, “Look, we need to sit and talk,” she absolutely makes it a plan and she writes it down. She will stay anytime and every time that you need” “Some meetings you sit, you have administrators who’ll pop up their computer and will start responding to emails when there’s a PowerPoint presentation going on. I don’t know. Taylor is notepad ready. She takes notes at every single meeting, everything. Even if it’s her own professional development, she will stop, write down something and keep going, every single time. She’s 100% present”

- “Yes, I have a lot of managerial tasks, but I try not to eat that up in my day when my teachers are here and the kids are here. If I’m sitting in this room all day, I
think it sends a message, so I have to find that happy medium.” “Probably running all over this building. It’s just running.” “My day, I would probably say I’m in my room maybe a total of two hours just during school day all day long. Then I would say I’m out about from that point either in the front office and rooms in the hallways. I try to be out so that no one thinks that I’m just shut away and not accessible.” “I think out in the building too. I never really realized how much of a contact person you are for not only classroom teachers but related arts and for guidance. You have the opportunity to make both of those or all of those parties relevant to one another. I just try to be out and accessible.”
REFERENCES


