MANIFESTATION OF BOUNDARY SPANNING ROLES IN THE RESIDENT TEACHER PROGRAM COMMITTEE

By

ZHANNA SHATROVA

Bachelor of Science in English and German Instruction
Kirovograd Pedagogical Institute
Kirovograd, Ukraine
1987

Master of Science in Educational Leadership
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
2004

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COMMITTEE

Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Ed Harris

Dissertation Adviser

Dr. Ken Stern

Dr. Tami Moore

Dr. Pam Brown

Outside Committee Member

Dr. Mark E. Payton

Dean of the Graduate College

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No one who achieves success does so without the help of others.
The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.
Alfred North Whitehead

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Effective teacher preparation should lead to improved teaching, and successful teaching should result in improved students' learning (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2008; Cavalluzo, 2004). Thus, in today's schools, teacher preparation and support are crucial factors in student academic achievement. The process of teacher certification is one of the ways to ensure effective teaching in public schools, and some states have implemented residency programs to improve the certification process.

Teacher residency programs are considered "an innovative response to the longstanding challenges in teacher preparation" (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008, p.1), and they represent another way of training teachers and demonstrate "the capacity to recruit, prepare, retain, and provide effective support for teachers" (US Fed. News Service, 2007, par.7). The best induction programs emphasize subject-matter mastery and provide many opportunities for novice teachers to work in classrooms under the supervision of an experienced mentor. Just as professionals in medicine, architecture, and law have opportunities to learn through examining case studies, learning best practices, and participating in internships, exemplary induction programs allow novice teachers the opportunity to apply their learning of theory in the context of teaching in a real classroom (Berry et al., 2008; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2008; Landgraf,

2004; Schlechty, 1985). Twenty two states have formalized and mandated this induction process (Quality Counts, 2008). These mandated mentoring programs, or resident teachers programs, are getting increased recognition as innovative ways to help beginner teachers to enter the profession through a mentoring and certification process and, as a result, succeed in the classroom.

Oklahoma is among the states that have formalized and mandated a teacher induction process. Since 1982, about 50,000 teachers have gone through Oklahoma's Resident Teacher program, the oldest in the nation. One of the program's objectives is to help in supplying the State with good teachers. In 2006, 92.85 % of all classes in Oklahoma were taught by highly qualified teachers and state educators attribute a large portion of this success to the residency program (Oklahoma State Department of Education, Title II, Part A). An indication of positive impact of the residency year program on school district profiles is the fact that 92.6 percent of teachers were still employed with the school district after the first year (Second-year resident survey, administrator evaluation, 2009).

Legislators contribute effective teaching to academic achievement of the students (Title II-A, No Child Left Behind), and there is some evidence to support this assumption. For example, in 2007, Oklahoma was among 14 states that had students' scores improved at grades 4 and 8 on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (nationsreportcard.gov). These promising data were contrasted by the discouraging fact that Oklahoma's overall Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math scores from 2007 to 2008 remained unchanged, and the results were lower than the nation's average scores. ACT scores in Oklahoma's high school students also did not

improve from 2006 and 2007 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2009). Despite the fact that Oklahoma ranks 9th in a number of teachers who have national certification, it is only 36th in student achievement (Annual Report on Nation's Schools, 2008).

Currently, certification programs focus on the set of qualifications the teacher should possess. Imig and his associates claim that the emphasis should be put on successful performance of beginning teachers and state, "This shift in emphasis is profound and carries with it enormous consequences for school and colleges" (Imig, Koziol, Pilato, & Imig, 2009, p.141). A resident teacher program has a potential of providing the necessary support for beginning teachers and can be a major factor in making the shift to successful performance happen. In the midst of growing recognition of the benefits of the formalized induction of beginning teachers, Oklahoma's legislature decided to terminate the program for the period of 2010-2011 and 2011-2011 fiscal years (House Bill 2039). This change raises questions about the reasons for such a decision other than financial, if any, about the ways the school districts are going to provide support for beginning teachers during this period, and the improvement of state policy in induction in the future.

In offering induction support for the graduates, universities are called for deeper involvement to professional development of teachers and certification process and cooperation with school districts. Resident teacher programs are viewed by scholars as a form of such cooperation (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008); therefore, it is important to understand the composition and dynamics of residency committees and the committee members' perception of their roles in the program. The cultural context of the committee might influence considerably the overall satisfaction of the teachers

participating in the program, their intent to stay in the profession, and, ultimately, their teaching effectiveness. The committee makeup might serve as a prototype for other forms of induction, support, and professional development of beginning teachers.

Problem Statement

Oklahoma was the first state to formalize the process of new teachers' induction and establish a mandated Entry Year Assistance Program, which was later referred to as the Resident Teacher Program (RTP). The Resident Teacher Committee was designed as a partnership effort between public schools and universities to provide support and assistance for novice teachers. The stated intent of the RTP is "to establish qualifications of teachers in the accredited schools of this state through licensing and certification requirements to ensure that the education of the children of Oklahoma will be provided by teachers of demonstrated ability" (Oklahoma State Department of Education, n.d.). However, after 27 years of operation and in the midst of increasing number of states which started introducing such programs, the program was terminated for two fiscal years by Oklahoma legislature (House Bill 3029).

Despite the considerable number of teachers going through Oklahoma's RTP (e.g. 3,000 in 2007), Oklahoma's student academic performance is still not up to the expectations. The NAEP scores still remain lower than the nation's average scores. Thus, the state is still facing challenges in terms of students' outcomes despite the quality of the teachers and the support system for new teachers the residency program represents. What forms of support for beginning teachers will school districts choose instead of this formalized assistance?

Though the Oklahoma program has been in place for 27 years, the data about its operation and functioning are very scarce. Meanwhile, the research on different aspects of the program could inform educators and legislators about the steps for further development and improvement of the policies to assist beginning teachers. Resident teacher committees as the entity responsible for final outcomes of the program should receive sufficient attention. Committees are comprised of people representing different organizations/groups. To accomplish the task, the committee members cross the boundaries of organizations and develop new roles in the team. Boundary spanning is among standards of NCATE Concepts of Professional Development Schools (Standard 5, NCATE, 2010). Boundary spanning roles of ambassador and task coordinator are significantly and positively associated with the overall performance of teams and groups (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2009). Boundary spanning activities of the committee members and their interaction in collaborative effort to prepare the teacher for productive work may influence the teacher's job satisfaction and professional development.

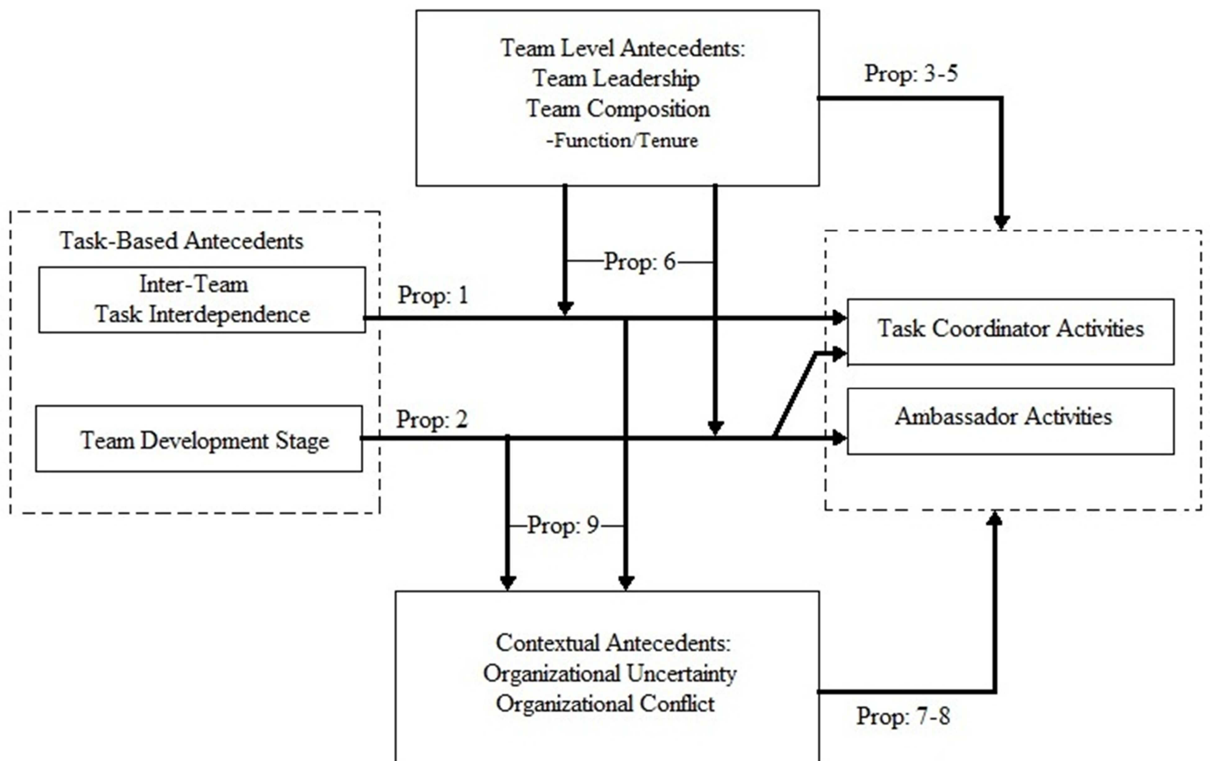
Understanding the committee members 'perceptions of the program, their roles in the program, and the influence of organizational cultures on the committee dynamics could shed light on the benefits and challenges the committees encounter and, consequently, explain the value of the program. It could also provide more insight of the educators' ideas about other forms of university-school partnership and collaboration in induction of beginning teachers to the profession.

Theoretical Framework

The integrative multi-level model of bracketed-team boundary spanning (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2009) (Fig. 1) informed and shaped the theoretical frame for this study.

Based on the premises of three theories- resource dependence and exchange, managerial sense making, and social identity - the model offers antecedents on three levels: task-based, contextual, and team-level for considering two roles (ambassador and task coordinator) which contribute to the success of the team. Initially the framework was developed to examine business environments and teams working on a particular product or project.

Figure 1. Multi-level Boundary Spanning Model



From "Bracketing Team Boundary Spanning: An Examination of Task-Based, Team-Level, and Contextual Antecedents" by A. Joshi, N. Pandey, and G. Han, 2009, *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 30,* p. 743. Copyright 2008 by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

The authors applied a "bracketing" approach (Hackman, 2003) to specify the antecedents of team boundary spanning: task-based, team level, and contextual combining "top down' as well as 'bottom up' perspectives on the emergence of team

boundary spanning activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 742). The combination of these three perspectives allows for understanding of how organizational, team, and individual factors manifest in team boundary spanning activities and outcomes.

Ambassador activities are aimed at protecting the team from outside pressure, persuading the others to support the team, and lobbying for resources. Examples of such activities may be the following: absorb outside pressure, protect from outside interference, persuade other individuals that the team's activities are important, persuade others to support teams decisions, acquire resources, report the progress of the team to a higher organizational level, find out whether others in the organizations support or oppose the team's activities, keep other groups in the organization informed of the team's activities. Task coordinator activities are aimed at coordinating technical and design issues. To resolve design problems with external groups, coordinate activities with external groups, negotiate with others for delivery deadlines, and scan the environment inside and outside the organization for ideas and expertise are the examples of the goals for task coordinator activities (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992, p. 640-641).

Teacher residency programs could be viewed as temporary organizations within a parent organization—a public school. On the one hand, they were integrated into school organizational context; on the other hand, they were a separate entity aimed at delivering a higher order of objective (recommendation for certification of the beginning teacher) which neither school nor university could do on its own. The teacher residency committee was a team comprised of representatives of different organizations and sub-organizations: universities and schools. As a team, the committee had some unique parameters. It operated in an educational setting. The committee spent little time

working together; the committee had only three meetings during a year. Most of the time they were engaged in individual observations of beginning teachers; thus, representing organization could be more important than representing a team. Each member of the committee represented his/her organization and shared expertise and knowledge necessary to fulfill the task. How committee members spanned boundaries of their respective organizations, where spanning activities took place and how the committee managed the program might be critical for meeting program's goals.

I considered using the frame posteriori because I wanted to allow it to "guide and inform rather than determine and force the research design and process" (Harris, 2006, p. 145). The theoretical frame suggested by Joshi, Pandey, and Han (2009) informed the study design in two ways:

1) It enabled looking at boundary spanning activities of committee members in two particular roles: ambassador and task coordinator. These are the roles which, as it has been mentioned before, contribute the most to the overall team performance.
2) The model offered three levels on which ambassador and task coordinator roles can be manifested: task, team, and contextual levels. The antecedents of each level; team task interdependence, team leadership, and organizational uncertainty or conflict were the areas of interest to seek understanding about boundary spanning in the committees and its fit in the frame.

Purpose of the Study

Two major objectives guided the study. The first was to describe how the RTP committees functioned to achieve desired outcomes and how they perceived their roles in the committee. A secondary objective was to consider the effectiveness of the multi-level

boundary spanning model in studying role and collaborative activities in educational settings.

Research Questions

1. How did the RTP committee function to achieve desired outcomes?
    a) How were roles manifested on these committees?
    b) How did committee members collaborate to achieve desired goals?
2. How does the multi-level boundary-spanning model explain these roles and dynamics of the teacher residency committees?
3. What other realities exist?

Procedures

This study utilized a case study approach. Case study is defined as "a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes " (Creswell, 2007, p.73).

The case study was focused on the particulars of a program, individual, or place (Rossman & Rallis, 1998), which in this case were resident teacher committees in schools in an Oklahoma public school district. The participants were faculty members, school principals, and teacher mentors who served on the committees, beginning teachers who went through the program, and Oklahoma State University program coordinator. I employed the following data collection tools: interviews (13), data from surveys and

follow up questionnaires of the principals and teachers, and documents (legislative bills, meeting minutes, and website postings).

Significance of the Study

The context of leadership practice and boundary spanning is multifaceted comprising of students, teachers, and parents; district, state, and federal policy; and local and national professional organizations. Thus, the information obtained from this study will be significant for several reasons.

To practice: Professional development and mentoring programs as a form of connection to the outside resources can utilize boundary spanning as a tool for knowledge acquisition and growth, and increased levels of job satisfaction (McGowan & Bozeman, 1982). Findings from the study will inform state legislators and other interested parties such as Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation about the challenges committee members encountered in their work in the program and the benefits they believed the program had. Legislators could use this information for reviewing procedures and policies for beginning teachers' induction to improve support of novice teachers. Educators could consider findings from the study in developing sequenced workshops and quality training for the committee members and discussing suggestions about induction activities and interactions.

To research: The study will inform about the aspects which need more examination. Clearly defined roles for each constituent in the program, understanding of boundary spanning activities of the committee members, and antecedents for other spanning roles might be the areas to look at in further research.

To theory: Applying the model to the educational setting will enrich and deepen understanding of the program committee as a unique organizational phenomenon. The study will examine effectiveness of the constructs of the model in studying emerging team boundary spanning and analyze anticipated as well as unanticipated outcomes of organizational interactions and program goals.

Assumptions

The underlying assumption for the study was that the resident teacher committee members representing different organizations and sharing expertise spanned boundaries of their organizations whether they viewed it as boundary spanning or not. They might not necessarily reflect on their roles as boundary spanners and the importance of boundary spanning activities for the program outcomes. It was also assumed that the committee chair was a team's leader who coordinated the committee activities and supported the committee decisions before the stakeholders.

Definition of Terms

Ambassador role- activities aimed at representation of the team and buffering its interests (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). For the study, these are activities of the committee members in protecting their respective organizations and the team from outside pressure, and persuading others to support the organization goals and values, scan the environment inside the committee for the threats to the final product (recommendations for beginning teachers)

Beginning teacher (also, resident teacher or entry year teacher)—"any licensed individual with zero years of teaching experience employed for any portion of the day" (Handbook for Resident Teacher Program 2009-2010).

Boundary spanner- Individuals who serve as connections between different constituents outside the organization. They are a vital link between the organization and the environment as "they filter environmental perceptions and interpretations" (Richardson, 2002, p. 199).

Boundary spanning- linking the organization with its external environment. It is "a means of coping with external change and that change is more salient under conditions of increased resources, conflict, and environmental turbulence" (McGowan, & Bozeman, 1982, p.179).

Induction- " a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process- that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progress them into a life-long learning program"(Wong, 2004, p.42)

Inter-team interdependence- "the extent to which teams have to exchange resources with other teams in order to accomplish team goals" (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2009). For the study, it is the extent to which each committee member exchanges the expertise and resources of their respective organizations to support a beginning teacher.

Leader's championing behavior- the ability of the team leader to scan the environment and support the team accomplishments before the stakeholders (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2009).

Mentor teacher – in the Resident Teacher Program, it is "any teacher holding a standard certificate who is employed in a school district to serve as a teacher and who has been appointed to provide guidance and assistance to a resident teacher employed

by the school district" (Handbook for Resident Teacher Program 2009-2010). The teacher should have at least two years of classroom instruction as a certified teacher.

Resident Teacher Committee – a "committee in a local school district for the purpose of reviewing the teaching performance of a resident teacher and making recommendations to the Board and the preparing institution of higher education regarding certification of the resident teacher" (House Bill 1549)

Resident Teacher Program (RTP) (Oklahoma) - a "support system for all beginning teachers the first time they teach or work with children/students. The licensed teacher is required to participate in the Resident Teacher Program during the initial year of teaching in an accredited school under the guidance and assistance of a Resident Teacher Committee in order to qualify for an Oklahoma teaching certificate" (Handbook for Resident Teacher Program 2009-2010)

Task coordinator role- "interactions aimed at coordinating technical or design issues" (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992, p.641). For the study, these are activities in coordinating the observations and assistance to the beginning teachers with other committee members and organizations the committee members represent, negotiating the deadlines for teacher recommendations, sharing experience and scanning the outside environment for new ideas and expertise, and protecting the information about the committee work from unauthorized release.

Organization-level conflict-for the study, the situation when the expectations for the performance of the job of each committee members (as defined by the program)

do not comply with the committee members' perception of the task as it is viewed in the organizations they represent.

Summary and Organization of the Study

The study is organized in six chapters. Chapter I provides background information about induction of beginning teachers and resident teacher programs and brief discussion of organizational boundary spanning. This information sets the context for identifying the problem, stating the purpose of the study and presenting research questions. The overview of theoretical framework which follows the research questions provides a rationale for choosing this particular frame and its relevance to the problem and purpose of the proposed research; it also explains main concepts and variables of the study and their relationships. Further, the discussion of the contribution of this study to knowledge designates its significance to research, theory, and practice. The chapter concludes with the list of terms which need to be operationally defined.

Chapter II is a review of body of literature relevant to the problem and purpose of the study. Comprehensive induction programs, Oklahoma Resident Teacher Program, and boundary spanning are the primary topics presented and discussed.

Chapter III provides a detailed description of the participants, research design, and procedures to conduct the study. It also reviews trustworthiness criteria and offers the reader a summary of steps and activities to meet those criteria.

Chapter IV presents interview data, documents, and observations. Descriptions of the settings are followed by the portrayal of the participants in clusters (professors, principals, mentor teachers, residency teachers). The data are reported as a narrative of participants' reflections and opinions on their service on resident teacher committees.

Chapter V discusses the findings relative to existing literature on comprehensive induction programs for beginning teachers. Further, the roles of the committees' members are examined through the lens of a multi-level boundary spanning model. Alternative forms of support and induction of beginning teachers are considered from the standpoint of school-university collaboration.

Chapter VI summarizes findings, offers conclusions, and reiterates significance of the study. The discussion of limitations and delimitations is followed by recommendations for further research, theory development, and practice.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter II is a review of the previous research in three areas: 1) induction of beginning teachers and programs that assist new teachers to enter the profession, 2) The Oklahoma Resident Teacher Program (RTP), and 3) organizational boundary spanning. The goal of the review is to: 1) synthesize and gain a new perspective on existing literature on induction programs and boundary spanning; 2) articulate important concepts and variables related to the study; and 3) discuss the key vocabulary to avoid ambiguities in definitions.

Comprehensive Induction Programs as Imperative

The success of the teachers hired today will affect the success of the students of the next generation. "Improving student achievement boils down to the teacher" (Wong, 2004, p. 41). Literature is replete with discourse about the challenges beginning teachers face during the first years of their career and the inherent problems, with which educators grapple. Inadequate resources, heavy work assignments, unclear expectations, sink-or-swim mentality, and reality shock are cited among environmental difficulties for novice teachers. In fact, some educators view inclusion or exclusion of a comprehensive induction program as part of the school culture (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Ingersoll, & Kralik, 2004).

With rising numbers of teachers leaving the profession after the first few years of teaching, which approximates to 40-50 % (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004), it is obvious that the sink-or-swim model does not work (Russel, 2006). "Educators can no longer afford only a haphazard approach to the induction of the newcomers, nor one with limited assumptions about new teachers as learners" (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006, p. 2). Scholars consider that comprehensive induction programs might become a new format for professional development of beginning teachers, a "foundation for career-long support for personal and professional transitions" (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010, p. 74). These programs should respond to emergent novice teachers' needs on a daily basis in an organized, collegial, and efficient manner (Blank & Kershaw, 2009; Downey, Steffy, Poston, & English, 2009). Moreover, such support can assist more than just beginning teachers. Block and Grady (2006) identified potential recipients of the programs; the pool includes: inexperienced, fully certified beginners; inexperienced beginners in alternative certificate programs; experienced teachers returning after a period of absence; experienced teachers new to the district or school; and experienced teachers who request assistance, as well as experienced teachers who are on probation.

Various stakeholders should contribute to development of the comprehensive induction models. Higher education institutions and school districts must work together to design and implement effective induction programs (Russel, 2006). State and federal governments have their input in this collaboration providing financial and legal support. They "design the education ship… It is important that the legislators view education as a system for which they carry a lot of responsibility" (Jenkins, 1997, p. 22). Recently, there is evidence of increasing interest to such efforts (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

Induction is a comparatively new phenomenon for education in comparison to other white-collar occupations, which have historical traditions and practices of structured induction and initiation processes to the profession, such as medical residency programs (Ingersoll, & Kralik, 2004).

Induction policy initiatives originated on the state level in the 1980s. Before 1984, only eight states introduced such policies; then, by 1992, 26 more started programs. Among those, 18 states had mandated programs: Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Mississipi, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia (Strong, 2009). The Quality Counts report of 2008 confirmed that 22 states had mandated, funded by the state government new teacher induction programs. All programs vary in their components; maybe that is why, the literature on induction differs in recognizing programs as successful. According to Strong (2009), the most effective programs were Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) in California, Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) in Connecticut, and Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) started in Ohio. Russel (2006) presented another list of promising induction models: New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz; The Pathwise Framework Induction Program, and The Teachers for a New Era Project of the Carnegie Corporation in New York. The other notable programs are in Alaska, California, New Jersey, Michigan, Virginia, Georgia, Connecticut, and Louisiana (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008; Russel, 2006).

What is Induction?

Literature provides an array of different definitions of induction. In a broad sense, induction refers to support, guidance, and orientation for a beginning teacher (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010). Glickman and his associates further specified that the teacher should obtain ongoing, intensive assistance at least during the first year of teaching. Wong (2004) presented a more inclusive definition of induction as " a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process-that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progress them into a life-long learning program" (p. 42). To explain this definition, he offered a list of features that should characterize a comprehensive induction program. According to Wong, a successful induction program promotes career learning and professional development; provides multiple support of people and administrators on the district and state level; treats induction as part of a lifelong professionally designed investment in an extensive, comprehensive, and sustained induction program; and acculturates a vision and aligns content to academic standards. Further, comprehensive induction programs allow teachers to "observe others, be observed by others, share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other's work "(p. 52).

Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2010) expanded the list of program components and suggested more specific elements: an assigned mentor, an orientation to the school and community, training in classroom management, and support seminars focused on novice teachers' concerns (p. 338). Downey, Steffy, Poston, and English (2009) emphasized continuity and team approach to building a sense of the learning community within the school and across the district. The idea of comprehensive induction as a contributing factor to transforming schools into real communities of

professional learning became prevalent in the literature (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Blank & Kershaw, 2009; Russel, 2006; Strong, 2009). Russel (2006) also discussed the importance of participation in an external network of teachers and standard based evaluation for positive outcomes of the programs. These features add to the areas where universities can provide support and guidance. "Mentoring and induction can bridge the gap between pre-service education and the classroom, and higher education institutions must be an important part of this picture" (p. 3).

Research not only delineates the components of induction programs but also identifies the features of successful models. Based on Ingersoll and Kralik's (2004) review of research of 10 programs and their own research, Blank and Kershaw (2009) claimed that the successful induction program should:

- use research- based evaluation process with the new teachers;
- extend beyond the first year teaching experience;
- identify responsibility for program implementation and results;
- function as a collaborative partnership of district educators and higher education institutions responsible for teacher training;
- occur within a culture (state, district, school) that is supportive and encouraging of professional development (p.10).

Furthermore, Blank and Kershaw emphasized a link between teacher effectiveness and students' academic performance and believed that student achievement should be a standard for decision making about hiring, placement, and mentoring of new teachers. Consequently, primary goals of any induction program should be retaining new teachers and capitalizing on student learning. A model induction and mentoring program

can "set the stage for a culture of collaboration in which educators can be co-workers, co-teachers, and co-learners; help new teachers to become experts more quickly; and increase retention of teachers" (Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, 2006).

Mentoring as the Major Component of Induction Programs

Induction and mentoring programs have a variety of forms and formats, including classes, workshops, orientations, and seminars (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). They may comprise few or many components, be state mandated or district required, and be well or poorly funded (Strong, 2009). Mentoring stands out among those forms, having become a dominant form since the 1980s (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). In fact, the terms induction and mentoring are used interchangeably in some research (Blank & Kershaw, 2009; Downey, Steffy, Poston, & English, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). On the other hand, other scholars view mentoring only as part of a comprehensive program (Strong, 2009). All researchers agree though on the variety of forms mentoring can take. The continuum goes from informal support of an available teacher to a formal support of a trained mentor selected for that role (Strong, 2009). Mentoring programs vary in duration and intensity, number of teachers they serve, purpose, mentor training, and matching mentors and mentees (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). A common feature of any program despite variation should be ongoing relationship between the mentor and beginner; it is the "heart of mentoring" (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010, p. 299).

Collegial interchange and high quality interpersonal relationships resulting from mentoring allow beginning teachers to experience a feeling of success and input to the whole school culture. Just assigning available teachers for mentoring or having no structure for the process diminishes induction effectiveness and does not solve novice teachers' problems and concerns (Wong, 2004). "The era of isolated teaching is over.

Good teaching thrives in a collaborative learning environment created by teachers and school leaders working together to improve learning in strong professional learning communities" (p. 51-52).

Research on Various Programs

Considerable body of literature on induction and mentoring programs serves as evidence of the significant interest to this field in education. According to Blank and Kershaw (2009), educators "can no longer afford 'business as usual' in the induction of beginning teachers" (p. 4). They suggested the following principles to guide the development of induction programs:

- Quality mentoring is the key, and induction assures it takes place.
- Effective induction offers beginning teachers the support they need in high-need schools.
- Mentoring builds Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- Mentoring and induction can accelerate new teachers' instructional effectiveness.
- Mentoring transforms. (p. 4-7)

In the mid-1990s, researchers started to investigate outcomes of the programs. The degree of new teachers' job satisfaction, effects on teacher retention rates, cost effectiveness of the induction programs, student achievement gains, and teacher practices were the main topics scholars addressed (Strong, 2009). Induction programs' effects on student learning and, ultimately, on academic achievement gains has gotten more attention since 2000; it is a "growing area" in the field (Russel, 2006). It is worth mentioning that while it might be unrealistic to find a direct link of effectiveness of induction program to student performance, literature presents enough evidence of

correlation between the effective teaching and student academic achievement. As it was discussed earlier, the main goal of any induction program is support and professional development to accelerate teachers' instructional effectiveness; thus, the argument that induction programs ultimately might contribute to students' academic gains seems relevant.

Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2010) stated that recent research present considerable evidence which indicate strong correlation between high-quality teachers and student achievement. Indeed, Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, and Heilig (2005) in their comprehensive study, found that the number of high-quality teachers with proper certification was the best predictor of student performance on national tests.

The key results of Klein, Hamilton, McCaffrey, Stecher, Robyn, and Burroughs' (2000) examination of the relationship between teachers' practices and students' achievement were not so assertive; still, they showed evidence that the relationship between teachers' instruction and students' achievements tended to be positive, though it was small. Consistent with earlier research are findings from the study on effects of comprehensive teacher induction (Isenberg, Glazerman, Bleeker, Johnson, Lugo-Gil, Grider, & Dolfin, 2009). Services from the programs were positively correlated to student's outcomes. However, the results did not support the hypothesis about causal effect of programs on students' achievement.

Limitations of Existing Research

Acknowledging the importance of research on induction programs and their effectiveness, scholars agree on limitations of the studies. The major issue according to Isenberg, et al. (2009) is that research has not been "conclusive or rigorous." Focus on

specific programs in a particular school district makes generalizability of the studies difficult (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Strong (2009) agreed, noting that, "Recommendations that arise from research studies will need to take into account the specifics of the programs and settings under investigation, requiring the addition of restrictions and caveats to any generalizations about the potential effectiveness of induction for beginning teachers" (p. 100).

Another limitation common for the research on induction programs is that the control over other factors influencing a decision to stay in the profession is not included in the design. Among those factors, literature identifies principal leadership, academic orientation of the curriculum, and organizational climate conducive to learning (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Strong, 2009). Role of principals in beginning teachers' induction was not typically mentioned or explored in research till 2004 (Wong, 2004). Later, Brock and Grady (2006) filled in that gap presenting a list of critical responsibilities of the principal in the induction process:

- Making timely appointments to teaching positions that allow adequate preparation time
- Making appropriate teaching assignments
- Assigning a classroom near a mentor teacher
- Providing adequate teaching resources
- Communicating expectations for teaching and learning
- Interacting with entry-level teachers individually and in small groups
- Observing classroom teaching
- Providing feedback and affirmation

- Induction Programs as Partnership with Universities (p. 28).

With a variety of programs in terms of scope, design, and components, it is clear from literature that collaboration of different levels including higher education is essential for the success of induction efforts. Accordingly, coordination of support and collaboration becomes critical. Blank and Kershaw (2006) contributed considerably to the discourse about comprehensive induction programs presenting their vision how the program should be planned and what roles the Mentor Core Team (MCT) as a whole, and each of the members of the team individually should play. They argue that support of new teachers within the program has two levels: external and internal-"in-house" level. Faculty members are viewed as expanded (external) level of support providing the expertise, observation, and feedback that are beyond the capacity of school-based team members. Blank and Kershaw (2006) further provided their idea of an effective MCT and team members' roles in designing a program. The team establishes rules, decides on meeting dates and times, adopts or adapts constructive models for decision making and problem solving, develops and uses appropriate meeting agenda and protocols, creates a yearly plan for mentoring activities, and ensures confidentiality of information shared at MCT meetings. The roles of each team member should be clearly identified. It is also crucial for the team "to examine their individual beliefs, determine core values, and agree on a shared vision early in the design phase" (p. 47). School culture is another thing team members should consider and examine thoroughly; attitudes, traditions, and routines that shape the culture contribute to the program's success. This examination could facilitate maintaining positive and productive climate and define participants' perceptions of the program. These considerations seem to hold true about all kinds of induction programs,

including Oklahoma Teacher Residency model, the oldest mandated program in the nation.

Oklahoma Teacher Residency Program

Entry-Year Assistance Program, which was later referred to as the Teacher Residency Program was part of Oklahoma Education Act or HB1706 (1980) aimed at introducing changes in teacher preparation, including certification and professional development. The goal of the program was to provide guidance and assistance to first year teachers in Oklahoma. The Entry-Year Committee comprised of a teacher consultant, school administrator, and a representative from higher education was expected to supervise and evaluate a first year teacher. The committee was responsible for deciding the certification eligibility of the teacher in Oklahoma. Depending on the recommendation of the committee, the teacher could or could not be granted certification. If it was not granted at the end of the first year, the teacher was allowed additional entry year of teaching.

In 1995, Oklahoma Legislature introduced a House Bill 1549, which changed the name from Entry-Year Assistance Program to Resident Teacher Program. The intent was "to establish qualifications of teachers in the accredited schools of this state through licensing and certification requirements to ensure that the education of the children of Oklahoma will be provided by teachers of demonstrated ability" (Oklahoma State Department of Education, n.d.). The terms for committee members changed too; a teacher consultant became a teacher mentor and higher education representative was called a teacher educator.

Research and Policy Development on the Program

The RTP was the focus of Oklahoma Education Research Symposium in 1985. Oklahoma scholars explored various aspects of the program including challenges and problems of beginning teachers and the role of support and assistance for the beginning teacher. Godley, Klug, and Wilson (1985) considered the problems first year teacher encountered from the perspective of college faculty members. They situated those problems in three areas: work socialization, personal characteristics, and translating knowledge into practice. Major findings of the study were the importance of support and assistance in handling challenges. Sufficient support made all problems more manageable. Participating teachers emphasized the role of the committee in their transition to real classroom. They valued an opportunity to be able to come to any of the committee members either for advice or an idea, or to get a second opinion. Such experienced and knowledgeable support provided new fruitful avenues for improving instruction. The theme of support and assistance was explored deeper in Stern's (1985) study of the beginning elementary school teachers' perception of support from principals and other committee members in Oklahoma and Kansas. A relevant consideration of this study was that "having a committee with different roles, with different expectations of the first year teacher, with different expertise, and with differing amounts of flexibility and constraints should result in a range of assessments of the teacher" (p. 22). The teacher should benefit the most from this mixture.

The 1985 Symposium also presented an evaluation of the program made by Oklahoma Public Schools (Crawford, Mcbee, & Watson, 1985). The purpose of evaluation was threefold: 1) to document implementation of the program from the perspective of the committee members; 2) to determine which instructional techniques of

entry teachers were associated with the largest student achievement test gains; and 3) to determine whether there was any difference in effectiveness measurements between the teachers who were in the programs and those who had only teacher consultants. Although the evaluation did not find very many significant differences of the formal program outcomes, it did present evidence of the program contribution to beginning teachers 'performance. The teachers were "more interactive with their students, somewhat more oriented toward academic content, and had higher rates of private, one-to-one contacts with students" (p. 30)

Oklahoma's Commission on Educational Planning and Assessment conducted an assessment of the program in 1983 and presented a report about the program effectiveness to the Oklahoma Legislature. Five hundred and fifty- two individuals participating in the program (117 entry teachers, 135 teacher consultants, 115 school administrators, and 160 higher education representatives) responded to the survey. Major findings of the study were the following. Almost all participants (92%) agreed that the Entry Year Assistance Committee was effective in providing support and guidance to the entry year teacher. The majority of the respondents (86%) thought that the program presented an opportunity for meaningful communication with higher education representatives, school administrators, and teacher consultants. Eighty-five percent of the respondents agreed that the program contributed to the teachers' success. A ranking order of the committee members most responsible for keeping the committee on task was: a) school administrator; b) higher education administrator; and c) teacher consultant. Higher education representatives and teacher consultants contributed mostly to general support of beginning teachers, while school administrators' major contribution was in

logistics and coordination. Participants also identified general support of the entry year teacher as the greatest strength of the program. The report specified most important contributions of individual committee members. For school administrators, it was coordination of logistics and general administrative support. The most significant input from higher education representatives was in general support of teachers, technical instruction in subject matter, teachers' observations, and coordination of logistics. Teacher consultants contributed considerably in general support, technical assistance in classroom management, sharing ideas, and providing feedback. As one can see, general support is a contribution of all committee members, while other elements are unique for each member (e.g. technical instruction in subject matter for a higher education representative, and technical assistance in classroom management for a teacher consultant). Final recommendations of the evaluation included the need for a continuing longitudinal assessment of the program. It should be noted that no information about other evaluations of the program has been found.

Another provision of House Bill 1549, which changed the name of the program, was creation of the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) to coordinate all aspects of teacher preparation, assessment, and professional development. A very significant contribution of the OCTP to the RTP was developing guidelines and recommendations about future directions for the program. They outlined the needs to make the program more effective: three years of mentoring support, changes in logistics of residency committees which included preparation and training for all committee members, releasing time for induction activities (observations and meetings among them), and protocols to guide induction interactions. Other critical needs included

"structured support that develops effective teachers who are a part of the learning opportunity and full funding for mentor stipend and professional development for the entire residency team" (OCTP, 2006).

A practical step to meet those needs was piloting a two-year mentoring program for educators in Oklahoma with the goal of creating high-performing learning communities and enhancing the vigor of the RTP. The mentoring project developers viewed it as a "consistent, replicable and sustainable" extension of the RTP. Professional development for all Residency Committee members was among project components. Innovation of this model was manifested in expanding the scope of partnership of universities and schools engaging state agencies and teacher organizations in collaboration (OCTP, 2006). Partnership and collaboration presuppose crossing organizational boundaries to develop new relationships and becoming more open in exchanging information and expertise. Furthermore, boundary spanning is gaining its momentum in education being included in the Concepts of Professional Development Schools (NCATE, 2010).

Organizational Boundary Spanning

Literature views boundaries as a crucial characteristic of any organization (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008). Their role is to delineate the organizational interface and protect organizations from environmental stress securing a certain amount of organizational independence from the environment. Essentially, it comes down to information exchange between the organization and the environment. Boundaries are not clear and stable, they are dynamic and permeable, and they can span (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). As McGowan and Bozeman (1982) argued, organization

members who are attuned to the information on both sides of the boundary can span or cross boundaries to find relevant information in the environment and share it inside organizations, or vice versa. Thus, boundary spanning activities, roles, and boundary spanners are key concepts within the notion of organizational boundaries, and they are critical for understanding how these mechanisms work.

What is Boundary Spanning?

Boundary spanning refers to the task of linking an organization with its environment and coordinating that boundary. These are interactions of the organization with external actors to establish relationships which would facilitate the achievement of overall organizational goals (Marrone et al., 2007). With constantly changing external environments, boundary spanning is "a means of coping with external change and that change is more salient under conditions of increased resources, conflict, and environmental turbulence" (McGowan & Bozeman, 1982, p. 179). Boundary spanning may be better understood by examining both organizational and individual factors (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2008). Boundary-spanning activity (BSA) serves as a measure of boundary spanning (Leifer & Huber, 1977). The domain of boundary spanning comprises a wide range of activities, including representing organizations to external constituents, gaining access to resources and support, and scanning the environment for information and knowledge necessary for meeting organizational goals (Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2008). The individuals who perform those activities and serve as connections between different constituents (Wenger, 1998) are boundary spanners or, as Adams (1976) calls them, "boundary role persons (BRP)." A BRP is a person who is responsible for contacting people outside his or her own group. Two major tasks of a

BRP are a) to represent expectations, perceptions, and ideas of each side to other and b) to convey influence between constituents and opponents. Richardson (2002) stated that spanners are a vital link between the organization and the environment as “they filter environmental perceptions and interpretations” (p. 199).

Miller (2008) went further in explanation of boundary roles and role holders. He concurred that boundary roles have a dual purpose: 1) to filter and facilitate the information exchange between organizations and 2) to represent organizations in the external environment. Boundary spanners should have expertise in defining what data to select, summarize, and interpret for this information to be beneficial for organizational success. External representation, according to Miller, is an organization’s response to external environment pressures and contingencies. The degree of formalization of boundary roles depends on complexity of the organization and the level of external environment constraints and demands. Earlier, Aldrich and Hecker (1977) stated “The more critical the contingency, the more attention is paid to explicit formalization of the role and selection of an incumbent” (p. 225). This explanation develops McGowan and Bozeman’s (1982) argument about the role of individuals’ motives in boundary spanning. “Because of different motives, internal and external aspects influence boundary spanning independently. External change is an encompassing factor that includes environmental turbulence, inter-organizational conflict and program growth (McGowan, & Bozeman, 1982, p. 179).

The need to adapt to environmental contingencies and manage potential unexpected opposition makes roles become routinized (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). Literature presents various terms to define spanners depending on what particular aspects,

role(s) or activities each study explores: gatekeepers (Allen, 1977); communication stars (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981), and ambassadors and task coordinators (Ancona, 1990; Joshi, Pandey, & Han, 2009) - to name a few. Guided by contextual knowledge about their organization, interpersonal skills, trust, and loyalty to the organization, the spanners take a particular role to facilitate the dialogue and collaboration (Miller, 2008). How do spanners perceive their roles, what challenges do they encounter in boundary spanning activities and how does the organization benefit from boundary spanning? There are two levels of boundary spanning engagement: individual and team (organization). One of the limitations of research on boundary spanning was that it considered only one level which resulted in two separate sets of findings on the topic (Marrone, Tesluk, & Carson, 2007), consequently, presenting a fragmented picture of the phenomenon.

Multilevel Approach to Boundary Spanning

A paradox stemming from the findings of two sets of research was, "A team engaging in boundary spanning may more effectively manage its external environment in ways that aid performance, yet, in carrying out boundary spanning, team members may experience significant role overload that could harm the team's long-term viability" (Marrone et al., 2007, p. 1424). The multilevel model Marrone et al. developed let them connect two streams of research and investigate how boundary spanning might contribute to the team's overall performance while the team lessens individual role overload. It also allowed identifying factors that influenced individual team member's engagement in boundary spanning of the team. Teams with primary importance of external activities were the focus of the study. The multilevel model framed individual level antecedents (boundary spanning roles, boundary spanning self-efficacy) and team-level antecedents

of individual-level boundary spanning (external focus and moderating role of consensus on external focus) into a cohesive scheme to look at the consequences of boundary spanning at the individual and team levels. One of the significant contributions of the study to research on the topic was that it provided "the foundation for multilevel theory of boundary spanning linking the individual, team, and organizational levels" (p. 1433).

Several thoughts are drawn from Marrone's et al. (2007) research. The link between all levels seems to be particularly important for the teams which consist of members representing different organizations; resident teacher committee is an example of such teams. Another thing to consider in regard to the team's outcomes is interplay between external and internal team dynamics. The resident teacher committee is a unique type of a team where external dynamics happens on two levels: individual within the team (team members representing different organizations span boundaries of their respective organizations due to the nature of the committee) and individual and team level outside the team (the committee as a whole is responsible for recommending the beginning teacher for certification which makes them accountable to all multiple stakeholders). The thought about twofold nature of individual level of boundary spanning in the resident teacher committee was a jumping point for identifying the purpose of the proposed study.

The review of 20 years of studies on boundary spanning (Joshi, Pandey, and Han, 2009) deepened my understanding of the multiple level nature of boundary spanning and shaped a theoretical frame for the dissertation. This study contributed to current research in the field in two ways: 1) it presented a comprehensive picture about scholarly advancement in conceptualizing boundary spanning, defining its antecedents, and

exploring the factors which influence the process of boundary spanning; and 2) the authors suggested a framework for understanding boundary spanning as bracketed between team and organizational constraints. Joshi et al. applied a "bracketing" approach (Hackman, 2003) to specify the antecedents of team boundary spanning: task-based, team level, and contextual. They claimed that application of these three perspectives allowed for understanding how individual members' attributes can manifest in team boundary spanning outcomes. The researchers specifically targeted two spanning roles, ambassador and task coordinator, as those that are positively associated with the team's performance. Again, as in Marrone's et al. (2007) study discussed earlier, the focus was on the external boundary team spanning activities with members of the team presenting the same organization. The theoretical frame suggested by Joshi et al. (2009) could enable exploration of how individual attributes of committee members representing different organizations as ambassadors and task coordinators are manifested on three levels: task (teacher observations), team (management, communication, leadership), and contextual (organizational culture), and how these manifestations within the team are revealed in the committee's and program's outcomes.

Boundary Spanning in Educational Settings

Research on boundary spanning looks at different aspects of organizational life as well as types or subtypes of organizations (temporary projects, programs, and teams). Though the major bulk of research on organizational boundaries and boundary spanning is done in business, the concepts are getting more attention in exploring organizations in education, especially in partnerships and collaboration programs. Boundary spanning is among the standards of NCATE Concepts of Professional Development Schools:

university and school partners share responsibility for a candidate's preparation, faculty development, and student learning. To accomplish these tasks, partners and candidates must cross institutional boundaries to develop new roles and relationships. Partners take active roles as teachers and learners in each other's partnering institutions; cohorts of candidates assume appropriate responsibilities in schools (Standard 5, NCATE, 2010).

In the discussion of school organization boundaries and challenges of leadership in boundary spanning, Richardson (2002) emphasized increasing complexity of the nature of schooling and educational leadership due to rapid social, economic, political, and technological landscape external changes. Those changes contribute to the organizational internal environment becoming "virtually boundaryless" (p. 203). The pressure to operate in such an environment, the primary responsibility for students' academic improvement, and the dependent fiscal role which does not let school administrators move money, people, or information across boundaries are manifestations of this increasing complexity. As a result, school leaders have to be "engaged in negotiating and competing for funds, building coalitions, resolving conflicts, and otherwise trying to fulfill the expectations of a skeptical public" (p. 203). Miller (2008) summed up that "To varying degrees all educational leaders are called to serve as boundary spanners" (p. 356). He further argued that it might be not very easy; not all successful leaders are as effective when they must operate and collaborate in the different organizational and professional context.

Successful instructional leadership is a challenge for school administrators (Coldren & Spillane, 2007). Boundary spanning and spanners contribute significantly to effective instructional leadership practices. Using boundary activities and being a

spanner allows the administrator to maintain “key connections to teaching practices, thereby enabling her to keep a hand on the instructional pulse of the school” (p. 370). The context of leadership practice and boundary spanning is multifaceted comprising of students, teachers, parents; district, state, and federal policy; and local and national professional organizations. Connecting teachers with outside resources, the school leader can shape classroom practice. Professional development and mentoring programs as a form of connection to outside resources can utilize boundary spanning as a tool to knowledge acquisition and growth, and increased levels of job satisfaction (McGowan & Bozeman, 1982).

Professional Development Schools standards (NCATE, 2010) emphasize the role of partnerships between schools and universities for building expanded learning communities. Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) -- a collaborative project of the University of Southern Maine with several school districts is an example of boundary spanning in professional development schools. In the study on this project, Walters (1998) looked at advantages and challenges of such partnerships. The overall advantage was that partnerships facilitated better understanding of both institutions. Schools received an opportunity to generate and test new ideas, and get a better insight to teacher education at the local, state, and national level. Universities could influence schools and school policy via the contacts with teachers and administrators, developing a better sense of belonging and community. At the same time, role conflicts and misunderstanding between partners stemming from an “ivory tower” stereotype may present challenges in maintaining a collaborative climate. Partnerships are “a host of significant leadership possibilities and dilemmas” (Miller, 2008, p. 355).

In addition to the research on multilevel boundary spanning which shaped the theoretical framework for the dissertation, several other studies were relevant to the project. Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2008) examined management of the temporary organizations' boundaries. They argued that "A program can be seen as a temporary organization in which a group of projects are managed together to deliver higher order objectives not delivered by any of the projects on their own" (p. 21). Their study shed light on boundary setting and management of initiation of the temporary program within the parent organization. Results pointed out the importance of boundary management for effective function of the program and the critical role of the program personnel in crafting program content and structures. These are individuals (boundary spanners) who ultimately make decisions about crossing the boundaries. They should be aware of the organizational context to be able to handle the constraints and unclear dynamic circumstances. They should also be able to maintain balance between integrating the program and guarding and insulating the program from the parent organization.

In maintaining the balance, how much should the system be open? Richardson (2002) considered stress as an attribute of any organization boundary spanning. Any social system (school is not an exception) is insulated from the environment by a psychological boundary. The more it is permeable to the influence from the environment, the more open the system is. Richardson claimed that for school leaders these boundaries do not exist today and they have to find ways to insulate their organization from the environment. This task makes boundary spanning challenging for school leaders. The issue associated with challenges of boundary spanning is role conflict (Friedman & Podolny, 1992). Boundary spanners are core figures in intergroup

relations. The organization a boundary spanner represents has certain expectations about values, interests, and ideas the person should convey outside the boundary. With different interests of each organization, fulfilling a certain role by a spanner might come to a conflict with those expectations. Friedman and Podolny (1992) discussed the following effects of the role conflict: suspicion shown to them by both sides, deteriorated relations, reduced communication in the organization. All these effects ultimately influenced negatively the overall performance of the organization.

Summary

In the review, I presented major research findings relevant to the topic of my study: boundary spanning in the resident teacher committee. I began with the discussion of importance of beginning teachers' induction for retention of prosperous and talented cadre in education and ensuring that the students in public schools are taught by quality teachers. The need to structure and formalize programs and the role of partnerships between schools and universities in induction of beginning teachers are among major arguments in this discussion. I proceeded further with the description of the Oklahoma Teacher Resident Program putting it in the historical context and distinguishing what had been done in evaluating and researching the program and its outcomes. In doing so, I particularly focused my attention on the residency committee as the entity responsible for assisting new teachers and recommending them for certification. In the *Organizational Boundary Spanning* section of the chapter, I synthesized the research on organizational boundary spanning and boundary spanning roles with the focus on teams to gain a new perspective on the literature regarding to the purpose of my study. I articulated and defined key concepts and variables and showed how they can be adapted to educational

settings. In reviewing the research on multilevel theory of boundary spanning, I highlighted the studies that informed and shaped a theoretical framework for the dissertation and defined the areas that should be examined when the suggested frame is applied to the residency committee. I concluded the chapter with the review of other relevant research on the topic.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Two major objectives guided the study. The first was to describe how the Resident Teacher Program (RTP) committees functioned to achieve desired outcomes and how they perceived their roles in the committee. A secondary objective was to consider the effectiveness of the multi-level boundary-spanning model (Joshi et al., 2009) in studying role and collaborative activities in educational settings.

The research questions to meet those objectives were:

1. How did the RTP committee function to achieve desired outcomes?
    a) How were roles manifested on these committees?
    b) How did committee members collaborate to achieve desired goals?

2. How does the multi-level boundary-spanning model explain these roles and dynamics of resident teacher committees?
3. What other realities exist?

The constructionist epistemological perspective shaped the methodology of this study. Constructionism explains that all knowledge is "contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and

developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Understanding the role of social context, interaction of processes, and intertwined bonds between subjectivity and objectivity was critical for the researcher in examining how participants' constructed realities about their service on the committees matched tangible entities (e.g., evaluations and recommendations) to "represent the multiple constructions of the individuals" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 84).

Nested in constructionist premises, the naturalistic mode of inquiry best met the purpose of the study, for it allowed to "understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved, to contextualize issues in their particular socio-cultural-political milieu" (Glesne, 2006, p. 4). This case study was based on "a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes " (Creswell, 2007, p. 73). The case study was focused on the particulars of a program, individual, or place (Rossman & Rallis, 1998), which, in this case, were resident teacher committees in schools in a Midwest public school district.

Chapter III discusses the procedures employed to seek understanding of issues posed in the research questions and describes key components, such as a sample, tools, and techniques for data collection and data analysis. Design in a qualitative research is "an ongoing process that involves 'tacking' back and forth between different components of the design, assessing the implications of goals, theories, research questions, methods and validity threads for one another" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 3). Thus, the outline of this

research was not something predetermined and rigid; it was a flexible interconnected structure which undertook some adjustments and changes as the study evolved.

Site and Participant Selection

The site, a public school district in a Midwest state, was selected based on the criteria for an ideal site discussed by Marshall and Rossman (1989). Among those criteria were: entry to the site; probability of mix of processes, people, and interactions which are part of the research questions; and reasonable warranty of data quality and credibility (p. 54). This school district, located in a university city, presented a mix of processes in providing support to beginning teachers. Mentoring training program, monthly new teachers' meetings, and book clubs were among the activities in addition to the RTP. The district had extensive experience of granting the permission for entry to the sites for the College of Education research projects due to the location.

I followed the established procedure and contacted the Director of Research at the school district's Board of Education with the request to enter the school sites of different levels: high, middle, and elementary. Three levels of schools and residency committees comprising of various faculty members, principals, and mentor teachers presented a good mix of people, interactions, and processes that allowed for maximum variation in perceptions, opinions, and experiences of the participants.

Data quality and credibility were reasonably assured due to a typical case sampling of participants which focused on what was typical for a phenomenon, process or case (Patton, 2002). The sample of participants was comprised of resident teacher committee members who served on the committees in the past (three people for each represented unit- the administrator, mentor, and university faculty) and three teachers

who participated in the program as beginning teachers. University coordinator of the RTP was purposefully included to the sample due to the nature of the position and the person's expertise, knowledge of the program, and experience of working with the committees.

To select the participants, I obtained from the university program coordinator a list of the school administrators, teacher mentors, and College of Education faculty who previously had served on committees. The candidates' names were verified for accessibility (current employment with the district and university and valid contact information) and fields of expertise (teaching content area and level). The final pool of candidates included 16 people. All of them were contacted through email with a recruitment letter as an attachment (Appendix B). I received immediate responses from 13 people; 12 agreed for interviews, one declined an invitation. Two additional responses were received later, two months after contacting the people.

Data Collection Techniques

Consistent with the purpose of the study and qualitative approach to meet the objectives was my choice of data collection techniques that comprised of interviews, observations, and document analysis. I employed a mix of these methods "to illuminate an inquiry question" (Patton, 2002, p. 248).

Interviews

In-depth interviewing and observations are the core in gathering information for a qualitative study; they are "the staples of the diet" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 79). Semi-structured topical interviewing which "focuses more on a program, issue, or process" (Glesne, 2006, p. 80) was a primary data collection technique, which allowed

for uncovering participants' views and perspectives about their roles on committees. Interview protocols were based on 10 previously identified research questions (Appendix C). Engaging in interviews, building rapport with participants, and gaining their trust enabled redesign of the interview structure if needed and development of prompts. Through interviews I explored participants' experiences and perceptions of their roles in the program.

An interview with the university RT program coordinator supplemented data collection. This person provided valuable information relevant to the purpose of the study due to her expertise and role she played in the program as a liaison among all constituents and familiarity with the legal and financial structure of the program. A follow up interview with the program coordinator was based on questions I developed analyzing the program handbook. I needed follow up to clarify some points which appeared from the document and interview data and to obtain more insight to the program's structure and mechanisms.

Observations

The study's focus had to be shifted to involve previous years' committees, because the legislature placed a two-year moratorium on the program's operation resulting from a financial shortfall. Observations of committee meetings and interactions among committee members were not feasible. Thus, I used observations of school sites during interviews and additional visits to the schools (e.g. open house), reflections on interviews, and indirect and direct observations of interactions of the members of Professional Education Unit of the College of Education as data collection tools. Direct observations included conversations with the faculty and staff of professional education

and research unit of the College about alternative ways to support new teachers. The researcher also observed the work and daily routine of the Teacher Excellence Network (TEN) project's coordinator.

Document Analysis

The Resident Teacher Program and government documents served as major sources for document analysis. Included were state House Bills, the program handbook, program evaluation reports, school administrator and beginning teacher follow up survey records, website editorials, and newsletters. A criterion for choosing sources was relevance of information in the materials to the topic of inquiry. Data from the documents allowed to "…furnish descriptive information, offer historical understanding, and track change and development" (Merriam, 2009, p. 155). Considering the time frame the program has been in place (since 1982), a historical analysis of documents became the background for developing interview protocols, and looking at what was known about committees from the previous data sources.

Data Collection Timeline

After finishing the University's Institutional Review Board's process and contacting a public school district for permission to access schools, I started collecting documents on the program: the evaluation report of 1983, legislation bills of 1980, 1995, and 2010, yearly follow up reports, newsletters and editorials from the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation website, and the program handbook. I obtained documents from the staff of the University Professional Education unit. I also had informal conversations with a program coordinator. The goal of those conversations was to develop a general overview of the program from the coordinator's perspective, build trust, and develop rapport.

In the fall of 2010, I was granted permission from the district's school board to access the sites and to start data collection interviewing by committee members. I scheduled interview dates with the 13 people who responded to my invitation e-mails and conducted interviews with these participants. Seven interviews were held at the College of Education, five at schools, and one in a coffee house. In all instances, participants chose the location for the interviews. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews were emailed to participants for a member check. I asked participants to verify accuracy of the transcripts, make corrections and additions, and request a follow up interview if needed. Eight participants responded to member check emails; two of them sent transcripts with minor corrections, the others verified accuracy of the transcripts. None of the respondents expressed a wish for a follow up interview.

Parallel to interviewing, I worked with existing data from second year surveys of principals and beginning teachers from four school years (2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007). I looked at aggregated data on the responses from surveys to obtain additional information about the outcomes of the program and the effectiveness of the support system provided by the program. Another document reviewed during interviewing process was the RTP handbook. Cross comparison of information from the handbook to the interviews' responses enhanced the data analysis process.

Data collection procedures with timelines are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Data Collection Timeline

Data Collection

Activity	Source/Participants	Goals/Things to Look at	Time
Document analysis	Documents on the program (reports, House Bills, editorials, and newsletters)	Role of committees, outcomes of the programs (measurement, evaluation of performance, changes in the policy and the rationale for the changes)	October – November 2010
Interview Follow up interview	University coordinator of the program	Perception of the program, challenges in forming the committees, and ideas about the ways to improve the program	October 2010
Gathering information from second year surveys of principals and beginning teachers	Second year surveys of principals and beginning teachers	Descriptive statistics on the outcomes of the program	November – December 2010
Interviews	Committee members, former new teachers	Perceptions of roles, approach to committee responsibilities, understanding of organizational boundary spanning, and leadership position	November 2010-February 2011
Document Analysis	Program Handbook	Contrast and comparison of the information in the handbook with the data from the interviews.	January 2010-February 2011

Data Analysis

The RT program and government documents formed a base for rationalizing the problem and purpose of the study. An analysis of legislative documents, program evaluations, and website editorials and newsletters provided information about history of the program, changes in the program, and evaluation of the program outcomes. Therefore, data were organized around three main topics: 1) what research in the

residency program had been done, 2) how residency committees were addressed in previous research, and 3) what influenced the decisions about changes in the program. The discussion was presented as a separate section in Literature Review chapter of this report.

Sources

Analysis of data from interviews, observations, and documents was an ongoing and inductive process to identify emergent themes and patterns (Glesne, 2006). Two sources framing the analysis included the research questions developed on a proposal stage of the study and analytic perceptions and interpretations on data collection phase (Patton, 2002). Thus, interview transcripts were supplemented with my reflections on each interview and analytical memos on the things which stood out during the interviews. Analytical memos helped me organize data, and search for alternative explanations. A reflexive journal served as a tool to reflect on my biases, values, and other things that shaped my stance as a researcher (Creswell, 2003). Records about everyday activities with my comments and questions were helpful in organizing the process and reporting challenges and obstacles.

Making Sense of the Data

Initial data analysis procedures were inductive in nature. All verbatim transcripts were formatted so that I had three columns with numbered lines: the first column was the interview transcript, the second and third columns provided space for writing names of codes and categories and my comments. I started with open coding of data from interview transcripts with my intent to identify emic themes that naturally emerged from interviews (Patton, 2002). Content analysis required identification of significant data

chunks representing a concept (Patton, 2002). Chunks were separated from the transcripts, identified by pseudonyms and line numbers used for coding, and printed out individually. Chunks of related content and contexts were reduced to smaller units representing a specific idea (Erlandson et al., 1993).

After initial unitizing was completed, I started the process of categorizing the data. Data units were placed on 3x5 index cards followed by mixing them to avoid any predetermined order. Those cards were read one-by-one and placed in piles representing same ideas. I assigned a descriptive term (a word or a phrase) for each pile (Erlandson, et al., 1993). The process was repeated to look for new descriptive terms. Emergent categories were tested for internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Patton, 2002) to classify themes. Bringing categories to themes was based on noticed connections and links between categories (Erladnson et al., 1993). Inductive examination through data displays, memos, and reflections was followed by deductive analysis of the data with relevance to the literature and utility of the multi-level boundary-spanning model in explaining the committee roles.

Trustworthiness of the Findings

Trustworthiness is one of quality characteristics for any type of scientific research, including a qualitative study. As Erlandson et al. (2004) pointed out, it "enables naturalistic study to make a reasonable claim to methodological soundness" (p. 131). In qualitative research, criteria for trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Credibility

To address the issue of credibility of findings, I utilized techniques suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985): prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, reflexive journaling, and purposeful sampling. Prolonged engagement provided "scope of data" due to the amount of time spent on the site to build trust and rapport with the participants, and persistent observation ensured "depth of data" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation is incorporation of multiple techniques, multiple kinds of data sources, multiple theoretical perspectives to make the reasoning for identifying themes coherent and consistent (Creswell, 2003; Denzin, 1989; Glesne, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study's research design included multiple sources of data (e.g., documents, participants' interviews, interview notes and reflections, and observations). The multi-level model of boundary spanning was grounded on several theoretical perspectives, which enhanced the potential of the frame for accurate data interpretation. My discussion of contrary information and discrepancies in the data also added to credibility.

Peer debriefing with two colleagues provided suggestions for data presentation and reporting findings, addressed my concerns about data collection and analysis stages of the research, and reduced anxiety (Erlandson et al., 1993). Data credibility was ensured by continuous member checking of interview transcripts and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability

Transferability was maintained through purposive sampling of participants and thick description of collected data. The participants' sample representing all stake holders in the RTP at different levels served as a means to seek data applicability to other

contexts. Thick description of data including school district and Professional Education unit profiles and cross reference of findings with the multi-level boundary spanning model offered adequate information for judgments about transferability and allowed to "specify everything that a reader may need to know in order to understand findings" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 125).

Dependability and Conformability

To meet dependability and conformability criteria, "The researcher must make it possible for an external check to be conducted on the processes by which the study was conducted" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 34). These criteria were met through reflexive journaling during the research process and having all materials ready for an audit trial. The reflexive journal offered a full account of all activities and researcher's decisions on day-to-day or weekly basis. The reflexive journal was part of adequate records and materials which I kept during the study. As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), they also included interview protocols, transcripts, notes, reflections; 3x5 data cards, analytical memos, peer debriefing notes, and the inquiry proposal. Peer debriefing and feedback from the advisor and dissertation committee members served as dependability and conformability audits for the study.

Table 2 provides a summary of activities and procedures to ensure trustworthiness criteria. It also locates the places in the report to find those examples.

Table 2

Trustworthiness Criteria and Activities

Criteria /technique	Examples of activities	Chapter/section
Credibility		

Prolonged engagement	Was in the field (school district) for six months-September 2010-February 2011; knew some participants previously; avenues of communication: emails, appointments, telephone calls; start the interview with updates in the participants' lives, and conversations about the topics which might be of interest for the participants (office, daily routine, school)	Methodology: data collection, and procedures Data presentation: description of participants
Persistent observation	Observation of participants during interviews, writing interview reflections, observation of Professional Education Unit (informal conversations with the staff, observing daily routine of the staff, and personal communications (emails, calls)	Methodology: design, data collection, and procedures
Triangulation	Multiple sources of data: interviews, observations and reflections, and documents	Methodology: data sources
Peer debriefing	Continuous informal discussions with two peers (design, interview process, and data analysis); suggestions on the additional references, feedback on the writing, and considering alternative explanations	Methodology: data collection and data analysis Data Analysis Findings, Conclusions, and Implications
Member checking	Test categories and interpretations: the participants received the transcripts to check the accuracy of information and provide any kind of additional information or request a follow up interview.	Methodology: data collection, and data analysis Data Analysis
Reflexive journal	Written diary with documented decisions and discussion of challenges, questions, doubts, and moments	Methodology
Purposive sampling	Maximum variation in sampling (nine committee members, three beginning teachers representing different grade levels, and a program coordinator)	Methodology: participants

Transferability		
Thick description	The profile of the school district and professional education unit at the university; portraits of the participants; education, experience, number of committees served, their educational platform, and overall opinion about the program	Data Presentation
Dependability/ Conformability		
Access to an audit trail	Have the following documents ready: transcripts of the interviews, interview notes, data cards (3x5), reflexive journal, and analytical memos	Methodology

Summary

In this chapter, I described the research design components and identified data collection and analysis procedures. I started with the discussion of the epistemological perspective that shaped the methodology followed by presentation of the rationale for choosing case study as a qualitative approach to meet the purpose of the study. Explanation of sites' selection, data collection sources and tools, and data analysis procedures outlined my steps in conducting the research and provided a detailed description of techniques and methods. I addressed the issue of ensuring research rigor through the discussion of trustworthiness criteria and my activities to meet those criteria. A summary table of quality techniques and activities concluded the chapter.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION

The purpose of this study was: 1) to describe how the Resident Teacher Program (RTP) committee members functioned to achieve desired outcomes and how they perceived their roles on the committee, and 2) to consider the effectiveness of the multi-level boundary-spanning model in studying role and collaborative activities in educational settings. A narrative descriptive form of reporting data was used to help readers understand the researcher's analysis and interpretation process as well as make their own inferences (Patton, 2002; Stake, 1998). Erlandson, et al. (1993) emphasized the principal task for the researcher "to communicate a setting with its complex relationships and multiple realities" (p.163). Therefore, the narrative opens with profiles of the school district and University Professional Education Unit (PEU). The settings' descriptions are followed by participants' data presented in two parts: participants' profiles regarding their service on the committees as well as the description of the data from interviews and observations to answer the research questions.

Settings

The settings' description was an integral part of the narrative in that it presented the background information so that readers could get a sense of the environment that the participants were functioning as teams. With consideration of each RTP committee's

composition and participants' sample, it was necessary to present the description of two settings: Hope School District and the University PEU. The school district profile provided information about teachers 'qualifications, district professional development programs, and policies and procedures which aided in deeper insight to the committees' dynamics. The description of the University PEU was critical for understanding of the role of the university in beginning teachers' induction.

Hope School District (Profile 2009-2010)

Hope School District, an exurban district with the enrollment of approximately 5,650 students, is situated in a university city. Students attend six elementary schools (grades K-5) and a middle school (grades 6-7), a junior high school (grades 8-9), a high school (10-12), and alternative school (grades 6-12). All schools are fully accredited by the state's Department of Education. The student population is predominantly Caucasian (76%); the other groups include African-American (8%), Native American (7%), Asian (5%), and Hispanic (4%). Thirty-nine percent of children are eligible for free/reduced lunches. A large number of international students are enrolled and collectively speak 26 languages.

The district employs 408 certified teachers and 184 of those have advanced college degrees. Eighty-eight teachers are National Board Certified. Average teaching tenure in this school district is 13 years. Special education, ACT performance, and college readiness are among primary foci of teachers. The high school graduation rate is 96.4 %. Students' ACT average test scores (23.6) have been consistently higher than the state average for the past five consecutive years. At the time of the study, two hundred

and fifty-three students were concurrently enrolled with the University. About 60% of the graduates continue their education at colleges and universities.

To ensure that good quality education is offered for the students, the district pays considerable attention to the teachers' professional development. The district's mentoring training program facilitates continuous growth and support of teachers. The program is aimed at developing necessary skills and receiving tools to become effective mentors. Mentor training is a requirement for all mentors to serve on the RTP committee. Among other activities intended to make professional development meaningful and effective is new teachers' orientation. Beginning teachers and teachers new to the district meet on a monthly basis to discuss various topics important to the district. These meetings are facilitated by the middle school principal and a lead middle school social studies teacher with topics and agendas decided by the district and school administrators.

University Professional Education Unit (PEU)

The university is a public, four-year, nationally accredited comprehensive higher education institution comprised of nine colleges. The university's PEU includes academic programs in the colleges of Education, Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Arts and Sciences, and Human Environmental Sciences. These programs are based upon the L.E.A.D.S. conceptual framework: **L**eadership, **E**thics, **A**cademics and Professional Roles, **D**iversity, **S**ervice Orientation/Community Outreach. The unit oversees teacher certification programs and other programs for "graduate special" students with a goal to facilitate lifelong learning and improvement in public schools and other educational settings. To ensure quality in the programs, the PEU collaborates with

a number of external agents, such as: State Regents for Higher Education, State Department of Education, and Commission for Teacher Preparation. Such collaboration warrants timely modifications of the program requirements due to changes in the legislation, policies and procedures.

The administrative staff of the unit is comprised of seven people: the Dean of the College of Education, the Associate Director of Professional Education, Administrative Assistant, Portfolio Specialist, Professional Education Specialist, Certification Specialist, as well as the Field Experience and Clinical Practice Coordinator. The Professional Education Specialist (PES) who coordinates the residency program by serving as a liaison between the state school districts and the university and a contact person for school districts to request a committee. Her responsibilities include matching faculty members with first year teachers, coordinating geography of the committees, communicating all activities and movements of the program, handling the financial aspect of the program (travel reimbursement for the faculty), as well as keeping the data base of the program participants and their follow up feedback surveys. An important aspect of the coordinator's job is conflict resolution. If problems, such as replacing a university representative, could not be resolved by the committees, the PES would intervene to negotiate a solution.

Participants

The goal of participants' description is to present a collective portrait of the committee makeup that includes range of experiences, attitudes, and opinions about committees' work and induction process. Table 3 is an overview of professional profiles of the participants.

Table 3

Participants' Professional Profile

Role on the committee	Coded Name	Education (highest degree earned)	Experience in education	Number committees served	Experience w/other roles on the committee
Principal	Andrew (high school)	M.S. in Curriculum Instruction and Administration	10 years classroom teaching (social studies); 16 years administrative positions; college teaching as an adjunct professor	20-25	Mentor teacher
Principal	Diana (elementary school)	Ed.D. in Educational Leadership	8 years classroom teaching (special ed.); 18 years administrative positions in the district; teaching college level as an adjunct professor	40-45	Mentor teacher
Principal	Beth (middle school)	M.S. in Curriculum Instruction and Administration	13 years classroom teaching (6th grade science) 5 years-school administrator	Five	Mentor teacher

Mentor	Carol (junior high school)	M.S. in Curriculum Instruction and Administration	28 years classroom teaching (math of all levels)	Three	n/a
Mentor	Mary (middle school)	Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction	20 years classroom teaching (English); college teaching as an adjunct professor	Four	n/a
Mentor	Nora (elementary school)	M.S. in Early Childhood Curriculum; National Board Certified	29 years classroom teaching(lower primary grades; college teaching as an adjunct professor	One	n/a
Professor	Helen	Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction	17 years teaching public schools; an assistant professor in Math Education K-12	20	Beginning teacher; mentor teacher; school administrator
Professor	Gregory	Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction	23 years teaching public schools and 13 years teaching college level; held administrative	12	n/a

			positions; an assistant professor in Social Studies Education K-12		
Professor	Kevin	Ed.D. in Educational Administration	35 years of college teaching as an adjunct assistant professor in Educational Leadership program	11 in 2010	n/a
Resident Teacher	Emily (high school)	B.S. in Family and Child Services; certified in Psychology and Secondary English	Five years teaching sociology and English	n/a	n/a
Resident Teacher	Luke (middle school)	B.S. in Elementary Education; pursuing M.S. in Educational Leadership	Five years teaching social science 7th grade	n/a	n/a
Resident Teacher	Faith (elementary school)	B.S. in Elementary Education	Two years 3d grade teacher	n/a	n/a

The participants were described in four categories: principals, mentors, professors, and resident teachers. Two major considerations shaped the decision on the

format of participants' description. The case was resident teacher committees in Hope School District. Committee roles and functions of the committee as a team were the areas of research interest. Consequently, the focus in the participants' description was not the individuals; rather, it was their opinions and perceptions of the roles and committee performance.

In 2010, the legislature placed a moratorium on the RTP. Thus, rather than speaking on their experience as a particular residency in a certain year, the participants were to reflect on their overall experience with residency year committees. Resident teacher participants who could not have multiple experiences with the committees were an exception.

Principals (Andrew, Beth, and Diana)

Principals were passionate about education and the role school administrators play in ensuring high quality education for the community. As Andrew commented, "I have a responsibility to my community to bring in the best teachers." Ways to provide high quality education varied among the schools, depending on the school level, mission, and culture. Knowing and understanding school culture and the school mission served as a starting point in the hiring process (especially beginning teachers), decision making, and performance on the RT committees. From principals' perspective, getting to know school culture was one of the challenges for professors serving on the residency program due to time constraints. To meet this challenge, school administrators took the lead in initiating a dialogue about school needs and priorities and communicating the rationale for certain decisions from the angle of those needs. Beth shared, "We need to be in a business of keeping our good people."

Principals saw great benefits of the residency program and believed that the program should be carried on, maybe with some modifications. They knew the nuts and bolts of the structure and procedures of the program and could easily identify its strengths and weaknesses. With the success of the school (which included the success of the first year teachers) being a priority for principals, they took charge on the committee, chairing meetings and coordinating all the logistics. Says Diana, "I always chaired the committee, because I felt very responsible." While basic responsibilities of the committee chairs were well defined by the program handbook, administrators defined the accents in this leadership role for themselves. Diana tried to ensure good communication among all stakeholders. Beth's priorities were ownership for the outcomes, professional manner of communication and consideration of all opinions. Andrew saw his main mission in facilitating a constructive dialogue among all constituents.

Principals had overall positive experiences working with university representatives on the RT committees, acknowledging the challenges and obstacles professors encounter. Beth commented, "The university representative does not have the privilege to know the teacher, because the person is not in the building." The participants agreed that under the circumstances, college representatives did their best to provide as much support as possible to beginning teachers and, as Andrew acknowledged, tried to "be a vital part of the team." Busy schedules and different priorities of those in academia did not allow principals to be very optimistic about the prospects of deeper involvement of universities in collaborative efforts with public schools. Beth shared, "University representatives try to make their best but their plates are full. They have a lot of other commitments. I do not know how to fix it." Nevertheless, they considered reaching out

to university professors and engaging in more collaboration as an important and doable aspect of the school principal's job because, as Diana pointed out, "We sit here in the university town, we are greatly influenced by the university, we have such a connectedness, and we rely on the university professors to provide lots of training and consultation for us." Developing personal relationships between the university faculty and school principals also facilitated more collaboration. Andrew would like professors to become more "insiders, not outsiders."

Despite the moratorium on the RTP, principals were sure that the district and schools would continue to support beginning teachers and provide mentoring for them with or without any input from the university. Andrew commented, "We do the program no matter what, with the exception of the university person." Professional development provided by the district for the mentors and new teachers plus the fact that this program was run by the middle school principal Beth convinced administrators believe that the schools were well off providing support to beginning teachers. At the same time, having slightly differing opinions about the committee makeup and contribution of each committee member (to be discussed later), administrators welcomed the concept of university-school collaborations. They looked at these collaborations not only from the perspective of beginning teachers' induction, but also in a broader context of the contribution of the academia to public education. They had some constructive suggestions about the things the university professors could bring to schools including support of beginning teachers. For Andrew, it was important to collaborate with the person "who knows my school culture and appreciates it. That could help entry year

teacher's integration into that culture, or merging into the culture." Diana thought that the university could also "provide lots of training or consultations."

Professors (Gregory, Helen, and Kevin)

The people in academia believed in the importance and feasibility of cooperation between universities and public schools. They did not seem to be distant or disconnected from the real world of public schools. All three had previous experience teaching in public schools. During their careers as university faculty, they stayed actively involved in supervising undergraduate student teachers at schools. All of them were members of the College's PEU, with its goal "to facilitate quality life improvement in public schools." Therefore, they had firsthand information and experience in public education in the state. Moreover, the participants emphasized many times that they enjoyed going out to schools because of the great learning experience and benefits for the University working together with schools. As Kevin summed up, "All faculty should get out to schools more often."

Professors reasoned that support of the beginning teacher was critical and necessary for improvement of public education, as in Gregory's claim, it "builds educators rather than just teachers." They were confident of the benefits of collaborative efforts of higher education and public schools in this process. Because of that confidence and their true care about education, university representatives viewed service on the RTP committee as an integral part of the responsibilities for any faculty member since, according to Helen, it allowed for helping beginning teachers "make bridge between the methods they learnt at college and they use while teaching." This belief motivated professors while serving on the committees. The program was a great opportunity to

work with teachers and reach out to schools. Kevin stated, “This is one of the best programs our state has had.” Professors were very knowledgeable about the structure of the program, its goals, and desired outcomes. All of them agreed that the primary purpose of the committee was to help entry teachers and provide as much support for them as possible during the first year. Overall, academia people had a positive experience with numerous committees on which they served. Being school practitioners and participating in the RTP in different roles before entering professoriate helped college faculty understand the arguments and points of other committee members and be more successful as team players.

Professors considered developing interpersonal relationships with beginning teachers and the committee as an essential ingredient for making the input from university representatives more meaningful. Helen shared, “Faculty have to really make a point of visiting the principal every time they go out to school.” They saw the major contribution from the university faculty as being a resource person. They eagerly provided any kind of additional materials, references, and resources to entry teachers. Gregory described it, “plugging in any holes that might have existed in what they [resident teachers] knew.” They did not mind doing extra of what was required of them (more observations or meetings) if they saw it was necessary. Alternatively certified teachers were of some concern for academia representatives. In their opinion, this group of teachers should be given more attention because they usually experienced more challenges during their first year. Kevin pointed out, “Alternatively certification people are important. I don’t think we have enough information about that area at all. What are their needs? How do we consult them?”

With the program's temporary suspension, professors were optimistic about the prospects of beginning teachers to get support to make their first years less stressful and more inspiring. They hoped for the success of new initiatives from the College of Education and were ready to partake in the project.

Mentors (Carol, Mary, and Nora)

Mentors were represented by the teachers who had more than 20 years of classroom teaching. They were established professionals well recognized in the community for their subject knowledge and ability to teach students. They valued professional development and considered it a vital part of the profession. In the conversations, they talked much about different workshops and seminars they attended and utility of those events for their professional growth. Nora described one of them, "It was like a seminar and they taught us how to really go in and serve as a coach to our peers, to beginning teachers, to student teachers, and not to go in as somebody to evaluate but as colleagues." Commitment to constant improvement and care about education motivated the participants to become mentors. They believed that mentoring was a natural thing in an educational setting, and all teachers should have an opportunity to mentor their colleagues. Mary summarized, "That's what a teacher does. We mentor our students. It only enhances our instruction, enhances the teaching profession."

Mentors emphasized a crucial role of Hope District leadership in making a difference in the quality of education in the district, in the efforts to support beginning teachers and provide effective professional development for all teachers. Teachers attended different coaching and training programs for mentors and thought highly of the value of such programs, as Nora stated, "We built a tremendous training program here."

Mentors believed that monthly meetings for the teachers new to the district met the purpose of fast adaptation of those teachers to a new working environment and helped them become familiar with the district policies, procedures, and regulations.

Mentors were well informed about the structure of the program and its goals, understood the mentor's role in the process, and realized the impact of mentoring on entry teachers' progress during the first year and their future career inspirations. Mentors believed that the main responsibility for the program to be a success was on their shoulders. They clearly saw themselves as the first line on the path to entry teachers' success. Says Carol, "I am more in the trenches with that person and want to give her as much support as possible." Being "in the trenches" with beginning teachers let mentors have a better understanding of novice teachers' needs, challenges, and frustrations. As professionals, mentors felt overwhelmed by the necessity to fill in a mentor log required by the program. In Nora's opinion, "It took away the time that could be used more meaningfully with beginning teachers."

The committees on which mentors served were a success. They saw many benefits of the program and representative committee for the entry teacher, in particular, and the school, in general. They would like to see more collaboration in the committee, especially with academia representatives. Carol explained, "The University needs to see their graduates. They need to see whether what they are doing is beneficial. Unless they are out here actually watching in real life what's happening, they won't know." Mentors realized that factors, such as time constraints and busy schedules, were the obstacles for collaboration to develop. This group of participants seemed to be more pessimistic than the others about the perspectives to make university–school partnership more viable. It

was important to note this fact because two out of three mentor participants taught at the University as adjunct professors. They shared their ideas how the process of induction could be improved and how the University could be involved more. All changes, according to Mary, should go "from top down. Having the people in the Board of Education in charge of explaining that this is something that needs to be required and get all stakeholders in participation." By this, she emphasized the role of educational leadership and policies, and appropriateness of those policies.

Resident Teachers (Emily, Faith, and Luke)

In terms of preparation, teaching experience, and experience with committees, residency first year teachers' representation was diverse. Nevertheless, what they had in common was their devotion and commitment to public education. These people approached a requirement to go through the program as an opportunity to learn more and get into the profession as much prepared as possible. They evaluated the whole experience with the program as positive, even despite certain challenges and issues; and they underlined the critical role their mentors played during the first year. Luke shared, "It would have been a lot different if I didn't have a good mentor teacher to lean on. I might be retired by now from teaching depending how the year would have gone."

Resident teachers' views on various aspects of the program differed depending on individual experiences of beginning teachers with the committees. Only Faith happened to have her former professor as a university representative on the committee, and she enjoyed it; therefore, she thought very highly about the role professors could play being on the committee. At the same time, she argued the program could easily do well without a university person. Making this seemingly contradicting comment Faith referred to her

friends' experience going through the RTP. It did not mean that professors did not do a good job with committee service. It was about less influence of professors on the teacher's growth and their overall contribution to the whole process. Congruent with this opinion were other residency teachers' opinions.

Resident teachers highlighted the role of personal relationships between the teacher and committee members. They believed that the level of rapport influences the extent of satisfaction with the program. The factors that made a difference for the teacher during the first year were unique for each participant. Faith knew her professor as a student, Emily received much support and care from her principal, Luke was grateful to his mentor who did much more than was required and went far beyond program requirements. It was important for resident teachers to feel genuine interest and care from the committee to be able to cope with anxiety, doubts, and fears, which Emily called "own monsters." She further explained, "They were very passionate about their own areas and their willingness to help. I felt like all three wanted me to have a really positive first year. It was inspiring." Moreover, resident teachers wished there would be some kind of follow up and consistency in terms of support: beginning teachers' induction should not stop after the first year. As Faith noted, "It goes from a ton of support to nothing. Next year, hopefully, those relationships keep stay like they do." Resident teachers did maintain relationships with their mentors because of friendship developed during the first year, it was entirely on good will from both parties though. Some structured form of continuous assistance would promote more effective professional growth.

Resident teachers were very familiar with the program for new to the district teachers, all three of them attended the meetings. Their opinions diverged due to different expectations and ideas about the foci of the program. While Luke fully supported the content and structure of the meetings and appreciated leadership of the people running the program, Emily and Faith shared some frustrations about discussed topics and general approach which did not account much for diverse audience's interests. That was the reason that made both teachers feel like they did not gain much from those meetings. Says Faith, "The district made us go to new teacher meetings where we had to talk about different things, and I didn't feel like those were beneficial to me." Emily thought that the focus of the meetings was narrow, "I felt like it was more applicable to elementary teachers."

Resident Teacher Program at Hope School District

A case study mode for reporting the data about the RTP in Hope School district served best the goal to provide "thick description" of data and "build on the reader's tacit knowledge" about the phenomenon under investigation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 359). The narrative about participants' collective experience with resident committees was organized according to the categories with emic sub-headings.

Safety Net

The RTP was viewed by participants as a support system with a goal, which professor Gregory formulated, "to help the teacher get through the first year of teaching beyond a contract of employment." Principal Beth believed that, "It takes a lot of support, it takes a continuing education, and it takes professional development for the beginning teacher to climb the professional ladder." The committee was a mechanism

designed to provide this support where the members had roles and responsibilities to make the mechanism work. The program was also, according to Gregory, "an educational process of offering support all the way through" during the teachers' first year at school.

Areas where the teachers needed assistance included not only content teaching and classroom management but also daily routine activities, which were not taught at college, but were very important in developing resident teachers' confidence and efficacy. The challenges would start with simple logistics, "Where to park, where to go? Where is the copy machine? Where do I get more paper clips? I am not sure how to set a field trip? How to send for duplicating, how to make a purchase order?" Mentors were most helpful with these day-to- day activities. Teaching the content, managing the students, working with curriculum, dealing with bullying, learning the school and district policies, and becoming part of the school culture and environment were the areas where the whole committee assisted the residency teacher.

Principal Andrew called the entire process a "safety net" which helped to reduce frustration, and "cushion and soften the teachers' experience." Professor Gregory underlined the importance of "being treated like being part of the school family, like a very important person: the things that everybody's ego needs." Resident teacher Luke defined the main benefit of the program as," having people come and observe my classroom and give a good feedback…having someone to lean on and someone to help me through the program."

A desirable outcome of support was beginning teachers' success. It was also a goal for all program constituents. Says principal Andrew, "Everybody's overall goal

was to have a successful entry year." To reach this goal, the committee tried to be side-by-side with entry teachers and help them, as professor Kevin put it, "become as good as they possibly can be and feel comfortable with what they can be." Evaluation was not the goal; it was the means and tool to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses. The committee members' suggestions were building blocks for the teachers' growth and improvement. Principal Diana shared her view on the committee members' mission, "You are an extension of their [teachers'] success, and you are not a filter to evaluate them."

Forming Committees

The residency program started with committees being formed after the school district hired beginning teaches and sent a request to the university coordinator about college representatives, thus following state guidelines. Data showed that all participants had a general idea about the process. As far as details are concerned, mentors and residency teachers could not present much information about certain elements of the program structure, such as criteria for selection of university representatives, for instance. Principals provided the most extended answers to the question about forming committees. Diana summarized the process:

> Three or four names of the teachers who have participated in mentor training and are eligible to be on the residency committee are submitted to the principal. The principal makes their selection and identifies and asks the teacher to be a teacher representative. At the same time the university is assigning your teacher to a university representative. As soon as that's done, that name is forwarded to the

> principal of the school and the principal actually coordinates setting up the first meeting.

Professors thought that the schools contacted the State Department of Education with a request for the committee which would forward it to the university. Program coordinator Jane though clarified that she always got the information from the school district.

Selection Criteria

Among the committee, mentors had the most well defined selection criteria: minimum of three-year experience of classroom teaching, mentor training, same subject area, and interpersonal skills. Hope School District required mentor training for teachers to serve on committees. This training was an extensive coaching program for certified teachers. Teachers either signed up to participate in it or were selected by their principals to participate. Once they got through the program, they had a requirement in their master contract to serve on a residency committee. Those teachers comprised a pool of mentors from which school principals could choose.

Having several candidates with training, the administrators looked at their subject areas. The goal was to have someone who taught the same subject and grade level. Andrew would "just look at who would be the best bid in the subject area." Diana was more specific:

> I would really want to be able to match somebody that was mentoring that teacher to have a similar position or experiences. One of the first things I looked at was similar background and similar experiences. Then, if you can get the same level, it is great because, if you have the common plan periods, it increases communication between the teachers.

From participants' experience, finding good matches was not always easy. Sometimes mentors served on committees even if they had a heavy teaching load because they were the only ones with required training. Says Carol, "They tried desperately to find someone within the core area. Since I am the only one in this building with math, I am a choice. There isn't a decision to make." Resident teacher Emily was the only psychology and sociology teacher in her school, so her mentor was not in the same area; the school counselor took a mentoring role.

If the major criteria (training and expertise) were met, principals considered personal skills of mentor teachers. Beth commented, "I would go and look at the teachers who are leaders in the building." Andrew added, "I think personal skills; some people are really good teachers with kids but not with other adults. Such teachers are alone in their careers."

Participants did not seem to know much about selection criteria for the committee members other than their own. Mentors and resident teachers were not aware of the process of assigning a university person for the committee. They could only assume some things about it. Says mentor Nora, "I am not really sure about the guidelines they use for selecting a university representative." Resident teacher Emily shared, "I do not know how the college person was chosen. I am just assuming they are divided up. I was never told…" Resident teacher Luke knew all details of the program from his mentor, "I actually did not know about the university supervisor until my mentor teacher told me about all the things that were going on." Professors named two criteria for selection: preferably content area of expertise similar to the residency teacher's and membership in the College of Education PEU.

It Was a Process

Participants did not look at the program as a series of activities to do to recommend entry teachers for certification; rather, it was important for them to highlight the concept of the program as a process. Support of the teachers was not limited to classroom observations and following feedback. Committee members viewed the program's outlined activities as a minimum in the course of assistance provided to teachers during their first year. Required minimum was instrumental for the overall committee performance. Professor Helen pointed out, "There needs to be some minimum structure. It does not have to be rigid, still…" This minimum structure served as a baseline for committees to come to terms about the goals and objectives. Says principal Diana, "It needs to be viewed as just an outline and we need to fill in the blanks." Filling in the blanks was at the committee members' discretion depending on the needs of resident teachers. The level of involvement and initiative taking depended also on personal approach and perception of the committee members about their roles in the program. Professor Gregory thought that if the structure of the program was changed in terms of expanding requirements about the number of observations and meetings, it would make the contribution of academia more meaningful. According to Gregory, one of the program weaknesses was that "the higher education people were not required to be there more than they should have been."

The opinion about inadequate number of required observations was shared by other professors and principals. They believed that more observations from university representatives and school administrators would add to integrity of the whole process. Professor Kevin also thought that the schedule of observations and meetings was not very

well thought in connection with the school calendar, "It was not set up very thoughtfully as far as the school calendar."

Observations as the most critical part of the process were a focus of participants' reflection on the program. Moreover, giving their criticism about a required number of meetings, they shared their experience how they approached observations and feedback. Professors tried to accommodate teachers regarding better times and classes to observe: "I always give them the option; it's going to work in our school, and you know your school better." (Kevin); "I usually devoted a half day for each observation. I would always ask the teacher when it would be a good time for me to come." (Gregory); "I stayed for at least two different subjects and tried to vary this so that I wasn't always for the first hour" (Helen).

Principals had a good idea about other committee members' work with residency teachers. They made sure that the discussion of observations was about giving suggestions and providing support, not about evaluation per se. Resident teachers agreed that the feedback they received from the committee after observations was the most valuable part of the process. They also appreciated having both formal and informal observations. Says Faith, "They split them out a little bit more to make it easier and not have so much pressure. They'd outline what they would need for each observation; some of them were formal and some were informal." Informal observations facilitated developing good rapport and relationships between the teacher and committee members. Formal observations provided resident teachers with the insight to the end-of-the-year evaluation process at schools. Mentor Carol believed that, "These teachers get the opportunity to see how the rest of us are evaluated."

With experience on different committees, participants did not have any difficulty talking about ways the process might be improved. One of things they reflected on was how formal the committee should be in the process. Principal Beth would like to know about similar program models in other states and see how committee (or its equivalent) works, "Are they strictly committee members or are they active participants?" Resident teacher Luke thought that developing a mechanism to make people accountable for their input to the committee would serve to overall effectiveness of the support system. This opinion resonated with principal Diana's comment about her wish to introduce a practice of resident teachers providing feedback about the committee performance, "…for us to know what we could do differently, what part of the process benefited them, what part of the process they struggled with, how did they value the process?"

Mixed Bag of Experiences

While the overall evaluation of the program's benefits and the performance of the committees, as a whole, to provide support was positive, participants had, as professor Kevin expressed it, a "mixed bag of experiences" with individual members. Attitudes and approaches to the committee service resulted in participants' both very favorable and very negative opinions about some committee members. Kevin reflected on his experience with mentors, "Mentor teachers varied from really wonderful teachers to people who did not even know what they were doing." Professor Helen described diversity in the principals' group which ranged from the school administrators who viewed the process as "something to check off their schedule" to the ones "who would take it very seriously." Principals shared the similar opinions about some university representatives they used to work with. Beth thought that for those people the program

"was something else that they had to do." Yet, the other two principals emphasized that such an attitude did not reflect the position of the College of Education on the program.

Professor Gregory thought that school culture played a very important role in determining attitudes toward the program, "Some schools just viewed it as a necessary evil. They'd do it because they had to do it and the attitudes were of a rubric issue." It would reflect mostly in the principal's approach to the committee's work. One of the reasons for such attitudes was, in professor Kevin's opinion, school administrators' much greater concern about test scores. Among resident teachers only one participant had an overall negative experience with a principal on his committee. The school administrator did not show any commitment, was late to the meetings, and did not do classroom observations. Other teachers felt support from their principals; however, they wished the principals would come more for a full class period to observe. Gregory shared residency teachers' concern about it; because he believed that the administrator could not get a real picture of what was going on doing five or 10 minute pops in the classroom.

Working Together

Most interaction among the committee members happened during meetings. State guidelines prescribed three committee meetings. From participants' responses, it was evident that committees followed those guidelines in terms of the number of meetings and agendas for every meeting. Committees had three meetings during the year: the first one was organizational, the second and the third were discussions of the observations. At the third meeting, the committee also decided whether to recommend the beginning teacher for certification or for a second residency year. Almost all participants underlined that three meetings were a minimum they had. If there was any kind of

concern or need, they would have an additional meeting. Due to different purposes of meetings and agendas, the duration of the meetings was different too.

The first meeting was usually shorter than the others, 15-20 minutes. It was, as professor Helen put it, “sort of meet and greet.” The main goal at that meeting was establishing the committee as a team: introducing people, outlining the activities and responsibilities of each member and the committee as a whole, scheduling the meetings and observations, agreeing on avenues of communication, and going through timelines. Principals usually took the lead in going through the RTP handbook developed by the University. They also prepared folders with hard copies of required documentation for each committee member. With similar objectives and goals for Meeting 1, each school administrator participant mentioned what they wanted to highlight. For Diana, it was important to discuss very specifically “what the series of observations would look like.” Andrew believed in benefits of helping university representatives to get familiar with the school culture as much as possible at those meetings. He usually initiated a “pre-meeting discussion” with committee members to clarify the expectations of each team member. A beginning teacher was not present at those meetings. Beth saw her main goal in making sure that everyone understood the logistics and expectations of their performance.

Meeting 2 lasted 45-50 minutes and focused on the first round of observations which all committee members had completed by December. Mentor Carol called discussion of the observations “sharing snapshots.” She further explained:

> Basically, we were all three different observers looking at what was going on as a snapshot. Mine was a greater snapshot because I was going to see that person on day-to-day basis, not necessarily in the classroom, but in other venues. They were

> going to see him as a snapshot in the classroom (at least a university person, definitely). The administrator is going to see him in different roles. At the committee meeting, we were focusing only on a snapshot of what we have seen at the observations. The administrator and I will add to it from other things we've seen. But the university person has just that little glimpse of what they've seen and can share. That is the main focus of the meeting.

Resident teacher Faith underlined the value of differing glimpses, "It was interesting to see different sides and hear the things that all felt were similar, and then know about things which were different."

Principal Diana saw the discussion as a dialogue about good things everyone had seen and areas which needed to be addressed and improved. Beginning teachers' input regarding committee's help was part of the dialogue, "Often times we would end up the meeting with 'what are some things that you would like our next set of observations to be focused on?' and we would define what we are going to be looking at." Diana deliberated on preferable social norms of the dialogue with a teacher to have no surprises at the meeting. Ideally, "if there were concerns, there had been communication among the committee members and also the communication with that teacher" before the meeting.

The third and final meeting was held after April 10, and could be relatively short (20 min) or long (50 min) depending on the teacher's progress and agreement of the committee on the recommendation. Professor Gregory summarized it:

> Basically, it would be going and saying, 'I either support that you get the license, or I recommend that you spend another year on the residency program, or I really

don't think you are in the right job. And, of course, everybody had that opportunity to convey those things.

Mentor Carol emphasized that usually the decision about "yehs or neys" was discussed by school administrators with university representatives and mentor teachers prior to the meeting. Professor Kevin shared his doubts as far as the dates for Meeting #3 scheduled for April. It did not make sense for him because the teachers already knew whether they were going to be hired for the next year; consequently, in a lot of instances the whole point of getting together and making a decision lost its significance. Kevin thought that the last meeting should be held in March.

A meeting was an event and place where all committee members came together. Participants considered meetings from different angles. For administrators, meetings were about individuals having a professional and collaborative conversation. That conversation was not segmented. Beth pointed out the efforts of the committee to make it friendly, "We tried not to make it intense, we tried to make it relaxed. Even if we chose not to recommend the certification for the teacher it was a very calm conversation." Mentors and beginning teachers accentuated a shared vision or a common goal of the committee. Resident teacher Faith described that she "felt they all had the same goal and they agreed with each other on the things that they saw. They were a team, they weren't fighting or disagreeing. It was good that they had a common goal."

Congruent to this comment was professors' perception of the committee and work with beginning teachers. They wanted to be part of a team, and it was important for them to feel such. Helen tried to build relationships with all constituents in a way that would enhance team efforts to support teachers and show them that the program was not

"just a checklist of things to check off." It concerned not only the meetings, but the whole process of induction. Principal Andrew revealed that though university representatives could be seen as odd persons because they did not work with other committee members on a daily basis, he never felt they were not "a vital part of the team."

Sharing their thoughts about the committee as a team, beginning teacher participants underlined committee members' passion about education, knowledge and expertise in their fields, positive attitude, and support of teaching endeavors. They valued open communication and dialogue. Emily appreciated the fact that she, "never felt intimidated, or embarrassed, or shy about stating my needs." Faith described, "They wanted me to succeed and did it in a nice professional way. I did not feel like they were going, 'This is wrong. That is wrong.'" Luke valued more personal contacts with the committee members because he would get more constructive feedback from each committee member right after observations. To him, committee meetings were more of a formality.

Seeing themselves as a team, participants were critical about a degree of collaboration among the members. "Disjointed… not a lot of collaboration… did not see a whole lot of collaboration, lack of cohesion"—were typical responses about team collaboration. For committee members, meetings were the only opportunity to get together and actually see each other. Finding time for more interactions was a major obstacle. Principal Andrew explained, "I do not know that there is enough time for us as a committee to really bond and focus on a team effort." It was especially challenging for relationships of university representatives with other committee members.

Developing Relationships

Providing support to beginning teachers required certain types of relationships among committee members. The topics that emerged from interviews categorized different relationship combinations, such as: university representative-resident teacher, resident teacher-mentor, and university representative- other committee members.

University representatives, being outsiders to Hope School District, saw their initial goal in building trust with a new teacher at the very beginning of the residency process. They tried to communicate their role, which was additional outside support, not as Helen articulated, "a barrier to getting certification." Such an approach became more critical for the teachers who were graduates from other universities and did not know a local university person. All three participants emphasized the fact that they tried to meet with a teacher before the first committee meeting. Kevin acknowledged that those short pre-meetings could not accomplish very much; however, they allowed for development of, at least, some sort of rapport. Another perspective conferred by all three academia participants was their willingness to accommodate the teachers' needs in terms of scheduling observations and things on which to focus observations. Kevin pointed out, "They [teachers] know that I am willing to be pretty accommodating as far as their concerns." Helen described her approach, "I tried those first two observations to be what they wanted. I really tried to dictate, 'When do you want me to come and observe."

As mentioned before, the status of the resident teacher in terms of affiliation to the University affected the relational dynamics of university representatives and resident teachers. All participants acknowledged that the committee would be more successful if a university person had a prior relationship with a residence teacher. From the

professors' perspective, those prior relationships facilitated more active communication and consequently, more support. Says Helen, "Committees where I have known the students prior to being their university supervisor on the committee have been more successful and I have been able to do more support. If I go out on cold and don't know the student I am not as effective on the committee." Kevin spoke about his expectations which his former students had already known , "Obviously, it was more comfortable if I had my students because they knew what I was going to expect, they knew what kind of things I was going to point out." Professors felt more commitment to their graduates. Gregory shared, "I would be honest; I probably gave more support to those that I had as students than to those that I didn't have. I've always maintained the commitment to my students. When they leave me as a professor, I am always available."

Such dynamics were logical for administrators and mentor teachers. They explained it by a vested interest of the University representative in their graduates because, as principal Beth explained, "they are reflection of the program, the teacher preparation program." In mentor Carol's opinion, "The university benefits because they use the school as a training ground for their student teachers." Resident teacher Faith reflected much on advantages of having her former university professor on the committee, "The fact that I knew her made a big difference in my experience. She knew what kind of student I was; thus, she did more than she might necessarily do otherwise. I think it played a big role."

Resident teachers who were not affiliated with the University received necessary support too. It was more challenging though for both university representative and resident teachers of that category to have the same level of comfort in communication.

Says Helen, “We are not with them as much as the schools are. So we are more distant. This probably might happen more with the committees where the university person does not know this person.” Beth as an administrator did not see that same vested interest from the University people to the teachers who were not their graduates; however, she did not think that affected their performance on the committee, “I don’t say they did not care because usually they did care.” Professor Gregory’s comment resonated with it, “Those who were not my students before…if I felt like they needed more help I provided that help.”

While the relationships between the University representative and resident teachers were considered distant even in case with University graduates, “the comfort zone” for resident teachers was their relationships with mentor teachers. This comfort stemmed from the amount of time spent together and the statutory requirement for mentor teachers to log in a minimum of 70 hours spent with a residency teacher. Participants stated that usually they went beyond the requirement and spent more time together. The most valuable part of those relationships from resident teachers’ perspective was having someone in Luke’s words, “to lean on…to relate to… to physically go to” or, as Faith mentioned, “to call crying about the things or just to whine.” Luke said that he would have left the profession but for his mentor teacher. Mentor participants saw their mission to ensure that teachers knew not only details and specifics about the curriculum and classroom but also, as Mary pointed out “all little ins and outs that you don’t get in a school handbook.” Carol noted that a comfort level built faster because they were together day-to-day.

University representatives and school administrators were not the first choice for resident teachers to seek information or advice. First, those committee members were viewed as figures of authority causing first year teachers to feel a little intimidated to initiate a dialogue. Second, according to mentor Carol, going to those people with concerns meant "admitting weakness and it's hard to do; they are more likely to go to the mentor because they are on one level."

In the relationships of university representatives with school principals and mentor teachers, prior connections also factored into making the committee more successful, communication became less formal and more effective. Professor Kevin said that administrators "were pleased to see me when I came in because they know when I'll be there, what accommodations we need to make and they know that they can call me if they have a concern about our teacher." On multiple committees academia participants served, they developed some close relationships and friendships with school principals. If they had not had any prior experience of working together, the committee members were determined to start developing relationships because they saw the benefits for all constituents.

Getting to know people on the committee was important for residency teachers; they mentioned it among positive experiences of the program. All three of them still have at least some sort of communication and connection with the committee members. They still remain quite close to their mentors, and they go to the University faculty if they need some resources or advice as far as continuing their education.

Communication

One of the committee's actions at the first meeting was to establish avenues of communication. It was instrumental for the committee logistics, as well as for developing relationships among committee members. Because of that, the chair asked everyone what types of communication each person preferred. Says Diana, "If I have a concern, what's my best way to get that concern to you? Is that an e-mail; is it picking up the telephone; is it doing the conference calls?" E-mails and telephone calls were the most common ways to communicate any kind of information.

Committee members saw different advantages in emailing. This avenue was more appropriate if a university representative did not know anyone personally at school. Says Helen, "I've had a couple of principals that email was better. It depended whether I knew them or not because e-mail is a little less personal." Gregory did not like talking on the phone, "I'd call and let the secretary know and I'd send an email to the principal." Email was also more reliable because the faculty checked theirs regularly; therefore, they could respond in a timely manner. It could be more problematic with phone calls to the office; the faculty may be often times out of their offices to take a call. Kevin explained that because he did not consider himself very technologically savvy, including text messaging and using social networks like Twitter, he found email the most convenient way of communication.

No matter what preferred avenue of communication, professors, Helen, for instance, "made a point of visiting the principal every time I go out to school." Gregory explained it from a former principal's perspective, "I would make sure that the principal knew that I was going to be there. As a principal, I never felt comfortable having somebody just show up." Emails and calls to principals were the first line of

communication for professors; the next was communication with resident teachers. Frequency of that exchange depended on people having previous relationships (professor-student) or the rapport resident teachers and university representatives managed to develop. Academia participants did not have much communication with mentor teachers outside of committee meetings. Says Kevin, "I can't recall a mentor teacher ever calling me." Helen had the same experience," I can't remember ever communicating with the mentor teacher, ever." Mentor Carol provided her explanation for this, "They always say, 'You can always email me, you can always call me.' So the invitation was there, but I think because of proximity…Unless I have some kind of legitimate concern to address, I did not talk to others."

Principals seemed to be a hub of all lines of communication. They met resident teachers frequently both personally and through emails. Andrew described, "I tried to spend a lot of time with my new teachers making sure they are okay, they are fine." They visited with mentors to check on the progress of resident teachers, as well as they connected with professors about all program aspects: scheduling meetings and observations, providing information about any plan changes, and sharing concerns and frustrations. They made sure there were no surprises for residency teachers and committee members about the teacher's performance and prospects of recommendation for certification. "Doing a temperature reading," as mentor Mary termed it, on the teacher's progress helped the committee avoid misunderstandings and conflicts at the final stage of the program.

Principals saw their obligation in informing everybody about any concerns and doubts before meetings and discussions. Andrew believed that it was very important that

"a pre-committee discussion be about everybody's expectations. That was always very helpful and could prevent some issues down the road." If, for some reason, principals could not talk to professors before the meeting, they had other strategies to avoid surprises. Says Beth, "I made sure I talked first at the committee meeting, and I outlined all the areas that needed improvement and growth. That way they knew where I was going with this."

Conflicts and Disagreements

Participants acknowledged that conflict situations happened very rarely in their committees. They could recall no more than one or two cases where the committee had arguments or conflicts. Those were, as principal Diana acknowledged, "outside of the norm." Resident teachers did not have any disagreements on their committees at all. The overall atmosphere and spirit of meetings and discussions were professional and cordial. Says principal Beth, "The committees I served functioned very well. There weren't disagreements about the things that were said or decisions that were made. There wasn't anyone who said, 'I totally disagree with you.' It was pretty balanced." It did not mean that all people had the same views. Committee members could have different perspectives and foci at looking at the experience residency teachers should get. Mainly, those differences revealed between principals and professors. School administrators would like university people to get to know more about the school's expectations of teachers, the priorities for residency teachers during that first year, and the school needs. Needs differed depending on a situation. If a mentor teacher was not in the same core area with a teacher, then the focus for a university representative would be content teaching.

Principals also considered it unrealistic to expect resident teachers to perform equally well in all areas, including extra-curricular activities, which some university people emphasized. Therefore, principals appreciated those university representatives who would take time to talk to a principal about the school culture and things the school really wanted professors to contribute whether it was more about classroom management, or content teaching, or something else. Otherwise, Andrew underlined, "They really did a greater disservice. They were just assuming that things were a certain way, and they would make judgment based on that. It was not necessarily true." If there was not sufficient communication between principals and professors about each party's objectives and ways to meet those objectives, disagreements would result.

A majority vote was a base for recommendation of residency teachers for certification. Voting process was a procedure where disagreements among the committee members manifested most of all. Resident teacher participants received a unanimous vote for certification by their committees. Because other participants served on multiple committees, they could recall some cases when somebody's opinion was overruled by the counterparts. Especially, it was true about professors. Participants could think of very few instances when it was not a university representative who had a different opinion about the committee decision. Kevin recalled, "I never won; it did not have any big difference. It's two to one if we have disagreement on the certification. But it did not happen very often." Helen added, "it's very rare that it would be the University person signing 'yes'…I've never heard of the other way." Gregory shared more about this issue, "I think the way that was designed was pretty self-defeating because there should have been more collaboration."

Participants also reflected on other causes for disagreements or conflicts other than a decision on certification. A unique outside perspective of university representatives perceived as a great benefit of the program, could cause, at the same time, disagreements and misunderstanding among committee members. Principals emphasized different expectations of both sides about the things to pay attention to while observing a teacher. They believed that university representatives had higher standards and wanted the teacher meet all of them. Extracurricular activities were an area where the views diverged. Principals pointed out that in many instances, professors wanted resident teachers get full experience during the first year which would include very active and intense involvement to after class events and happenings. Principals argued that they did not see much value in trying to embrace all things; certain things should be learned at a certain time and over time. School administrators believed in choosing one focus for the first year and making sure teachers progressed. Says Diana, "My philosophy has always been that you focus on your instruction. I would prefer that they do not anything else as far as clubs, or activities, or sports during their first year." If the teacher did not have enough time to do other things, principal Andrew "was not going to penalize them for that."

Professor participants shared same frustrations about extracurricular activities being a point of disagreements. However, from their experience it was school administrators who would like to recommend a teacher for certification because of the person's excellent records in extracurricular things, even if the teacher needed more help with instruction or discipline management. Says Helen, "that guy was doing so many

extracurricular things that they were overlooking the things that were going on in the classroom until they just got so out of hand."

Those rare cases of conflicts which resulted in requesting change on the committee also had a lot to do with different views of principals and university representatives on the role of committee members and lack of sufficient communication and dialogue among the committee. Diana voiced her stance about the principles she considered critical for committee members to follow:

> Because you are certified in something does not mean you are up to date at this time on the current curriculum, because it might be years ago that you were embedded in that. It just being honest with you: what are our strengths, what are our weaknesses? You can make a great team and do not all have to look alike; but you got to be honest and make sure we are not stepping outside our own expertise.

Requesting replacement for a university representative was the last resort for principals to deal with conflict situations. Only if they saw that a consensus could not be achieved, and the ways that person handled disagreements with resident teachers were not acceptable, or the person was unreliable coming only to the meetings to sign off, would principals call the university coordinator and request a replacement. For university representatives, the people they would go to in such situation, other than the university coordinator, could be department heads, or other faculty members.

With deep conflicts being "out of the norm" and very rare, the ways to come to agreement on the recommendation for certification or resolve minor misunderstandings were through communication among committee members. If there were concerns from a committee about a residency teacher's performance, the committee would work as a team

going for more observations and discussions. They could also come to a common ground through conversations with each other presenting their arguments and finding similar points to reach consensus. The key to resolving any issue was openness of each person to dialogue and communication.

Fresh Pair of Eyes

Among three committee members, a university representative was a person whose status and contribution were viewed in a wide continuum: from the belief that it was very beneficial and helpful to not a very clear understanding about the rationale to include this person on the committee and conviction that the program could easily do without university representation.

Academia participants had similar comments on their overall attitude to serving on the program: they enjoyed it. All participant pointed out various things they liked most of all. Kevin shared, "I personally enjoy it: I like to go to schools, I like to see schools, and get an impression of the schools. It helps me teach the courses." Gregory appreciated it because he was also learning from teachers. His classroom teaching experience helped him be effective observing elementary teachers (not his content area) and he "enjoyed going in the classroom and sitting down on the floor and reading to the kids." Some participants from mentor and school administrator groups could see the faculty passion about their service. Says Mary, "I think they really enjoyed being out. It was a very positive thing." The others stressed more the fact that the university faculty were doing it, first and foremost, because of the service requirement, and they wished they could see more interest from college professors in school life, not only at the time when their own children attended public schools. University participants also articulated

different attitudes of college representatives to these responsibilities: for instance, tenured vs. non-tenured faculty. Kevin suggested that this service component be capitalized more in a five-year faculty review.

Participants reflected on the benefits of having university representatives on the team. Two aspects were mentioned more frequently: bringing theory to practice and providing resources. Bringing theory to practice included two components. College professors helped resident teachers with suggestions how to apply the knowledge they gained at university to everyday classroom teaching. To be able to do it, they should have as much of first-hand knowledge of what was going on in a real school life as possible. It would help them see how effective teacher preparation programs were. Mentor Carol summarized this need:

> The University needs to see their graduates. They need to be part of it. They need to see if what they are doing is beneficial: their courses that the students are going through…are they worthwhile? Are they giving them the content knowledge they need, the methodology they need to be effective in the classroom. Unless they are out here actually watching in real life what's happening, they won't know.

Academia participants considered providing and sharing resources an integral part of their work on committees. Those resources varied from simple tools like checklists, rubrics, or, in Helens' opinion, just a reference to "sharing specific books and research with the entry teacher." Principal Diana observed such exchanges and considered them very helpful, "I actually saw a university professor come in and share theory on appropriate developmental activities and give the entry teacher books and drop books off

at the school with very specific things and chapters highlighted."   A resource piece was part of committee's perception of the university representative's role.

Observations and feedback being major responsibilities of the committee received considerable attention in the discussion of the program. In regard to academia members, participants pointed to the things which differentiated their feedback from the rest of the committee. "Different" was a key word describing feedback and ideas from professors. It was logical for participants because university professors were outsiders; consequently, they could have a different perspective; moreover, they were expected to have a different perspective. Diana called university representatives "a fresh pair of eyes." Being "fresh" let professors see the things others did not see or did not notice and suggest the ways to improve them.

This perspective might explain the overall evaluation of professors' feedback by other committee members and resident teachers. They considered their feedback more general, focused more either on a bigger picture (bridging theory and practice) or some aspects which were not directly connected with a particular class but were important, in the long run. As an example, Luke recalled a conversation with a university representative when the person brought up an issue of left-handed desks, the absence of those at school. The teacher admitted that it was nice to get a perspective on some things he had never thought before. Principals pointed out that university representatives asked a lot of questions about school procedures and policies and different aspects of teaching and classroom management.

The discussion of university representatives 'contribution to the program would lead to the question about the need for professors' involvement in beginning teachers'

induction. Everyone agreed that it was necessary and important for the college to be engaged in this process as much as possible; the benefits of such collaboration were mutual, they were greater for the university. Such statements were frequent in the interviews with school practitioners. Principals were confident that the schools would go on with induction and mentoring whether the program would be in place or not.

From principals' and mentors' perspectives a major hindrance for more active involvement of university professors was their busy schedules. For them, it was not faculty's direct responsibility or job. Consequently, principal Beth thought the program, "was one more thing the state asked the university to do." Mentor Mary shared her understanding of the university faculty's challenges, "they have a lot of stuff going on, and it's hard for them to get out into the public schools." Academia participants acknowledged time constraint challenges for any bigger commitment to the program. They said that more faculty members participating and more time allocated for that purpose would make a difference.

Hope School District was in a more advantageous position in terms of collaborating with the University in the program due to its location. The issue of proximity to the University was brought up mainly by principals and mentors. They agreed that being close to the University facilitated more effective connections and partnerships with professors. It was much harder to people to find time to drive several hours to some districts than to spend time at the Hope District schools. Academia participants stated that it required more efforts to schedule observations in distant districts. Says Helen, "You have to have them blocked off, and make it a priority. If you do not make it a priority, it becomes, 'Oh, I've got to do this' and you are not effective."

Answering the question about the things to improve and strengthen the induction process, the participants shared their ideas how to bridge a gap between theory and practice. Professor Kevin thought that college professors should make themselves more available for public schools. Some comments accentuated the importance of changing the overall approach to this issue. Principals talked not only about the input of the college to beginning teachers' induction but also about the things the university could do for the schools, in general, to meet the needs of public education. Among suggested ideas was that of university professors serving as liaisons to the schools. Andrew would prefer to deal with one person on a regular basis. That liaison would use college resources including help from other faculty if needed. Beth and Diana saw a great value in bringing more current research to school sites but adapting too much theorized studies for teachers. Says Beth, "…just cut through the data, just tell me what it says, and don't make me look at graphs; just tell me what it says and how we can make this work for kids." Mary considered professors as a very important part in teachers' plans to work on their graduate degrees. According to participants, all these ideas would bring positive changes in academia-schools relationships. To make those changes happen, Beth believed there "would have to be the conversation with a lot of people."

Leading the Team

The committee chair was a leadership role required for the committee and explained in the program handbook. Committee members were supposed to select a chair at the first meeting. From interview data, it was evident that a typical choice for the chair was a school administrator. As all participants explained it, there was always an assumption and expectation that a principal would chair the committee; it was a natural

choice for everybody. Principals always volunteered to take this role because they felt responsibility for the whole process and understood mentors' and professors' constraints to serve as a chair. From the administrators' perspective, mentors had already enough duties "on their plate" (required number of hours to spend with the entry teacher and writing a log). Besides, relationships in a mentor-beginning teacher dyad differed from other committee members, which added to the constraints to take the lead on committees. Professors were harder to contact, and they did not spend enough time at school to be able to keep track of all paper work, scheduling, and preparing the meetings. Diana noted in this regard, "It is too much to expect them [university faculty] to do it."

Professors and mentors shared their reasoning about greater benefits for the committee to have a school administrator as a chair. In participants' experience university representatives never served as chairs. Helen pointed out, "The university person was never the chair of the committee because that doesn't make sense." Gregory explained, "That's a little additional work that I'd rather not have. I am more than happy to allow the principal to do that." Participants also recalled few incidents when a mentor teacher served as a chair. It happened either because the principal was on several committees due to the number of new teachers hired or because the school administrator did not want to deal with paper work; so a mentor teacher was forced to do it. In such situations mentors did not have much choice other than agree. Professor Helen recalled one of the cases, "The teacher would say, 'I do not know what I am doing.' But they would figure it out and do OK."

As previously noted, the program logistics required a selection process in determining the committee chair. Accordingly, despite the assumption that the principal

would take the lead by default, the committee had a discussion about the chair at their first meeting. The discussion usually was brief and matter of fact. In some instances, a principal just let the committee know that he/she volunteered doing it. There were cases when a selection part was omitted and the school principal led the meeting without mentioning anything about the chair, just become one.

Principals described their chairing responsibilities. Beth provided a list of those responsibilities, "organizing the meetings, setting the meeting dates, sending reminders to make sure everyone can come together on the dates we agreed upon, contacting the professor if there is a problem and we need the person to come sooner or later." Diana summed the chair's duties as "taking charge of documentation and communication and making sure that is happening." Meetings were a major activity where chairship was manifested most of all. Administrators saw their mission in ensuring a smooth flow of meetings in terms of both logistics and content. Beth shared a detailed description of her running the meetings on observations:

> I usually run the meeting. I always start by asking the teacher how the things are going to get the feeling where they are coming from, what page they are on. If I've seen things they do not see, then we have a problem. It gives us a springboard to talk from, it gives teachers ownership, and it helps them reflect….I usually make a folder for each person and give it to them with the sheets that are already copied. These sheets are on line too. I give it to them on paper; if they choose to go online, that's fine too.

Protection of entry teachers' interests was something else chairs felt responsible for. For that, they coordinated observations making sure visits did not happen on the same day

and the committee observed different activities. They also facilitated additional communication among the committee if there were any kinds of concern between the sets of observations to avoid any surprises for teachers at the meeting.

Other committee members' perception and experience with the chair was congruent with principals'. Professors viewed the chair as a person who set the tone in the whole process and the person to address concerns if a committee member saw a problem or an issue. Helen's description of meetings and responsibilities was similar to Beth's, "The principal led all the meetings making sure that all paper work was taken care of, the committee meetings got scheduled. He met with the university person and mentor if there were issues." Mentors highlighted logistics responsibilities of the chair pointing out the chair's role in setting a positive tone of the meetings, as Nora noted, "We all would start off with something positive."

The chair's leadership was evident for resident teachers. Even if selection of the chair was not discussed, resident teachers could define immediately who played this role. Faith recalled, "She would come in, and we knew we can start it. She would jump off and ask me questions and start the conversation going, be the first one going over the observations." Emily spoke highly about her principal as a chair, "I knew he was in charge of getting everybody together and making sure that everything was done correctly. He was very efficient about that. He gave me a lot of notifications. I never worried about papers to sign." Luke highlighted his chair's leadership role, "He was the one to have the last say."

Everyone Had a Role

Participants looked at their roles on the committee from different perspectives: program objectives, time spent with residency teachers and other committee members, and contribution to induction process. They did not seem to have any difficulty in identifying their own roles in the program as well as the roles of other committee members.

The overall agreement was that mentor teachers played the most crucial role in the whole process. Professor Helen acknowledged that a mentor teacher was the one who "was in trenches with them on the day-to-day basis." Such a crucial role was predetermined by the program's structure and requirements, such as: hours to be logged in and activities to do together. At the same time, the findings show evidence that there was much more to that from mentor teachers than just doing what was prescribed to them. Mentors' both negative and positive past experience as mentees played a very important role in their passionate approach to mentorship duties. If the experience was positive, they wanted others benefit from mentoring too, it was a sort of payoff for them. Having a negative experience resulted in the desire to help other people avoid such a situation. Mary noted, "If I had that as a first year teacher, it would be great." Carol shared her positive experience, "I happened to have a teacher who'd provide that without a pay. It was invaluable."

Mentors' contribution to the program was, according to principal Diana, in the "years of experience dealing with a wide variety of teachers and students and working with them. It was a shared experience." Principal Beth emphasized vested interest of mentors in beginning teachers to be successful, "They are experts in their subject areas, and they take great pride of their subject area and teachers that teach this subject. They

are going to work hard to make sure that this person is a good teacher." Resident teachers' comments supported this claim. Says Luke, "That was the main thing, because that was the person who was actually doing the teaching with you. She always offered something. She would do whatever it was to make my life easier." Faith agreed, "The role of the mentor teacher seemed to be the biggest." Having all these assets to help teachers go through their first year, mentors were also accessible. They were the people teachers were comfortable to go to not only with the issues connected with content teaching or classroom management, but also with everyday needs outside the classroom and beyond school life. Emily shared, "I could access her. I could talk to her about not only what happened in the classroom. That was nice to have a kind of to go to person for everything, not only the classroom setting."

Speaking about the role of school administrators on the committee all participants, except principals themselves, used the same descriptor - administrative. They did not consider any further explanation necessary because they thought it was self-explanatory. Professor Gregory stated, "The role of the administrator was basically administrative, and that role was pretty clear." The following comments illustrate what participants included into the concept of administrating. Mentor Nora noted, "The principal is probably viewed as the State Department said, 'We have to have this committee and you are going to serve on it' and she is on a million different committees." For mentor Carol, that "was the person who would be evaluating." Carol also described responsibilities of the principal which were similar to the ones of the chair.

Principals provided more insight to the role of school administrators on the committee and goals and priorities they defined for themselves. Diana described the role as:

> more of the big picture role in integrating that teacher into staff, into the procedures of the school. That was a person of resource for the residency teacher to rely on in questions about the district policy, school procedures, and expectations of teachers in the building.

Beth saw herself, first and foremost, as an instructional leader for her teaching staff. Consequently, she projected this aspect on her work with resident teachers as well, "I always try to find the ways for my teachers to grow professionally. I want to make sure I give them the cutting edge information they need." She also underlined the need to maintain more formal relationships with teachers and make them very professional because the principal does "hiring and firing."

Being a person who did "hiring and firing" and served on the RTP committee produced double duties for principals. They welcomed an opportunity to work on the committee because of responsibilities and vested interest in the teachers they hired and who worked for them. Diana was excited about the "opportunity to influence new members of your profession and to encourage them and to be part of their success." For success to happen, Beth shared, "I work hard to make these teachers successful and give them tools they are lacking." Says Andrew, "I would probably put in more time because that person is going to be part of our culture." Resident teacher Faith saw a hiring aspect as a motivational factor for principals in investing time in residency teachers, "she

wanted to make sure that I was doing the right stuff so that she would not have problems later."

Resident teachers also appreciated their principals' understanding of the challenges beginning teachers were going through during their first year and communicating their expectations. Says Emily, "He was very clear about what his expectations were and respectful of each teacher's individuality and uniqueness. He was very clear as a principal and continued to be for the next three years I was with them." Mentors also pointed out hiring as an augmenting factor to principals' greater sense of responsibility of working on committees. Says Mary, "The principal felt a greater responsibility and a time crunch because she hired this person." Nora shared her perception of principals' reasoning, "Definitely, the principal was looking, 'Did I make the right choice? Do I want to rehire?'"

Wearing two hats did not present much of a challenge for principals. They managed to differentiate and separate these two processes, as Diana shared, "It's probably more difficult in the administrator's role if you are an evaluator for performance for employment and for certification, but, truly, in practice those can work different. Those are two separate sets of conversation." Those two sets of conversation had different objectives; therefore, they were approached differently. The discussion about employment was, according to Diana, "very controlled and outlined all around state statutes about employment and minimum standards. You have a tool that you have to use." Says Beth, "I had teachers set goals, and our conversation around their evaluation was really about supporting them with their goals to meet these minimum criteria."

The conversation about residency was more of developing a growth plan to support teachers and did not determine their employment. Other participants recognized the fact that school administrators succeeded in wearing two hats. Says professor Gregory, “They handled it very well because it’s the role they play all the time.” Mentor Carol underscored the benefits for resident teachers, “They got the administrator to work in a non-threatening manner, because with the official TPI (teacher performance indicator) it can be more threatening.” Despite the “dual sword” for resident teachers with two sets of conversation with the principal during their first year, none of residency participants mentioned the fact that they felt scary or uncomfortable because of that.

“Outsider,” “outside opinion,” and “outside observer” were most common descriptors for the role of a university representative on the committee. Professors believed that their feedback and opinions were more objective. Being geographically and professionally distant from schools and spending much less time with resident teachers, university representatives could see the things school people did not see, and it was easier for them to express their concerns and worries, if any. Says Kevin, “Telling the teachers that perhaps they need to be doing something else is easier for me as an outsider than it is sometimes for the onsite people.” Residency teachers acknowledged benefits of an outside opinion because of different perspectives on their teaching and a different angle from which they were evaluated. Luke liked “having the third opinion to validate.” Emily reflected, “His [university representative’s] role was to really let me know how effective I was as a teacher.” Faith appreciated diversity of the program structure, “I liked having people at different levels that had different purposes.” With agreement among principals that the role of university representatives was not very active because

they were not in the building, Beth was the most critical about professors' contribution, "I do not see them playing a critical role in the teacher's development. I see them part of the requirement of the state put out in the program."

Looking at committees' composition from the roles' perspective, principal Andrew used a "family" metaphor. For him, the committee was a family unit. In this family, a university representative played a role of a distant relative- uncle or aunt, for instance. A school administrator was a parent, a mentor -- an older brother or sister. Andrew clarified the relationship dynamics within a family unit. Residency teachers spent a lot of time with mentors on a daily basis and developed very close relationships due to similar interests, levels, and goals. Principals had to be rule keepers, disciplinarians, and decision makers. University representatives were distant and separate yet "members of the family" who cared about their "relatives." Andrew further explained, "They had a different view of things which was always interesting because it is not just a reflection of that person, it is a reflection of the family unit." Valuing and appreciating professors' input, Andrew used his family as an example to specify challenges of relationships with "uncle/aunt", especially when it came to giving advice or suggestions:

> This is a physiological thing. My own father gives me advice because he feels like that's his job. I, on the other hand, don't give my daughters advice unless they ask for it. Part of that is confidence in the job that I have done with my family. The university representatives feel that there is an obligation on their part to give this advice because that's their role. I don't think that's always necessary.

Andrew was not the only participant who referred to a family concept speaking about committee members' roles. Says mentor Mary, "I see a mentor like a secondary friend or parent."

Other Realities

All participants agreed that the program was very beneficial and overall met the goals and objectives. They thought that it was unfortunate that the state placed a moratorium on it. Professors reflected on different aspects that caused the program's effectiveness. In their opinion, the program was one of the best things the State Department of Education had done in terms of developing true educators. Says Gregory, "Basically anybody can be a teacher per se, but an educator is someone who changes lives in the classroom. The residency program builds educators rather than just good teachers." In Helen's opinion, it also provided the data "how the entry teachers learn and what it takes to develop good teachers." Therefore, it is critical that some sort of a program or structure should be in place. Kevin stated, "There should be a program that could be set up so that the administrator or a teacher could call somebody in professional education no matter whether a person has been teaching one or five years." Mentors' views on the program resonated with the professors'.

Another aspect of agreement was the belief that beginning teachers should receive support whatever form and shape it might have. Moreover, they were sure that the school district would continue to support their beginning teachers with or without any state mandate. In fact, the school district continued the program activities, only without university representatives. Says principal Andrew, "The program is still there; it's just in different form, it's in a different format." Diana agreed:

> The principals and residency teachers and mentors are all meeting. So the structure may not look exactly the same; it may not be like three committee meetings. But certainly, the intent of the process is still there, the structure may look different though.

Participants could not emphasize more the importance of mentor training for all constituents of the induction process. Says mentor Mary," I would have the whole school district…everybody needs to be able to mentor—that's what a teacher does. We mentor our students. It only enhances our instruction, enhances our profession." She believed mentoring should happen at all levels: teachers should be able to mentor someone yearly in their building; principals should reach other schools' principals mentoring them and enhancing communication among schools. Mentor training for school administrators and university professors would improve their skills in offering suggestions, asking questions, and giving strategies for help. Professor Kevin shared an idea about a training program for administrators and university faculty. It might be, in his opinion, not as extensive as formal training for mentor teachers in terms of time and topics covered. However, the benefits of such training would be considerable, "It would be important: the better we are directed and taught, the better job we can do for the first year teacher."

Principals shared their ideas about the university contribution to public education, in general, and support of beginning teachers, in particular. Being realistic about challenges and constraints to make collaboration meaningful, they would like to see more involvement of faculty members in the life of schools. Andrew expressed his wish to have a faculty member from the College of Education serving as a liaison between his school and university, "I would like to have one faculty member that I deal with all the

time." This person would have an opportunity to learn the school's culture and goals, get to know students and teachers, and would be more effective in providing support and advice. Diana thought that the university faculty could increase their consultation role in teaching strategies, curriculum development, and other areas. A great advantage of Hope District schools was their proximity to the university, and Diana saw many ways how connections might be created and developed, "We are greatly influenced by the University, we have such a connectedness: we rely on the university for our teachers to move forward on their Master's, we rely on University professors to provide lots of training and consultations for us." Beth shared her ideas how her school could benefit from working with the university faculty. She hoped for more assistance with educational technology. University professors could be very instrumental in bringing current research to the classroom. Their mission would be to adapt research and make it understandable for teachers to "go to the nuts and bolts of the chapter and still get the same thing."

With a strong belief that there should be a support system for beginning teachers at schools, professors talked about some things the University tried to do to stay involved in this process. They mentioned mentoring programs which had been already in place in a number of school districts statewide and which were initiated and supervised by the College of Education. They also spoke about a pilot project of the PEU- Teacher Excellence Network (TEN) - to provide online support for beginning teachers who are the University graduates. At the time of interviews, participants could not tell much about the project; they knew that faculty members were going to be involved as mentors

for beginning teachers through active use of technology: videoconferencing, interactive tests, and manuals, blogs, and discussion boards.

Teacher Excellence Network (TEN)

TEN is an example of “other realities” which exist after the TRP was terminated. I learned about the project in February when it was launched. The project is a partnership program for assisting University graduates in their first year of teaching. Participants work in teams comprising of the college Professional Education faculty and one or two new teachers. Meetings and observations occur through online conferencing. All activities and topics for observations are developed in five modules and correspond to a state teacher evaluation rubric currently tested by one of the largest school districts in the state.

TEN project is now in a piloting stage. The project manager was hired in mid-December 2010 and has these responsibilities: writing content for the website, recruitment of the participants, managing the blog, and logistics of the pilot program. The content for the program was put up in mid-January 2011. Participants’ recruitment finished in the last week of February 2011. The target population for selecting participants was beginning teachers – university graduates. Telephone calls proved to more effective than emails in recruiting teacher-participants. The manager had also a responsibility to get school principals’ approval for teachers to participate in the program. Some of the teacher-participants had a mentor at school, some of them did not. Recruitment of the Professional Education faculty started with an orientation meeting in which 20 professors attended. The director of PEU was actively involved in selecting

faculty-participants. Totally, 11 pairs/teams (a beginning teacher and a faculty member) were formed to start the program.

The role of a faculty member is to provide guidance, resources, suggestions, and feedback to a new teacher doing observations, facilitating different activities, and using various communication tools. All activities are in an online format. Each of the following five modules for the project: classroom management, instructional effectiveness, personal growth and continuous improvement, interpersonal skills, and leadership, has content presentations, activities to practice the content, teacher evaluation rubrics, self-assessment materials, and communication tools to collaborate and network with other participants. Communication tools include forums, blogs, and instant messaging, to name a few. Teacher participants received webcams to use for videoconferencing with faculty members.

Summary

This chapter reported participants' experiences of serving on resident teacher program committees with their insights to the program structure, committee make-up, roles of committee members, and committee dynamics. The description of Hope School District and University PEU milieus and participants' profile created a context for the following case study narrative. Data presented in the narrative enhanced understanding resident teacher committees and allowed for drawing interpretations about their functioning.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

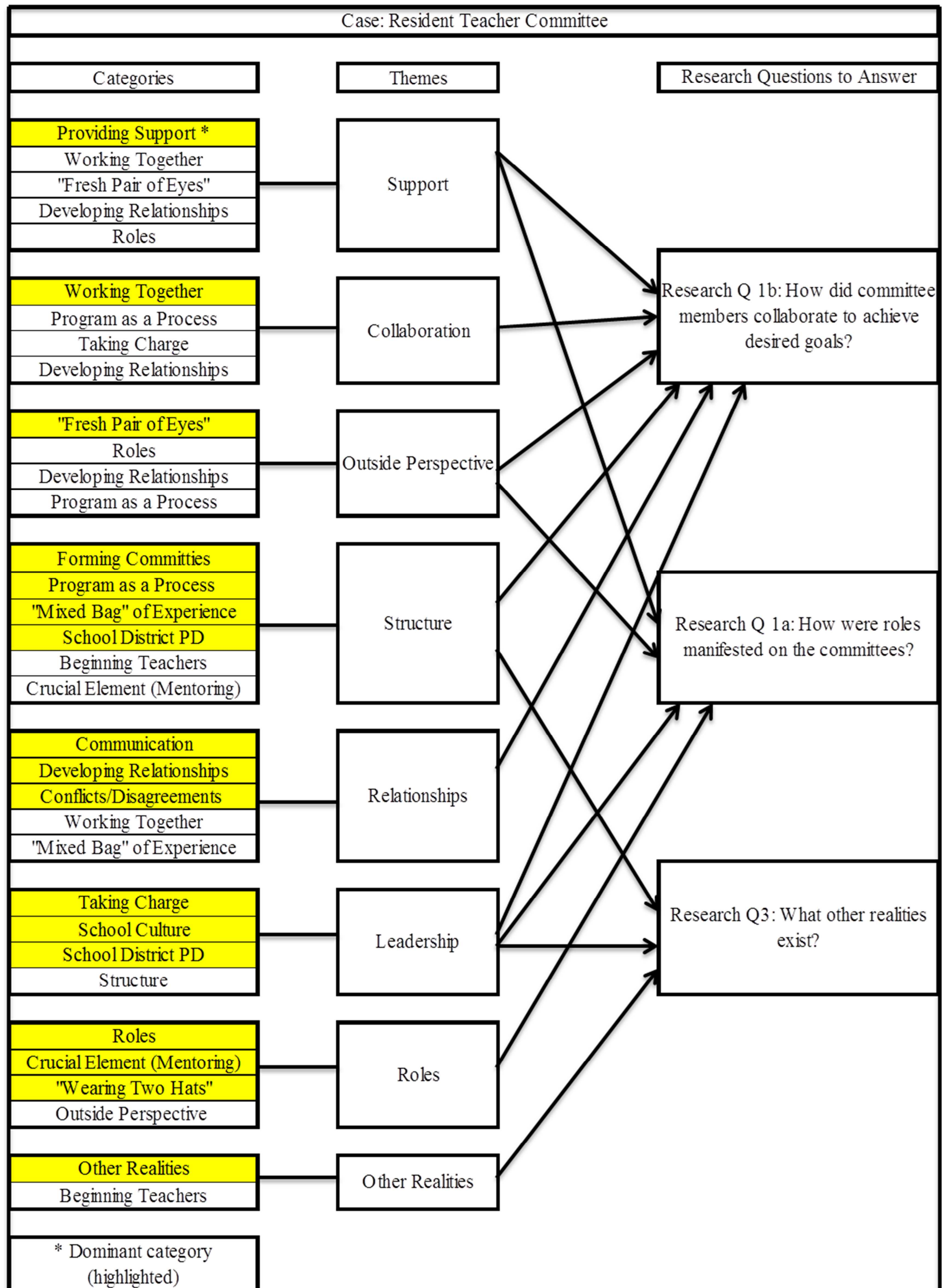
Two objectives for the study shaped the data analysis process of reconstructing the meaning of participants' interview responses. The first objective was to describe the functioning of the Resident Teacher Program (RTP) committees and explore committee members' perceptions of their roles on the committee. The second objective dealt with utilizing a multi-level boundary spanning model (Joshi et al., 2009) to explain committee roles and activities.

Regarding the first objective, initial unitizing and categorizing of the data from interviews, documents, and observations allowed for identifying 15 emergent categories about committees' structure, roles, and functions. I used emic terms created by participants to name categories, "to capture some essence" of participants' experience with the program (Patton, 2002, p. 455). These categories were: fresh pair of eyes, mixed bag of experiences, wearing two hats, and taking charge.

Further analysis and testing of categories for internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Patton, 2002) led to classifying eight themes: support, collaboration, outside perspective, structure, relationships, leadership, roles, and other realities. Each theme was a set of categories comprised of a dominant category or categories and other categories with data units which fitted the theme.

Themes provided data to answer the research questions. Some themes, such as: *Other Realities, Roles, Collaboration,* and *Relationships*, were relevant to one research question. The themes *Support, Outside Perspective, Structure,* and *Leadership* offered data to answer more than one research question. Relationships between categories and themes in connection to research questions are presented in Figure 2. The goal of the following theme discussion was "to derive the meaning from comparison of the findings with information gleaned from the literature" (Creswell, 2003, p. 195)

Figure 2. Data to Answer Research Questions


Case: Resident Teacher Committee
Categories
Themes
Research Questions to Answer
Providing Support *
Working Together
"Fresh Pair of Eyes"
Developing Relationships
Roles
Support
Working Together
Program as a Process
Taking Charge
Developing Relationships
Collaboration
"Fresh Pair of Eyes"
Roles
Developing Relationships
Program as a Process
Outside Perspective
Forming Committies
Program as a Process
"Mixed Bag" of Experience
School District PD
Beginning Teachers
Crucial Element (Mentoring)
Structure
Communication
Developing Relationships
Conflicts/Disagreements
Working Together
"Mixed Bag" of Experience
Relationships
Taking Charge
School Culture
School District PD
Structure
Leadership
Roles
Crucial Element (Mentoring)
"Wearing Two Hats"
Outside Perspective
Roles
Other Realities
Beginning Teachers
Other Realities
* Dominant category (highlighted)
Research Q 1b: How did committee members collaborate to achieve desired goals?
Research Q 1a: How were roles manifested on the committees?
Research Q3: What other realities exist?

Resident Teacher Program Desired Outcomes

Understanding the committees' functions to achieve desired outcomes required clarification of what those outcomes were from participants' perspective, as well as regarding state expectations. All participants showed familiarity with state guidelines for the program and were able to almost quote its goals from the program handbook. How way they interpreted the document showed their perception of the process and their responsibilities on the committee. In the handbook, the goal for the committee was to decide after April 10 of the first year whether a beginning teacher could be recommended for certification. This goal had two options. The first was to retain the teachers who had showed professional growth and potential and recommend them for certification. The second option was to require the individuals, who struggled despite the support and assistance, to complete another year in residency or consider changing a career path. Thus, support and recommendation for certification were main goals of the program. How the participants prioritized those goals determined the committees' dynamics.

Support

From the data, it was evident that committee members placed much more emphasis on the concept of support of beginning teachers. Only one participant, mentor Mary, started explaining the program goals with a recommendation for certification notion. Other participants considered support a primary goal of the program. Theme *Support* was dominant through all interviews; the idea was also present in other themes. This finding was congruent to overall emphasis in literature on the concept of support in the induction process (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Blank & Kershaw, 2009; Glickman et al., 2010).

How to provide that support varied depending on goals prescribed by the law and defined by the committee members themselves. Structural elements of the program, such as: observations, feedback, and mentoring which included keeping a log-- were the required components of support process. Each committee member decided on the format and content of the feedback and identified additional avenues of assisting the teachers depending on teachers' needs and roles developed. Program structural elements corresponded to activities of a Core Mentor Team discussed by Blank and Kershaw (2006). However, ownership and responsibility for design and core procedures were the areas of divergence between two teams. Core Mentor Teams were autonomous and independent on all program stages beginning with design, while the RTP committees had a mandated structure developed for them.

A "safety net" notion became one of the metaphors for the committees' efforts to help beginning teachers become effective teachers. It appeared that for participants being a good teacher had two aspects. The first was a professional aspect which dealt with developed and improved teaching skills, as well as included continuous education, professional development, and, as principal Beth stated "climbing professional ladder." These characteristics comprise Wong's (2004) list of features of comprehensive induction programs. Observing classes, giving feedback, providing additional resources, and working with entry teachers to improve certain areas were the avenues through which the committee ensured provision of the professional aspect of teachers' success.

The second, emotional, aspect dealt with job satisfaction. The teachers' professional growth and progress resulted in their career choice satisfaction and, ultimately, had a positive effect on the overall teaching performance. Previous literature

emphasized urgency to end “the era of isolating teaching” (Wong, 2004, p. 3) and “haphazard approach to the induction of the newcomers” (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006, p. 2). Knowing pitfalls and challenges of the first year and understanding frustrations and emotional roller-coasters experienced by beginning teachers caused committee members to be more aware of the need, in principal Andrew ‘words, “to cushion and soften experience of the entry teacher.” The “safety net” notion made it easier to transit to the classroom when teachers were suddenly alone. As beginning teacher Luke admitted, it was crucial “to have someone to lean on.”

Recommendation for Certification

Formality of the process with observations and evaluation forms was a frequent topic during the interviews with participants. Several people expressed their frustration about the evaluation form design and content because they did not see much value in a number of items there. Principal Andrew shared, “I just felt obliged to do those open ended questions to fill in a lot of holes.” On the other hand, the committee viewed this issue as a minor hindering factor, since the main purpose for them was providing support for teachers, and paper work was only part of the process. Resident teachers felt the same way. For instance, Luke commented, “The evaluation form was almost a formality because the people who were actually observing me had already talked to me.” As Blank and Kershew (2010) noted, for the evaluation process of the induction program to be a success, it should be research based. Participants did not provide much information about the rationale for rubrics in the forms. With approved standard evaluation rubrics, each committee member developed individual focus and range of observation feedback. The tendency to modify the scope and or content of evaluation, on the one hand,

explained the committee members' discontent with forms. On the other hand, it showed evidence of differentiated approach to evaluation process and unique understanding of current critical issues in teaching. Resident teachers valued different perspectives of the feedback most of all, for various viewpoints let them put "snapshots" from observations together to create a full picture of individual strengths and weaknesses.

To summarize, the goals of the RTP committees were to support resident teachers during their first year of teaching and make recommendation regarding their certification. Participants defined a cumulative desired outcome of the program in terms of success for all constituents. They did not give a definition of a successful year; however, they provided explanation of what they perceived as a success for the program. For beginning teachers, success was professional growth, support, and career learning with recommendation for certification as an outcome. This emphasis was important to note because of the growing calls from educators to shift the focus of certification programs towards the success of new teachers, not just a set of qualifications they should possess (Imig et al., 2009). Therefore, the success of the program and committee resulted in retaining good teachers as well as identifying people who should give another thought about the professional field they chose. Diana's comment about the mission of committees to be "the extension of the teachers' success, not a filter" showed that committee members expected that the majority of young teachers entering the profession would meet program requirements and be recommended for certification. At the same time, a "filter" role was also important to ensure that schools did not keep the individuals who would not be able to provide quality education to students.

RTP Committee Performance to Meet Goals

Emergent themes from the data analysis offered information about functioning of committees to achieve desired outcomes. A distinctive feature of the themes was that the committees' performance and decision making were affected both by a formal structure of the program as well as individual attributes and initiative of committee members.

Formalized Program Structure as a Mechanism to Achieve Desired Outcomes

State guidelines served as a road map for committees in their activities during the year. These guidelines and the program structure provided a format for beginning teachers' induction advocated by Glickman et al. (2010). This format allowed for beginning teachers' effective professional transition from college to the school classroom. Structural elements of the program included mentoring of a new teacher on a regular basis, class observations by all committee members, committee meetings for observation discussions, feedback from each committee member, and recommendation for certification. In reference to the above mentioned required actions, the participants kept saying that these were minimum activities.

The notion of minimum activities was quantified as well as qualified by participants. The program outlined the number of observations and meetings for the committee to decide about recommendation for certification. The committees always met minimum requirements. Due to qualifications and experiences of committee members, they could get an idea about the potential of a beginning teacher and felt confident about their opinion. However, all participants agreed that the program design did not provide enough time and activities to get a very good idea of how teachers actually performed. It did not allow for ongoing and intense guidance and orientation for beginning teachers emphasized by Glickman et al. (2010). Mentor Carol's term "snapshot" demonstrated a

general perception of the committee concerning observations and supported the comments about scarcity of information about the overall teacher's performance during the year. Following program guidelines, committees were flexible in making adjustments in terms of providing more assistance to a teacher, if needed. In case with resident teacher participants, the decision on the recommendation did not raise any questions. They showed constant progress and worked hard to improve and utilize committee's suggestions. In contrast, committee members recalled other experiences when they had to have more than three observations and additional meetings to come to consensus about a beginning teacher's overall performance.

Discussing frequency of meetings and observations, residency teachers commented on a gap between a particular observation and "real world" professional routine of the teacher. Scheduled observations could happen on a day which was not good or productive for a teacher, and it could result in the distortion of the teachers' performance assessment. Emily shared more of her thoughts and feelings about the process. One of her worries was that the program design did not provide a full picture of residency teachers' professional life during their first year, "It's too much like a performance. It's not real life. I do not think it is a true measure of what is really going on every day." Downey et al. (2009) viewed response to the teacher's emergent needs on a daily basis as an integral part of any induction program. Clearly, the feedback from three observations could not meet those needs. The only committee member who could assist beginning teachers on a regular basis was a mentor teacher.

Mentors spent considerable time with teachers, usually more than a required minimum of 70 hours to log in. The fact that participants mentioned different number of

hours in the range from 80 to 100 proved that mentors went beyond the guidelines. Shared frustration about the mentor's log came from realization that the time for filling in the log could have been spent for more observations, communication, and learning from each other. On the other hand, the logs were the means of keeping people accountable, which the participants acknowledged to be very important. This discussion of program requirements for the mentor teacher aligned with the discourse in literature about formal and informal forms of mentoring (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Strong, 2009).

Team Collaboration

Team approach to beginning teachers' induction is a dominant theme in the literature on the induction process (Downey et al., 2009; Russel, 2006; Strong, 2009). The views of the RTP as a team deviated somewhat among resident teachers and committee members. In general, resident teachers thought of the committee as a team. A common goal, regardless of differing opinions and perspectives of team members, is a crucial component for the composition of the induction program team (Blank & Kershaw, 2006). Seeing that common goal on their committees contributed to the level of comfort of resident teachers and helped them not to feel intimidated or preached to.

Committee members' perceptions of themselves as a team seemed contradictory. On the one hand, there were claims about committees being a team; on the other hand, there were comments about disconnected work. This contradiction may be attributed to the challenges teams encountered, which participants identified as busy schedules, mismatch in expectations, and different approaches. Another reason could be a temporary nature of the committee as a team. Committee members had different levels of prior relationships, and the program design did not allow much time to develop strong

connections. While there is literature to support the need for long-term relationships to develop strong teams, the research on relational dynamics of induction teams is scarce.

One aspect not receiving scholarly consideration was accountability and professional ethics of committee members in terms of different attitudes to their service. Participants shared experiences about the instances when certain individuals on the teams looked at this duty as another demand on their schedule and, as Beth described it "come, sign off, and done deal. A wide range of opinions about certain people did not limit to a particular group. A "mixed bag" of experiences, as Kevin termed it, could refer to mentors, school administrators, and university representatives. Such an approach, certainly, had a negative impact on the overall performance of committees and led to tension. Participants pinpointed the importance of assigning people to the committees who would take the responsibility accordingly and be motivated to do their best. At the same time, they found it difficult to offer any ideas about an accountability mechanism for the program.

A clear communication scheme for committee members was pertinent for team collaboration. Receiving information in a timely manner was critical for university representatives because they were only able to be present at schools on the days of meetings and observations. With the calls for universities to be deeply involved in teachers' professional development (Blank & Kershaw; Russel, 2006), the program structure and requirements became hindering factors for more engagement. Having a well-established protocol of communication was instrumental for dealing with those challenges. School administrators had to maintain high levels of connectedness with all program partakers.

Principals served as ambassadors among all committee members. Efficient communication was a prerequisite for the principals' successful management of program logistics, documentation, concerns and doubts, and general "temperature reading" of the well-being of resident teachers and committee members. Participants reflected on the principal's responsibilities that corresponded to the list of school administrators' critical duties in the induction programs suggested by Block and Grady (2006). The principals' efficacy in fulfilling those responsibilities allowed the committee to be rather proactive than reactive.

With the view on the residency committee as a form of university-school collaboration (Berry et al., 2008), it was important to see how collaborative efforts were manifested in the committees under investigation. The word "balanced" used by participants to describe a general tone of meetings and discussions showed that committee members had different approaches, expectations, and foci as far as their service on the committee. Nonetheless, they managed to find a common ground and consensus in most cases. If there were any disagreements or conflicts, they were an exception, not the rule. It is notable that the first level of dealing with disagreements and solving conflicts, if there were any, was the committee.

In explaining the dynamics of committees, participants quite often used the phrases of "different expectations" and "different perspectives" interchangeably. In some instances, it could be confusing because "expectation" usually had a negative meaning while "perspective" bore a positive connotation. Getting different perspectives from committee members was considered one of the program benefits. At the same time, difference in expectations could cause a disagreement on the assessment of the teachers'

performance. After clarifying the semantics of "expectation," it was apparent that principals usually used a word "expectation" to refer to knowledge about particular school needs, priorities, and culture. Committee members' understanding and consideration of school culture helped avoid possible conflicting situations and served as contributing factors for committee success (Blank & Kershaw, 2006).

Relationships

Literature emphasized the significance of a collaborative learning environment for a beginning teacher to succeed (Wong, 2004). Part of such an environment is relationship development. Participants constantly emphasized this point as a necessary prerequisite to making everyone's experience in the program beneficial. A first level was relationships between resident teachers and committee members. The closest connections were formed with a mentor teacher, which was a likely scenario. Mentor teacher-beginning teacher dyad was "in the same trenches" having a similar organizational status, working with each other on a daily basis, and sharing the time not only at work but also beyond school. Glickman et al. (2010) posited that such relationships are the "heart of mentoring" (p. 299).

Beginning teachers who pursued a traditional route of preparation comprised two groups: the local University graduates and the graduates from other higher education institutions. Prior relationships between a beginning teacher and the committee were one of the factors that could influence the committee dynamics. This issue received most consideration in the reflections of professors and resident teachers. A university representative was the most professionally and geographically distant person for a residency teacher. The degree of distance varied based on prior connections, if any, with

the professor. Literature did not show evidence of consideration of possible effect of these undercurrents, while it seemed that it could be a factor for the committees to account for in their operation.

All participants agreed that if a teacher had known a university representative as a college student, it affected positively their experience on the program due to vested interest of professors in their graduates. Some principals and mentors saw that interest for professors to assess college teacher preparation courses' effectiveness. Both university faculty and resident teachers admitted the benefits of prior relationships which resulted in more frequent communication, more meaningful and targeted support, and a higher comfort level.

With the graduates from other universities, faculty members could take time to develop rapport to achieve some comfort level, to let teachers know their expectations, and to know them well enough to provide support. This task added to the complexity of the committee service. Further, professors did not have as much vested interest in this group of teachers as in their own graduates. University representatives acknowledged the fact that they were less effective with the students they had not known previously.

Another group of beginning teachers identified by Brock and Grady (2006) as potential recipients of comprehensive induction programs was alternatively certified teachers. These teachers had unique needs and required more attention from committees. Professors' comments about working with alternative certified teachers showed that the faculty understood additional challenges alternatively certified teachers faced because of the lack of traditional teacher training and preparation. This finding was not surprising due to considerable attention the needs and challenges of alternative certified teachers

have received from scholars (Salyer, 2003; Sokal, Smith, & Movat, 2003; Wayman, Foster, Mantle-Bromley, & Wilson, 2003). The majority of teachers in this group were not very familiar with the public school environment, which added to challenges. Even if an alternatively certified teacher, such as Emily, a study participant, had some previous experience with public schools, it did not remove a higher level of anxiety. University representatives thought that alternatively certified teachers should get more attention to be able to meet their unique needs. Emily's comment about the school district meetings for new teachers also illustrated this argument. She did not benefit much from those meetings because their agendas were focused more on elementary school teachers and failed to account for various needs and expectations of other audience.

The relationships between resident teachers and principals were predetermined by a double duty of the principal as an employer and committee member. Resident teachers tended to see the principal first as a building administrator and the person who did two evaluations and, ultimately, would decide on further employment. Multiple principals' responsibilities critical for induction process (Brock & Grady, 2006), made the principal both a distant and close person for beginning teachers. Resident teachers, with the exception of Luke, acknowledged the support from their principals. However, they did not initiate any communication unless administrators did it. First, they had mentors to lean on and go to with any issue, and they felt comfortable about it. Second, it was much harder to reveal weaknesses to the administrator because of the mentioned above variables.

Resident teachers considered it important to emphasize a point that the support of beginning teachers and connections developed during the first year should not stop after

the program was over. They were frustrated to watch the attention and assistance going from everything to nothing. The message behind those comments was: one year was enough to make a decision about recommendation for certification; it was not enough for the beginning teachers to develop a level of confidence and professionalism they needed. A recommendation of Oklahoma State Commission for Teacher Preparation (2006) to extend mentoring to three years was a response to those frustrations. In addition, literature provided examples of best programs in the nation, such as: Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment in California and The Pathwise Framework Induction Program in New York (Russel, 2006; Strong, 2009). These programs' time-frame varied from two to five years.

Furthermore, the importance of mentoring in any form as an ongoing process at school was an underlying idea in other participants' comments as well. Mentor Mary voiced it most strongly saying that every teacher and school administrator should go through mentoring training and have an opportunity to mentor colleagues on a regular basis. University representatives agreed that having training in mentoring would enhance their potential as consultants and resource people. In 2006, Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) developed recommendations for improvement of RTP which included mentioned above issues. However, the suggestions to introduce three years of mentoring, orientation and training for all committee members, and releasing time for induction activities were not realized.

Leadership

Leadership on the committees was mostly manifested in the role of a chair. Data showed common patterns in the selection of the chair. Principals usually volunteered to

chair committees, while the other committee members would eagerly agree and accept it. For professors, the option of chairing the committee either did not make sense or meant additional responsibilities, which they would rather not take. Meanwhile, the idea of being a chair should not seem illogical to university professors, because one of the rationales of university representation in the program was provision of transparency and objectivity of the process. Moreover, serving as a chair would allow university representatives to be more involved in collaborative efforts of the committee and span the boundaries of their organization. This need is outlined in the NCATE Concepts of Professional Development Schools (Standard 5, NCATE, 2010). Further, with the principal performing a double duty of a committee member and employer, a university representative as a chair could seem a better choice. Nevertheless, because of the amount of paper work and other challenges such an option did not appeal to professors, as they admitted.

Committee Members' Roles

In the reflection on their roles on committees, participants went beyond what was prescribed in the handbook's brief descriptions. They provided unique personal perspectives on committee roles. Andrew's family metaphor offered the insight to committees from the point of view of closeness of committee members to beginning teachers and to each other, contribution of external factors, and understanding of embedded disagreements and contradictions.

According to Andrew, a university person as a "distant relative" considered his/her responsibility to provide some advice even if school people did not ask for it. Such a comment served as evidence of some sort of bias of school practitioners towards

university representatives because they were not part of their school culture and, as outsiders, could not know all odds and ends of school sites that could be critical for the program process. The claim about limited knowledge of university representatives about each particular site where they served on the committee was fair; however, the rationale for including professors on the committee was to provide an outside perspective on beginning teachers' progress. Being an outsider, or "fresh pair of eyes," as principal Diana put it, allowed for grasping some things school practitioners could overlook due to their immersion to the school environment (Blank & Kershaw, 2006). Therefore, the professors' wish to point to those things and discuss them did not seem unreasonable.

A wide continuum of opinions about the role and contribution of university representatives to the program resulted from different experiences with committees, different degrees of familiarity with program guidelines and a designated role for university representatives, preconceived assumptions, and personal biases. This continuum revealed the complexity of perceptions about the role of academia in improvement of public education. On the one hand, participants emphasized their belief about great benefits of collaborative efforts between universities and public schools, resident teacher program being an example of such efforts. On the other hand, personal biases based on negative experiences, and "town-gown" cliché made them skeptical about the prospects of true collaboration.

Divergent perceptions of university representatives were reflected in opposite semantic connotations of the role descriptors for professors. One of the terms used to explain the role of university representatives was "outsider." This term bore a positive meaning describing professors as external agents to ensure objectivity and transparency

of the process or referring to a different additional perspective on the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. In this case, such perception was consistent with Blank and Kershaw's (2006) view regarding the role of academia in induction programs. That positive meaning was synonymous to such concepts as: helpful resource, bridge between theory and practice, or link between academia and public schools. Word "outsider" acquired a negative connotation in the discussions about disagreements, lack of collaboration, or conflicting expectations of committee members. In those cases, it meant something or somebody alien, not sufficiently familiar with the context, or carrying the agenda which did not have much in common with program goals. Negative aspects of faculty members' role did not seem to be considered by previous literature.

Resident Teacher Committees' Boundary Spanning

The second objective of the study was to examine committee roles through the lens of multi-level boundary spanning model (Joshi et al., 2009) and assess model effectiveness in educational settings. The participants' reflections on committees' collaborative team work, committee members' roles, and relationships team members developed during the year provided the data to examine the committee roles from boundary spanning perspectives. The residency committee design presupposed representation of different organizations on a team which allowed for analyzing how committee members span the boundaries of their organizations within and outside the team.

Ambassador and task coordinator boundary spanning activities, claimed by literature to be critical for effective team performance (Ancona, 1990; Joshi, et al., 2009), helped to understand how organizational and team level variables together with

committee members' individual attributes shaped committees' boundary spanning. Consideration of those attributes can be valuable for developing school-university collaborations. It is to the discussion of multi-level boundary spanning model (Joshi et al., 2009) propositions to explain the activities and roles of RTP committee members that I now turn.

RTP Committee as a Team

The RTP committees under consideration functioned in an educational setting. They were temporary teams comprised of representatives of two organizations: a higher education institution and a public school. These teams' uniqueness was in a double status of a university representative. As a committee member, the person was an external agent for other committee members representing a different organization. In this regard, we may talk about boundary spanning activities within the committee.

At the same time, the committee was a team with a common goal and task for a period of one year; and, as a team, they dealt with external agents. External agents the committee targeted with boundary spanning were represented by the state Department of Education, school district board, and PEU at the College of Education. The product or outcome of the team was a recommendation regarding certification. The teams did not work on a regular basis. All routines and activities were prescribed to the committee by an external agent, State Department of Education. Still, the committee members had flexibility and power to change or modify certain aspects, provided a required minimum was met, to justify their decision. Some of the boundary spanning activities, such as reports on observations, were embedded in the program design and procedures; the

others, such as a request for changing a university representative, could be initiated by committees.

In their multi- level model, Joshi et al. (2009) developed nine propositions which related three levels (team, task-based, and contextual) to boundary spanning activities. These propositions helped to explain how committee's contingencies and committee members' attributes shaped participants' boundary spanning roles within the committees as well as committees' responses to the external environment.

Proposition 1: "The level of inter-team task interdependence will positively predict team-level task coordinator activities" (p. 744).

Participants' perception of committees as a team considerably influenced their approach to doing the task. Sharing an overall goal, as Andrew articulated it, "to have a successful entry year" contributed to more efficient coordination of the activities. Committee members relied on the resources and expertise of their organizations. Professors offered suggestions and ideas about teaching techniques or school improvement and left school representatives much discretion whether to accept those suggestions. Kevin stated, "I always give them an option, 'it's going to work in your school, but you know your school better.'"

Scanning for ideas and expertise was a prerequisite for effective work on committees. One of the professors' roles was as a resource person. As such, university representatives could go for assistance and advice to their colleagues at the PEU if, for instance, their area of expertise differed from the beginning teacher's subject area. Mentors were required to have training and attend monthly school district meetings that provided them an opportunity to exchange ideas and share experiences. Principals

represented not only their schools but also the school district doing hiring and firing of teachers. The orientation for new-to-Hope School District teachers was one of the avenues for committees to reach out for additional resources and ideas.

Reliance of each committee member and the committee, as a team, on other groups explained such task coordinator activities as modifying the program design in terms of number of observations and meetings to be done depending on a situation. If disagreements or conflicts could not be resolved within the committee, the committee members reached out to external agents for assistance in dealing with the situation. The deadlines were not negotiated; however, the committee had flexibility and freedom to schedule activities as they saw fit.

Proposition 2: "Team development stage will predict task coordinator and ambassador activities will predict task coordinator and ambassador activities at the team level. Specifically: In comparison to teams in other stages, teams in the transition phase will display the highest levels of ambassador activities. In comparison to teams in other stages, teams in the action phase will display the highest levels of task coordinator activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p.745).

Having a year to complete the task, the residency committee did not work together on a daily basis, and it affected the level of the team's interpersonal ties. Therefore, the development stages were hard to delineate. A summary of the three committee meetings: meeting #1- "sort of meet and greet" (Helen), meeting #2- "sharing snapshots" (Carol), meeting #3- final, "saying yehs and neys" (Carol)—let conclude that at the beginning of the school year, the committee was in the transition stage; then, it moved to the action phase after winter break.

Fluctuation and fast change of team phases could explain why the level of task coordinating and ambassador activities did not seem to depend on team development stages. Committees displayed both activities on a similar level throughout the whole year. Depending on a situation and the committee dynamics, some activities were on a higher level than others; still, they were intertwined. An example of such a situation could be incompatibility of a university representative with the committee. The committee's request for a university faculty change was a manifestation of the team's attempt to protect their interests (ambassadorial role) and to negotiate a problem and coordinate activities with external agents (task coordinating role). Ambassadorial actions of keeping the program coordinator informed and reporting about the committee meetings as well as task coordinator activities of scanning for additional ideas and expertise were performed regularly regardless of the program phase.

Proposition 3: "Team leader's championing activities will positively predict team-level task coordinator and ambassador activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 746).

This proposition suggests that team leadership is a significant contributing factor to group boundary spanning. Committee chairs, with school principals typically playing this role, led the RTP teams. Principals took a proactive approach to leadership volunteering to be a chair. Other committee members showed complacency with this strategy. Professor Helen mentioned, "The University person was never a chair of the committee because that did not make sense." The committee chair's championing behavior was manifested in setting a tone at meetings, ensuring clear lines of communication, mediating disagreements, and providing the committee with necessary information, in mentor Mary's term, "doing a temperature reading." The more active the

chair's leadership, the more confident committee members felt about searching for additional resources and expertise. Principals showed ability to look at residency requirement beyond short-term needs of their schools; rather, they considered the program in a wider context of ensuring quality education for students. It resulted in the chairs' effective communication with external entities when the committee had to justify its decision, or there was a negotiation about changes in the team or activities. Taking strong stance as chairs, principal-participants carried most of ambassador and task coordinator activities

Participants also had experience with the committees where the chair approached these duties as a mere formality. Under that circumstance, the committee members took ambassador or task coordinator roles. An example of such incidents could be a university representative going to the program coordinator with concerns about school people's neglect of some inappropriate behaviors or serious performance weaknesses of a resident teacher. To sum up, the leader's championing behavior defined who on the committee would carry more ambassadorial and task coordinating activities.

Proposition 4: "The team's average intra-personal functional diversity will positively predict team-level task coordinator and ambassador activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 746).

Intra-personal functional diversity was demonstrated in the participants' experiences in multiple educators' roles. All principals had classroom teaching experience. Two principals and two mentors were teaching college courses as adjunct instructors/professors at the time of data collection for this study. The university faculty had school administration and classroom teaching experience before going to academia.

Four out of nine participants had the experience of serving on the RTP committees in different capacities: mentors, principals, and/or university representatives. Three committee members experienced the RTP as beginning teachers. Expertise in multiple professional roles and functions developed participants' understanding of the committee's team environment and its relationships with the external environment. Principal Diana commented, "We can make a great team and do not all have to look alike. But we got to be honest and make sure we are not stepping outside our own expertise." That understanding was manifested in the relationships committee members built with each other, in the attempts to resolve any disagreements within a team, and in reaching other groups for ideas and resources.

Proposition 5: "The team's average organizational tenure and tenure diversity will positively predict team-level task coordinator and ambassador activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 747).

According to this proposition, organizational tenure of committee members is another individual attribute which could facilitate ambassador and task coordinator activities of the team. Data analysis from interviews relating to participants' tenure in their organizations and number of committees they served showed evidence that this factor influenced ambassadorial activities of the committees. Extensive experience on the committees let participants "identify more closely with overall organizational goals and develop emotional attachment" (Joshi, et al., 2008, p.746).

The number of committees where professor participants served ranged from 12 to more than 50. In the interviews, university faculty emphasized their enjoyment of going out to schools, seeing it as a great professional and learning experience. Professors did

not have any problems with identifying benefits of the program and expressed their frustration about the program's moratorium. Serving on committees for a considerable period of time allowed for developing close relationships and wide network with school principals. All these factors contributed to more active engagement of professor participants in boundary spanning activities. They felt more confident in voicing their opinion in external interactions or in offering expert suggestions on the issues which were not necessarily directly related to beginning teachers' residency.

Principal participants' tenure on committees ranged from 5 to 45.
Beth had the shortest tenure as a school administrator and committee member. She expressed more skepticism and doubts about the prospects of school-university collaboration and was more aggressive in promoting the district mentor and new teachers programs. Her responses did not present much evidence that her ambassadorial activities went beyond prescribed by the program responsibilities for a committee chair. At the same time, Beth's active involvement in district training and orientation programs and interaction with external agencies in scanning for ideas and expertise were evidence of task coordinator activities. Andrew's and Diana's perceptions of their roles and activities often resonated with the professors' responses. These two administrators also developed personal connections with university faculty members. They were more passionate about the program, and tended to take a more proactive approach to negotiating with external agents on any type of issues.

Proposition 6: "Team-level antecedents will moderate the relationship between task-based antecedents and boundary-spanning outcomes. Specifically: The positive relationship between inter-team interdependence and task coordinator activities will be

strengthened by the team leader's championing activity, team-level intra-personal functional diversity, tenure, and tenure diversity" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 747-748).

An interactive effect of organizational tenure, tenure diversity, and team task characteristics on the boundary spanning activities was examined from the university representatives' perspective. Professor participants represented faculty members who had worked at the University for at least 13 years. Being aware of biases and different views and attitudes toward the residency program, they shared their thoughts about the university faculty's roles and service on committees. They agreed that internal motivation and personal commitment made a difference for a university representative's work on the committee. This argument supported McGowan and Bozeman's (1982) findings about the role of motivation on an individual's boundary spanning. If the committee membership fell in the category of priorities for a faculty member, the challenges and constraints of the program design and logistics did not serve as an excuse for not active involvement in the induction process. Consequently, professors-participants affirmed that they enjoyed going to schools and providing support. For them, it was also a reciprocal process in terms of learning. If committee service was not on the list of priorities for the constituents, the challenges became an excuse for approaching responsibilities very formally, doing only a required minimum. Kevin also shared his doubts about the effect of professor's tenure on the committee service suggesting that this service should be included in the five-year tenure faculty review.

Proposition 7: "Organization-level uncertainty will positively predict team-level ambassador activities and negatively predict team-level task coordinator activities" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 749).

The concept of a teacher's progress was an area of possible deviation in opinion and committee uncertainty. Principal Diana believed that professional growth of beginning teachers required more time than a year; that is why she usually rehired residency teachers for a second year to give people more time to develop and grow as professionals. Mentor Carol thought that school people could seem more complacent in this matter because of the assumption that unless a person had really hard time in the classroom and did not show any progress, the person could be recommended for certification.

Diverging opinions about recommendation could stem from different views of what should be considered a progress and how much progress was enough to recommend teachers for certification. That is why schools could be seen as more protective of their teachers with university representatives. Mentor Carol's comment about public school educators not willing to "create waves" and to reveal the issues to external agents and environment explained such an attitude. The motives to recommend a teacher for certification were not necessarily related to the teacher's abilities to teach and manage the classroom, which were main areas for comments in the evaluation forms. The fact that some school administrators would like to go for recommendation because of a great job a person was doing with extracurricular activities or due to the individual's popularity with a school community showed that there could be some hidden factors for schools to consider. Under such circumstances, ambassador activities of a committee chair became more active in attempts to justify the position of schools with less attention to task coordination.

Proposition 8: "Organization-level conflict will have a negative effect on team-level task coordinator activities and a positive effect on team-level ambassador activity" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 749).

Main areas for generating disagreements were: 1) different expectations of school and university sides which could lead to discrepancies in the observations; 2) majority vote; and 3) personal ambitions of a particular committee member. Principals-participants frequently mentioned different expectations of university representatives and school representatives about the foci of teachers' final assessment for recommendation. Principals' complaints that professors wanted to see all aspects of teachers' routine including extracurricular events and community service while the school needed assistance mainly in the instruction and classroom management areas contradicted professors' descriptions of their priorities during observations and the rationale for a decision about recommendation. None of the professor participants mentioned the fact that they observed teachers out of the classroom or considered extracurricular activities in their evaluations. Moreover, they shared frustration about instances when their voice was overruled because of the mentioned above factors. Such tense discussions would typically engage two committee members: a school principal and a professor and facilitated more ambassador activities. Principals could take a proactive approach and consider expectation issues at the pre-committee discussions which helped, in principal Andrew's opinion, to "prevent some issues down the road." Other ambassadorial activities included communication with the program coordinator and requests for university representative substitution. Typically, mentor teachers were not involved in these disagreements. Both professors and mentor participants admitted that they had very

little communication amongst them. Mentor Carol's comment, "Unless I have some kind of legitimate concern to address, I did not talk to others" showed mentors' reluctance to ambassadorial activities. Consequently, reaching consensus and finding the solution to a problem depended mostly on principals and professors.

Majority vote was both a cause of disagreements and a mechanism to resolve them. University representatives seemed to put up with a situation that they were the ones on the other side of the barricade if the opinion was not unanimous. They did not see how it could be changed because the potential for such a disagreement was embedded in the program design. It was logical that school people were more protective because of the amount of time spent with teachers, while university representatives were more like accidental visitors. Principal Andrew admitted, "I do not know that there is enough time together as a committee to really bond and focus on a team effort." This comment revealed that time constraints were a hindering factor for developing more collaboration among committee members and getting more insight to each other's stances and reasoning. Nevertheless, even with the account for these challenges, the incidents when consensus on the vote could not be reached were not frequent. The committee's expertise, experience, and attitudes served as contributing factors to increasing ambassadorial activities to reach understanding and be successful despite all obstacles.

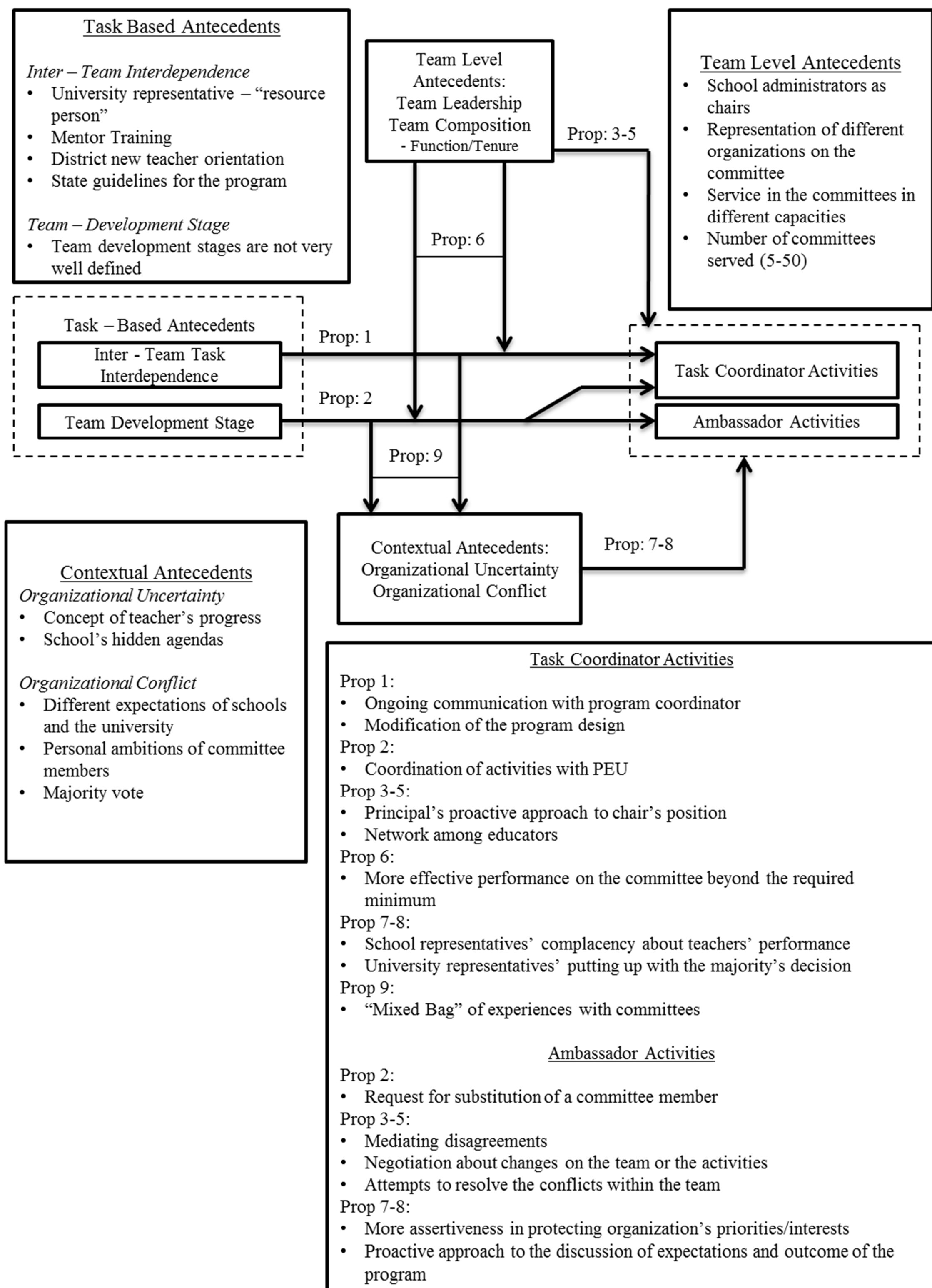
Proposition 9: "Organization-level uncertainty and organization-level conflict can jointly either enhance or minimize the relationships described in propositions 1-6" (Joshi et al., 2009, p. 749-750).

Uncertainty and conflict situations on the organization level were reflected in participants' "mixed bag" of experiences with the committees they served. Committee

members frequently mentioned the influence of school culture and environment on the committees' performance. Possible conflicts between beliefs about the importance and benefits of the program and obligation to do it anyway shaped committees' attitudes. Professor Gregory's comment about the schools where the program, "was viewed as a necessary evil" as well as principal Beth's sharing experience of working with some university representatives for whom the committee "was something else that they had to do" were evidence of committee members' frustration about their service. Boundary spanning activities under such circumstances were minimal because the committee performance became a mere formality.

In summary, data analysis of the resident teacher committee roles and boundary-spanning activities, using the Joshi et al., (2009) multi-level model propositions as a frame, helped to gain more insight to the committees' dynamics and explain their performance and roles from the perspective of organizational boundary spanning. The model variables allowed for conceptualizing individual committee attributes which influenced the committee functioning as a team. Individual attributes were also considered from the perspective of organizational representation. The overview of findings within the multi-level model frame is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Multi-level Boundary Spanning Frame for Resident Teacher Committee.



Task Based Antecedents
Inter – Team Interdependence
• University representative – "resource person"
• Mentor Training
• District new teacher orientation
• State guidelines for the program
Team – Development Stage
• Team development stages are not very well defined
Team Level Antecedents:
Team Leadership
Team Composition
- Function/Tenure
Prop: 3-5
Team Level Antecedents
• School administrators as chairs
• Representation of different organizations on the committee
• Service in the committees in different capacities
• Number of committees served (5-50)
Prop: 6
Task – Based Antecedents
Inter - Team Task Interdependence
Team Development Stage
Prop: 1
Prop: 2
Task Coordinator Activities
Ambassador Activities
Prop: 9
Contextual Antecedents:
Organizational Uncertainty
Organizational Conflict
Prop: 7-8
Contextual Antecedents
Organizational Uncertainty
• Concept of teacher's progress
• School's hidden agendas
Organizational Conflict
• Different expectations of schools and the university
• Personal ambitions of committee members
• Majority vote
Task Coordinator Activities
Prop 1:
• Ongoing communication with program coordinator
• Modification of the program design
Prop 2:
• Coordination of activities with PEU
Prop 3-5:
• Principal's proactive approach to chair's position
• Network among educators
Prop 6:
• More effective performance on the committee beyond the required minimum
Prop 7-8:
• School representatives' complacency about teachers' performance
• University representatives' putting up with the majority's decision
Prop 9:
• "Mixed Bag" of experiences with committees
Ambassador Activities
Prop 2:
• Request for substitution of a committee member
Prop 3-5:
• Mediating disagreements
• Negotiation about changes on the team or the activities
• Attempts to resolve the conflicts within the team
Prop 7-8:
• More assertiveness in protecting organization's priorities/interests
• Proactive approach to the discussion of expectations and outcome of the program

Other Realities

The RTP moratorium in 2010 prompted the quest for data about prospects of beginning teachers' induction in the district and about participants' ideas regarding alternatives for resident teacher committees. These data were obtained from interviews with participants and from the researcher's observations and field work in the College of Education. Despite shared regret about program termination, participants expressed their belief that beginning teachers would be receiving support even without the program. Hope School District assigned mentors to new teachers in the 2010-2011 school year, and mentoring training and new year teachers' orientation were still in place. School participants' conviction that beginning teachers in the district would receive necessary support as long as they had a mentor teacher assigned to them was not surprising given the fact that mentoring is often perceived as a dominant form of the induction process (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Their confidence of the ability of the district schools to carry on with induction of entry teachers was based on the professional development structure built into the school district. The district's leadership support for creating professional learning communities was an important instrumental factor for success of the programs (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Wong, 2004).

Based on their experience, principals were cautious about the prospects of school-university collaboration in beginning teachers' induction. This skepticism was mostly evident in discussions about the future of the residency program. All three school administrators expressed their confidence that the school district would provide necessary support for the entry teacher due to the district system which was already in place: new teacher program and mentor training program. Because of that, the participants were sure

they could do well without university contribution. At the same time, they articulated the willingness to get support from academia and offered their ideas about the forms of assistance from the university to meet schools' needs. Understanding that there should be a conversation and meaningful discourse about the ways both institutions can collaborate was an important outcome of those discussions.

University representative participants' interview responses, observations of the college professional education unit, and informal conversations with its staff revealed another reality which evidenced the efforts of the university to span boundaries and work with schools--Teacher Excellence Network (TEN) project. This project was an attempt by the university to find an alternative to the residency program and facilitate collaborative efforts of faculty members. The goal of the project corresponded to Wong's (2004) vision of an induction process which aims at bridging pre-service education and the real classroom. The program design and delivery format addressed the main obstacles which faculty members encountered serving on RTP committees, such as time constraints and insufficient communication with beginning teachers. In the course of discussions about the forms of mentoring and induction programs and calls for educators to be co-workers and co-learners (Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, 2006), the TEN program serves as a promising example of the university's proactive approach to the state educational policy changes and contingencies.

Summary

Data analysis revealed the themes which presented insight to the functioning of resident teacher committees to meet the program goals. Comparison of the themes to existing literature on the topic allowed for identifying convergent points in the

perceptions and views on the residency program and committees, and the phenomena which did not support the literature. Data analysis also revealed some aspects that had not been considered by previous research.

Committee members' roles were analyzed through the lens of the multi-level boundary spanning framework (Joshi et al., 2009). The antecedents of the frame were used to examine committees' activities and explain the influence of the committee composition and individual attributes on team boundary spanning. Furthermore, the consideration of the roles with the multi-level model also showed the utility of this framework for educational settings.

The discussion of the realities which existed after the RTP moratorium assisted in gaining additional perspective on the beginning teachers' induction process in the state. Moreover, consideration of those realities both on the school district and university levels allowed for a more comprehensive picture about future prospects of induction of beginning teachers and school-university collaboration.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

First-year teachers' success is one of the critical issues of public and scholarly discourse about ways to improve public education. An underlying argument is that this issue should be approached comprehensively and systemically, for haphazard sink-or-swim models do not work (Achinstein & Athaneses, 2006; Russel, 2006). One systemic approach to induction of beginning teachers is resident teacher programs (Berry et al., 2008). The growing number of states that have implemented comprehensive induction programs, which now includes 22 states, illustrates the awareness of educators and legislators of the significance of the issue and the need to be proactive (Quality Counts, 2008).

Comprehensive induction programs also provide a great avenue for involving universities in the process and developing partnership and collaborative ties with public schools. Professional Development School standards consider them as critical components for building learning communities (NCATE, 2010). Literature presents evidence of mutual benefits of such partnerships, such as better understanding of both institutions, openness in exchanging information and expertise, generation and testing of new ideas about teacher education, and deeper sense of belonging and community (Miller, 2008; Walters, 1998).

Oklahoma pioneered a comprehensive program for resident teachers and was one of the first states that mandated it in 1982. With little research and evaluation of the overall program in the past 30 years, one aspect that received insufficient attention was resident teacher committees. It was important to examine team dynamics of the committee in terms of its composition, roles of the committee members, and members' activities to span the boundaries of organizations represented on the committee because ultimately, all these aspects could affect the committee's performance to achieve desired outcomes. With the program changes in 2010 and school district and university efforts to find alternative ways for providing support for beginning teachers, this study on the committees can inform stake holders about strengths and weaknesses of the team makeup and management in similar university-school partnership projects.

The purpose of the study was: 1) to describe how the Resident Teacher Program (RTP) committees functioned to achieve desired outcomes, and how the committee members perceived their roles on the committees; and 2) to consider the effectiveness of the multi-level boundary spanning model roles and collaborative activities in educational settings. To achieve the purpose the following research questions were developed:

1. How did the RTP committees function to achieve desired outcomes?
    a) How were the roles manifested on those committees?
    b) How did committee members collaborate to achieve desired goals?
2. How does the multi-level boundary spanning model explain these roles and dynamics of the residency teacher committees?
3. What other realities exist?

Chapter VI presents findings of the study, offers conclusions from the findings, and discusses implications of the study for theory, practice, and further research. Limitations and delimitations section as well as final thoughts conclude the chapter.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: How did the RTP committees function to achieve desired outcomes?

a) How were the roles manifested on those committees?

b) How did committee members collaborate to achieve desired goals?

Regarding desired outcomes, participants viewed the program as a "safety net" for beginning teachers during their first year in the classroom. This net was supposed to provide a necessary support for teachers in their transition from pre-service education to a real world of the profession. The outcome of this support was the committees' recommendation for teachers to be certified. The concept of "safety net" included class observations and evaluations, suggestions about teaching techniques and classroom management, encouraging and softening the experience, and introducing teachers to the school culture and school district. Emergent themes on the RTP structure, such as committee collaboration, relationships committees developed, and of each committee member's roles revealed performance modes and functions of the team.

Committees did not have responsibility to structure the program, for all activities and procedures were clearly defined by the state and embedded in the program design. Class observations, feedbacks from the committee members, discussions of the evaluations during the committee meetings, and recommendation for certification were the elements to meet program goals. Participants acknowledged that they viewed

mandated activities as a minimum and shared their frustrations about the challenges to go beyond a required minimum. They thought that the number of observations was not sufficient to allow for consistent support, especially from principals and university representatives. Mentors went beyond the required minimum (72 hours) of working with beginning teachers. They expressed their dissatisfaction about the time they had to spend for filling in a required log, because they thought that time could be spent on additional activities with the teachers.

Concerning the roles of the committee members, they were predetermined by committees' composition. The rationale for the team makeup was to ensure both external and internal support for first year teachers. Findings of the *Outside Perspective* theme provided insight to the role university representatives, as external agents, played in the entire process. Professors saw their task in offering constructive feedback, necessary resources, and outside "fresh" perspective on teachers' performance. Other participants were consistent in their perception of university representatives as "outsiders." The continuum of meanings of this concept included both negative and positive connotations. Generally, school constituents of the committee appreciated university representatives' contribution. On the other hand, outside perspective could be a source of disagreements or conflicts due to inefficient communication or insufficient faculty member's knowledge of a particular school culture.

Internal support was supposed to be provided by mentor teachers and principals. Mentor teachers served as liaisons between beginning teachers and other committee members. Along with the prescribed by the program observations, feedback, and evaluations, they provided much support and encouragement not only in instruction and

classroom management but also in other areas of everyday routine in and outside the classroom. Resident teacher participants credited their mentors for a less stressful transition to a real world classroom and tremendous assistance they received in the process.

With acknowledgement of the crucial contribution of mentor teachers to the induction process, participants delineated the role of principals as, primarily, administrative nature. Principals usually did not go beyond a required minimum, as far as observation and evaluation part of the program was concerned. They played a double role on committees serving, as a rule, as committee chairs. The *Leadership* theme revealed participants' thoughts about the role of a committee chair and principals' leadership in this role. Principals usually became committee chairs by default due to everyone's overall assumption that it was the best logical choice. Mentors did not consider taking this responsibility because of their teaching load and the number of hours to work with an entry-year teacher. University representatives believed that they were not the best choice due to their busy schedules and insufficient time they spent at school. Principals volunteered for this role because of their multiple school administration roles that were related to the chair's responsibilities. Chairing the committee allowed them to ensure productive functioning of the committee and protect their schools' interests when a situation required.

Regarding the committee's collaborative efforts, they were revealed in participants' perceptions of the committee as a team, their reflections about the relationships they developed serving on committees, and their opinions about the program's structure and goals. Resident teachers did not have any reservation to perceive

and look at the committee as a team based on a common goal the committee articulated, observations and feedback they received from the committee, and the meetings' overall atmosphere. In contrast, committee member participants had more difficulties identifying themselves fully as a team. On the one hand, they agreed they were a team presenting the similar attributes resident teachers did. On the other hand, they expressed much criticism about committees' cohesiveness and cooperation. Participants defined the structure and design of the program as major impeding factors for more effective collaboration among team members.

The relationships committee members developed and well-defined protocol of communication facilitated more collaboration in providing constructive evaluation during the meetings, deciding on certification, and articulating the committee's expectations at the beginning of the program and concerns, if any, during the year. Collaborative efforts were also manifested in the ways the committee handled disagreements or conflicting situations. Participants described committees' dynamics as balanced, meaning that, despite differences and challenges, they managed to find a common ground to achieve the goal. In rare cases of conflicts, committee members were trying to resolve them within the team articulating their beliefs and positions and spanning boundaries of their organizations. If the consensus could not be reached, external agents, such as RTP coordinator, would be involved.

Previous relationships or absence of those between professors and resident teachers were another contributing factor to the committee's effectiveness. Professors acknowledged that they were more successful with their former graduates. The graduates from other universities and alternatively certified teachers presented more challenges for

university representatives because of insufficient time to get to know a person better and, consequently, be more involved in the induction process.

Research Question 2: How does the multi-level boundary spanning model explain the roles and dynamics of the residency teacher committees?

Examination of the committee members' roles through the lens of Joshi's et al., (2009) multi-level boundary spanning frame was beneficial in that it not only helped to explain the dynamics of the committees but also allowed for justification of the possible makeup of teams for partnership and collaborative projects in educational settings regarding to individual and organizational attributes of the team members. Data analysis showed that all three levels of boundary spanning (task based, team level, and contextual) were present in the RTP committee. The roles assigned to the committee members, as well as the roles participants defined by themselves, were manifested in their ambassadorial and task coordinated activities.

Task coordinating activities included ongoing communication with the Professional Education Unit program coordinator; modification of the program design according to the committee needs, such as: number of observations and meetings and provision of additional help or resources; network among educators; and handling majority vote issues, to name a few. Task coordinator activities explained the roles of the principal as a chair, and the university person as an outsider and resource person. Inter-team interdependence, team composition and leadership, and organizational uncertainty and conflict antecedents affected task coordinating activities most of all.

Ambassadorial activities included requests for changing a committee member; attempts to resolve conflicts, first, within the team; negotiation about changes in the team

and activities; protection of organizational priorities and interests; and proactive approach to the discussion of expectations and outcomes of the program. Similarly to task coordinating, ambassadorial activities explained a chair role of principals and an outsider role of university professors. The attributes which affected ambassador roles were mostly of the contextual level. Organizational uncertainty and organizational conflicts strengthened ambassadorial activities of principals and professors.

Data did not show much evidence of team boundary spanning activities of mentor teachers. The role mentor teachers played on committees and their position in school organizations could plausibly explain such dynamics. The antecedents of any level did not seem to influence mentors' behavior concerning boundary spanning. Carrying a major load of providing support and being on the same hierarchical organizational level with beginning teachers prevented mentor teachers from initiating boundary spanning. The amount of time to spend with beginning teachers and the position of being "in the same trenches" with them put mentor teachers in a situation when, as committee members, they could be more biased about the teachers' performance and more dependent on the principals' stance. Consequently, mentors seemed to assume that it was a principals' prerogative to span the boundaries of their school organizations and committees.

Research Question 3: What other realities exist?

Temporary deletion of the RTP in 2010 was an unpredictable contingency which made me tweak the initial design and plan for the study. Adding a research question about other existed realities alternative to RTP was one of the ways I responded to a changing situation. Further, participants were asked to share their ideas about

improvement of the induction process. Findings revealed the participants' confidence that the district would carry on with induction of beginning teachers under any circumstances. The base for such confidence was a support system Hope School District had already in place. This system included a mentor training program and orientation program for new-to-the-district teachers. These programs supplemented the RTP and became an integral part of the district professional development structure. School participants voiced their hope that the district leadership would continue their efforts to ensure the function of the programs, including financial provisions.

School participants considered it important to find alternative ways to involve the university more in the public schools' activities. Among suggested ideas were to have a faculty member at school as a liaison and work with the person on a constant basis or make faculty members available as consultants for schools in different areas of teaching and classroom management. The College of Education responded promptly to the legislative's decision about the RTP. Teacher Excellence Network (TEN) project was an initiative to ensure active engagement of faculty members in the support of beginning teachers. It provided an alternative for the University to be more involved in public education. The project design seemed to resolve some of the issues participants had identified as major challenges and weaknesses of the RTP, such as time constraints, few classroom observations, and insufficient communication. The on-line format, design of the teams, variety of activities and resources, and participants' network were the elements of the program aimed at making support of beginning teachers consistent, regular, and meaningful. One of the limitations of the project was that it offered support only to the local university graduates.

Conclusions

Results of this study were useful in several regards. They provided prevalent patterns about the RTP committees' objectives and dynamics, indicated possibilities and dilemmas of the committee's composition and representation, and revealed the aspects of team boundary spanning relevant to committees' activities. Findings also identified the areas and questions to examine through future research.

Committee Dynamics

The RTP committee was similar in its activities and functions to Mentor Core Team—the entity studied by Blank and Kershaw (2006). The committee differed from the Core Team in terms of autonomy of the team. Blank and Kershaw viewed the team as a unit in which the members made decisions about all aspects of the program, including planning and design. Unlike Mentor Core Team, the RTP committee did not create rules, decide on logistics, develop meeting agendas, create a yearly plan for mentoring activities, and adopt constructive evaluation and decision making models. All these responsibilities were developed by the state and prescribed to committees. This situation raised questions how autonomous such teams should be, and what effects would result from the committee taking the ownership of the program procedures.

Deliberations about the program structure and challenges the committee members encountered during their service showed that the participants agreed that, while there should be some kind of prescribed formal structure, the decisions on major activities and scope of the task could be given to the committee's discretion. These ideas aligned with Lethonen and Martinsuo's (2008) arguments about management of temporary organizations, which RTP committees were. According to Lethonen and Martinsuo,

designing the team's content and procedures allows for maintaining balance between a team and parenting organizations and making decisions about boundary crossing. Therefore, it can be suggested that some authorship in structuring the program would facilitate more active committee boundary spanning.

Support

A tangible formal outcome of the program was a decision on the recommendation of beginning teachers for certification. However, study participants were unanimous in identifying support of first year teachers as the main goal of the program. The idea of support as a primary objective was congruent with previous research on comprehensive induction programs (Blank & Kershaw, 2009; Ingersol & Kralik, 2004; Russel, 2006; Wong, 2004). Participants underlined the importance of expending support in terms of time and content. Their agreement on a one year time-frame being insufficient for the induction program was not surprising. Best practices discussed in literature, such as Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment in California, Beginning Educator Support and Training in Connecticut (Strong, 2009); The Pathwise Framework Induction Program in New York (Russel, 2006), extended their support for more than a year. Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation recommended three years for the program (OCTP, 2006). Therefore, based on participants 'experience participants and data on other programs, it is evident that at least three years of comprehensive support for beginning teachers is needed for the induction process to be effective.

Program's time extension could have implications on the dynamics of an induction team. Team members would get an opportunity to establish necessary relationships and stimulate their individual boundary spanning attributes to contribute to

the team's success. Longer involvement in the team could reinforce the committee or project members' sense of ownership and responsibility for program outcomes and, consequently, enhance ambassadorial and task coordinating activities.

The diversity of beginning teachers as a targeted population was an aspect of the program content that received considerable attention from participants. Alternatively certified teachers were a matter of concern for professor participants who reflected on the additional challenges those teachers encountered during their first year. This concern was shared by one of the resident teacher participants who represented this group. Unique needs of this group of teachers, such as: insufficient preparation for classroom management, lower self-confidence in teaching ability, and higher level of occupational stress (Salyer, 2003; Schonfeld & Feinman, 2011, Sokal et al., 2003; Wayman et al., 2003), should be considered in planning activities and procedures for induction programs and projects. Meeting these needs can also influence task coordinating boundary spanning activities in teams.

Findings on the ideas how to make support more meaningful offered the directions policy makers and partnership teams can go in the induction process. It is obvious that changing the timeline (more than a year), providing necessary training and orientation for all program constituents, consideration of new realities and searching for and developing innovative practices could contribute to the effectiveness of beginning teachers' induction.

Committee's Composition and Representation

Composition and representation on the RTP committees was an aspect which converged with Blank and Kershaw's (2006) vision of the induction program in offering

support to beginning teachers on two levels: external and internal. These two levels defined the rationale for the committees' makeup and the roles each committee member played in the team.

Findings showed evidence that university representatives, as external support agents, provided expertise and feedback beyond the capacity of school committee constituents. The participants' acknowledgement of the benefits of external contribution, on the one hand, and their shared pessimism about greater involvement of universities in the life of public schools including beginning teachers' induction, on the other hand, revealed the complexity of building relationships between two institutions due to a strong popular "ivory tower" stereotype. Literature claims the opportunities and mutual benefits of the university-school partnerships and challenges these collaborations present being "a host of significant leadership possibilities and dilemmas" (Miller, 2008, p. 355). The participants' suggestions about the need for outreach and dialogue between higher and K-12 education institutions about forms of collaboration indicated the existing understanding among educators of the necessity to bring different levels of the educational system together to find common grounds to deal with critical issues in public schools.

Internal support was provided by mentor teachers and school administrators. The findings about the crucial role of mentor teachers on committees in helping beginning teacher in all areas were consistent with an existing scholarly view on mentoring as a core component of the induction process and the significance of strong relationships between the mentor and mentee (Downey et al., 2009; Glickman et al., 2010; Strong, 2009). They also allowed for reflections on mentoring in a broader context: mentoring as

an integral ongoing process in public education and roles of teachers, principals, and university representatives as mentors. New practices in providing support to first-year teachers, such as the TEN project, support a review of the approach to link the concept of mentoring only to a classroom teacher. Another consideration from the analysis of boundary spanning activities in RTP committees was mentor teachers' passivity as boundary spanners. A hierarchical position of mentor teachers in the school organization, the school culture, and teachers' individual attributes could cause such disinterest in becoming team ambassadors and task coordinators.

School administrators comprised another level of internal representation on the committee. Principals carried double duties of employers and committee members. Despite the challenges associated with "wearing two hats," principals managed to balance those two roles. Principal participants limited reflections on their responsibilities only to the duties they performed as committee members: observations, evaluations, and feedback. The fact that they did not mention other responsibilities of the principals in the induction of beginning teachers discussed by Brock and Grady (2006), such as: making appropriate teaching assignments, assigning a classroom near a mentor teacher, and making timely appointments to teaching positions, was the evidence that they differentiated their tasks as committee members and employers; those were, as principal Diana pointed out "two separate sets of conversations."

The concept of balance was also critical for principals' role as committee chairs, especially when they had to deal with conflicts. Managing disagreements and miscommunications was the area which increased boundary spanning activities of the committee chair. Promoting the committee's awareness of the context of the school and

university organizations and capitalizing on the points of common interests helped the chair to handle conflicting situations and disagreements. The principals' emphasis on consideration of organizational cultures in partnership teams echoed with Lethonen and Martinsuo's (2008) discussion of the importance of team members' understanding of the context of represented organizations to be able to deal with uncertainties and contingencies.

Boundary Spanning

The multi-level boundary spanning model (Joshi et al., 2009) offered constructs to explain roles and activities of the committee members in the program from the perspective of organizational boundary spanning, which was important considering member representation on committees and the claims that "all educational leaders are called to serve as boundary spanners" (Miller, 2008, p. 356). The model's antecedents allowed for interpretation and explanation of the committees' internal and external activities, boundary spanning roles associated with those activities, and the factors that influenced those roles. The model also demonstrated its utility for educational settings helping to identify distinguishing features of educational teams and examining the organizational, team, and individual attributes of the team members in initiating boundary spanning activities.

Examination of individual attributes provided the information which will be very useful for educational partnership projects or programs on designing and planning stages. Instead of a haphazard approach to creating teams for such partnerships, the team membership could be determined with account for the team antecedents and potential members' attributes.

To sum, the findings from this research presented the insight to functioning of the RTP committees and explained the dynamics and challenges of those teams. Data analysis and interpretation allowed not only for explanation of the phenomenon under investigation, but also for raising questions about certain areas to be addressed in future research and policy making. Among those areas are: autonomy and independence of teams in educational settings regarding external agents, educational leaders as boundary spanners, individual attributes critical for partnership teams, and approach to creating teams in collaborative projects in educational settings.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations and delimitations of research are two parameters that should be addressed to explain weaknesses of the design and delineate the scope of the procedures (Creswell, 2003). Delimitations for this study were embedded in the design. The site and participant selection narrowed the scope of data collection to a particular school district and the participants were purposefully selected. The criteria and rationale for these decisions were discussed in Chapter III. Data collection procedures were narrowed to interviews, document analysis, and site observations to achieve the purpose of the study-- examine the RTP committees' dynamics.

The discussed delimitations had some characteristics that, at the same time, constituted limitations of the study. Hope School District generally met the criteria for an ideal site in a case study; however, the school district was in a unique position due to the location and proximity to the University, the fact which was also emphasized by the participants. Therefore, the findings were discussed with consideration of the context, and they did not allow for generalization.

Because of the legislative moratorium on the program, observation of the committee members became infeasible. Consequently, observations as a data collection technique were confined only to observing school sites and the Professional Education Unit at the university. The scope of information from interviews was increased when the participants were asked to reflect on their overall experience with all committees they served. If the participants did not remember certain details as far as procedures and rules of the program, the information from the program handbook filled in the gap.

Implications of the Study

This research has examined core elements and function areas of the RTP committee as a main unit of a formalized state mandated educational policy. The highlights on boundary spanning activities and relationships of the committee with external agents were critical for consideration of the committee's composition and dynamics for partnership teams in educational settings. As such, the study provides the base for suggestions for beginning teachers' induction policies and practices and recommendations for future research in the areas of school-university partnerships and beginning teachers' induction.

For Theory

This study added to current literature in that it used the multi-level boundary spanning model and showed its usefulness for examining boundary spanning activities and dynamics of temporary teams in an educational setting. The model explained the committee members' roles from the perspective of ambassador and task coordinator activities which, as literature (Ancona, 1990; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Joshi et al., 2009) suggested, are critical for effective operation of any team. With a growing interest

in collaborative partnership projects and educational programs, boundary spanning theoretical frame has a great application potential, because it considers team composition on different stages of programs beginning with planning and design phases. Moreover, educational settings are unique due to “virtually boundaryless” (Richardson, 2002) nature; consequently, it presents a direction for further development of the theoretical frame. Examination of the model antecedents and constructs in the environment where boundaries are not very well delineated will be very beneficial.

Findings about the importance of the committee members’ understanding of organizational context offer an avenue for employing organizational culture theories in terms of relationship and influence of school culture on team boundary spanning. This study did not consider school cultures in explaining the committee roles. However, examination of particular elements of school cultures contributing to boundary spanning through an organizational culture theoretical lens would provide more insight and understanding of boundary spanning in educational partnership teams.

Leadership championing behavior as one of the constructs of boundary spanning could receive further development in leadership theories in education. Contingency theory, for example, could be helpful in explaining how educational leaders in teams, such as the RTP committee, deal with contingencies and uncertainties.

For Practice

Study results will inform the state legislators and other interested parties, such as Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, about the challenges committee members encountered in their work in the program and ways to make the investment to

beginning teachers' induction more effective. Legislators could use the findings for reviewing procedures and policies for beginning teachers' induction.

Temporary deletion of the RTP furthered the attempts of school districts and the university to find alternative ways to provide support to beginning teachers. The existing programs and workshops in Hope School District and TEN project of the College of Education are the examples of these efforts. School districts and the university would benefit if they reconsider recommendations from the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (2006) to provide orientation and training for all constituents of the program or project, and extend the time of teachers' support for more than a year. The results from the study can be helpful in developing sequenced workshops and quality training for committee members or members of alternative partnership teams. The study also provides topics for the discussion about not only beginning teachers' induction process but also other university-school collaborative efforts and activities.

Findings from the study can serve as a resource for planning and designing partnership teams in educational settings. Knowing the antecedents of a particular team will allow for better decisions on the group composition and membership. Another critical aspect to account for in designing a partnership project is the degree of independence and autonomy of the team in planning and execution of the program. Consideration of this factor can facilitate more active boundary spanning of the team.

For Further Research

With a unique nature of educational settings, further research is needed on teams of different types in collaborative programs and partnerships. An example of such a program which is related to the current study is the TEN project. This program is an

authentic way the universities can contribute to beginning teachers' induction; therefore, a study on the project, as a whole, would add to the body of literature on innovative practices in the induction process. Supplementary to this research theme may be studies on particular elements of the project (e.g., online format of providing support for beginning teachers, faculty members as first-year teachers' mentors, beginning teachers-faculty members' team boundary spanning).

Another line of possible research is individual attributes of the partnership team members, motivational factors, in particular. Examination of extrinsic and intrinsic factors which influence the team members' commitment to be on such teams and their wish to be active in ambassadorial and task coordinator roles could be helpful in predicting the team's effectiveness. Studies on educational leaders as boundary spanners would expand the body of research on educational leadership providing data and recommendations about the ways and forms to improve public education and teacher preparation.

Qualitative in nature, this case study does not allow for generalizations about committee teams' functioning and boundary spanning. Therefore, a research project within a quantitative paradigm would offer the data which could be generalized to different contexts. Common patterns identified by a survey study on educational partnership team boundary spanning would serve as a resource for developing policies and programs. They would also provide topics for further discourse about effective practices in education.

Personal Reflection

The purpose of this section is to share some thoughts about my experience with this project; namely, the things which were not previously discussed but were critical to meet the study objectives and maintain its rigor as well as to establish myself as a researcher. A brief retrospect of my professional background related to beginning teachers' support will explain my choice of the topic. Further, I will elaborate about the importance of reflexivity in a research process regarding challenges I experienced in being "part of the context for the findings… and the instrument of qualitative methods" (Patton, 2002, p.64). I will also write about the strategies I used to meet those challenges and minimize personal biases. A brief summary of findings that I consider most valuable and discussion of lessons I learned and skills I gained as a novice scholar will conclude my reflection.

Decision on the topic for my study was not an easy one. The questions I kept asking myself from the first days in the program were: "What is this particular thing about education I am mostly passionate about? What do I want to know more about it? Why might it be interesting to other people?" The fact that other students in my cohort decided already what they were going to focus on as well as my inability to answer a common question, "What is your dissertation topic?" made me feel as if I was missing something and legging behind. It took me awhile to realize that the topic actually found me long ago. All of my career accomplishments are rooted in the remarkable support I received as a beginning teacher and later as an established professional. I have been so fortunate through my 23 years in education to have people who were beside me in all my endeavors. I developed a lifelong friendship with my mentor whose ongoing support laid the foundation of my achievements and gains. My college professors kept in touch and

provided assistance and guidance; they formed an informal team with my mentor which greatly enhanced the first year experience. Later, when I became a mentor myself, I benefitted so much from working together with university faculty not only helping beginning teachers at my school but also doing small research projects with our students and community. This professional and personal experience made me a strong believer in the importance of university-school collaborations and tremendous benefits of these ties for both parties. Therefore, my choice of the RTP committee, which was as an example of such collaboration, could not be by any means accidental or random.

To do a good study, one should be passionate about it. However, passion is a strong weapon that can be both a driving force and a powerful obstacle in research process. The questions I was pondering in the dissertation process were: "How could I balance my own voice with my participants' voices? What should I do to maintain a researcher's integrity and credibility making sure that my biases and beliefs do not distort the meanings constructed by respondents?" My passion was a driving force for me when I had to deal with a contingency over which I had no control. The RT program was temporarily stopped right after I defended my proposal and started document analysis. The belief about usefulness and applicability of the study findings for other types of collaborative teams helped me in searching alternatives and tweaking the initial design; it also kept me positive on further stages of research.

At the same time, my enthusiasm about the topic generated biases which threatened credibility and rigor of the study. The reflexive journal was a primary tool for "self-questioning and self-understanding" (Patton, 2002). Journal entries allowed me to have a fresh look at phenomena, events, and people's perspectives, reflect on them, and

analyze emergent things which were unexpected or contradictory to my previous beliefs. Peer debriefing was invaluable in getting an outside perspective. Debriefing sessions with my peers, who became "fresh eyes" in the study, helped me in learning how "to step out" of myself so that I "can view life through the eyes of the respondents" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 143). Member check was one more powerful tool to meet quality criteria for the study. People who were familiar with the program and served on committees but were not study participants were a member check group instrumental in dealing with my biases. Their unique perspectives of the program and experience which could be quite opposite to participants' made me return multiple times to interview transcripts, double check my writings making sure that all claims were supported by data. These efforts resulted in my confidence that I managed to maintain rigor of my research.

"So what?" reflection on the results and outcomes of my study started with such questions as: "What would be two or three most important outcomes of my study if I have to summarize it in a short paragraph? How does my study stand out and what does it add to the field?" Two considerations had most weight and served a springboard to develop suggestions and recommendations for theory, practice, and research. Those considerations were: 1) understanding among educators that beginning teachers' induction is imperative for public education and there should be a joint effort of both universities and public schools to make it effective and 2) utility of the multi-level boundary spanning model for teams in educational setting.

Findings on new realities existed after the RTP moratorium revealed participants' understanding of the role induction programs play in improving public education and need to be proactive in creating viable programs. The TEN project piloted by the College

of Education distinguished itself as a grassroots effort of the University to contribute to beginning teachers' professional growth. Unlike the RTP, the TEN was not mandated by state legislators. This bottom up initiative served as evidence of willingness of academia to do away with the "ivory tower" cliché and offer available resources and assistance to public schools. An idea of faculty members as beginning teachers' mentors and support delivery format were the project's unique features that resolved many issues discussed by study participants. I believe that my suggestions, such as mentoring training for faculty, pre-program orientation, and consideration of multi-level model's variables in recruiting participants would enhance project teams' efficacy.

The multi-level boundary spanning theoretical model, which I used to explain committee members' roles, showed its utility. This fact is worthwhile noting because of benefits and prospects of model application in educational settings. Model variables and constructs could be very instrumental in forming teams for partnership projects. Moreover, the model itself could be further developed regarding educational teams which are unique because of their vague, not well delineated boundaries. Reflection on major study outcomes and development of recommendations and suggestions was a rewarding process because I received evidence of this project's utilitarian value.

"So what?" reflection on my personal gains in the process included questions: "What lesson did I learn during this journey? What is the biggest gain? What is the biggest loss? What advice I can share with doctoral candidates?" Conducting research and writing this dissertation was a period of my life I will remember as both the best times and the worst times. It was the first real opportunity to step into the shoes of a scholar and experience all ups and downs of this path. Transition from a student to a

researcher was very challenging. The first lesson I learned is that nothing could fully prepare me to this last stage. I was fortunate to be part of a great program in the college: courses were useful, and professors were committed and knowledgeable. However, until I realized I was not just a graduate student anymore but an independent scholar with own perspectives, views, and ideas about every aspect of the research process, my work was more frustrating rather than rewarding. I gained a deeper understanding of true scholarly collaboration and partnership working with my academic advisor. His feedback facilitated fruitful discussions about philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research and particulars of my study. I believe that the fact I always presented only writing drafts which I thought could be final helped us focus on conceptual issues rather than on mechanics of drafts. I learned a true value of an outside perspective receiving very honest and critical feedback from peers and my cohort. Shared experiences and additional resources I received from colleagues and faculty members made me feel, "Yes, I am on my own, but I am not alone." My major gains in this dissertation process were a sense of accomplishment in achieving my short-term ambitions as well as awareness that I am passionate about research and I can contribute to scholarship.

With sense of accomplishment came realization that it was only the first step on the path to becoming a scholar. I received answers to questions about my ability to engage in research. I have many more questions to answer and challenges to meet to become a good scholar, and I am excited about the prospects and opportunities this journey presents.

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APPPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent

Manifestation of Boundary Spanning Roles in the Resident Teacher Program Committee.

Investigator: Zhanna Shatrova, Ph. D. candidate, Oklahoma State University

Purpose:

You are being invited to participate in a study on boundary-spanning activities in the Resident Teacher Program Committee. The purpose of this study is to describe how the RTP committees functioned to achieve desired outcomes. A secondary objective is to consider the effectiveness of the multi-level boundary-spanning model in studying role and collaborative activities in educational settings. This study seeks to gain insight and information regarding your service and experience in the Resident Teacher Program.

Procedures:

As a participant in this study, you have been purposefully selected to participate in an interview, where you will be asked questions regarding general information about yourself, your participation in Resident teacher Program, your opinion of the program, and information about anything concerning your experience with the program. The interview should take approximately one hour and will be conducted in the location of your choice. The interview should not cause any discomfort or consequence to you.

Risks of Participation:

During the research study, you will be asked to provide information and/or discuss your opinion of the Resident Teacher program. There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in everyday life.

Benefits:

The results from the study will inform the state legislators and other interested parties such as Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation about the challenges the committee members encountered in their work in the program and ways to make the investment to the program more effective. The legislators could use the data findings for reviewing the procedures and policies for beginning teachers' induction to improve the outcomes of the program. The educators could consider the findings from the study in developing sequenced workshops and quality training for the committee members and discussing suggestions about induction activities and interactions.

Confidentiality:

Data collected during this study will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only to the researcher. Data will be stored for a year, and will then be shredded and destroyed. Interviews will be tape recorded, and the recorder and voice data files will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. No names will be collected, and there will be no way to link data with names at any time. The records of this study will be kept private and confidential. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

Compensation:

No compensation will be provided for participation in this research.

Contacts:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Zhanna Shatrova
Ph. D. candidate
COE-OSU
218 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744-4715
zhanna.shatrova@okstate.edu

or

Dr. Ed Harris, Advisor
Okla. State University
College of Education
308 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744-7932
ed.harris@okstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact:

Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair
219 Cordell North
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405)-744-3377
irb@okstate.edu

Participant Rights:

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may choose to discontinue participation at any time with no risk or penalty.

Signatures:

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_______________________________________ ______________

Signature of Participant Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

_______________________________________ ______________

Signature of Researcher Date

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Script

(letter to be sent via email)

Dear…

My name is Zhanna Shatrova. I am a Ph. D. candidate In the School of Educational Studies at Oklahoma State University. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, and I would like to invite you to participate in it. I am studying Resident Teacher Program committees. The title of my dissertation is *Manifestation of Boundary Spanning Roles in Resident Teacher Program Committee.*

Your insight about the experience of being a committee member will be a valuable contribution to understanding the importance of beginning teachers' induction and the benefits of the program to improve state policy in this area. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to meet with me for an interview about your experience in serving in the committee. The meeting will take place at a location of your choice at a mutually agreed time, and should last approximately an hour. The interview will be audio taped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed.

Although you probably won't benefit directly from participating in this study, I hope that the state educators in general will benefit from it by receiving more information about the program and considering ways to make it more effective.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at Oklahoma State University. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed.

Thank you for your consideration. Please, let me know if you agree to be a participant of the study.

If you have questions, please, contact me at (405) 744-4715, email: zhanna.shatrova@okstate.edu. You may also contact my advisor, Dr.Harris at (405) 744-7932; email: ed.harris@okstate.edu.

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol for OSU Coordinator

Individual code: ____________________ Time: Date:

- Could you please tell me a little about yourself- job title, work experience, educational background?
- How long have you been coordinating the program? How did you get this position?
  What are your responsibilities?

1. How were residency committees formed? Who made the decisions on committee formation? What criteria were used? Why?
2. Explain the purpose of the residency year committee?
3. How did each member achieve that purpose?
4. How was the committee chair decided? What were the criteria for selection?
5. What was the role of each committee member on the committee?
6. What organizations were represented on the committee?
7. What was the role of each organization represented on the residency year committee"
8. What factors influenced committee member's activities on the committee?
9. How were conflicts resolved?
10. Who did you communicate with in the committee? Why?
11. How could the residency year process be improved?

Interview Protocol for Resident Teacher

Individual code: ____________________ Time: Date:

- Could you please tell me a little about yourself- job title, work experience, educational background?
- How do you like this school? What was the main consideration for your decision to apply for work in this school?

1. How was your residency committees formed? Who made the decisions on committee formation? What criteria were used? Why?
2. Explain the purpose of the residency year committee?
3. How did each member achieve that purpose? Explain how you functioned together.
4. How was the committee chair decided? What were the criteria for selection?
5. What was the role of each committee member on the committee? How did they function together?

6. What organizations were represented on the committee?
7. What was the role of each organization represented on the residency year committee”
8. What factors influenced committee member’s activities on the committee?
9. How were conflicts resolved?
10. Who did you most communicate with on the committee? Why?
11. How could the residency year process be improved?

Interview Protocol for Committee Member

Individual code: ____________________ Time: Date:

Could you please tell me a little about yourself- job title, work experience, educational background?

How many committees did you serve on?

1. How were your residency committees formed? Who made the decisions on committee formation? What criteria are used? Why?
2. Explain the purpose of the residency year committee?
3. How did each member achieve that purpose? Explain how you functioned together.
4. How was the committee chair decided? What were the criteria for selection?
5. What was the role of each committee member on the committee? How did they function together?
6. What organizations were represented on the committee? What was the role of each organization represented on the residency year committee”
7. What factors influenced committee member’s activities on the committee?
8. How were conflicts resolved?
9. Who did you most communicate with on the committee? Why?
10. How could the residency year process be improved?

APPENDIX D

IRB Approved Protocol Modification Request Form

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD **APPROVED PROTOCOL MODIFICATION REQUEST FORM**	**ED 1099** **IRB Number**

Title of Project: **Manifestation of boundary-spanning roles in Resident Teacher Program committee.**

Principal Investigator: *I acknowledge that this represents an accurate and complete description of the proposed changes to the research*

Zhanna Shatrova		**11/01/10**
Name of Primary PI (typed)*	Signature of Primary PI	Date
SES	**COE**	
Department	College	
218 Willard, COE-OSU Stillwater, OK 74078	**(405) 744-4715**	**zhanna.shatrova@okstate.edu**
PI's Address (Street, City, State, Zip)	Phone	E-Mail

Adviser (complete if PI is a student): *I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected.*

Dr. Ed Harris		**07/14/10**
Adviser's Name (typed)	Signature of Adviser	Date
SES	**COE**	
Department	College	
308 Willard Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078	**(405)744-7932**	**ed.harris@okstate.edu**
Adviser's Address	Phone	E-Mail

Concurrence:

Dr. Bert Jackobson			SES
Department Head (typed)	Signature	Date	Department

Dr. Steve Edwards — COE

College Dean or Research Director (typed)

Signature	Date	College

1. Changes to be made to: (check all that apply)

☐ Project Title
☐ Principal Investigators (include resumes)
☐ Sponsor
☐ Estimated # of Subjects
☐ Subject Population
☐ Vulnerable Subject Population
  ☐ Decisionally Impaired
  ☐ Children age 17 or less
  ☐ Pregnant Women
  ☐ Prisoners
  ☐ Other Vulnerable Populations

☐ Advisor
☐ Subject recruitment
☐ Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
☐ Research Site(s)
X Research Procedures
X Consent form
X Assent form

2. Describe in detail the proposed changes indicated above.
The participants of the study will be people who used to serve on the committees in the past. Though the site does not change: it is Stillwater public school districts, the participants will be principals, mentor teachers, COE faculty members who used to serve on the committees and teachers who went through the program in different years. Data collection will not include any observations. Interviews and document analysis will be primary data collection techniques. Due to these changes the language of the consent and assent form and interview question will be changed too. The verbs will be in the past tense form. Observations will not be included in the forms.

3. Explain the reason (s) for the requested changes.

The study was planned on Oklahoma Resident Teacher Program (RTP), however, the program was not funded go for 2011-2013, and consequently, is temporarily or permanently defunct. The decision was made to do a historical study on past RTP committees. It requires the changes in research procedures, consent and assent forms and interview questions.

4. Do these requested changes pose additional risks to subjects? ☐Yes **X** No

If Yes, please describe the risks and any procedures proposed to address them:

5. Submit all materials that are being revised with changes highlighted.

VITA

Zhanna Shatrova

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: MANIFESTATION OF BOUNDARY SPANNING ROLES IN THE RESIDENT TEACHER PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Major Field: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2011.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Educational Leadership at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2004.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in English and German at Kirovograd Pedagogical Institute, Kirovograd, Ukraine in 1987.

Experience:

2005-present ***Research Assistant***, Oklahoma State University, College of Education, Stillwater, Oklahoma

2008-2010 ***Course Instructor*****,** Oklahoma State University, College of Education, Stillwater, Oklahoma

Summer 2010 ***Community Development Programs Assistant,*** Oklahoma State University, Family Resource Center

1987-2003 ***Teacher of English*****,** Gymanasia #77, Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine

Professional Memberships:

American Education Research Association, American Evaluation Association, Phi Beta Delta · Epsilon Upsilon Chapter

Name: Zhanna Shatrova Date of Degree: July, 2011

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: MANIFESTATION OF BOUNDARY SPANNING ROLES IN THE RESIDENT TEACHER PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Pages in Study: 187 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Scope and Method of Study:

This study utilized a case study approach. The purposive sample was comprised of 12 resident teacher committee members from a Midwestern university and school district. Data collection procedures included interviews, observations, and document analysis. The multi-level boundary spanning model was used to explain the committee members' roles in the program.

Findings and Conclusions:

- Despite a moratorium of the state's Residency Teacher Program, the district and university continued the efforts to provide support to beginning teachers. This initiative presented an innovative way for the university and school to be more actively involved in school-university collaboration, in general, and beginning teachers' induction, in particular.
- The initiative was viewed as a "safety net," which provided necessary support for beginning teachers during their first year in the classroom.
- Although the committee roles were predetermined, participants considered the committee a team. The rationale for the team makeup was to ensure both external and internal support for first year teachers.
- The multi-level model demonstrated its utility for educational settings by identifying distinguishing features of educational teams and examining the organizational, collective, and individual attributes of the team members in initiating boundary spanning activities.
- All three levels of boundary spanning (task based, team level, and contextual) were present in the committees. The roles assigned to the committee members, as well as the roles participants defined by themselves, were manifested in their ambassadorial and task coordinated activities

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Ed Harris