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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CURRICULAR CHANGE

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
AND ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

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Dedication

Throughout this journey, my constant supporter, encourager, and advocate has been my beloved husband, Ron, who gave up innumerable relaxed evenings at home to drive thousands of miles just to spend an extra eighty minutes together each way in our commute to the University of Oklahoma for classes, exams, and research. Because he had confidence that I could accomplish this monumental task, I was able to believe in myself. Taking the road less traveled was an adventure for both of us, and I could never have reached this zenith without him.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of curricular change and how teachers in one high school in the southwestern United States viewed the potential effects of the implementation of Common Core State Standards. Surveys, focus group sessions, one-on-one interviews, and various observational techniques were used to ascertain teacher perceptions. Teachers reported confidence in their abilities to challenge students, to provide alternative explanations and examples, to adjust their lessons based on student need, and to use a variety of instructional strategies and assessments. However, perceptions of self-efficacy dropped significantly and varying levels of anxiety emerged when faced with actual performance-based tasks from the Common Core.

The study found few initiatives were being utilized during the initial transition phase to help prepare teachers for an impending fundamental educational reform, yet teachers had great faith that administrators would eventually provide substantive professional development. When asked to design optimal professional development, teachers articulated a preference for practical, relevant, specific, peer-initiated, intellectually-stimulating experiences. Implications for the study include the need to provide timely, focused, thorough professional development during critical incubative periods.

Keywords: teacher efficacy, professional development, teacher collaboration, professional learning community, community of practice.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Learning in the classroom setting – who initiates the learning, how learning is internalized, and what mode of learning is most effective – has been approached from different perspectives. John Dewey's "pragmatic epistemology" from the 1890's posited that knowledge was developed as the learner manipulated the environment through inquiry during activity that promoted sensory and motor responses (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 5). In the 1920's, Dewey's contemporary, Jean Piaget proposed that cognitive development emanated from "genetic epistemology" through constructivism where the learner played an active role in the "bottom-up" process (p. 169). Lev Semenovich Vygotsky, another theorist during the same period, in Russia, determined that learning that moves beyond the current level of competence requires a challenge to the "zone of proximal development" (p. 196). The struggle of destabilizing forces creates the discovery of the "lines of articulation" and "lines of flight" as described by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987), opening up other ways of teaching and learning (pp. 92-93). The environment of learning in the classroom is controlled by the teacher as facilitator of knowledge development. Mangiante (2010) defines the teacher as the "most important resource in education" and one who must be knowledgeable in the craft of teaching (p. 52).

With a focus on the teacher in the classroom, Haberman (2011) describes the quality of the teacher as the single most important element of learning in the classroom, and one that is of critical importance in what and how much students learn. Harris and Rutledge (2010) noted that student achievement gains might reasonably be attributed to

individual teachers (p. 948). Furthermore, teacher effectiveness plays a role in inspiring students to learn (Mangiante, 2010; Harris & Rutledge, 2010).

Historically, state and federal legislation has been aimed at the improvement of standards from *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 (NCEE) to No Child Left Behind in 2001 to the most recent adoption of Common Core State Standards to be implemented in most states by 2014-2015. With these mandated changes in curriculum, teachers are required to implement substantive revisions at a high level of excellence, yet they may have little meaningful input into the mandates and may receive little professional development.

After National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores were released on November 1, 2011, showing 73 percent of fourth and eighth graders in Oklahoma are below proficient in reading and 66 percent of fourth graders and 72 percent of eighth graders are below proficient in math, Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction Janet Barresi stated, "This is all the more reason to redouble our efforts and work quickly to implement our recently approved reforms" (NCES, 2011; Oklahoma SDE, 2011). The directive is unfortunately not accompanied by an imperative to redouble funding or redouble professional development.

Teachers may not be provided with professional development to enhance knowledge that will facilitate instructional reforms. To increase teacher self-efficacy for implementation of the required curriculum, Hochberg and Desimone (2010) emphasize that the professional development must be applicable to teachers' circumstances and it must enable teachers to align instruction to facilitate students' proficiency while emphasizing active learning.

Common Core State Standards have eclipsed the horizon and their implementation, following three years of transition, is imminent. Incremental educational reforms occur continuously from year to year and fundamental reforms (such as No Child Left Behind and Common Core) occur periodically. These changes can lessen a teacher's sense of efficacy if the influence of the environment overwhelms a teacher's ability to have an impact on a student's learning. Under such conditions, a teacher may believe that reinforcement of their efforts in the classroom lies outside their control (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In general, teachers' perceptions of their own efficacy in the face of change are higher in settings where the school culture is collaborative (Ross, 1998).

In 2011, *Scholastic* paired with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to perform a study involving more than 10,000 teachers of PK-12 grades nationwide about teachers' awareness and preparedness to teach Common Core Standards. The study revealed that 78 percent of teachers felt they were only "somewhat prepared" or "somewhat/very unprepared" (Mayer & Phillips, 2011). This may be detrimental to their efficacy at this transition point.

This study will add to the research on teachers' perspectives of change by examining the first year of transition prior to full implementation of the Common Core State Standards in a midsize public school district in the southwestern region of the United States. This real-time snapshot of teachers' perceptions will reveal how teachers respond to change and how top-down educational reform affects teacher efficacy.

Definition of Terms

- Incremental change – continuous change that requires minor adjustments to curricula, methods, and/or assessments in place to fine tune instruction toward target goal. For example, each year schools analyze their test data to adjust instruction to improve low-scoring areas of the curriculum, and these incremental changes are both expected and manageable.
- Fundamental change – overall change in public education, usually requiring legislative action, wherein the new curricula and/or goals replace the current educational program. For example, No Child Left Behind in 2001 required a major overhaul of all instructional approaches to meet the goal of 100 percent proficiency for all students by 2014-2015 on a national level, leading states to implement higher standards to meet the academic goal.
- Veteran – teachers with 10 or more years of service.
- Seasoned – teachers with 4-9 years of service.
- Novice – beginning teachers with 1-3 years of experience.
- Community of practice – groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 1998).
- Professional learning community – combination of individuals with an interest in education, such as a grade-level teaching team, a high school department, an entire school district, or a professional organization, that focuses on learning by working collaboratively and by holding each other accountable for results (DuFour, 2004).

Survey

For quantitative descriptive data, all certified teachers in a midsize public school district in a southwestern state were invited to participate in a 33-question survey (Appendix A) in which they ranked their own self efficacy in the classroom. They were also asked about their perceptions of their own knowledge of Common Core, their instructional strategies, and their individual teaching environments.

One-on-One Interviews

Teachers at the high school level are responsible for the summative state-mandated testing required for graduation and for calculation of the district's Academic Performance Index (API), which ultimately becomes a major factor in determining whether Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) has been achieved. The purpose of AYP is to promote growth and measure success. Recognition and rewards are available for schools that are successful, while sanctions, restructuring, and interventions are consequences for schools that do not meet AYP.

For the qualitative portion of this study, 13 teachers from one high school volunteered for face-to-face interviews (Appendix C). They were divided into three groups: veteran teachers with 10 or more years of service, seasoned teachers with 4-9 years of service, and novice teachers with 1-3 years. All 13 teachers have taught the majority of their years of experience at the high school level.

The veteran teachers have experienced the onset of fundamental changes involved in implementing NCLB in 2001 nationally followed by a state-mandated test in 2003. Seasoned teachers have worked their entire careers under NCLB and have experienced only incremental changes, such as implementation of the state test in 2003,

to align with NCLB requirements. Novice teachers have been mentored by teachers who have experienced change, but they are on the cusp of the next fundamental change, Common Core State Standards.

Three administrators were interviewed to provide a parallel analysis with the teachers' perceptions of change including a superintendent and two curriculum directors. Their perceptions of change from outside the classroom were contrasted with those of the teachers.

Focus Groups

After compiling the descriptive data from the online survey and comparing the responses of the interviews, three focus groups of four teachers per group were convened. These additional teachers were allowed to work collaboratively within their assigned groups to accomplish two tasks: 1) design a professional development plan for the upcoming implementation, and 2) analyze a performance-based task from the Common Core State Standards (Appendix D); specifically, teachers were asked what they would need to know in order to teach students the necessary knowledge and skills to accomplish the task. These groups were intentionally set up as interdisciplinary focus groups to allow teachers to collaborate across curricular disciplines.

One administrative focus group comprised of three assistant principals was assembled to give an outside-the-classroom perspective as to what form of professional development will be required to implement Common Core in the classroom, and as evaluators, what the administration would need to know about the new standards.

Summary

Teaching requires an enormous amount of flexibility during the normal course of a school year, and teachers are required to implement new policies as mandated. Teachers' perceptions of change influence how successful the outcomes of the changes are likely to be, no matter if the change is seemingly inconsequential or high stakes (Guskey & Passaro, 1994).

Discovering teachers' perceptions of change in the face of the next fundamental reform will be at the center of this study. Transition to and implementation of Common Core State Standards has been relegated to individual states and districts to devise a plan that best suits their teachers and students. Johnson (in Hampel et al, 1996) points out that reform from a top-down approach has damaged the respect for teaching as a profession, and that has made it "more difficult to have fundamental faith in teachers as primary agents of change" (p. 479).

According to Harris (2005), disenfranchising teachers from the process of designing and implementing change can be traced to failure of recent reform efforts, creating division between those outside the classroom (as designers of change) and those inside the classroom (implementers of change). Without teachers as partners in the process, Harris (2005) concluded the gap between designers and implementers "limits reform to a minimal long-term impact on teaching and learning" (p. 419).

Lee (2011), a skeptic of the Common Core, emphasizes the need to involve a critical mass of teachers at the local, grassroots level from the very beginning of its implementation. According to Lee (2011), teachers were underrepresented in

developing Common Core State Standards and will view its implementation as surrogate decision making, subverting the professional judgments of teachers.

While teachers will individually be responsible for implementing the changes associated with Common Core, administrators will be held accountable for the results. As Popham (2004) points out, there are currently so many curricular aims in the state standards, teachers tend to teach what they expect to be on the test, often guessing incorrectly, only to excise curricular content that would be taught in the process otherwise. How teachers feel about compulsory compliance to change that impacts their instructional practice will emerge as a study in efficacy during the transition phase of implementation of the new fundamental reform.

Vignette: A New Year Begins

One week before the first day of school finds Mrs. Jackson in her classroom, unpacking new markers, pens, pencils, bulletin board borders, a new calendar, an electric pencil sharpener – all fresh and brand new to start off a new school year. But, in reality, this school year promises to be much like the last 34 years. Students aged 14 or 15 years of age, who definitely have changed over those 34 years in their clothing and hair styles, in their overall attitudes about education, and in the electronic accoutrements found in their pockets, purses, and backpacks, will be crossing the threshold of Room 241-A in exactly one week. "No matter how they come to me, I still have to equip them for the next grade," she thinks to herself. Just as she retrieves last year's lesson plans from the archive of files in the similarly aged teacher desk, an administrator, possibly 20 years her junior, arrives at her classroom with a multiple-

page document in a pristine white cover, also seemingly fresh and new to start off the year.

"Hello, Gladys. I knew you would be the first teacher up here preparing for the new school year. I can always count on you to be ready for the thundering herds!"

"Hi, Ms. Simpkins. I just wanted to get everything set up. You know how busy those first few weeks of school are. We have to be at least one step ahead of our little darlings!"

"You are so right. We have to be prepared for anything. Speaking of being prepared, I have a document I'd like you to take a look at. It's called Common Core State Standards, and our state and 45 others have adopted these new standards for our students as a means to insure that our students are college and career ready by the time they leave high school. We administrators have been studying these, and we'd like to see how you think these new standards line up with the current state-mandated objectives. We will be transitioning towards full implementation in two years, so we really need you to start thinking about how you and the teachers in your department could start adapting your lesson plans to incorporate these standards."

Mrs. Jackson was speechless as Ms. Simpson left her classroom. She had already run off reams of worksheets – one of the main reasons she came to school a week before other teachers: uninhibited access to the Xerox machine. She was ready to keep her students on task for at least the first four weeks of school. The reliable yet yellowed notes from which she had been teaching for nearly her entire career always afforded the right amount of information to be imparted to her students in nine-week blocks. The mimeograph spirit masters of every perfectly timed assessment had been

replaced with a Xerox version at least twenty years ago, and they were still holding up well. How would these new standards affect all that she had planned for this year's students (even though it was actually what she had planned for countless previous students)?

After looking only briefly at the document, she could discern some similarities, but she noticed a higher level of rigor in the wording of the standards, one which was not conducive to learning facts and terms from worksheets that could be regurgitated back to her on multiple-choice tests that had been carefully timed to occur before strategically placed breaks in the school year. Writing topics were rampant, and what was the role of the performance-based tasks listed in the Appendix B? What would this curricular change mean to her teaching style and the performance of her students on state –mandated assessments?

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Society expects improvements to educational curriculum in the public schools. This chapter traces educational reform over the last hundred years to show the timeline of fundamental curricular changes and the goals that each reform attempted to accomplish for the betterment of the public education system.

Educational Reform as a Continual Process

Encountering change in the field of education is not a new concept. John Dewey's progressive education theories of 1919-1938 incorporated imagination and expression with opportunities for children to be creative, critical thinkers and opened up a process of inquiry that expanded children's perceptions of the world (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). This coincided with Ralph Tyler's "Eight-Year Study" (1933-1941), a national program that addressed the narrowness and rigidity in the high school curricula (Aiken, 1942). In 1949, Tyler's *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* was published, which established an objectives-based approach to educational evaluation and assessment. Using the "Tyler Rationale," a teacher would define appropriate learning objectives, introduce useful learning experiences, organize these experiences to maximize their effect, and evaluate and revise areas of the process that were not effective. These principles of teaching and learning, popularized by Tyler, are still utilized today.

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was the federal government's foray into educational matters that had previously been left to state and local educational institutions. With the creation of Title I, a key component of ESEA, federal dollars could be allocated to states to improve educational opportunities for

disadvantaged children. Due to misappropriation of funds, Congress amended the law four times between 1965 and 1980 (Duffy et al., 2008).

In the post-Sputnik era, America began to lose faith in public education, and it appeared that while other countries were flourishing, American students were mired in mediocrity. One response was the Coalition of Essential Schools in 1985 that attempted to create a utopian revitalization for a more satisfying educational culture (Muncey & McQuillan, 1993; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

President George H.W. Bush introduced the America 2000 Excellence in Education Act of 1991, which would have provided federal funding to urban schools with overwhelming drug problems and schools with high populations of homeless students. However, this act never passed Congress. In the next administration, President Clinton devised Goals 2000 Educate America Act, which was enacted into law in 1994, with a goal that by the year 2000, all American children would start school ready to learn; high school graduation would increase to 90 percent; students would demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter at grades four, eight, and twelve; U.S. would be world leaders in science and mathematics achievement; every adult American would be literate; schools would be free of drugs and violence; teachers would have access to continued improvement of their professional skills; and schools would promote parental involvement and partnership (Paris, 1994).

Under the administration of George W. Bush, Congress adopted No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 with assessments tied to school improvement directives. The expectations of this federal legislation incrementally adjust upward each year as 2014-2015 approaches, the school year when all students are expected to be proficient in

reading and math. One of the stated purposes in NCLB is to meet the educational needs of "low-achieving children in our Nation's highest poverty schools, limited English proficient children, migratory children, children with disabilities, Indian children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance" (NCLB, 2002).

In 2002, No Child Left Behind refocused the public's attention on the state of public education. Ultimately, these initiatives were meant to improve student learning through emphasis on measured student performance; alignment of state standards for what students are expected to know and be able to do in reading, language arts, math, and science; a system of rewards and sanctions as incentives for improving achievement; report of student performance data in all subgroups that include both race and ability; increased decision-making authority by states on implementation of reforms in exchange for increased responsibility and accountability; and local capacity to distribute and target resources for professional development, reform initiatives, and instructional programs and materials (NCLB, 2002).

Although NCLB is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the new and improved version that was the centerpiece of the Bush administration's educational agenda has been praised for its emphasis on student achievement within underrepresented subgroups; however, it has more recently been criticized for reliance on test-based accountability. Linn (2009) believes the goals are unrealistic or counterproductive and are actually undermining the positive aspects of NCLB. Additionally, there is minimal responsibility on the students and the families for the students' academic performance under a heavily test-based accountability

system (Ravitch, 2010). As the conservative think-tank Heritage Foundation (2007) discovered, emphasis is being placed on test scores followed by punitive action for low-performing schools, forcing schools to train students for taking tests. The public outcry has shifted from success within a school, a district, or a state to nationwide and global achievement.

When test-based accountability is not coupled with investment in improved teaching, student achievement and student disposition toward learning were seen to decline in New York (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Increased accountability for teachers through test scores has narrowed the curriculum, and students have become disposed to learning only what is on the high-stakes test. Accountability does not supersede the conditions for higher achievement. Actually, higher levels of collective efficacy among colleagues were associated with higher levels of individual teacher efficacy as well as higher student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

Prior to NCLB, accountability was primarily the responsibility of the states, so the revision and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 constituted a major departure from federal policy. NCLB sets fixed parameters on state accountability systems that dramatically reduce the range of variation among state policies that previously existed. This represented a dramatic shift in the relationships among federal, state, and local control over issues of governance and control of education (Elmore, 2009). Bringing all states under the umbrella of one major legislative reform required a reevaluation of the accountability of all states to align with NCLB.

From the federal NCLB accountability system have emerged requirements that states and local districts are finding difficult to achieve. First, the expectations that 100 percent of tested students will be at the proficient level or above in English and mathematics are unrealistic and likely unobtainable for all subgroups. Diane Ravitch (2011) condemns the federal legislation that establishes unreachable goals for students and teachers and then punishes those schools that have been set up for failure caused by not meeting the impossible goals. The level of proficiency is not clearly defined. The target of adequate yearly progress (AYP) within districts and states, whose mandates vary widely, is fixed without considering fluctuations in student achievement from one year to the next.

Second, the assessments are based on state exams restricted to mathematics and reading/language arts, which may encourage some districts to drop the arts or other nontested subjects (Ravitch, 2010). A more complete picture of formative student achievement could be derived from multiple sources, such as socioeconomic status, academic rank, and school effects, rather than a singular objective assessment tool or one writing sample, though such "value-added analyses" are more expensive (Linn 2009).

Schwartz (2009) proposes that AYP requirements apply to states rather than to districts or individual school sites. Recently, many states have applied for federal waivers of portions of the NCLB requirements to allow the remediation and intervention process in those low-performing schools to fall under the jurisdiction of the states. While NCLB will continue to require states to use their internal systems of accountability, the public will not be inundated with separate federal and state ratings.

To meet AYP requirements under NCLB, a minimum of 95 percent of eligible students must be tested and must meet the proficient level. If any subgroup fails to meet the proficient level, the school fails. No compensation is given for other subgroups that may meet an advanced level of knowledge as a balancing mechanism (Linn, 2009). As with any reform, adjustments will have to be made in NCLB so that actual gains in subgroups can be acknowledged while using gains in achievement to set goals for all groups.

In the southwestern state selected for this study, a school's Academic Performance Index (API) score is calculated to identify achievement gaps among subgroups. Studies have shown that student socioeconomic factors significantly impact a school's API while teacher and principal factors are not significant in improving a school's API score (Henne & Jang, 2008). State and local educational agencies may request temporary release from the requirements of accountability under NCLB where districts are rural, unusually populated by migratory/immigrant students or English language learners, or greater than 20 percent of students are below the poverty line (ESEA, 2002). In fact, these characteristics are typical in most public schools in the state where this study takes place. These "flexibility opportunities" are provided at the state and local levels to those districts where meeting the target AYP has not occurred and will not likely occur within the required annual time limit (ESEA, 2002).

However, there are provisions in place to remedy punitive consequences such as closing individual schools sites, which would be detrimental to disadvantaged students who attend those schools. Additional funding for teacher recruitment and retention, for classroom resources and technology, and for training for principals and teachers are

possible interventions that may be available to schools. Waivers can also be obtained to extend the time for up to five years for reaching the 100 percent proficient level in disadvantaged areas.

Not only are students' scores used as an accountability measure for academic success, but teachers' qualifications are also part of the formula for NCLB with the requirement that all students be taught by "highly qualified teachers," fully state-certified teachers who hold a bachelor's degree and demonstrate competency in the subject matter. This statistic must be included on the state report card each year delineating all teachers' professional qualifications, the number of teachers on emergency or provisional credentials, and the number of classes in the state not being taught by highly qualified teachers (HQT), information which must be shown in aggregate, then disaggregated among schools by income levels, and reported to parents.

The provision in the law that requires documentation of highly qualified teachers is meant to encourage teacher equity in all classrooms; however, allowing states the flexibility to implement the HQT provision conflicted with federal accountability, and the first deadline for implementing the HQT provision was missed 2005-2006 (Loeb & Miller, 2009). It was evident that states utilized the given flexibility, and with little federal oversight by the U.S. Department of Education, the deadline to meet the requirements had to be extended with more federal scrutiny. An option for veteran teachers to complete a High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) was implemented to fulfill the subject matter competency requirement for HQT, but again states took advantage of the flexibility in setting the HOUSSE standards and the disparity among states' standards caused the U.S.

Department of Education to require states to revise their standards or suffer loss of funding (Loeb & Miller, 2009).

Schools that are scrambling to avoid sanctions to increase achievement look to more stringent internal personnel accountability and evaluation systems to accomplish both goals (Casserly, 2007). While transparency of teachers' qualifications is one aspect of the institution of the NCLB legislation, there are wide variations among states as to what constitutes a teacher as highly qualified. Some states weigh a teacher's experience in the field as heavily as content knowledge (Illinois, 60%) while other states consider experience at a much lower rate (Ohio, 24%), thus creating a disproportion among states' calculations (Loeb & Miller, 2009). This disparity has not yet resulted in a mandate at the federal level for across-the-board specifications as there is still the attempt to allow the states some autonomy in the process.

States also began escalating the number of teachers who are alternatively certified, allowing teachers to pass a basic competency test or a content area exam, such as PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II respectively, to be considered highly qualified (Baines, 2010). Alternative certification, which was originally meant to prevent using an unqualified substitute until a certified replacement could be found, has now become the mainstream instead of the alternative (Baines, 2010). The requirement for "highly qualified" teachers may have been diluted by the inconsistencies in state alternative certification programs and the increasing influx of alternatively certified teachers.

Researchers have found that standards-based accountability may lead to a focus on tested material to the exclusion of nontested content (Hamilton, Stecher, Russell, Marsh, & Miles, 2008). Hamilton, et al. (2008) also found that within schools, some

teachers used standards-based policies to focus on traditionally low-performing groups and to promote alignment between standards and instruction.

The federal government requires accountability of teacher qualifications, student test scores, and school and district adequate yearly progress, the cut score of which is raised every year by the states so that the target goals will incrementally reach 100 percent proficiency level by 2014-2015. A minimum of 95 percent of students enrolled must be tested and disaggregated into nine subgroups. States must use an accountability system that complies with these federal mandates.

In addition to fundamental changes that have surfaced regularly, incremental changes, such as whole language, phonics, learner-centered philosophy, site-based management, new math, charter schools, homeschooling, block scheduling, bilingual education, mainstreaming, and project-based learning, have added complexity to the educational landscape. Irrespective of the severity of the reform, teachers are expected to adapt and implement all recommendations while maintaining academic excellence.

The Common Core State Standards

America is on the cusp of a new fundamental educational reform, Common Core State Standards, a product of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) working with representatives from 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia. Two groups, the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Coalition and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), specializing in assessments to accompany the new standards, have begun the process of developing the evaluation tools that will be in place in 2014-2015.

According to CCSSO and NGA, the Common Core is based upon standards used in top-performing countries, so that students are prepared to succeed in the global economy. The college and career readiness goals seem to have more emphasis on the future as opposed to the genuine learning of the present (Tucker, 2011). Obviously, teachers who are responsible for the implementation of Common Core will help determine the relative success of the new standards.

By drawing from the best state standards in the country, coupled with the highest international standards, the Common Core State Standards (2010) are built upon the most advanced current thinking and expertise about educational outcomes. Even students who enter colleges from public schools in high-performing states are still requiring remediation (CCSS, 2010), thus demanding more rigor from all states' curricula.

In the language arts standards, reading is designed to spiral upward as students learn foundational reading skills in early grades and then incorporate those skills in increasing complexity as students advance through the grades, comprehending more as they advance. With an increase in the use of challenging informational texts in a range of subjects, in conjunction with a traditional canon of literature, students are expected to "build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspectives" (CCSS, 2010). Exemplar texts are provided for teachers, not as a reading list, but as a guide for the expected complexity of readings that will be required to meet the new standards.

In writing, the focus of Common Core is the ability to write logical arguments based on "substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence," and this basic

form of argument extends down into the earliest grades (CCSS, 2010). Research through written analysis and presentation of findings is also an expectation of Common Core standards. Both formal and informal presentations that incorporate speaking and listening skills allow student to gain knowledge, evaluate evidence, and collaborate to build understanding and to solve problems, another Common Core goal. Skills related to analysis and production of media are also integrated in the writing and presentation portions of Common Core State Standards.

Language development through vocabulary study during conversations, direct instruction, and reading will help students "determine word meanings, appreciate the nuances of words, and steadily expand their repertoire of words and phrases" (CCSS, 2010). The knowledge of formal English conventions provided in the standards allows students to express themselves through language as they progress to the college and career levels.

The math standards provide students with a foundation of skills in the early grades to successfully apply more demanding math concepts and procedures and to move into applications as the student progresses to the higher grades. The standards stress "not only procedural skill but also conceptual understanding" to make sure students are equipped with the information they need to succeed at higher levels (CCSS, 2010). The students are prepared to think and reason mathematically and to apply mathematics to novel situations, as college students and employees regularly do "to analyze empirical situations, understand them better, and improve decisions" (CCSS, 2010).

Porter, McMaken, Hwang, and Yang (2011) found that because of the lack of alignment across state standards due primarily to states emphasizing measurement and assessment in their standards, the Common Core standards are designed not just to create homogeneity of intended content across states but also to improve the content message to teachers in most if not all states. This study also concluded that the Common Core standards represent considerable change from what states currently call for in their standards, in what they assess, and in what U.S. teachers report they are currently teaching, with a move toward greater emphasis on higher order cognitive demand (Porter et al., 2011). Further, Porter et al., (2011) note that because all states would share a consistent set of standards, states would not have to individually develop their own standards and assessment tools, which would save both time and money.

Conley (2011) sees the Common Core State Standards as the opportunity for U.S. schools to move beyond test-prep instruction that fosters shallow learning, which has reached epidemic proportions after more than a decade of NCLB. These national standards are to replace state standards used to assess achievement under NCLB. Common Core promotes the concept of students transitioning from novice to expert over time as the curriculum grows progressively more complex over the PK-12 experience (Conley, 2011).

Change and Teacher Efficacy

Change can often be disconcerting, the outcomes unpredictable. Donnelly (2006) conducted a study of graduates of the Dublin Institute of Technology in Ireland in relation to program changes that were foisted upon the students over the three-year period and the impact of those changes on teaching. Donnelly (2006) found that

teachers who were more self-actualized and had a greater sense of efficacy persisted in successfully implementing change (p. 11). The actions of individuals, coupled with a work environment that provided continuous improvements, led to successful changes in teaching practices.

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is a primary factor in human motivation and teachers' beliefs about their abilities to influence student performance (1997). Self-efficacy is not to be confused with self-esteem, as the former is concerned with perception of personal capabilities while the latter is concerned with self-worth (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009). In teaching, self-efficacy is oriented toward one's perceived ability to impact future learning and to execute actions to accomplish specific teaching tasks. When educational reforms are launched, there is a naturally occurring incubative learning period as all educators internalize new requirements and translate them to their own practice. It is during this incubative period that teacher efficacy is in the initial phase of the learning curve as development of a common language occurs (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009).

Historically, both incremental and fundamental reforms have been mandated with the underlying assumption that they would solve the problems of public schools (Wagner, 2008). However, the success of any educational reform is dependent upon teachers' willingness to incorporate change into their classrooms (Guskey & Passaro, 1994). While efficacy implies the extent to which teachers *believe* they can affect student learning (Coladarci, 1992), Tschannen-Moran and MacFarlane (2011) point out that self-efficacy can lead to "self-fulfilling prophecies, validating either beliefs of

capability or of incompetence" (p. 218). The better efficacious teachers feel about their abilities to be effective with students, the more job satisfaction they derive.

The last thirty years of research has demonstrated that efficacy is affected by motivation, professional goals, and effort (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Ross, 1998). Bandura (1997) found that beliefs about self-efficacy may be more powerful than the actual abilities of the individual. Goddard and Goddard (2001) discovered that a teacher's ability to educate students was positively related to behaviors that promoted student achievement, such as persistence and optimism.

According to Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, and Davis (2009), personal teacher efficacy emanates from four primary sources: mastery experiences that produce success, vicarious experiences that build confidence to tackle new strategies, verbal persuasion that provides the pep talk that is often needed, and psychological and emotional factors, such as anxiety versus excitement. While teacher efficacy is subject and task specific, it is also cyclical in nature and can lead to direct instructional decisions, indirect communication consequences, and interpersonal and emotional dynamics of the classroom (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009).

Class size can affect a teacher's efficacy. It is a determining factor in how much time can be devoted to each student by the teacher. State statutes set out clear limits for class sizes: 10 students in special education classrooms; 20 in Pre-K with an assistant; 29 in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 with an assistant; 20 in grades 4, 5, and 6 with up to 16 additional students for a total of 36 if an aide is provided; and a combined class load of 140 students for grades 7-12 (averaging 28 students per class) is allowable (70 O.S. § 18.113.1-18.113.4).

According to Schunk and Pajares (2009), self-efficacy beliefs are "cognitive, goal-referenced, relatively context-specific, and future-oriented judgments of competence that are malleable due to their task dependence" (p. 39). Behavioral, personal, and environmental influences interact through "reciprocal determinism" to affect teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). The bottom line appears to be that if the teacher does not anticipate success in a specific type of instruction, she would likely put forth less effort in both the preparation and delivery of the lesson and would be less helpful in remediating students (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). Teachers who feel confident about coordinating the complex knowledge and skills required to design meaningful instruction will likely exert greater effort, persistence, and resilience (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

While studying English language arts teachers, Hansen (2006) discovered that teachers purposefully teach areas of the curriculum in which they feel most efficacious while slighting or even omitting areas in which they feel less confident. Lavelle's study (2006) drew a direct correlation between teachers' quality of writing instruction with the teachers' own perceptions of their own writing abilities. If teachers perceive their abilities to be sub-par, their instruction will be deficient or nonexistent. Students may bear the burden of what is omitted due to the teacher's perceived lack of skill (Lavelle, 2006). In the face of a new set of standards to replace the state objectives that have been in place since 2003, the expectation is for teachers to feel less efficacious during the initial transition phase of the Common Core implementation. Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, and Davis (2009) point out that self-efficacy is a primary belief that influences all other factors. Efficacy influences classroom instruction and drives teacher decision-making.

In general, higher self-efficacy is associated with better planning, organization, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, and openness, and a willingness to experiment with new methods. In contrast, lower efficacy leads to less effort and poor teaching outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & MacFarlane, 2011). Self-efficacy is at the core of a teacher's success. In the midst of change, maintenance of self-efficacy can be partly assured through the support of collaborative teams (Goddard & Goddard, 2001).

Self-efficacy is a motivational construct based on teachers deriving satisfaction from feeling empowered in their classrooms and having influence on larger school issues through schoolwide collaboration and involvement (Gordon, 2008). Collaboration can assist teachers in marshaling resources, conserving energy, and understanding requirements and demands (Valli & Buese, 2007). Goddard and Goddard (2001) recognize the collegial effort in conjunction with collaborative professional development may facilitate a collective efficacy, which is needed to implement Common Core.

Professional development toward implementation of the standards may play a role in the teachers' efficacy levels as they come to realize how the national standards will impact the state, the district, and most importantly their individual classrooms. Hochberg & Desimone (2010) recognize that professional development for teachers plays an integral role in standards-based accountability by building teachers' capacity for addressing both basic content knowledge and higher order thinking and problem-solving skills to improve student achievement. When teachers can see a direct connection with their particular teaching environments, they may engage in dialogue,

planning, and organizing instructional strategies to meet requirements for the new standards.

Teachers with higher efficacy may be more open to new ideas and instructional strategies and more innovative. They also may be more willing to experiment with methods that will better serve their students, such as inquiry and collaboration among students, rather than relying on weaker methods, such as traditional lecture methods, while nearly eliminating criticism of students yet encouraging them to follow up wrong answers with the further pursuit of the correct answers (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009). The positive tendencies in the academic realm align with similar tendencies in the classroom management and relationship aspects of teacher efficacy as well (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009).

According to a meta-analysis and research done by Valli, Croninger, and Walters (2007), the isolation of teaching can lead to norms of self-reliance, limited teacher learning, and an emphasis on trial and error in improving instruction. Since Wagner (2008) surmises that "isolation is the enemy of improvement," professional development can best be accomplished through a collaborative professional culture where teachers are able to interact professionally (p. 52). This could foster new thinking about content and instructional practices and their improvement, alignment of instruction with standards and the need to address diverse learners, and ability to address challenges in their particular school cultures, thus preventing the feeling of isolation that often inhibits efficacy at its core (Wagner, 2008). Smylie (1998) found that interactions with colleagues about instruction matters carried a positive indirect effect on personal efficacy by reassuring the certainty of practice.

Professional development has been influenced by accountability since *A Nation at Risk* (NCEE, 1983) compared the poor performance of American students on national and international assessments. After Finland's students were top scorers on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2000, researchers flocked to the country to discover the "Finnish miracle" (Sahlberg, 2011, p. 18). One discovery was that "over 90 percent of schools in Finland, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom" provide professional development for teachers during their regular workday (Murray, 2011, p. 19). Teachers in the United States average approximately 1,100 hours per year of face-to-face instruction with students; in South Korea and Finland, that number drops to 600 hours because much of the school day is spent planning with colleagues (Sawchuk, 2012, p. 15-16). For example, Finnish teachers may teach three classes per day with 25 students in each in contrast to American teachers who teach six classes per day with 30 students each. The extra 500 hours are spent in unit and lesson planning and collaborative development with their colleagues.

Most U.S. schools do not support collaborative professional learning even though it leads to meaningful improvements in teaching (Murray, 2011). Teachers are so accustomed to the compulsory whole-faculty, single-topic training on the mandated professional development days, that they have lost the concept of how meaningful training on topics of their own selection can be to their teaching practice. The shift in professional development from the fragmented in-service training to "more systematic, theoretically grounded school-wide improvement efforts" is important to curriculum design and implementation (Sahlberg, 2011, p. 22). In Finland, "continuous upgrading of teachers' pedagogical professionalism has become a right rather than an obligation,"

which leads to confidence that teachers are equipped to implement solutions for problems in the classrooms and evaluate the results (Sahlberg, 2007, p. 155).

Professional development that is conceived as a collaborative enterprise creates a space for learning through mutual exchange, dialogue, and constant challenge (Musanti & Pence, 2010). Williams, Tabernik, and Krivak (2009) verify that teachers in any district, regardless of the setting, would benefit from sharing experiences and expertise. Lawson (2004) notes that among the multiple benefits are the following gains:

> effectiveness gains (e.g., improved results; enhanced problem-solving competence); efficiency gains (e.g., eliminating redundancy); resource gains (e.g., more funding); capacity gains (e.g., weaknesses are covered; workforce retention improves); legitimacy gains (e.g., power and authority are enhanced; jurisdictional claims are supported); and, social development benefits (e.g., social movements are catalyzed). (p. 225)

According to Reilly (2000), "moral altruism" is a motivating factor in the collaboration process, even if the benefits are not seen immediately and directly. Additionally, as a seemingly powerless entity, teachers may see increased gains in their legitimacy, power, and authority as a force of change in the educational process through unity and collaboration with peers (Valli & Buese, 2007). Core subject teachers who are vertically and horizontally aligned have a self-interest in collaboration because of the potential benefits. On the other hand, not collaborating with peers in light of these positive attributes can lead to a fear of being left out or to a loss of "legitimacy, prestige, and resources" (Reilly, 2000).

In a culture that is characterized by collaboration among faculty members who are innovators and creators, a curriculum is likely to be "transactive or transformative" (Behar-Horenstein, Mitchell, & Dolan, 2004, p. 171). According to Williams,

Tabernik, and Krivak (2009), there is power in collaboration, power in numbers, and power in sharing efforts and ideas.

One way to ameliorate the loss of teacher efficacy amid change is to provide a forum for teachers to collaborate in communities of practice. Etienne Wenger (1998) outlines the three relationships necessary for coherence in a community of practice: mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire (p. 73). Because the community of practice is a joint enterprise with mutual accountability, it is a collective process of negotiation and disagreement can be a productive part of the enterprise (Wenger, 1998). Through a community of practice, a shared repertoire of resources is coherently developed as members contribute their own meaningful statements about the situation according to their individual identities through dynamic and interactive relationships (Wenger, 1998).

Collier (2011) cites a variety of benefits of learning communities for teachers, such as sharing knowledge and expertise in instructional strategies for a constantly evolving setting, allowing teachers to be individually and collectively successful. Linda Darling-Hammond called the benefits of these teacher communities of practice "a virtuous cycle" because "the more efficacious [teachers] feel, the more they are likely to stay [in the profession]. The longer they stay, the more effective they become" (Collier, 2011).

According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), informal communities of practice and more structured professional learning communities promote relationships between and among colleagues, and this bonding may lead to improved teacher

efficacy, which is a stronger influence on student achievement than socioeconomic levels of students.

Some of the survival skills that Tony Wagner (2008) highlights in *The Global Achievement Gap* pertain to critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, access and analysis of information, and oral and written communication skills. These college and career readiness skills are expected to be taught in all disciplines under Common Core, skills that have heretofore been assumed to be the responsibility of the language arts teacher. Under Common Core, all teachers will be teaching informational texts, since reading and knowledge acquisition are intertwined rather than independent (Munson, 2011).

Although communities of practice and professional learning communities are not to be viewed as the panacea for improving teacher efficacy through educational reform, the partnerships that are fostered throughout the process may contribute to the support teachers need and desire to prevent the isolated feeling inherent in teaching.

Summary

Educational reform is both expected and necessary to address new research findings, new technology, and new demands by the public, the state government, and the federal government. Over the past hundred years, change seems to have become inherent in the educational profession.

Accountability has often been the driver for change, and a teacher's perception of change, whether threatening or enlightening, can affect efficacy. Undeniably, a teacher's self-efficacy influences the instruction. The influence of teachers' perceptions of change is the focus of this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers perceive change brought about by educational reform and how teachers' efficacy might influence instruction. This study explores teachers' perceptions of change and their perceptions of the Common Core. The change to Common Core will take place in more than just the classroom; it will mean a change in orientation and school climate. All subject areas, not just core subjects, will be expected to implement changes, and this study documents how teachers plan to cope with change wrought by Common Core. Additionally, this study investigates perceptions of change from the administrators' perspectives.

Research Questions

The study focuses on the following research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of curricular change?
2. What role does teacher efficacy play in the implementation of Common Core State Standards?

Mixed Methodology

Quantitative research attaches numerical values to specific questions that can range from feelings to particular behaviors. Seen as following a "positivist worldview," meaning reality exists to be discovered by objective means that have "observability," analysis of quantitative data is widely viewed as the dominant methodology in psychological research (Wiggins, 2011, p. 45). Authentic data derived from written, spoken, visual, or kinesthetic means is converted to numbers, and the numbers can be analyzed statistically.

In contrast, qualitative research allows participants to take information in a direction of their choosing in a particular context. Often it is up to the researcher to tie themes together into a coherent report. While measurement by numerical data is seen as preserving objectivity, qualitative data allows a researcher to address questions that arise throughout the study. A qualitative researcher has the freedom to generate theory during the research and then verify the theory through data analysis. Through a grounded theory approach, themes may arise during an initial phase and are confirmed through analysis and coding of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Some evidence supports that blending of the two methods can be useful. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) define mixed methods research as follows:

> Mixed methods is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. (p. 5)

Symonds and Gorard (2010) argue for a change "to enable new and innovative research designs to emerge" as part of the "future evolution of educational and more general social sciences research" (p. 122). Diversity in methodology may facilitate independent thinking and encourage alternative – and perhaps more effective – multifaceted research design (Symonds & Gorard, 2010). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) suggest that using both approaches yields a better understanding of the research problem than using either approach in isolation (p. 5). This "compatibility thesis" advocates combining the two research methodologies into a single study to maximize results (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 15). A mixed methods approach may allow

complementary strengths from both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to emerge through their combined use (Greene, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Combining methods is a form of triangulation that can strengthen a study (Guion, 2011). Truscott et al. (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 2,381 research studies to discover how many claimed to use a mixed methods approach and how this approach was carried out. After discovering that 14 percent of the studies attributed their research findings to a mixed methodology, there was a wide variety in the level of blending of qualitative and quantitative data. Some studies actually demonstrated a symbiotic relationship between the two methods that yielded "distinct yet complementary data source and analysis strategies," while others used the two methods separately and included separate sets of data in the results (Truscott et al., 2010, p. 324-325). A blended format may increase the validity of a study (Truscott et al., 2010). Wiggins (2011) noted that in many mixed methods studies, one method lays the "preliminary or exploratory groundwork to then be built upon by the dominant and culminating method" (p. 49).

Mixed Methods Study Design



Figure 1. **Timeline of Development of Survey Questions.**

Many research studies have delved into the concept of teacher efficacy, beginning with the seminal studies of the Rand Corporation in 1976 to Albert Bandura in 1977, Thomas Guskey in 1981, Rose and Medway in 1981, and Ashton and Webb in

1982. When Gibson and Dembo (1984) created their Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES), many subsequent researchers used and adapted their scale to meet particular research study needs. From Coladarci (1992), Guskey and Passaro (1994) to the more contemporary Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998, 2001), the Teacher Efficacy Scale has proven to be reliable and valid when measuring teacher efficacy by its correlations to the earlier studies mentioned above. It is for this reason that I chose the Gibson and Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale from among other more well-known scales of measurement, and a modified version was used for my research study. The questions were designed to elicit a teacher's current perception of their personal teaching efficacy to positively impact student learning (Nietfeld & Enders, 2003). A group of graduate students field tested the questions and provided feedback, and the final set of revised survey items can be found in Appendix A.

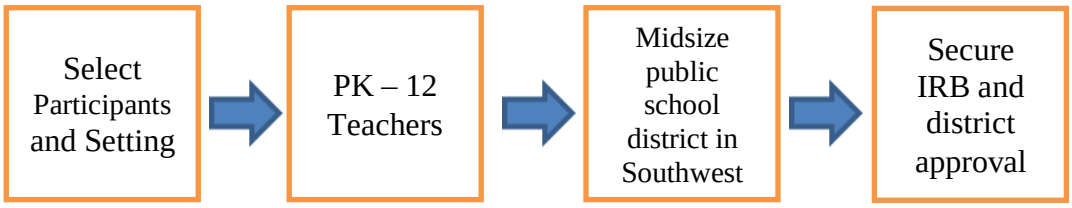

Figure 2. **Selection of Participants for Survey.**

The research study used a mixed methods research design including a survey of certified teachers, one-on-one interviews of teachers and administrators, and focus groups comprised of three groups of four teachers each, and one focus group of three administrators. Table 1 depicts the sources of the information used in this study. (Tables 1-29 are located behind Appendix F in the back matter of this dissertation.)

The quantitative portion provides descriptive data about teachers' initial perceptions of their own self-efficacy. The initial data collection opportunity was

through a 33-question survey (Appendix A) that was offered to all certified teachers. Survey responses were compiled and are presented in the form of percentages describing years of experience, time in current teaching position, areas of content expertise and grade levels, and responses to questions pertaining to personal efficacy relative to the Common Core. All raw data from online survey are contained in Appendix B.

The survey was followed with face-to-face interviews with 13 teachers using the interview questions in Appendix C to delve further into teachers' personal feelings about how change affects their teaching efficacy. Three focus groups sessions were held with 12 additional teachers to assess teachers' perceived needs for implementing the new Common Core standards. The three focus group sessions were interdisciplinary among the four teachers in each session. Each group examined a performance-based task from the Common Core standards to determine what teachers would need to know to prepare students for the task and what students would have to demonstrate to achieve mastery of the task (Appendix D).

Six administrators were asked to participate, in separate sessions apart from teachers, to establish a parallel view of perceptions of change. Three district level administrators were interviewed using the questions in Appendix C, and three building level administrators (assistant principals) were convened for a focus group session (Appendix D) to devise a professional development plan and to examine the performance-based tasks from Common Core.

How teachers view their readiness to teach for student success under the new standards is vital to actual achievement (Guskey & Passaro, 1994). Harris and Rutledge

(2010) attributed student achievement gains to individual teachers whose effectiveness became the catalyst toward educational goals.

As described in Merriam (1998), the qualitative portion is particularistic in that it will focus on one particular faculty at a specific midsize high school in a southwestern state, and the end product is descriptive. Although admittedly not generalizable to all teachers, the experiences described by the teachers in the interviews and in the focus groups may prove informative (Stake, 1995a). By allowing the phenomenon of perception toward change to emerge, the hypotheses are derived from the data but are also worked out in relation to the data during the course of the research, thus generating theory in the process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Teachers' perceptions of change and self-efficacy were measured numerically on a scaled survey to establish quantitative, baseline, descriptive data. A final question on the survey gave teachers the opportunity to elaborate their views in detail. The numerical data led to a variety of questions that were administered in the qualitative portion of the study through one-on-one interviews with teachers of different experience levels. Through an interpretivist worldview, this study sought to gain a better understanding of teachers in the particular context of transitioning to Common Core.

Validity and reliability are not as clearly defined in qualitative research but are most often described in the realm of trustworthiness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Patton (2002) acknowledges that while there are no absolute rules that can be applied for reliability and validity in qualitative research, it is imperative that the researcher use all possible means to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal in the course of the study. Therefore, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data,

the confidence in the conclusions is strengthened and the level of trustworthiness is raised.

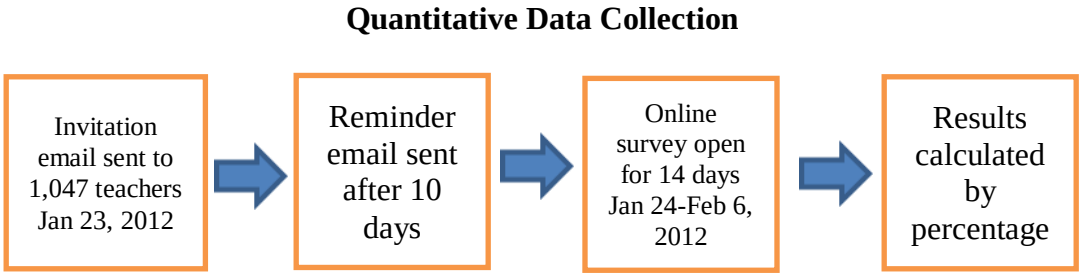

Figure 3. **Timeline of Online Survey.**

Participants

The study was conducted in a southwestern state in a midsize public school district comprised of 28 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 3 high schools, and 1 alternative school. The district serves approximately 16,000 students. At the time, one elementary school and one high school were on the "Needs Improvement" list having not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), according to the tenets of NCLB. Two elementary schools have achieved Blue Ribbon status and one elementary and one middle school are Great Expectations model schools. Eight elementary, two middle schools, and two high schools exceeded the state average API score of 1138 in 2011.

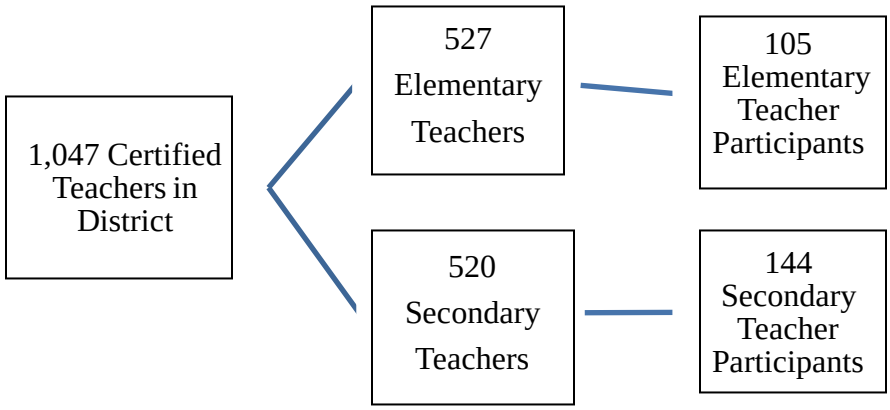

Figure 4. **Sources of Data – Survey.**

Of the 1,047 certified teachers (520 secondary and 527 elementary) in the district, all were contacted by email and encouraged to participate in the survey. An initial email requesting teachers to participate was sent out on January 23, 2012. An email to school principals requesting that they urge teachers to share their opinions on the survey was sent on the same day. The survey was posted on kwiksurveys.com, and teachers were given 14 days to respond. The survey questions about years of service, grade levels, and content areas across the curriculum are designed to insure an across-the-board response. In predicting teacher efficacy beliefs, demographic variables such as race and gender have not been found to be strong predictors of the efficacy beliefs of teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007); therefore, questions of either ethnicity or gender were not included as part of the survey.

At Day 10 of the 14-day timeframe, a second email reminder was sent for those who wished to participate but who had not yet answered the survey. On February 6, after 14 days, a final email was sent thanking participants for their input and soliciting volunteers for face-to-face interviews. At the close of the survey, the data were compiled in the form of percentages of participation among grade levels and subject areas.

The purpose of including all grade levels at the initial stage of this study was to determine a cross section of teachers' efficacy levels in the face of change to rule out anomalies that only occur in teachers at the elementary or secondary level. In allowing all teachers to identify their level of efficacy in the classroom through the survey, their responses led to a more focused set of interview questions to probe their perceptions of

change and its impact on their classroom efficacy during the qualitative portion of this study.

The pool of potential participants in the quantitative portion of this study was 1,047 certified teachers in a midsize public school district in a southwestern state: 527 elementary teachers (Grades PK-5) and 520 secondary teachers (Grades 6-12).

Of the 1,047 certified teachers in the district, 249 teachers (24% of all classroom teachers) participated in the survey, consisting of 105 of the 527 elementary teachers (20% of all elementary) and 144 of the 520 secondary teachers (28% of all secondary).

In this district, veteran teachers constitute the majority of the population of certified teachers; there are 736 veteran teachers (70%), 196 seasoned teachers (19%) and 115 novice teachers (11%). In the sample, 136 veteran teachers (55%), 85 seasoned teachers (34%), and 28 noviceteachers (11%) responded to the survey.

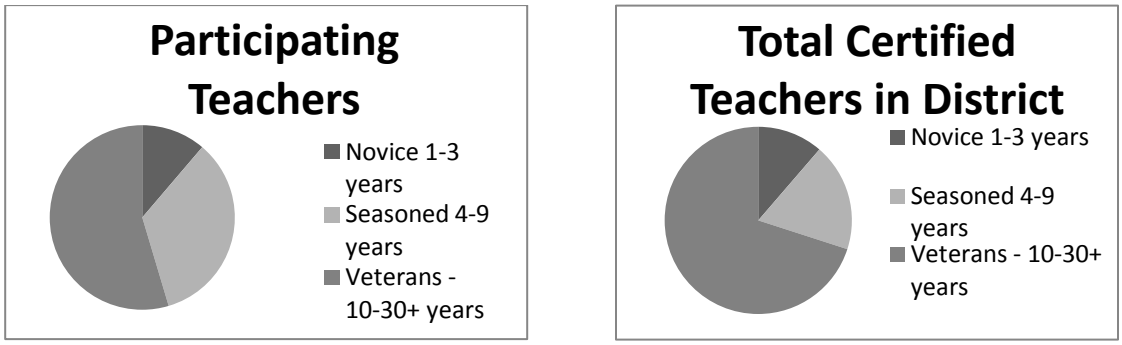

Figure 5. **Survey Participants Compared to Total Certified Teachers in District.**

Current Teaching Assignment

Next, teachers were asked to identify what subject areas and grades were assigned to them for the 2011-2012 school year. The 105 elementary teachers were responsible for the following content areas:

- all subject areas – 78

- math only – 3
- reading only – 4
- reading and math – 3
- music and/or physical education – 3
- learning disability resource/special education teachers – 5
- computer skills – 1
- transitional first grade – 1
- Pre-K – 1
- instructional coaches for grades K-5 - 6

Because the majority of elementary teachers prepare and teach all subjects throughout the day, the Common Core State Standards will greatly impact their instruction as they will be required to be fluent across the curriculum for all standards as they impact students in grades K-5. This group represented 42 percent of those responding.

The 144 secondary teachers taught the following content areas:

- science – 16
- math – 28
- language arts – 33
- social studies – 12
- art – 3
- orchestra – 1
- computer applications – 5
- special education – 37

- physical education – 1
- foreign language – 5
- agriculture – 1
- alternative school teachers – 2

The 144 middle school and high school teachers totaled 58 percent of the participants.

With subject areas established, teachers were asked to identify the grade levels of their teaching assignments, and it was clear that many of the teachers responding to the survey teach multiple grades throughout the day. Eleven Pre-K teachers also responded to the survey even though there are no Common Core standards for the Pre-K level. Grades K-5 were represented by 34 percent of participants, while middle school grades 6-8 comprised 17 percent, and high school grades 9-12 made up the remaining 47 percent. Individual grade percentages are shown in Table 2.

Table 3 illustrates how many years participants have taught at their current assignments: over half (51%) had been in their current teaching positions between one and five years; another 25 percent had been teaching in their particular teaching environments for between six and ten years; and the remaining 24 percent have been assigned to their current positions for 11 to 30 or more years.

Class size, in conjunction with years of experience and teaching environment, may affect efficacy, and 92 percent of teachers are in compliance with state statutes. Table 4 shows the following details about class sizes: 22 teachers had class sizes of 10 students or less; 67 teachers had class sizes of 10-20 students; 133 teachers have classes that fall into the state recommended class sizes of 21-30 students; however, 18 teachers (7.5%) reported class sizes of over 30 students.

The typical respondent for the survey was a high school level teacher with more than ten years of experience in the district but less than five years in the current assignment who teaches more than one level of subject matter or more than one subject throughout the duty day with 21-30 students per class.

The 105 elementary teachers were distributed in this way: 11 Pre-K, 39 kindergarten, 35 first grade, 26 second grade, 25 third grade, 31 fourth grade, and 34 fifth grade levels. Numerous special education and reading specialty teachers assist multiple grades, and team teaching in the upper intermediate grades requires teachers to share their content areas among multiple grade levels; thus, the 105 teachers had multiple grade level or content area responsibilities.

In the secondary grades, the 144 middle and high school teachers were also responsible for multiple grade levels, and those participating from the middle school grades represented 30 sixth grade, 35 seventh grade, and 33 eighth grade levels. High school participants were divided into 55 ninth grade, 66 tenth grade, 73 eleventh grade, and 68 twelfth grade teachers. Teachers were counted in more than one category if they teach more than one grade level during the course of the day.

Qualitative Data Collection



Figure 6. **Sequence of Interviews and Focus Group Sessions.**

One of the three high schools in the district was chosen as the site for the thirteen one-on-one interviews and for the three focus group sessions. The high school

has an enrollment of 1,017 students: 228 freshmen, 251 sophomores, 272 juniors, and 266 seniors. The ethnic representations were 31 percent African American, 52 percent Caucasian, 13 percent American Indian, and 1 percent Pacific Islander. Of the students, 11 percent also listed themselves as Hispanic or Latino culture. Approximately 33 percent of the students are on the free or reduced lunch program. The faculty was comprised of 56 certified faculty members, 6 administrators, and 4 counselors.

Interviews

Information was gathered about teachers' perceptions of change through face-to-face interviews using the open-ended interview questions in Appendix C. Since the interviews were designed to allow teachers' answers to evolve, additional questions may have emerged during the course of the interviews and were coded accordingly.

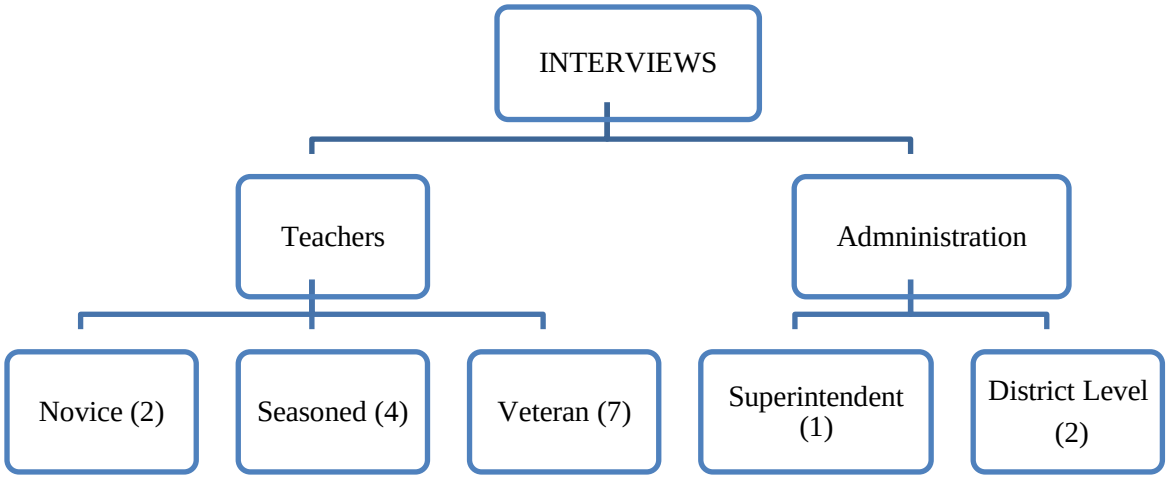

Figure 7. **Sources of Data – Interviews.**

For the one-on-one interviews, each volunteer made a separate appointment for an interview. The participants were 7 veteran teachers, 4 seasoned teachers, and 2 novice teachers who are all members of the faculty of the selected public high school in the southwestern region around which the mixed methods study revolved. Thirteen

teachers were interviewed, representing teachers of science (1), history (2), foreign language (2), English (1), math (3), special education (2), JROTC (1), and art (1). The 13 interviewed teachers were classified by years of service: 7 veteran teachers (10+ years), 4 seasoned teachers (4-9 years), and 2 novice teachers (1-3 years). Each interviewee signed a consent form with a waiver of confidentiality agreement to being audio recorded and quoted in the research study.

Using the questionnaire in Appendix C, each interview began with a break-the-ice question about what characteristics are indicative of a great teacher. As the interview progressed, the questions were asked in the order listed on the questionnaire, clarified when necessary, and each teacher was encouraged to answer as completely as was comfortably possible. The interviewees were given the opportunity to take any question in a direction of their choosing.

Each teacher was interviewed and audio recorded individually at the school site with the same script of open-ended questions (Appendix C), and the time for each interview ranged from 10-30 minutes, depending on the extent of experience of each teacher and how much the participants wanted to expound upon their answers. Each interview was allowed to take its own direction as interviewees responded with their perceptions of change and its effect upon their self-efficacy. The list of core questions included the following topics:

- effective and ineffective educational reforms (4 questions)
- positive educational innovations (2 questions)
- examples of curriculum implementation (3 questions)
- effects of change on the job (3 questions)

- implementation of Common Core (3 questions)
- preferences for professional development (3 questions)

Three administrators (one superintendent and two curriculum directors) were interviewed with the same questions to compare and contrast their perceptions of change outside the classroom with the teachers who are in the trenches.

The multiple perceptions from the 13 teachers were juxtaposed with three administrators' perceptions about change. The interview questionnaire was utilized where appropriate with these administrators, but not all questions were applicable, so a one-to-one comparison with the teachers' responses cannot be made. However, the bulk of the questions can be compared and contrasted. The administrators were interviewed in a similar manner as the teachers for approximately 20 minutes, with the exception that during the interview with the superintendent, the two curriculum directors joined the session and the three administrators answered the questions individually and collectively.

I transcribed each recording within 24 hours of the interview and provided a transcript to each interviewee as a member checking element of this study to ensure that their comments were represented authentically. After all 13 interviews were complete and verified by the interviewees, the transcripts were reread multiple times, and the following central themes surfaced during data analysis: 1) knowledge of Common Core, 2) levels and sources of teacher efficacy, 3) need for collaboration, and 4) future impact of Common Core on students. These themes provided additional insight that extended the quantitative data from the survey.

Focus groups

Following the interviews, 12 additional teachers volunteered to form focus groups. None of the teachers who were involved in the one-on-one interviews participated in the focus groups. All volunteers for the focus groups were veteran teachers. Teachers were given two tasks: first, to propose a professional development plan for the district to implement Common Core, and second, to analyze an actual Common Core performance-based task.

With five English teachers, two science teachers, two history teachers, one financial literacy teacher, one economics teacher, and one web design teacher, the groups were distributed into interdisciplinary groups: Group 1 = two science teachers and two English teachers; Group 2 = two history teachers and two English teachers; and Group 3 = technical subject teachers (one financial literacy teacher, one economics teacher, and one web design teacher) and one English teacher.

Additionally, three assistant principals were convened as a focus group for the same tasks that the teacher groups had performed, and I served as observer of their interactions, taking notes about the similarities and differences in comparison to my observations of the teacher groups.

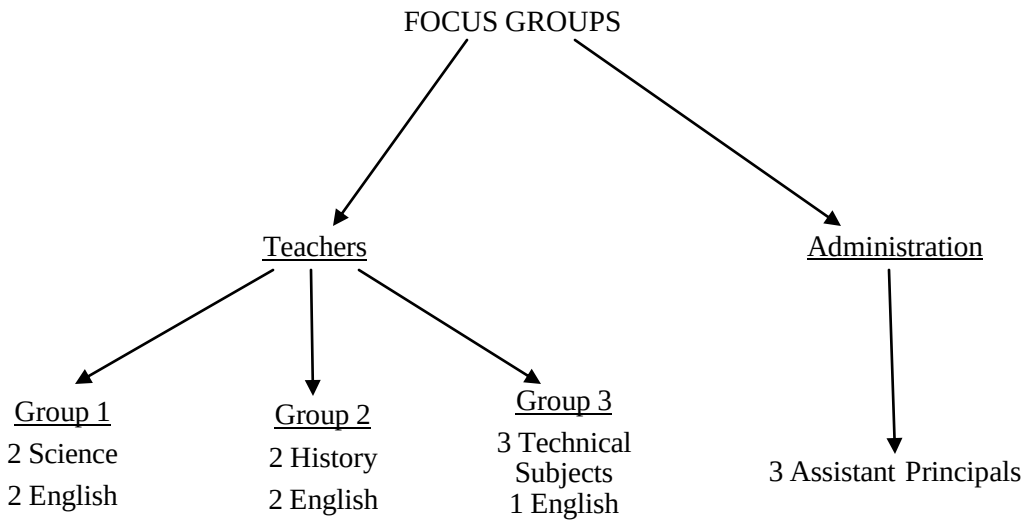

Figure 8. **Sources of Data – Focus Groups.**

Each group of four teachers gathered on separate days in a conference room in the school's library. I did not participate in the group sessions other than as facilitator. I opened the group sessions by stating the purpose of the focus group, and then I provided the handouts of the two tasks, one at a time, (Appendix D), served as timekeeper, and observed the interaction and collaboration of the group. Each focus group session lasted 20-25 minutes.

I read Task 1 aloud to the group and then asked all members to brainstorm for a minimum of 20 minutes with a goal of devising a "no limits" plan for professional development to assist teachers in implementing Common Core standards. After observing and noting the discussion, group members were notified that five minutes remained and Task 1 concluded at the end of 20 minutes.

Next, Task 2 (Appendix D), which was tailored to each group and highlighted a science, a history, or a technical subject task respectively for each group, was distributed to the four group members. The activity requirements, common to all three

groups, entailed discussing what a teacher would need to know and be able to do to ensure that students know the attached material and asking how teachers would prepare students for this particular performance-based task taken directly from Common Core State Standards. The three groups read and annotated their respective prompts with accompanying exemplar texts and discussed their strategies for accomplishing the task. Except for Group 3, Task 2 required 25 minutes to complete. The annotations on the task handouts were coupled with my observation notes for analysis of commonalities among the groups.

Quantitative Data Analysis

At the close of the 33-question survey, data were compiled and analyzed. The descriptive data are meant to capture teacher perceptions of change and knowledge about the Common Core State Standards. Each question was analyzed to discern emerging themes about teachers' reactions to change and their strategies for adapting to change. Emergent themes were grouped by knowledge of Common Core, actual teaching context and environment, perception of self-efficacy, collaboration, and view of implications of Common Core for the future of students. Tables 2-28 depict details of number of participants responding and percentages per question.

Qualitative Data Analysis

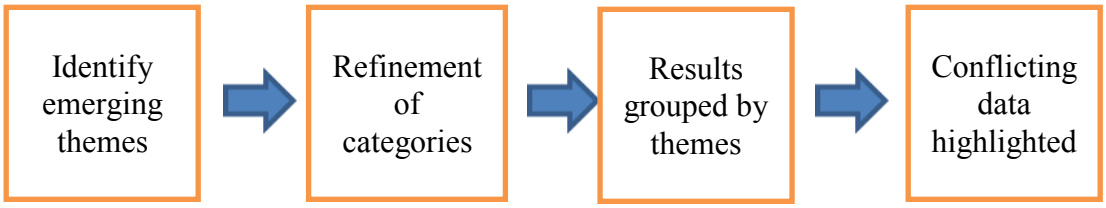

Figure 9. **Analysis and Coding of Qualitative Data.**

The qualitative portion of the study was designed to elicit teachers' real-life reactions to change and teachers' preferences for professional development opportunities. Data collected during interviews and documents collected during focus group sessions were analyzed using a method of constant comparison to identify units of meaning, which were grouped into categories (Creswell, 2007). Multiple readings of the transcripts of the interviews for emerging themes revealed patterns of responses.

Ethical Consideration and Researcher Subjectivity Statement

Researcher influence is a concern in qualitative research since "researcher-researched interaction is common" (Glesne, 2006, p. 129). As the primary interpreter of data, it is important to acknowledge my own close involvement to the participants in this study to reduce any influence on either the data collection or data analysis. Glesne (2006) suggests that subjectivity can be an asset on which to be capitalized rather than completely removed from the process, but the researcher must be aware of subjectivities to prevent distorting the data during analysis.

Discovering teachers' perception of curricular change in light of the imminent implementation of the Common Core State is important to me as a researcher since my doctoral studies have focused on not only academic curriculum but instructional leadership for teachers who will be the frontline of this fundamental curricular change over the next three years. These are my colleagues, and the results of this study will allow me to assist district level administrators in knowing what the teachers feel they need to be more efficacious throughout the transition and implementation of Common Core State Standards. By focusing on the desired professional development that the teachers feel would be most effective to their instructional practices, the administration

can tailor professional development to include sessions that the teachers feel would be most beneficial and thus respect the needs of the frontline implementation teams.

Since I have taught in this district for 19 years at the secondary level, seven years as a 7th grade teacher and 12 years as a 10th-12th grade teacher, I have observed many teachers as they have reacted to change, regardless of size and impact. During the interviews, I allowed teachers to tell their stories without interjecting my own opinions, but knowing and working with these teachers, I recognized some discrepancies in what they voiced as their perceptions of change and what their observable actions in the classroom and at faculty meetings are. By recognizing my intimate knowledge of the participants and by utilizing research methods of both the quantitative and qualitative structures, the overall impact of subjectivity on the study can be reduced. Total subjectivity is impossible because of the human factor, but Patton (2002) advocates being transparent with any biases by discussing their possible influence on the data during the collection and analysis phases and then mitigating the influence of those biases through triangulation of data.

I expected the majority of responses to come from secondary school educators, and in fact, 58 percent of the participants were secondary educators. However, with 42 percent of responders being elementary educators, and all curriculum areas included, the survey is a reliable representation of the population of this district.

In addition, the qualitative portion of the mixed methods study focuses on the high school in which I teach, and the teachers who were members of the three levels of teacher interviewees and the focus groups members are well known to me as I am to them. On a positive note, the teachers felt comfortable in being honest about their

perceptions of change knowing that I can be trusted to keep their answers confidential. Even the newer teachers who have seen me in a quasi-administrative role as the site testing coordinator were very forthcoming with their perceptions of change, limited as they may have been. Both of these situations were tempered by questions that were open ended. Participants were asked to acknowledge their consent to provide data and comments that could be quoted in the study, and each consented to participate prior to answering the survey or the interview questions.

This study includes a number of strategies to enhance the internal validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of the study, including member checking and triangulation of qualitative interview data among teachers and administrators juxtaposed with the descriptive quantitative survey data. Responses to the online survey were anonymous and untraceable; no answers could be connected to the participants. The formal interviews were conducted at the teachers' workplace and documented with an audio recording, which was transcribed at the conclusion of each interview. A transcript of the interview was provided to each participant as a member checking component of validity. By having participants review the transcribed interviews, they had the opportunity to verify their responses or clarify any portions they felt did not accurately reflect their perceptions of curricular change.

Interviewees and focus group participants were identified by name on the audio files, but not in the research report, where descriptors such as "veteran history teacher" or "seasoned English teacher" were used when quoting directly. Audio MP3 and Wav files have been stored on a separate flash drive that will be kept in safe storage.

By clarifying my assumptions and worldview based on my personal experiences, ethical consideration of the epistemological constructs contributes to increasing the internal validity of this study. The primary goal of this study was to capture a snapshot of the critical incubative period of transition to Common Core.

Chapter 4: Results of Research Study

The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' perceptions of change through educational reform and how teachers perceive their self-efficacy in the face of imminent curricular change.

Research Questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions of curricular change?
2. What role does teacher efficacy play in the implementation of Common Core State Standards?

Quantitative Research Findings

The first step in the research study was to discover teachers' perceptions of their own teaching efficacy in a variety of teaching settings across the district prior to full implementation of Common Core State Standards. This was established through the use of a 33-question survey adapted from the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by Gibson and Dembo (1984). The full survey can be found in Appendix A.

From the 33-question survey emerged six general themes: 1) varied experiences among participants; 2) current knowledge levels of Common Core; 3) teacher efficacy levels; 4) instructional strategies; 5) teacher collaboration; and 6) future impact of Common Core.

Knowledge of Common Core State Standards

With teaching environment established, teachers ranked their knowledge of Common Core State Standards (Table 5). Almost two-thirds (63%) of teachers claimed minimal or no knowledge of Common Core. Only four teachers (approximately 2% of

participating teachers) claimed extensive knowledge of Common Core with 35 percent claiming moderate knowledge.

As shown in Table 6, when participants were asked if they had received "adequate" information about Common Core at the outset of the first year of transition to the new standards, 34 percent of the teachers disagreed in some degree that they had received an adequate amount of information. This trend carried through the next two questions where 40 percent of the teachers disagreed that they had received adequate information about the transition timeline for Common Core (Table 7), and nearly 50 percent disagreed that they had received adequate information about the implementation of Common Core in 2014-2015 (Table 8). There were 10-12 teachers who responded with "Not Enough Information on these three questions of being adequately informed about the new standards, the timeline for transition, and the implementation, and it may be supposed that these were the 11 Pre-K teachers for whom there are no Common Core Standards, thus representing another 4-5 percent who do not feel adequately informed.

Efficacy

To discover each teacher's current level of personal efficacy regarding their knowledge of Common Core and its compatibility with the current state standards, the questions targeting efficacy were asked from first person point of view, and teachers were required to rate themselves on a personal level of self-efficacy and belief in their abilities and knowledge. Personal efficacy questions were directed to teachers' perceptions of their own teaching abilities. Table 9 reveals that teachers overwhelmingly disagree that their perception of the teaching abilities is more

important than their actual abilities (85%). Only 11 percent felt that their perception of effectiveness is more important than their actual teaching abilities.

Further, teachers were asked about their confidence in their level of understanding of Common Core. Only 24 percent agreed with the statement that they are confident in their understanding of Common Core (Table 10). On the other hand, 38 percent disagreed with the statement revealing that they do not feel confident, while 18 percent only slightly agreed and 20 percent did not have enough information about Common Core. In other words, 76 percent of participants were not confident in their understanding of Common Core.

Regarding the Common Core standards, teachers were asked whether they felt the current state standards and Common Core are more alike than different and whether or not they felt Common Core would require them to alter their instructional strategies significantly. Because the participating teachers felt they needed more information as shown above, Table 11 shows that 37 percent did not feel they had enough information to answer. About 45 percent did feel that there is more in common between the two sets of standards than differences. Only 18 percent disagreed in varying degrees. Table 12 shows that only a little more than half the teachers who felt they had the information needed to answer this question believe that they will have to significantly change their classroom instructional strategies. Again, 37 percent did not have enough information to answer the question.

Teachers speculated how their understanding of Common Core will impact their perception of their ability to teach, and Table 13 illustrates that 60 percent of teachers believe that their understanding of the new standards will have an impact on the way

they perceive their teaching abilities, but 23 percent did not have enough information and 17 percent disagreed with that statement.

Teachers were questioned about the number of times informational texts were included as a part of their instructional strategies, a requirement of Common Core standards. Table 14 shows that even before being required to do so, over half the teachers participating (56%) always or frequently use informational texts including history/social studies, math, science, and technical subject areas in their teaching. Only 4 percent reported never using informational texts, while 40 percent have experience using informational texts and will only have to increase their frequency of use to more than sometimes or rarely.

Because Common Core has cross-curricular expectations, teachers were questioned about their frequency of participation in an interdisciplinary teaching approach. Cross-curricular and interdisciplinary studies can be accomplished within one classroom using a variety of content areas or by involving several classrooms and content area experts as a team. Table 15 shows that over half of the teachers (58%) who responded always or frequently use an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. This may occur more frequently in the elementary classrooms where one teacher teaches in a unit format that incorporates all subject areas. However, those teachers comprise only 78 of the 140 teachers who reportedly use this approach. In other words, an additional 62 teachers are purposely incorporating other disciplines into their content areas in a single-subject classroom setting.

When participants were asked about incorporating other core subject area content into instruction, 68 percent perceived themselves to always or frequently

incorporate other subjects (Table 16). Only 12 teachers (5%) answered "never" or "rarely" as their frequency of incorporating other core subject area content into their own subject matter.

In analyzing instructional strategies, 92 percent of participants believe they frequently or always use a variety of instructional strategies to reach academic goals for their students (Table 17). Further, 98 percent felt they frequently or always provided an alternative explanation or example when students are unclear about the concept being taught (Table 18). When asked about varying assessments, 84 percent of teachers claimed to frequently or always use a variety of assessment strategies to gauge student achievement (Table 19).

Approximately 87 percent of teachers surveyed felt they are confident in gauging their students' comprehension during instruction (Table 20). Additionally, 86 percent of teachers felt they always or frequently adjust their instruction for individual students (Table 21), while 91 percent always or frequently provide appropriate challenges for students (Table 22).

The perceived ability to incorporate other subject areas into instruction was rated highly by teachers. As Table 23 shows, 95 percent of participants claimed they were confident about being able to incorporate other subject areas into instruction.

Collaboration

Teachers were asked how often they currently meet as a department, as an instructional team, or by grade level each quarter of the school year. Table 24 shows that teachers reported scheduled collaboration occurring at least once per quarter in 96 percent of the teachers' settings, with 44 percent meeting five or more times during a

nine-week period. When asked if teachers collaborated with teachers from other disciplines, 55 percent attested to always or frequently collaborating, while 43 percent were sometimes or rarely collaborating and only 2 percent claimed they were never collaborating with other content area teachers (Table 25). In other words, 98 percent of teachers are reaching beyond the scope of their own content areas.

For further support, Table 26 testifies to the availability of a mentor or trusted colleague who can assist the teacher on an as-needed basis, and 65 percent claimed to know a contact for individual collaboration, while 35 percent did not have that level of available support.

Future Impact of Common Core on Students

When asked if incorporating other subject areas into the primary teaching assignment lesson plans has real-world application, overwhelmingly 96 percent agreed (Table 27). Of those 232 teachers who agreed, 215 claimed that instruction using other subject areas for application to the real world was a personal goal (Table 28). Even with a lack of adequate information, teachers recognize that the new standards are geared toward making students college and career ready, which implies real-world application in its description.

Summary of Quantitative Findings

The descriptive data collected during the quantitative phase of this mixed methods research study centers around the teacher's perception of self-efficacy in the classroom in light of the imminent implementation of Common Core State Standards. With a cross-section of grade levels and subject areas from the teachers who responded, several observations can be made regarding the participating teachers:

1. Six out of ten teachers claimed limited knowledge about Common Core.
2. Approximately half the teachers noted that sufficient information had not been provided about the transition timeline and implementation of Common Core.
3. Almost four of ten teachers did not have enough information to determine if the current state standards are more similar than different to Common Core. Similarly, four in ten teachers did not have enough information about Common Core to determine if the new standards will cause a significant altering of their instructional strategies.
4. Only one-fourth of the teachers felt confident in their understanding of Common Core with three-fourths of the participants either not feeling confident or not having enough information to make that decision.
5. Six out of ten teachers believe their level of understanding of Common Core will impact their teaching ability, but two out of ten teachers felt they did not have enough information.
6. Seven of ten teachers in this district have 10 or more years of service, yet over half of all teachers surveyed have been in their current position less than five years. The high rate of mobility within the district is indicative of teachers who are familiar with adapting to changes in teaching environments.
7. Informational texts, which will be required to be interspersed in all core subject areas under Common Core, are currently prevalent in more than half of the classrooms in this particular district as a normal course of instruction.
8. Over half the teachers currently see their practices as interdisciplinary with the incorporation of other subject content two-thirds of the time. According to the

survey, teachers also felt confident in their ability to incorporate other subjects into their instruction for real-world application.

9. Collaboration with other teachers and incorporation of other subject matter into the primary teaching setting is occurring in two out of three classrooms.
10. Teachers claimed, as a part of their teaching routine, to use a variety of instructional strategies, to provide alternative explanations, and to employ a variety of assessments as the normal course of instruction.
11. Teachers are confident in their abilities of how they are teaching currently and further are confident that with more information about Common Core, they will be able to adapt their instructional strategies to the new standards for the real-world benefit of their students toward a goal of academic achievement that is both college and career ready.

Qualitative Research Findings

The qualitative portion of this research study regarding teachers' perceptions of curricular change was enlightening through what Stake (1995b) calls "discovery learning" (p. 442). Through open-ended questions during one-on-one interviews (Appendix C) and during tasks requiring focus groups to develop a professional development opportunity related to Common Core and to analyze the skills necessary for both teacher and student on a content-focused performance-based task from Common Core (Appendix D), readers of this study will be provided with an opportunity for vicarious experience (Stake, 1995b).

While the vignette in Chapter 1 of this dissertation is indicative of many teachers' reactions to change over the years, the actual current teachers who agreed to

take part in one-on-one interviews to discuss the perceptions of curricular change revealed many of the same emotions as Mrs. Jackson.

In the tradition of qualitative research as espoused by Creswell (2007), this research examined the incubative period of transition to Common Core standards in a bounded system consisted of teachers of varying years of experience in a single high school within a midsize school district in the Southwest as described in full context detail above. The study used multiple sources of information with a rich description and case-based themes occurring during the school year 2011-2012. This format was appropriate to this study because the 13 teachers who volunteered to be interviewed and the 12 teachers who participated in focus group sessions represented purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2007). The teachers' data, in addition to six administrators' input, showed different perspectives on the issue of the role of teacher efficacy during curricular change and the necessary professional development needed to fully equip teachers for the implementation of Common Core.

The qualitative portion of this mixed methods study took place midway through the school year 2011-2012. By this time, the teacher grapevine had disseminated at least a minimal amount of information about the Common Core State Standards. There were varied reactions to the news that a fundamental curricular change was imminent, with some teachers taking the initiative to read and learn more on their own, while at the other end of the spectrum, others took a "wait-until-I'm-told-I-have-to" approach. Based on the theoretical orientation of critical theory and postmodernism, interviews of 13 teachers were conducted in the teachers' workplace at the selected school site. The

responses to the interview questions show evidence of common themes that carried through all 13 interviews.

One-on-One Interviews -- Teachers

As a means of easing into the conversation about curricular change, each interview began with a question about what qualities make a teacher "great." The novice teachers felt that *caring, accessible, relatable,* and *available* were characteristics of a great teacher. The seasoned teachers added characteristics of being committed, creative, and orderly; being a good listener or a shoulder to lean on for students; and teaching the life skills that are not being taught at home, such as manners, hygiene, right versus wrong, and cooperation with others. Veteran teachers also felt there is an aspect of nurturing in a great teacher who must wear "many hats" with the ability to motivate, mentor, and guide students to navigate the gauntlet of education to discover their own learning. Additionally, veteran teachers believed great teachers are continuous learners with dedication, determination to improve, and a continued love of teaching in spite of the number of years of experience.

What was noticeably absent from this list of stellar characteristics was the ability to adapt to changes that are required throughout the course of a teacher's career. The assumption from the absence of any mention of the quality of adjusting to change may mean that all teachers – veteran, seasoned, or novice – find change inherent in the teaching profession and all must work through change as a normal course of teaching in all content areas and grade levels.

Research Question #1: What are teachers' perceptions of curricular change?

Responses to the first research question regarding how teachers perceive curricular change ran the gamut of change being a "breath of fresh air" to "nobody likes change but a wet baby," both responses coming from veteran teachers with 30 or more years of experience. One elective course teacher, also a veteran, remarked that "change comes as a bitter pill to swallow" because it takes work and effort to adjust to new requirements. A seasoned art teacher remarked that a change in his teaching duty through an addition of a course of stagecraft design actually made him "angry"; he felt it was "unfair that he was forced to teach a course without any background in theater" even though his new course fell under the umbrella of his subject matter. He believed that his "reduction in effective teaching was a disservice to his students" while he worked through "on-the-job training" without any professional development support.

A similar sentiment was echoed by a veteran science teacher who "[didn't] feel ready to do the best job for [her] students" at the outset of changes in the curriculum, and when she was "not effective, students suffer." A seasoned special education teacher was "worried and nervous" when her grade level changed from middle school to high school because she "didn't know how [she] was going to be able to do it" since she "did not feel very sure of [her]self." Her remedy was to take the initiative to seek out information from the State Department's website so that she could "get past the initial worry and doubt."

In contrast, the novice teachers seemed less focused on themselves and more focused on how the change would affect their students. A foreign language teacher expressed "fear," "frustration," and "stress," but felt it was her responsibility to her

students to be "willing to anticipate the changes and be preemptive" in arming herself with the new requirements. A novice math teacher felt "overwhelmed" by the new Common Core standards, but knowing that she would be "forced to participate," she decided it was better to be "proactive not reactive" and present a "positive front as a role model to her students."

One unanimous response among all participants was that change always seems difficult initially until there has been time to compare what has been in place with what is new. Among the 13 interviewees, change deemed "effective" led to the embracing of the changes required after hurdling the preliminary fear and anxiety that accompanies not only curricular change but changes in life in general.

As discussion moved to how curricular changes were implemented in the district, there was unambiguous agreement that it has always been through a top-down approach. One elective teacher commented that new curriculum is "generally shoved down your throat, ready or not," but he admitted that implementation could be improved through allowing "open communication with other content area teachers."

A veteran history teacher added that "if teachers were allowed to design the curriculum in something like professional learning communities, the best teachers would embrace the challenge, and other teachers would see it as peer-driven instead of top-down."

When questioned about No Child Left Behind, veteran teachers who had experienced the change in 2002 admitted that the premise behind the fundamental change had "good intentions," but that NCLB had "eliminated creativity from a teacher's repertoire" because of the focus on objective testing. A veteran history

teacher felt that NCLB seemed to emanate from "federal legislators who have not been in the classroom since they themselves were students," and they were dictating a mandate to teachers to "fit square pegs into round holes."

A math veteran claimed that NCLB was "never about student accountability; it was about holding teachers accountable." Without "parent accountability" and "allowing students to fail as part of the learning process," a veteran Spanish teacher agreed that NCLB was not as effective as it was intended. Only one veteran English teacher felt positively toward NCLB because she was able to use it as a guide when beginning a new grade level.

Although seasoned teachers came into the teaching profession under NCLB, one math teacher felt it was "too rigid" while a special education teacher pointed out that "when special needs students bring down test scores overall, there is no recognition for subgroups that show progress and this is prejudicial." A novice math teacher held the opinion that NCLB is "too homogeneous in requiring all students to be proficient by a certain target date and believing that all students will go to college."

As the topic turned toward Common Core State Standards, the novice teachers, one a math teacher and one a foreign language teacher, both admitted they were "interested" in the new standards but would "withhold judgment until we can break them down" to determine how drastic the changes would be. For math, the novice teacher has heard that the mantra will be "less is more," meaning less concepts taught to a deeper level of understanding, and she is interested in seeing how that will manifest itself in the classroom. The foreign language novice was truly unsure as to what role her subject area would play in the implementation of Common Core.

The seasoned teachers had a different perspective on the new standards. A math teacher remarked that the new set of standards "scares me" because there has been "no training and it feels like I've been left floundering to find out everything on my own." Additionally, she felt the "lofty goals of the higher standards added stress and frustration" to the lack of preparation. The seasoned art teacher dismissed the new standards as "not applicable to elective courses." When I mentioned the literacy strands that apply even to technical subjects, he replied that he would be a "team player in a supportive role," but he did not feel he would be affected greatly by Common Core.

A seasoned history teacher considered the literacy strands pertaining to social studies were "layers that are hard to navigate because there is so much," but he added that since he and some of the other teachers in his department were already incorporating Advanced Placement strategies in their classrooms, his instruction was not going to change that much."

The veteran teachers' responses seemed informed by the perspective of having been through a curriculum implementation in the past. Professionally, a change to Common Core is going to entail "authentic ownership by all since we all have a vested interest in being successful," according to a veteran math teacher, who also confessed to being "excited and optimistic about envisioning a different school from the antiquated industrial model."

"Usually we feel like we are being thrown to the wolves," a veteran Spanish teacher commented about new curriculum implementation, but admitted that "problem solving is a necessary life skill" and she would approach these new standards with "an open mind, patience, and extra time."

A veteran English teacher felt there were stages to accepting any curricular change: "There's the period of anxiety, then there's where you have limited knowledge, and then you get enough to make yourself dangerous, and then … unconscious competence. Then you get familiar with it and comfortable and then it's easy."

A sentiment that "this too shall pass," referring to other incremental changes that have occurred in the history of educational reform, was not mentioned by a single interviewee. On the contrary, teachers seemed to recognize that it would not be a choice they could make – whether they would use the Common Core State Standards – but rather that this was a fundamental educational reform that had the magnitude of a nearly nationwide mandate.

Research Question #2 –
What role will teacher efficacy play in the implementation of the upcoming fundamental change in education, Common Core State Standards?

What was discovered as the target shifted to the second research question about teacher efficacy was that teachers have varying levels of emotional responses about implementing a new set of standards and releasing the old, comfortable state-mandated objectives that have been in place for the last decade. Teachers expressed anxiety, fear, stress, frustration, reluctance, and hesitancy over how this imminent change might impact their sense of efficacy in the classroom.

Colleagues outside this particular setting who were interested in this study prior to any interviews or focus group sessions or survey questions, commented that using the term "efficacy" was off-putting as it is not a common term, so I approached the issue by asking, "How effective did you feel in carrying out your teaching duties in the face of

curricular change?" or "How effective was your instruction at the outset of a change in your situation?"

Many of the sentiments of the participants were included in their perceptions of curricular change, and it always pertained to how well they were able to help their students learn when they were unsure of themselves. The two novice teachers declared that they needed more training and more mentoring from experienced teachers to gain that sense of efficacy that would help them to feel confident enough to implement instruction that would allow their students to meet the new standards. The seasoned teachers held similar opinions, with a history teacher noting that if he had to start teaching with the new standards right now, he would definitely feel "a reduction in effectiveness in his teaching abilities" without adequate meaningful and systematic training on the standards.

A seasoned special education teacher said that "first we have to zero in on our own skills to master the teaching of the standards" before we can submit our students to "trial and error teaching." During the interviews, the lack of personal efficacy in teaching the new Common Core standards was a common theme among all teachers.

While concerned, a veteran math teacher did not seem to feel intimidated by the new Common Core standards. He believed that his approach to keeping a high level of efficacy could be attributed to his personality as a "planner, one who is slow to react, allowing new things to marinate rather than becoming anxious." He plans to take time to talk with others as he is "open to trying new ways to teach" to accomplish this "paradigm shift" of new standards. His attitude, while rare, speaks to not only his teacher efficacy but also his personal efficacy in having the confidence to maintain a

high level of effectiveness in his classroom throughout the transition to and implementation of Common Core State Standards.

A veteran history teacher expected to "make a lot of mistakes at the beginning but I will work through it for the sake of my students." In other words, while efficacy might be lower at the beginning, efficacy is recoverable and worth the effort.

Since training, or lack thereof, became a common theme in interview discussions, the topic moved toward past experiences with professional development. Of the whole-faculty training opportunities that were deemed "useless," "meaningless," and "a waste of time" were a half-day session led by a reformed meth addict, a three-hour analysis of testing statistics from a State Department representative, and a presentation by officers from the police department's narcotics and gang unit. Elective course teachers doubly voiced their opinions that for them, the worst professional development experiences are when teachers are "lumped together and the information only pertains to a few." Because of the upcoming implementation of Common Core, all teachers were focused on "practical," "relevant," "innovative," "hands-on," "applicable to my classroom" sessions with other teachers to raise their confidence levels.

As previously revealed in the responses to the survey, teachers thought they had not been provided with adequate information about Common Core (34%), the timeline for transitioning to Common Core (40%), or the implementation of Common Core (49%), and the overwhelming majority of teachers felt their knowledge of Common Core was either "None" or "Minimal" (63%). The interview responses echoed the survey findings.

When asked, "What do you need to equip you for the transition and implementation of the new Common Core standards," the answers were resoundingly focused on professional development that offered frequent, practical, hands-on, small group, content-specific sessions. The novice math teacher exclaimed, "I need something I can use NOW to feel confident."

Many of the participants cited Dr. Mark A. Forget's (2004) MAX Teaching workshops where several practical skills are taught and practiced repeatedly during an eight-hour session. Typically, teachers left the MAX Teaching workshops ready to use the MAX Teaching strategies in class the next day.

One veteran history teacher pointed out that the trainers in Common Core need to "avoid the sales pitch" and "shut up about the theory" and "let the teachers get together and design the pedagogy and the techniques that can actually be used in the classrooms." She was further adamant that professional learning communities take place in core subject area groups since "honestly, math does not want to know what history Common Core is or the English." In general, teachers wanted time for immersion and time to discuss potential changes with subject area colleagues.

Other teachers, veteran, seasoned, and novice alike, voiced the same reaction that the professional development be site-based, small groups so that "nobody can hide and everybody contributes." A seasoned high school history teacher suggested groups of 3-4 teachers with an emphasis on horizontal alignment and larger group meetings (10-15 teachers) with the middle school for vertical alignment.

A veteran math teacher said that, through meaningful conversation, teachers gain the confidence in their own personal teaching efficacy "making the reluctant

teachers feel they can" present instruction to their students based on the new standards. A veteran English teacher and self-described "workshop junkie" stated that presenters should be "one of us – a normal Joe" who has been trained in train-the-trainer sessions and then who comes back to share the training in the small groups, rather than someone who is unfamiliar to the faculty and who is unaware of the nuances of each school site. Preference of who should be the trainer for each content area at each site was never clear from the participants, although interviewees assumed department chairpersons were the most likely choices.

The next aspect of professional development that surfaced during the interviews was the theme of dedicated time for training. All teachers interviewed felt that a "nice gesture" from the administration would be to set aside time for teachers to collaborate during the workday. This would be seen as the district level administrators advocating for teacher efficacy through prioritizing the Common Core State Standards and being invested in the transition to the new standards as well as showing that the teachers are "respected as professionals," according to a veteran history teacher.

Additional monitoring by administrators to insure "everyone pulls their own weight" in the session was suggested by a veteran math teacher to instill the change in school climate in all participants. Several suggestions for frequency of once a week for subject areas during the first quarter of the school year, evolving to using two sessions a month for cross-curricular teaming after all teachers feel efficacious in their understanding of the standards.

One other aspect of bad professional development experiences that showed up in teacher comments was the lack of individual teacher choice. A seasoned art teacher

pointed out that the current method of professional development of the masses "lacks impact to assist academic areas specifically and precludes (for the most part) the interchange of ideas and solutions between peers within each subject matter area."

As a seasoned history teacher put it, "if we are the professional, shouldn't we have a choice in our own development?" Regardless of professional development committees at the site or district level, a novice math teacher felt teachers should have "options that are adjusted to fit" the individual needs of the teacher.

Teachers in the district receive five professional development days every year, and a seasoned history teacher rationalized that "teachers must have input for professional development to be relevant to the individual; otherwise, there will be resentment." Attending workshops outside the district or subject area sessions at another school site, organizing communities of practice that focus on cross-curricular lesson ideas and strategies, convening vertical alignment meetings between middle and high school content area departments, and coordinating subject area horizontal alignment with other high schools in the district were suggestions of interview participants with a focus on teachers sharing best practices, unit ideas, and innovative strategies with other teachers.

When asked what effect the paying of a stipend can have on professional development, one veteran science teacher proclaimed, "You will always have half the room who would have gone without the stipend, and the other half that is only there for the stipend and not the learning." Other teachers echoed the sentiment that the stipend helps but is not necessary.

Individually, teachers revealed that their perceptions of changes in the curriculum raise the level of anxiety initially, but after overcoming the preliminary fear factor of the unknown, teachers seemed confident in tackling a new curriculum with the same level of inquiry and discovery that they expect from their students. As a collective profession, teachers encounter change continuously, and although teaching is an isolated profession, the participants in this survey recognized the benefit of seeking out other teachers in the same content area to edify each other about the unique distinctions in the new standards and the similarities and differences with the current state-mandated objectives. The participants ultimately welcomed change that was relevant and effective in the classrooms, but implementation of new curriculum that did not include input from the teachers was viewed with suspicion. The dire need for collaboration was clear among the participants, and the sense of increased efficacy gained through the collegiality bolstered their individual beliefs that they can and will be successful in teaching the new Common Core standards.

One-on-One Interviews – Administrators

One superintendent and two district level directors of curriculum were asked to discuss the same questions (where applicable) from Appendix C. Two analogies from their discussion when asked how best to implement change to maximize teacher efficacy were interjected. When asked what is the best way to change from departmentalized subject area instruction to a more cross-curricular approach as expected with the Common Core State Standards, one administrator remarked, "It's kind of like the departments are each on their own island and there's not even a ferry that goes across so you almost have to swim with the sharks to get to the next place." In

the context of the discussion, she was acknowledging the reluctance to change what has been the overall sentiment of teachers heretofore, yet there was no suggestion of how best to reach those "islands."

In commenting on the responsibility of the university in preparing prospective teachers to enter the field in 2014-2015, the year of full implementation and evaluation of Common Core, one administrator observed that it is like "trying to change the tires on the 18-wheeler while it's going down the highway," meaning that in the midst of preparing future teachers in their content areas and in the pedagogy of teaching, this is an additional requirement that the universities are also faced with in changing the mindset of the university faculty that has been preparing teachers for at least a decade to be knowledgeable in the teaching of the state-mandated objectives.

Administrators anticipated a variety of levels of reluctance among teachers to incorporate the changes necessary to implement the new standards, just as they are feeling some anxiety about assisting teachers in the transition and implementation. Further, they acknowledged that "there will always be those teachers who whine and complain because they whine and complain about everything," but there are also those "star teachers" and "master teachers" who will "take the bull by the horns and lead the rest of the herd" into the new era of standards that will insure that students will be both college and career ready.

Summary of Teacher/Administrator Interviews

Teachers' primary focus during the interviews was receiving information about Common Core in a timely, relevant, and useful manner. Administrators anticipated

reluctance from the teachers, and in fact, showed varying levels of anxiety concerning teachers implementing Common Core.

Teachers admitted that although change is difficult at first, there was a prevailing attitude of acceptance of the imminent fundamental change to Common Core. Administrators envisioned the departmentalization of the high school core content areas as a disinclination to integrate content areas, while teachers were advocates of collaborating within their subject areas as well as extending the community of practice to include other content areas in a cross curricular manner. Teachers and administrators agreed that master teachers would take the lead through the implementation of Common Core, and both parties agreed that peer-to-peer orientation and training toward the new standards would be more beneficial than a top-down approach.

Focus Groups – Teachers

After speaking to the 13 interview participants individually, 12 additional veteran teachers (who had an average of 15 years of experience) were assembled in cross-curricular focus groups to gauge the symbiotic relationships across disciplines. The faculty at the selected high school had only two teachers in the novice range and four teachers who are seasoned by definition, and since all six participated in the interviews, only veteran teachers remained to form focus groups.

Three groups of four teachers were formed: Group 1 consisted of two science teachers and two English teachers; Group 2 was comprised of two history teachers and two English teachers; and Group 3 was a blend of technical subject teachers, with one

financial literacy teacher, one economics teacher, and one web design teacher joined by one English teacher.

All groups were asked to complete two tasks during their 45-minute sessions, allowing 20 minutes for each task with five minutes of transition time between each task. The first task in all groups provided information about key design features of the Common Core State Standards and asked the teachers to collaboratively recommend a professional development plan for implementation. The second task was similar in all groups in that it was a performance-based task from the Common Core State Standards but different for each group in that it was tailored to the subject area of the non-English teachers in the group.

Task 1

The groups were more similar than different on Task 1, which involved recommending a professional development plan for implementing the Common Core standards. Groups were given latitude to create a "no limits" plan, and some of the ideas were Common Core experts brought to the school for orientation, workshops in large cities in other states (Las Vegas was a popular choice), in-state workshops, shadowing teachers in other districts who are piloting the Common Core Standards currently, and cross-district collaboration, all of which carried varying levels of cost for the district (Table 29). On a more realistic note, all groups suggested the zero-cost option of having a team of teachers (or one content area expert teacher) train the core subject areas in small groups. This option, followed by collaboration with other core subject area teachers, was the overwhelming favorite of all groups.

All groups recommended grade level and content area small group sessions on a "consistent basis, either weekly or biweekly," to collaborate with peers during at least the first two years of transition. The science teachers in Group 1 requested specific training with lesson plans that would aid them in moving away from the "cookbook" type of learning to more "inquiry-based" learning as espoused in Common Core.

History teachers in Group 2 requested speakers on specific lesson plans with plenty of "hands-on" activities to keep students engaged with logical pacing guides and suggestions for projects that could become cross curricular and include elective subjects, such as art, music, and foreign languages. The English teachers in all groups noted their need for "assistance in teaching reading skills for informational texts," which are included in the science and history curriculum through the normal daily course of study.

The elective teachers in Group 3 in web design and financial literacy both felt that they had "no clue about what role" they would play in the implementation process. Since there are no specific standards for their subject areas, their questions were primarily about "what is different and what do we need to know." In Group 3, the English teacher remarked that "the more you can get students to write in your courses, the more it will help the core subject teachers since we are all going to be requiring more writing with Common Core." There was unanimous agreement among the four members that professional development in writing for non-core, non-English teachers was a high priority.

Across all the groups, there was a sense of varying levels of anxiety toward this implementation, but the teachers seemed to have faith that administrators will consider

teachers' input about their individual and collective needs to provide beneficial professional development.

Task 2

The responses to the performance-based task in the focus groups were guided by two questions:

1. Discuss what a teacher would need to know and be able to do to insure that students know this material.
2. If you were preparing students for a "performance-based test" on this specific topic, how would you prepare them?

Group 1, comprised of two English teachers and two science teachers, began by reading the accompanying informational text for the performance-based task from the Common Core State Standards (Appendix D). The reaction from all four teachers was an overt realization that the reading level required for comprehending the sample text exceeds the reading levels of current materials at the present time.

"Even I would have to read up on the Higgs field before I could approach this task with my students," remarked one science teacher, to which the other agreed. "None of our science textbooks are written on this reading level," remarked the other science teacher, "and our students are nowhere near reading on this level." Even though the prompt targets 11th and 12th grade students, all teachers agreed that the students would first need to be taught specific vocabulary and comprehension skills, starting in grades much earlier than 11th grade, in order to be successful.

"For them to even understand the reading, we need to teach process, sequencing, visualizing, and vocabulary strategies, but that can't wait until the upper grades," stated

a science teacher, who seemed somewhat overwhelmed as she listed the skills. She recognized the need for revamping her current lesson plans and hoped the feeder grades would do the same. One English teacher supported her colleague by saying, "We [English teachers] will have to include other vocabulary strategies, like pre-reading word study in our classes just to get them used to seeing the words before they read something like this in your class for comprehension."

"And the writing requirements – how in the world do we know how to teach formal writing? We are so busy teaching the enormous amount of science content, we barely can get it all in," the science teacher continued. She acknowledged the paradigm shift over the next two years, teaching few concepts on a deeper level rather than "an inch deep and a mile wide."

The English teachers in this group, while supportive of aiding science teachers in the writing process, also felt less than proficient at teaching reading strategies for informational texts, and since the science curriculum is primarily informational, they felt there could be a reciprocating relationship through cross-curricular planning. This discussion circled right back to the same theme that emerged during the interviews: time that could be set aside for collaboration with subject area teachers and cross-curricular collaboration to exchange ideas, teaching strengths, and instructional strategies.

Group 2 consisted of two history teachers and two English teachers. After reading the prompt requiring analysis of both primary and secondary documents concerning the Civil War as well as the accompanying passage from McPherson (Appendix D), the history teachers exhaled deeply. "We teach the Civil War, but not

like this," one history teacher remarked, meaning requiring students to analyze multiple documents and then construct an argument that supports a stance.

"History doesn't change, but this is going to change a lot of how we teach it," said the other history teacher acknowledging the upcoming paradigm shift. One English teacher remarked, "Our 11th grade English classes are American Lit and your U.S. History classes are perfect for working together, but we just never have the time to sit and plan anything."

Writing and resources comprised the remainder of the Task 2 session. The history teachers voiced concern over their abilities to teach writing, since "that is usually left up to the English department." Again, the English teachers expressed a willingness to mentor the history teachers in teaching writing and asked the history teachers to suggest documents that could be read in the English classes that would supplement the informational history texts, "few that they are," in the literature textbooks. The history teachers asked if there would be extra money to obtain more primary document resources over the next two years of transition.

Group 3 was a mixture of technical subject teachers and one English teacher. Their Task 2 concerned distinguishing reliable web sources (Appendix D). The economics, web design, and financial literacy teachers agreed that while our students are digital natives, they will "need terminology and vocabulary skills to attack this prompt, not to mention higher reading skills," specified the web design teacher. "I think English teachers teach this stuff when they have the kids do research papers," interjected the economics teacher.

The English teacher spoke up, "We do, but it would be nice if they heard it from someone other than us all the time." The tone of this group turned adversarial very quickly on Task 2, although during Task 1, there had been earlier agreement on the professional development recommendation to collaborate in small groups by content areas and in cross-curricular groups. Because the terminology of this prompt is not included in the former state-mandated objectives, the new standards will require teaching a more selective content at greater depth, and the teachers in this group were not well enough versed in the new standards to feel confident in recommending how to accomplish the instruction of this prompt. Actually, this group took only 12 minutes on Task 2, and it was obvious that it was due to their lack of knowledge and unwillingness to appear uninformed, so they concluded the task with "we don't really have new standards in our subjects so we'll stick to [state-mandated objectives] in our areas." This led to the need to repair the relationships with the three elective teachers, as the feeling that they had been "put on the spot" was palpable.

Focus Group – Administrators

After all focus groups with teachers were completed, three assistant principals agreed to sit down and discuss the same two tasks given during the teacher focus groups. They were more globally focused as far as the professional development plan, and it became evident that there have been discussions and planning sessions at the district level about how to equip teachers for the imminent implementation of Common Core standards. One administrator produced the actual "District Plan for Implementation of Common Core State Standards" (Appendix E), and the discussion that followed represented more details about that district plan.

Rather than devising their own plans, as the teachers had been asked to do, the administrators discussed what already has been set in motion for professional development for the teachers. One administrator summarized that the State has selected lead schools to attend summits that are presented by State Department of Education experts, and then the lead schools, which are scattered throughout the state, are to meet with representatives from schools to provide information to the teachers at each building site.

The "train-the-trainer" model is designed to allow teachers to train teachers rather than force administrators to provide the training. This planned professional development aligned directly with the desires of the teachers as revealed during their focus group sessions and favored the zero-cost options the teachers had previously discussed (Table 29).

When asked to elaborate more on that plan, the administrators described it as an "hour glass" concept: many representatives from various districts will meet at the state level and that training will funnel down to the geographical areas of the state where a training session of one district team will train other nearby district teams. Then, each district's team will return to their specific district and train school site teams, divided into elementary and secondary teams, and each of those site teams will be responsible for training the teachers in each building. Administrators were well aware of the teachers' adversarial response to a "top-down" approach to professional development and acknowledged that teachers preferred help from their colleagues. Administrators noted that measures had been put into place to allow teachers to train other teachers in a collaborative environment.

When asked to provide a timeline for this professional development plan, the administrators again referenced the District Plan of Implementation of Common Core State Standards adopted in January 2012 (Appendix E). The administrators were unclear about specific school team meetings but acknowledged that three summits at the State Department level with area/lead school teams had occurred and a fourth was scheduled for April 2012 to complete the training. With one teacher from this particular high school on the district level team, one administrator felt we would have the "inside track on the training schedule." Although no training has been set to formally introduce teachers to the Common Core standards, one administrator anticipated that professional development would begin during the first three in-service days at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

Each administrator was given an example of the three versions of Task 2 given to the focus groups, and immediately the discussion turned to individual teachers who are not teaching anywhere close to the level of rigor prescribed in the performance-based tasks. The comments went back to the dire need for professional development that included "sample lesson plans that would walk the teachers through a few days, or even weeks, until they get the true feel for the increased requirements of Common Core." Again, their level of concern for the teachers was evident. Further, as instructional leaders, they were all three in a quandary as to how much support will be required of the administrators to assist teachers who may have difficulty translating and implementing the new standards.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

During the interviews with the teachers, the theme of anxiety emerged in relation to their lack of knowledge regarding implementation of Common Core. Even though teachers felt confident in their ability to instruct students effectively under the current state standards, this confidence was undermined by an initial feeling of anxiety about the future, due primarily to their lack of information about Common Core. However, because teachers interviewed regarded No Child Left Behind as an ineffective fundamental reform with unrealistic expectations, they viewed the new standards as a possibility for challenging their students toward a more relevant education through integrated curriculum as opposed to narrowing their curriculum in order to "teach to a high stakes test."

Teachers were very specific about the need for professional development training to better understand the new standards, and they were adamant that the training come from colleagues as opposed to administrators. Teachers wanted collaborative opportunities on a frequent and regular basis to support their efficacy in the transition to the new standards. This was reinforced when teachers in the focus groups suggested a similar professional development plan and when they perceived the performance-based tasks from Common Core to be "daunting" and a "major paradigm shift" in instructional strategies needed to insure student success.

Administrators concurred with teachers' perceptions of change and the anxiety that inevitably accompanies any change that affects teachers' individual classrooms. They admitted that they, too, feel a level of apprehension as the implementation of new standards approaches, since they will be required to be as knowledgeable as the teachers

for evaluative purposes. Further, the administrators acknowledge their secondary role in professional development and recognized that teachers learning collaboratively from their colleagues will lessen the top-down perception of the implementation.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of curricular change and to determine the impact of their perceptions on teacher efficacy in implementing the Common Core State Standards. While findings were at times conflicting in the perceived versus actual efficacy, self-efficacy was a volatile, though largely unspoken, almost subversive force. Teachers were even averse to using the term "efficacy" during the interviews and focus groups. Administrators, on the other hand, referred to "efficacy" as a teacher's instructional effectiveness as substantiated by student achievement scores.

The typical survey respondent was a veteran high school teacher responsible for multiple levels of content and/or multiple content areas. The interview participants were all high school teachers who varied in their years of experience. The number of survey respondents was not proportionately in line with the overall demographics of the district's certified teachers, but all three groups were well represented. Veteran teachers were marginally underrepresented, seasoned teachers were overrepresented, and novice teachers reflected an accurate representation in the district. Seasoned and novice teachers may have felt more compelled to provide input because they recognized that this fundamental change may have more impact on their groups than the veterans who may be moving to administrative or other leadership roles or retiring from the profession.

In the quantitative portion of this study, the data described the feelings of teacher efficacy across the district and included all grade levels and subject areas. The descriptive data collected during the quantitative phase of this mixed methods study

centers around the teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in light of the imminent implementation of Common Core Standards. To discover each teacher's current level of self-efficacy regarding their knowledge of Common Core and the compatibility with the current state standards, teachers rated themselves on a personal level of self-efficacy and belief in their abilities and knowledge. The overall tone of the survey findings was of teachers brimming with confidence and proud of their current efficacy. However, with only 11 percent of teachers agreeing that perception of their teaching abilities is more important than their actual abilities, this contradicts Bandura (1997) on the surface, but the "self-fulfilling prophesies" fostered by self-efficacy is manifested in the confidence of their past mastery experiences of instructional success (Tschannen-Moran & MacFarlane, 2011).

The mixed method design uncovered several incongruities. On the survey, teachers reported that they were very confident in their abilities to challenge students, to provide alternatives, to adjust their lessons for their students, and to use a variety of instructional strategies and assessments. This perception of self-efficacy aligned with studies done by Tschannen-Moran, MacFarlane, Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, and Davis (1998, 2007, 2009, & 2011). However, their perceived level of efficacy dropped significantly when faced with an actual performance-based task from Common Core during the focus group sessions. In general, the focus groups were dismayed by their lack of knowledge of the scope of suggested tasks under Common Core.

A recent report published by Scholastic and the Gates Foundation involving 10,212 PK-12 teachers found that 78 percent of the teachers surveyed felt unprepared to teach the Common Core Standards (Mayer & Phillips, 2011). Similarly, 72 percent of

the teachers in my much smaller sample of 249 teachers felt unprepared to teach the Common Core Standards. The level of anxiety toward curricular change to which teachers admitted during the interviews was accentuated when participants were faced with a sample task from the new Common Core standards. The obvious increased expectations for student performance translated directly into a kind of panic over their own level of knowledge.

Data from the surveys revealed a surprisingly high mobility rate for teachers within the district. Teachers admitted to frequently changing teaching assignments, grade levels, and schools. Mobility is evident by the high percentage of respondents who have been in their current positions for only a few years, while attesting to have more than ten years of teaching experience in the district. This anomaly shows that the district has a very high rate of internal mobility. That is, teachers change jobs within the district fairly often.

Perhaps this is one reason that teacher efficacy seemed so high in the survey instrument. Content area experts notwithstanding, many teachers have already displayed versatility in teaching multiple grade levels and subjects, so the Common Core, in many ways, only represents the latest in a series of challenges.

The qualitative portion of this study allowed the research to go deeper into uncovering teachers' perceptions of change. A common theme of anxiety when changing from the familiar to the unfamiliar surfaced repeatedly in stories about the frustration with past experiences of reforms that were forced from the top down. These perceptions could play a role in the implementation of the Common Core Standards if

these teachers are not included in the planning and informing stages of the transition to the new standards.

While some teachers perceived change as an opportunity for new challenges, the prevalent tone could be characterized as resigned optimism with hope for adequate training opportunities. By and large, teachers expressed preference for professional development that is immediately applicable to the classrooms, specific to the content area, and collaborative in nature. Administrators recognized the primary role of teachers training other teachers and thought that collaborative opportunities would be needed for any kind of success. This is directly in line with what has been found to be successful in top-scoring countries such as Finland, who recognize initial collaboration during the incubative period of implementing curricular change and in ongoing collaboration for substantive improvements in teaching (Sawchuk, 2012; Murray, 2011). It is in direct contrast with the current mindset that teachers are expected to acquire professional development on their own time and at their own expense during evenings, weekends, or summer months. Unlike high-performing countries like Singapore and Finland, American teachers are under constant pressure to perform at a high standard in addition to managing extra duties, such as coaching, hall duty, IEP meetings, sponsorship of clubs and extracurricular activities. This scenario is a close parallel to the overworked factory workers of a hundred years ago who were paid low wages, worked long hours, received few breaks, and were saddled with enormous, time-sensitive responsibilities.

Of course, an added incentive for teachers training teachers is that such an approach is financially frugal through zero-cost professional development (Table 29).

At the time of the conclusion of this study, the only professional development expenses accrued have been in gathering lead school teams at the State Department for orientation and training on three separate occasions. These teams have subsequently met on two occasions with the area schools for whom they are responsible, with the next meeting scheduled for October 2012. No stipends have been paid to anyone in attendance thus far. The cost of substitute teachers at the building sites to allow release time for the Common Core leadership teams has been the only district expense thus far. When teachers begin to train their colleagues in their buildings, optimally during time allocated in the workday, this cost will also be eliminated.

As of July 1, 2012, the State Department will be hiring 60 teachers as regional instructional coaches who will each be responsible for training 1,000 teachers throughout the state during school year 2012-2013. Other than State Department employees who have done the training heretofore, this will be the largest expenditure toward professional development in the teachers-training-teachers model.

Regarding the transition to and implementation of Common Core, teachers overwhelmingly felt that they have not been adequately informed about the Common Core Standards and its impact on their students and on their careers. In spite of what is prescribed in the Common Core State Standards District Transition Plan (Appendix E), which was distributed to school leadership in January 2012, there has been no formal CCSS training and minimal informal training during the first year of transition. This obviously unfamiliar territory is at the root of the anxiety expressed by teachers during the interviews and focus groups.

Most teachers reported to be confident about their ability to implement Common Core while admitting that they know little about the new standards. From the survey data to the focus groups, this was noticeably apparent. However, a slight overestimation in self-efficacy judgments can be desirable if it causes raised effort and persistence in reaching a goal (Schunk & Pajares, 2009).

While the conversation during the planning of professional development (Task 1) was upbeat and animated about their "pie-in-the-sky" ideas for training, the discussion turned to silence when they were handed the performance-based task (Task 2). As they each read the literature exemplar that accompanied their particular tasks, they exchanged worried glances with the other members of their groups. When discussion resumed, the tone was much more subdued and serious as they internally processed what they would need to know before they could prepare their students to accomplish the task, and then voiced their concerns. Group 3 spiraled downward into a refusal to even attempt to suggest how to approach the task. The confidence level reported in the survey was represented by its antithesis in the focus groups.

Even without an adequate amount of information available about the new Common Core State Standards, teachers seem to be approaching the process with an open mind. While some have the idea that Common Core Standards are radically different from any previous reform, more teachers assume that their current instructional approaches will carry them through.

Overall, teachers seem to possess a blind faith in the administration to make the implementation of Common Core a smooth and seamless transition. Most teachers seem to believe that administrators will lead them in whatever direction they need to go.

The appropriate time for administrators to provide practical, intellectually enriching professional development is during the critical incubative period at the beginning of the transition to Common Core. Doing so could go a long way in eliminating the uncertainty, disequilibrium, anxiety, and even anger exposed during this study.

Teachers further believe that the administration will provide a forum for the proper training for the curricular change, a testament of their faith in the leadership to be cognizant of teachers' needs. After all, the administrators' success hinges on the success of the teachers; therefore, the teachers are counting on all levels of administration to honor their requests for immediately practical, small group training to facilitate the Common Core Standards.

Most of the teachers surveyed and interviewed and all teachers in the focus groups have been through fundamental curricular change with No Child Left Behind in 2002, and they believe that the same determination and resilience that enabled their success during that change will do so again. While it may be seen as naiveté for them to believe in their teaching abilities at such high levels of efficacy, their ability to change teaching sites, subjects, and grades may be evidence of an overarching adaptability that is inherent in the district.

Data from the interviews of veteran teachers, seasoned teachers, and novice teachers, in addition to the data gathered through the survey of teachers across the district, added to the validity of the results of teachers' perceptions of change and its effect on their classroom instruction. The focus groups augmented the individual teachers' input with a layer of information about coping with change from a collaborative perspective. This data, juxtaposed with information from administrators'

perspectives, increased the validity of this study through triangulation with multiple sources.

The findings of the research study are not intended for generalization to other schools, although at least according to Stake (1995b), generalizability need not be an outcome in all research. However, the findings are pertinent in the revelation of how the teachers in this particular high school setting are coping with their own feelings of efficacy at the very outset of the Common Core curricular change.

The research study extends our knowledge of efficacy's role in implementing fundamental educational reform by focusing on waning teacher confidence during the transition phase. Levels of anxiety were higher than normal due primarily to the lack of knowledge disseminated to teachers during the first transition year. Teachers are not opposed to change, as evidenced by the high mobility of teachers throughout the district with less than five years at the same school assignment even though most teachers in the district have more than ten years of experience. Change is inherent in the teaching profession; however, knowledge and training in preparation for curricular change is a vital component of successful implementation.

Plan for Implementation of Common Core State Standards

Professional development that focuses on collaboration in communities of practice promotes teacher efficacy as research has shown. Implementation of Common Core State Standards has been mandated, yet no federal or state funding or financial incentive accompanies the mandate. During the incubative period of developing the language necessary to implement the Common Core Standards and with the first year of transition essentially over, the district could use the zero-cost training model suggested

by teachers in Task 1 (Table 29). The collaborative planning is more economical (no expensive speakers for professional development sessions), more efficient (teachers focus on particular timely issues), and more meaningful (teachers select what issues to discuss and they have ownership in the solutions to the issues at hand). The collaborative, site-based, small groups are both cost effective and aligned with teachers' requested forum for professional development.

To accomplish a goal of professional collaboration, one possible solution could be a 30-minute period incorporated into the school day schedule. The period could also simultaneously benefit students as shown in Appendix F. By reorganizing the minutes in the current day's schedule, a dedicated Student and Teacher Enhancement Period (STEP) would allow teachers to collaborate weekly. Teachers would have a dedicated collaboration time, on a rotating basis, to plan both vertically and horizontally, while students would attend a core teacher's enhancement period each day on a rotating basis or relocate to another teacher on the basis of need, a win for both groups.

The rotation of the enhancement period would facilitate both individualized student instruction and teacher collaboration. Core teachers could meet in a central location to discuss issues of transition to the new Common Core State Standards through vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum. Through the STEP period, teachers in the same discipline have a built-in community of learning within the content area and whose interactions with other teachers and administrators affect pedagogical interactions with students (Harris & Rutledge, 2010).

During this collaboration time, students who have a core teacher for STEP would rotate to attend enhancement in another core subject. Throughout the week,

teachers in other core subject areas would have the opportunity to collaborate with teachers in their particular departments. After the initial orientation phase of the new program in the first quarter, teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with teachers from other disciplines to formulate cross-curricular or interdisciplinary units of instruction. According to Vance (2010), in secondary educational institutions, in particular, the atmosphere or culture is often divisive rather than collaborative due to the logistics of teaching a discrete subject area, and although high school teachers do not prefer isolation, the demands of the profession encourage it. The enhancement period would facilitate the integration of colleagues and disciplines through collaboration in the professional learning community.

By the end of every week, students would have had an additional 150 minutes of individualized instruction or study time, while teachers would have had 30 minutes dedicated to their content areas in a professional learning community setting. By the end of the year, teachers would have had 1,080 minutes (18 hours) of ongoing collaboration time with peers, rather than only five disjointed, disconnected professional days throughout the year on topics that may or may not benefit their knowledge of Common Core. While this may not come close to the ratio of instructional versus collaboration time of countries like Finland or Singapore (Sawchuk, 2012; Sahlberg, 2011; Murray, 2011), the dedicated time with colleagues is an initial step towards a collaborative professional community. An added benefit is that students would have had 5,400 minutes (90 hours) of dedicated – rather than optional – study time or individualized instruction time with core teachers with whom they are in need of additional instruction or reteaching.

Discussion

A significant outcome of the research study was the discovery that teachers have identified that the way to raise their levels of personal and general teacher efficacy is through collaborative professional development. Further, teachers feel empowered to request – even demand – that the administration provide the teacher-led, small group communities of practice where content and cross-curricular collaboration can facilitate a smooth transition to and implementation of the new Common Core State Standards.

The mixed methods study incorporated the input of 249 teachers in the quantitative portion, yet it correlated closely with the findings of the 2011 national study by *Scholastic*/Gates Foundation of more than 10,000 teachers. The conclusion can be made that while teachers exhibit high levels of efficacy teaching their current state standards, teachers have lower efficacy during this transition phase to Common Core, and in fact, feel unprepared to teach the new standards.

Rather than continuing to accept professional development sessions that are delivered to the faculty en masse and have limited application in the everyday machinations of the classroom, teachers felt empowered to insist on a change in how training will be delivered, what will be included, and the frequency and collaborative nature of the training. Having faith in a supportive administration, the teachers demonstrated autonomy as professionals to design what they will need to build their understanding of a new set of rigorous standards that will pave the way for their students to be both college and career ready.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

The mixed methods research study was limited to one midsize district for the quantitative portion and to one high school faculty for the interviews and focus groups. Although there were only 249 participants in the survey and 25 teacher participants and 6 administrators in the interviews and focus groups, the results were consistent with the *Scholastic*/Gates study of more than 10,000 teachers. Using the Gibson and Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale, albeit a modified version, provided trustworthiness in an instrument that correlated with earlier studies about teacher efficacy. Because of the environmental, behavioral, and personal influences on teacher efficacy, results from a different context using a different instrument may elicit findings that align with this study or that are dissimilar. In the future, selection of a particular school site where the researcher is not part of the faculty may yield different results due to lack of familiarity and researcher subjectivity as a quasi-participant.

The study adds to research on teacher efficacy by discovering that teacher efficacy is a malleable, multidimensional construct that tends to decrease in light of curricular change. With this knowledge, administrators can proactively offset the anxiety produced by educational reform by providing professional development that is relevant, timely, and collaborative during the critical incubative period of transition.

A follow-up study that reexamines the issue of efficacy after the full implementation would reveal the change in teacher efficacy after being immersed in the fundamental educational reform. It would then be worthwhile to quantitatively study the test results of the teachers who formerly felt their efficacy would wane during the

transition and what effect that rebuilding of efficacy has had on their instructional strategies, and thus the achievement of their students.

Conclusion

There have been many educational reforms over the last hundred years. Through all the innovations, mandates, or legislation, there has been one common denominator: teachers are on the front lines of implementing new educational directives. With high levels of efficacy tempered by a level of anxiety toward change, the effort, determination, and success of teachers can be reinforced through collaborative professional development in a community of learning (Wenger, 1998).

In light of the imminent implementation of Common Core State Standards, states, districts, and individual school sites recognize the importance of teacher efficacy as a factor in student achievement. Compatible with Deleuze and Guattari's "lines of flight," teachers and administrators at all levels could fare better during this transition period to seek alternative methods for training teachers whose efficacy is currently waning in its curvilinear path toward recovery (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006). To combat what Popham (2004) calls "rampant curricular reductionism" excising any untested albeit important content, the Common Core standards allows teachers to focus on a manageable number of challenging skills that can be taught to a mastery level. With a focus on performance-based learning, a key component of Common Core, professional development in small groups by subject area, grade level, and/or interdisciplinary team communities of learning may appeal more to teachers' efficacy through a more efficient, more cost effective method of collaboration where teachers have both choice and ownership in the content of the collaborative meetings.

Ultimately, the only constant in this world is change. Teachers are fully aware that change is inherent in the educational profession. Their efficacy, whether personal teacher efficacy or general teacher efficacy, is dependent on how they perceive the change to be either threatening or enlightening, relevant or superfluous, enhancing or entrenching. However, collaboration with peers who are in a similar position, especially during this critical incubative period of transition to Common Core State Standards, creates a sense of unity in communities of practice that can yield an increased sense of efficacy in the classroom.

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Appendix A: Online Survey Questions

http://kwiksurveys.com/preview-survey.php?survey_ID=NMOILF_5bbc4ccf

Survey Name: Teacher Efficacy and Common Core

1. INFORMATION SHEET FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Sheila Rulison, and I am a doctoral student in the College of Education, Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, at the University of the Oklahoma. I am requesting that you volunteer to participate in a research study titled Teacher Efficacy and Common Core State Standards. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a colleague of mine in Lawton Public Schools. If you have any questions, please contact me at srulison@lawtonps.org.

Purpose of the Research Study: The purpose of this study is to determine the perspectives of teachers relative to their instructional efficacy in the transition over the next three years to the recently adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which will replace and/or supplement the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills, by 2014-2015.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to answer an online survey of 33 questions that describes your teaching environment and your perspective on your own instructional effectiveness prior to the transition to CCSS. A few volunteers will be asked to allow information to be gathered through a one-on-one interview lasting ten minutes or less, the audio portion of which will be taped and transcribed for inclusion in the research study. All names and identifying factors will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in the study's findings.

Alternative Procedures: If any volunteer would rather answer the survey on a paper-and-pencil basis, a hard copy will be provided and retrieved through the district's distribution service among schools.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study: The study carries no inherent risks to your employment status, your job placement, or your salary as all information will be submitted anonymously online through the survey, and any interviews will be kept completely confidential as no names or identifying factors (school site, gender, age, position) will be disclosed in the research study.

The benefits to participation are that areas of decreased efficacy can be identified to be addressed by professional development and information dissemination.

Compensation: You will not be compensated for your time and participation in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not result in penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Length of Participation: The survey will be available on line for two weeks for your convenience in participation. All participants will be notified as to the dates of opportunity to participate. Interviews will occur within 30 days of the closing date of the survey.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private and your supervisor will not have access to your responses. In published reports, there will be no information included that will make it possible to identify you as a research participant. Research records will be stored securely. Online responses will be deleted within seven (7) days of the closing date of the survey. Audio/video interviews will be maintained until transcribed and then will be deleted from the hard drive, USB drive, and/or tape recorder that are used. Written transcriptions of audio/video interviews will be maintained through the coding and analysis phase of the research, and then will be shredded upon the approval of the research study. Only approved researchers will have access to the records.

Contacts and Questions: If you have concerns or complaints about the research, the researcher conducting this study can be contacted at (580) 585-1955 and srulison@lawtonps.org. The researcher's advisor's name is Dr. Lawrence A. Baines and he can be contacted at lbaines@ou.edu or (405) 325-1508. In the event of a research-related injury, contact the researcher(s). You are encouraged to contact the researcher(s) if you have any questions. If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the research or about your rights and wish to talk to someone other than the individuals on the research team, or if you cannot reach the research team, you may contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at (405) 325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

○ ACCEPT

○ DECLINE

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2. Will you be teaching full time in the classroom during school year 2011-2012?

☐ Yes ☐ No (If NO, please skip to Question 33.)

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3. Middle school/High school teachers: What subject(s) will you teach for school year 2011-2012?

---

4. Elementary: What subject/content areas will you teach for school year 2011-2012? If you are responsible for all subject areas, please write the word "ALL" below.

---

5. What grade(s) do you teach? Please check ALL that apply for school year 2011-2012.

Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

---

6. Including this school year (2011-2012), how many years have you worked as a teacher? Please include years in districts other than Lawton Public Schools also.

- ○ 1-5
- ○ 6-10
- ○ 11-15
- ○ 16-20
- ○ 21-25
- ○ 26-30
- ○ 30+

---

7. Including this school year, how many years have you worked at your current teaching assignment?

- ○ 1-5
- ○ 6-10

- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 30+

---

8. On average, how many students are in each class that you teach throughout the day?

Less than 10 | 10-15 | 16-20 | 21-25 | 26-30 | 30+

---

9. How often PER QUARTER do you and your colleagues meet as a department, instructional team, or grade level?

None | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+

---

10. To supplement the content area being taught, how often per quarter do you incorporate informational texts, including history/social studies, math, science, and technical texts?

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Frequently | Always

---

11. How often per quarter do you use an interdisciplinary teaching approach by incorporating other subject areas (history, math, language arts, science, music, art) into the teaching of a particular core subject area?

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Frequently | Always

---

12. Do you have a colleague, mentor, or instructional coach to assist you on an as-needed basis?

- Yes
- No

---

13. I have been provided with adequate information about Common Core State Standards.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

14. I have been provided with adequate information about the timeline for transitioning from state standards to CCSS.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

15. I have been provided with adequate information about the implementation of CCSS in the 2014-2015 school year.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

16. Current state-mandated standards and CCSS are more similar than different.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (I do not have enough information to answer.)

---

17. CCSS requires a teacher to alter instructional strategies significantly.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

18. My personal perception of my teaching abilities is more important than my actual teaching abilities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

19. I feel confident in my understanding of CCSS.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

20. My level of understanding of CCSS will impact my perception of my ability to teach.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree

- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

21. I use a variety of instructional strategies to help students reach their academic goals.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

22. I provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

23. I use a variety of assessment strategies to gauge my students' achievement.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently

- Always

---

24. I adjust my lessons to the proper level for individual students.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

25. I feel confident that I can gauge my students' comprehension of what I have taught.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

26. I provide appropriate challenges for my students.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

27. I incorporate other core subject area content into my instructional strategies when teaching my subject area/grade level.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

28. I collaborate with teachers from other disciplines.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always

---

29. Incorporation of other subject areas into my primary teaching assignment lesson plans has real-world application.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

30. Incorporation of other subject areas into my primary teaching assignment lesson plans is a personal goal.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

31. I feel confident that I can incorporate other subject areas into my classroom instructional strategies.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Slightly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)

---

32. My knowledge of Common Core State Standards consists of one of the following levels:

- None.
- Minimal.
- Moderate.
- Extensive.

33.

Do you have any particular questions, comments, or concerns about the implementation, training, or content of the Common Core State Standards?

Appendix B: Complete Results of Online Survey

Question 1

INFORMATION SHEET FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Sheila Rulison, and I am a doctoral student in the College of Education, Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, at the University of the Oklahoma. I am requesting that you volunteer to participate in a research study titled Teacher Efficacy and Common Core State Standards. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a colleague of mine in Lawton Public Schools. If you have any questions, please contact me at srulison@lawtonps.org.

Purpose of the Research Study: The purpose of this study is to determine the perspectives of teachers relative to their instructional efficacy in the transition over the next three years to the recently adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which will replace and/or supplement the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills, by 2014-2015.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to answer an online survey of 33 questions that describes your teaching environment and your perspective on your own instructional effectiveness prior to the transition to CCSS. A few volunteers will be asked to allow information to be gathered through a one-on-one interview lasting ten minutes or less, the audio portion of which will be taped and transcribed for inclusion in the research study. All names and identifying factors will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in the study's findings.

Alternative Procedures: If any volunteer would rather answer the survey on a paper-and-pencil basis, a hard copy will be provided and retrieved through the district's distribution service among schools.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study: The study carries no inherent risks to your employment status, your job placement, or your salary as all information will be submitted anonymously online through the survey, and any interviews will be kept completely confidential as no names or identifying factors (school site, gender, age, position) will be disclosed in the research study.

The benefits to participation are that areas of decreased efficacy can be identified to be addressed by professional development and information dissemination.

Compensation: You will not be compensated for your time and participation in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not result in penalty or loss of benefits to which you

are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Length of Participation: The survey will be available on line for two weeks for your convenience in participation. All participants will be notified as to the dates of opportunity to participate. Interviews will occur within 30 days of the closing date of the survey.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private and your supervisor will not have access to your responses. In published reports, there will be no information included that will make it possible to identify you as a research participant. Research records will be stored securely. Online responses will be deleted within seven (7) days of the closing date of the survey. Audio/video interviews will be maintained until transcribed and then will be deleted from the hard drive, USB drive, and/or tape recorder that are used. Written transcriptions of audio/video interviews will be maintained through the coding and analysis phase of the research, and then will be shredded upon the approval of the research study. Only approved researchers will have access to the records.

Contacts and Questions: If you have concerns or complaints about the research, the researcher conducting this study can be contacted at (580) 585-1955 and srulison@lawtonps.org. The researcher's advisor's name is Dr. Lawrence A. Baines and he can be contacted at lbaines@ou.edu or (405) 325-1508. In the event of a research-related injury, contact the researcher(s). You are encouraged to contact the researcher(s) if you have any questions. If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the research or about your rights and wish to talk to someone other than the individuals on the research team, or if you cannot reach the research team, you may contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at (405) 325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

ACCEPT	240	99.17%
DECLINE	2	0.83%

Question 2

Will you be teaching full time in the classroom during school year 2011-2012?

Yes	239	95.98%
No (If NO please skip to Question 33.)	10	4.02%

Question 3

Middle school/High school teachers: What subject(s) will you teach for school year 2011-2012?

Geometry, Algebra II	
7786129	General Science
7786153	English
7786162	computer applications I & II
7786189	Reading, Pre-AP Reading, & Pre-AP English
7786236	Reading
7786257	All
7786258	AP Micro & Macro Economics and AP Calculus BC
7786297	High School 101/Current Issues & Wolrd history at night school
7786343	World History / AP World History
7786355	My position is at the Student Adjustment Center. I facilitate the instruction for special education students assigned to our facility. I provide instruction in all subject areas as per individual schedules and education plans.
7786361	Geometry, Pre-AP pre-calculus
7786418	Special Education Co-teacher reading, math, and English-7th grade
7786432	7th grade math & honors math
7786525	I teach a self-contained ID class. Subjects will vary but will include AlgebraI Concepts, English II Concepts, Applied Communications III and IV Concepts, Biology Concepts, World History Concepts, Reading Concepts and any other subjects deemed necessary for students to pass.
7786656	Agricultural Education
7786686	Study skills, fundamentals of math, Life management
7786690	Psychology, Sociology, Geography
7786695	High School Computer Application/ Stage Production
7786704	English I and II, Speech I, and a Reading elective course
7786795	Pre Algebra 6
7786807	Earth Science, Biology, Env. Science, WOrld History, US History, OK History, all special education.
7786835	Current Events, Skills for Adolescence, Math & Reading Remediation
7786906	English
7786960	HS Teacher - Biology, Chemistry, and Physical Science ...
7786990	N/A
7786992	English Career Explorations Ace Remediation
7787095	Art
7787115	Math of Finance, Algebra I, Pre-Algebra, Plane-Geometry, English I,

	English, II, English III, English IV, Reading.
7787178	Math - Intermediate/Pre-Algebra
7787213	Art
7787400	Family & consumer Science
7787409	All subjects....special education self-contained classroom.
7787451	Special Education - Multiply Handicapped
7787617	Language Arts
7787710	7th grade Language Arts and 7th Grade Geography.
7787841	High school Algebra I and Algebra II
7787861	special education transition
7787970	Resource English II, Applied Communications III, Computer Applications I & II (Tech-Now: special education computer graphics class) & Lifeskills (Remediation for English II, US History and Biology EOI)
7788102	Biology 1 Environmental Science
7788185	Study Skills and Career Exploration and Health; High school teacher
7788215	NA
7788378	Geography
7788408	Special Education 6th grade English, Math, and Reading.
7789196	8th Grade Math
7790169	Reading
7791018	Pre Advanced Placement English I and English I
7799547	English III and Pre-AP English III
7799748	Language Arts, Reading, Math Co-teacher
7799968	Business Law, Marketing, Web I & II Design
7800196	Biology I, Pre-AP biology
7801237	Special ed, coteaching in 6th grade math (pre-algebra), 6th grade world history, 6th grade science
7801648	geometry
7801671	English II and English III
7801877	Math
7801961	middle - 6th grad math
7802743	French I, French II, German I, German II
7803276	Drama and English I
7803585	Pre-AP English I
7804880	English as a Second Language Reading Language Arts Math
7805836	Computers
7806997	Orchestra.

7809699	AP English Composition (11th grade) British Literature (12th grade)
7809798	United States History and Advance Placement United States History
7815881	Algebra II Algebra II-HS ACE Remediation Algebra I
7816411	7th-Geography
7816786	English language arts
7819512	7th Grade Math
7821199	EnglishI,SpanishII and SpanishIII.
7821844	English, Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies
7822286	Physical Science and Pre-Algebra
7822723	Algebra I Concepts, English Concepts, History Concepts, Science Concepts, Life Skills Concepts
7823392	N/a
7823822	Science
7839863	Reading Recovery (1st grade) and both 4th and 5th grade reading
7840494	Grades 9-12 Language Arts, Math(Algebra ect) Science (Biology and other sciences), History's (Oklahoma, U.S. & World) and Arts & Crafts/Life Skills
7840903	All high school social studies classes. Some high school p.e. classes. Some high school electives.
7841259	Biology 1 and Pre-AP Biology
7843654	10th grade English and AP Language and Composition
7851741	U.S. History
7855426	Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts
7855725	Algebra I; Math of Finance; Life Skills
7856381	English
7872194	8th grade Science
7881095	Kindergarten-General
7886508	English
7886523	Computer class/Yearbook
7886524	English II, On-Leve, PRE-AP
7886588	Spanish 1 and 2
7886628	Algebra 2 and Geometry
7886660	Intermediate Algebra and Geometry
7886663	spanish yearbook newspaper
7886791	English III and IV
7886809	Mathematics
7886838	8th Grade Reading

7886932	Math, Reading, and English
7886948	All subjects
7886986	Algebra I, Algebra II
7887020	World History
7887082	Mathematics - Algebra I and Geometry
7887091	Geography, SCience, English/reading
7887097	Yearbook, Newspaper, Journalism
7887098	8th grade science
7887171	Pre-Algebra
7887190	English I
7887252	English
7887385	Human Anatomy Honors Human Anatomy AP Biology
7887407	Co-Teaching Reading, Math, and English
7887521	language arts - special ed classroom
7887758	Art III/IV, Ceramics, and Stage Production
7888306	biology 1 & 2, physics, chemistry, environmental science, physical science, life science, earth science, spanish, family and consumer science, computer keyboarding, web design, art, ceramics, music, horticulture, agriscience,rotc,personal finance, office procedures, and P. E.
7888375	Math, English, science, social studies, & reading
7889904	high school us history
7890763	American History 8th grade
7896840	Direct Instruction in a special education classroom: Science & Social Studies
7897192	ENGLISH IV AND ACT PREP
7897329	Spanish Skills for Adolescence
7897331	SOCIOLOGY AND CURRENT ISSUES
7897367	Social Studies
7897396	Central Middle American History
7897690	Reading, math
7898292	4 periods of Math, 1 of science.
7898564	PHysical Education-Wight Training
7898728	Middle School Geography/7th Grade
7898794	environmental sci
7899066	I co-teach reading,language arts,and math.
7900612	N/A
7900843	Reading

7901012	Math
7901661	An electives class for special education students: Communication/Social Skills
7901996	Math
7902171	Co-taught Algebra I;Direct instruction Algebra I;US Government, OK Hist, Finance of Math
7902306	6th grade Drama 7th grade Skills for Adolensence 8th grade Speech
7902437	English III, English IV, Journalism
7903556	Algebra 1, Intermediate Algebra, Geometry
7903753	n/a
7904657	science/english
7913870	English IV AP English IV
7916993	Biology II and Zoology
7919507	AP Physics II, AP Calculus, Pre-AP Physics I, Physics I, Physical Science
7920270	science
7930528	English and Reading
7944133	Pre-AP English II and AP English IV
7946775	Biology 1 Biology 2 Zoology
7953245	math 8th
7989282	Pre-AP English II

Question 4

Elementary: What subject/content areas will you teach for school year 2011-2012? If you are responsible for all subject areas, please write the word "ALL" below.

ID	Text Answers (106)
7786103	ALL
7786201	I am the LD Resource teacher. I will mainly teach reading, math, and writing.
7786297	N/A
7786314	ALL
7786316	ALL
7786399	Math Coach
7786418	NA
7786442	ALL
7786480	ALL
7786559	ALL
7786615	all
7786656	ALL

7786700	Literacy Coach for k-5th grade
7786704	English I and II
7786904	reading
7786954	All
7786964	Music
7786990	ALL
7786992	NA
7787071	all
7787085	Reading, writing, math = small group instruction for mild resource LD students
7787094	all
7787381	Iam a Literacy Coach. I wll be teaching reading/language arts, to include spelling, grammar, and writing.
7787383	all
7787598	all
7787621	ALL
7787849	ALL
7788102	NA
7788160	ALL
7788215	ALL
7788385	all
7788700	all
7788776	ALL
7788849	ALL
7788969	all
7789901	all
7791927	all
7799593	all
7799748	N/A
7799889	all
7800616	Reading, Math, Written Expression
7801255	General Music
7803383	All
7804365	all
7804400	ALL
7806522	All
7817955	Early Childhood - ALL

7818504	ALL
7819843	All
7820000	All
7823392	ALL
7823498	ALL
7839863	Reading
7842914	math
7859305	Math, Science, Social Studies, and Some Language Arts
7881095	ALL
7883040	All
7886529	All
7886541	ALL
7886555	Transitional First Grade
7886567	Computer Lab- I suppliment the reading and math curriculm.
7886570	All
7886584	All
7886609	Gifted Education
7886650	all
7886653	All
7886664	ALL
7886821	special ed reading + math
7886882	P.E./ Music
7886915	Instructional Math Coach
7886943	All
7886973	ALL
7887027	ALL
7887045	Reading, Language Arts, Social Studies
7887072	all
7887092	Reading and Math
7887114	all
7887162	all
7887178	all
7887273	All
7887484	ALL
7887571	all
7887577	all

7887657	ALL
7887684	Special Education-Resource (K-5th grade)
7887822	Reading/Math
7888163	All
7888560	ALL
7889219	ALL
7896710	All
7897329	N/A
7897876	all
7899317	All
7899431	ALL
7900612	READING, MATH, LANGUAGE ARTS, SPELLING, SOCIAL STUDIES
7901222	ALL
7902641	All
7903753	All
7905450	All
7905534	all
7915176	All and I teach system 44.
7919327	all
7929852	4th/5th self contained special education
7934258	ALL
7966236	all
7973173	ALL

Question 5

What grade(s) do you teach? Please check ALL that apply for school year 2011-2012.

Pre-K	11	1.96%
K	39	6.95%
1	35	6.24%
2	26	4.63%
3	25	4.46%
4	31	5.53%
5	34	6.06%
6	30	5.35%

7	35	6.24%
8	33	5.88%
9	55	9.80%
10	66	11.76%
11	73	13.01%
12	68	12.12%

Question 6

Including this school year (2011-2012), how many years have you worked as a teacher? Please include years in districts other than Lawton Public Schools also.

1-5	58	24.07%
6-10	47	19.50%
11-15	38	15.77%
16-20	30	12.45%
21-25	22	9.13%
26-30	17	7.05%
30+	29	12.03%

Question 7

Including this school year, how many years have you worked at your current teaching assignment?

1-5	123	51.04%
6-10	60	24.90%
11-15	24	9.96%
16-20	11	4.56%
21-25	8	3.32%
26-30	7	2.90%
30+	8	3.32%

Question 8

On average, how many students are in each class that you teach throughout the day?

Less than 10	22	9.17%
10-15	29	12.08%
16-20	38	15.83%
21-25	67	27.92%
26-30	66	27.50%
30+	18	7.50%

Question 9

How often PER QUARTER do you and your colleagues meet as a department, instructional team, or grade level?

None	9	3.77%
1-2	61	25.52%
3-4	63	26.36%
5+	106	44.35%

Question 10

To supplement the content area being taught, how often per quarter do you incorporate informational texts, including history/social studies, math, science, and technical texts?

Never	9	3.77%
Rarely	22	9.21%
Sometimes	73	30.54%
Frequently	96	40.17%
Always	39	16.32%

Question 11

How often per quarter do you use an interdisciplinary teaching approach by incorporating other subject areas (history, math, language arts, science, music, art) into the teaching of a particular core subject area?

Never	2	0.84%

Rarely	23	9.62%
Sometimes	74	30.96%
Frequently	109	45.61%
Always	31	12.97%

Question 12

Do you have a colleague, mentor, or instructional coach to assist you on an as-needed basis?

Yes	156	64.73%
No	85	35.27%

Question 13

I have been provided with adequate information about Common Core State Standards.

Strongly Disagree	18	7.47%
Disagree	43	17.84%
Slightly Disagree	20	8.30%
Slightly Agree	42	17.43%
Agree	70	29.05%
Strongly Agree	37	15.35%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	11	4.56%

Question 14

I have been provided with adequate information about the timeline for transitioning from state standards to CCSS.

Strongly Disagree	32	13.39%
Disagree	43	17.99%
Slightly Disagree	21	8.79%
Slightly Agree	45	18.83%
Agree	61	25.52%
Strongly Agree	27	11.30%

NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	10	4.18%

Question 15

I have been provided with adequate information about the implementation of CCSS in the 2014-2015 school year.

Strongly Disagree	39	16.25%
Disagree	57	23.75%
Slightly Disagree	22	9.17%
Slightly Agree	41	17.08%
Agree	50	20.83%
Strongly Agree	19	7.92%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	12	5.00%

Question 16

State Standards and CCSS are more similar than different.

Strongly Disagree	6	2.51%
Disagree	18	7.53%
Slightly Disagree	19	7.95%
Slightly Agree	52	21.76%
Agree	51	21.34%
Strongly Agree	5	2.09%
NOT APPLICABLE (I do not have enough information to answer.)	88	36.82%

Question 17

CCSS requires a teacher to alter instructional strategies significantly.

Strongly Disagree	4	1.68%
Disagree	34	14.29%
Slightly Disagree	27	11.34%
Slightly Agree	46	19.33%

Agree	33	13.87%
Strongly Agree	6	2.52%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	88	36.97%

Question 18

My personal perception of my teaching abilities is more important than my actual teaching abilities.

Strongly Disagree	65	27.08%
Disagree	113	47.08%
Slightly Disagree	26	10.83%
Slightly Agree	15	6.25%
Agree	9	3.75%
Strongly Agree	3	1.25%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	9	3.75%

Question 19

I feel confident in my understanding of CCSS.

Strongly Disagree	16	6.69%
Disagree	50	20.92%
Slightly Disagree	23	9.62%
Slightly Agree	43	17.99%
Agree	50	20.92%
Strongly Agree	9	3.77%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	48	20.08%

Question 20

My level of understanding of CCSS will impact my perception of my ability to teach.

Strongly Disagree	6	2.53%
Disagree	26	10.97%
Slightly Disagree	10	4.22%

Slightly Agree	34	14.35%
Agree	83	35.02%
Strongly Agree	24	10.13%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	54	22.78%

Question 21

I use a variety of instructional strategies to help students reach their academic goals.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	1	0.42%
Sometimes	18	7.53%
Frequently	109	45.61%
Always	111	46.44%

Question 22

I provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	0	0.00%
Sometimes	4	1.66%
Frequently	72	29.88%
Always	165	68.46%

Question 23

I use a variety of assessment strategies to gauge my students' achievement.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	3	1.25%
Sometimes	35	14.58%
Frequently	107	44.58%
Always	95	39.58%

Question 24

I adjust my lessons to the proper level for individual students.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	3	1.25%
Sometimes	30	12.50%
Frequently	97	40.42%
Always	110	45.83%

Question 25

I feel confident that I can gauge my students' comprehension of what I have taught.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	1	0.41%
Sometimes	31	12.86%
Frequently	135	56.02%
Always	74	30.71%

Question 26

I provide appropriate challenges for my students.

Never	0	0.00%
Rarely	1	0.41%
Sometimes	21	8.71%
Frequently	144	59.75%
Always	75	31.12%

Question 27

I incorporate other core subject area content into my instructional strategies when teaching my subject area/grade level.

Never	1	0.42%
Rarely	11	4.60%
Sometimes	65	27.20%

Frequently	126	52.72%
Always	36	15.06%

Question 28

I collaborate with teachers from other disciplines.

Never	5	2.07%
Rarely	36	14.94%
Sometimes	91	37.76%
Frequently	78	32.37%
Always	31	12.86%

Question 29

Incorporation of other subject areas into my primary teaching assignment lesson plans has real-world application.

Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	1	0.41%
Slightly Disagree	3	1.24%
Slightly Agree	28	11.62%
Agree	137	56.85%
Strongly Agree	67	27.80%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	5	2.07%

Question 30

Incorporation of other subject areas into my primary teaching assignment lesson plans is a personal goal.

Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	10	4.18%
Slightly Disagree	10	4.18%
Slightly Agree	42	17.57%
Agree	130	54.39%

Strongly Agree	43	17.99%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	4	1.67%

Question 31

I feel confident that I can incorporate other subject areas into my classroom instructional strategies.

Strongly Disagree	1	0.42%
Disagree	4	1.68%
Slightly Disagree	6	2.52%
Slightly Agree	25	10.50%
Agree	139	58.40%
Strongly Agree	61	25.63%
NOT APPLICABLE (not enough information)	2	0.84%

Question 32

My knowledge of Common Core State Standards consists of one of the following levels:

None.	35	14.71%
Minimal.	115	48.32%
Moderate.	84	35.29%
Extensive.	4	1.68%

Question 33

Do you have any particular questions, comments, or concerns about the implementation, training, or content of the Common Core State Standards?

ID	Text Answers (91)
7786129	Yes, will there be specific science Core eventually or are we just overlapping the reading on top of the science objectives...
7786189	My knowledge of Common Core is based on my own reasearch and personal study of the CCSS, not what the district has provided.
7786201	No, not at this time.

7786257	I do not know what they are.
7786297	I get a lot of spam about training for it. I do have basic understanding that this is going to occur, but I have not yet been told when it will occur. I am curious as to what the plans are for the district as a whole to Common Core State Standards.
7786314	Not yet...
7786316	I need more training in this area. It is VERY overwhelming to me right now.
7786355	Our position at SAC is different from a classroom teacher with an assigned roster of students. We receive students from all middle schools in the morning and from all high schools in the afternoon. It is our responsibility to present the assignments the teachers of record forward to our location for each student from their roster assigned to us for a determined amount of time dependent upon the infraction which placed the student with us originally. We have not a group been afforded the opportunity for training in the CCSS.
7786399	writing the Kinder pacing for Common Core and am learning more and more each day on the elementary standards. I am an instructional coach in mathematics.
7786418	How do you get a copy or learn about what the common core standards are? I have heard of them, but we have not been given any details.
7786480	Once we are given more time and information, i will feel a lot more comfortable with the common core standards. Since this is the beginning of the first year i was introduced to them i know i need to get more comfortable with them.
7786525	More information needed
7786807	This is the first time I have heard of this.
7786835	Why the change??
7786904	I have yet to be provided with my own copy of the Common Core State Standards. I would like to have one.
7786906	Not at this time.
7786960	Don't know enough about CCSS ...
7786990	I feel like the Common Core State standards will be a good thing for education.
7786992	I am looking forward to receiving more information about Common Core as we transition.
7787085	I like the district I work in. I feel like they do better than many other districts. I know they'll give us all of the details we'll need. I really think a huge part of my job is making sure my students are ready to pass the OCCT. Often my student need information/lessons repeated & it's a constant race to make sure they're ready.
7787094	not at this time
7787095	How are these standards written pretaining to teaching Art?

7787115	No.
7787381	no
7787451	My class has several students with severe disabilities, so I use the CARG-A objectives until the State Department comes up with a curriculum that modifies the CCSS. That's why I have minimal knowledge of the CCSS!
7787710	I know my subject area and feel like im struggling to change to the new format. However the students are receptive to the new way of learning to write. So i know I will grow stronger in the subject area also with more practice.
7787849	When will the training begin?
7787970	I really don't know enough yet to ask. My concern is that in trying to incorporate more math and reading into the other disciplines that we are once again putting emphasis on a narrower outcome. We seem to be overlooking those students who excel in arts or technical areas and we have created a generation who don't understand home economics or how to use basic tools.
7788102	Yes, I'm concerned that I know so little about it.
7788215	I assume that we will be given a professional development day seminar to recieve instruction about CCSS and it's impolementation. I hope I am correct.
7788378	No, thank you but I am interested to find out more about it. I know that it involves more reading and writing and MaX Teaching is using these tools in the content area.
7788408	We focus on state standards and use MAX teaching stragies in our lesson plans. I have not been informed about CCSS.
7788846	I am concerned with the scoring on the "participation or performance" portion of the CCS.
7788849	NO
7789058	Not that I can think of now.
7799593	I can't find patterns in the kindergarten math common core standards and yet it seems a useful thing to teach to kindergarteners.
7799748	Availability of CCSS-suitable teaching materials, including text books.
7799968	I don't understand the CCSS enough to elaborate, since I am teaching elective courses. I know I need to study this more though, if I'm going to become an administrator in the near future.
7800616	no
7801193	No
7801648	No, I don't have any questions and I don't have time to adequately cover the material I am expected to cover. Consequently there is no time to incorporate other subject areas into my classes. In fact, I would prefer to incorporate other subjects but the requirement from the state quashes any freedom to do other than what is in the pacing calendar. I have been teaching for 41 years and will retire this year. I have seen so many programs come and go that are to be the

	salvation of the teaching profession that it dizzies me. The key to good teaching is hard work: standing in front of the class until my feet are screaming, presenting information and answering questions for better understanding. I am glad it's over. I love kids. I am contemptuous of new programs. I hope this is informative. Thank you. Mike Thompson Eisenhowere High School Lawton, OK
7801877	Since CCS are hte wave of the future, LPS needs to start informing us more of what's to come!!
7804400	When will the training begin and when will it take place?
7804880	no
7809699	Some of the standards are quite vague. I have encouraged my department to meet with the grade level teachers to begin talking about the items we are already doing (think positively) and brainstorm ways to implement the new Common Core State Standards. School-wide this discussion of the Common Core State Standards is not a concern. I am worried that no one will really focus on it until the official deadline right before the changes take place. I'd prefer to start ahead of time than rush to figure things out. I think teachers should have to start using the Common Core standards now to see what they are not doing before they have to officially start using them. It would be much easier that way instead of trying to learn it all at once a few years from now. At this point, I am not sure how to abbreviate the numbers/standards into separate categories since they are not labeled like state objectives (state standards are in outline form with numbers and letters). The English Common Core State Standards look like AP requirements. I wonder what the AP classes will look like if all the students are doing AP-type work. I think the new standards will be much more challenging than the state objectives. I am looking forward to meeting that challenge, but at the same time I am concerned about the first few years of teaching under the new standards. Teachers who teach "testing grades" will have a lot of ground to cover in one year to make up for the other teachers who were not observant and did not start changing over to the Common Core the previous year. There are already teachers who do not teach the state objectives. They will really be behind when we switch to the Common Core because they will realize how much more is involved. I think they should either make us all switch to Common Core and not have the test count as much for the first few years OR make us start teaching the Common Core now and still test us under the state system. I have already started introducing new techniques in my classes based on the new standards so that I will be comfortable using them once the switch finally occurs. Most of my colleagues have not even looked at the Common Core or are worried about the change. They have said they will wait until they are told to start thinking about it.
7815881	No
7817955	Teachers should be proactive and take it upon themselves to start reading and researching CCSS. They should not wait to be told what to do. I have chosen to be a part of the LPS kindergarten teachers who are implementing CCSS this

	year. It takes time. It is more rigorous and this means that I will need to adapt my teaching strategies and approaches.
7818504	None at this time.
7819843	none
7821199	At this time I have no questions,perhaps when I am better informed.
7822723	no
7823392	I've heard that it is coming, but have heard no details. Perhaps that's because I teach Primary. I've learned more from this survey than I knew before taking this survey.
7840494	Self Contained Special Education is always forgotten about
7840903	I have not seen any information about this.
7855725	No.
7859305	How is CCSS going to change the way students are state assessed?
7872194	Have not been instructed to do anything as fas as the standards.
7886529	No
7886541	no
7886564	none
7886570	Not at this time.
7886653	No questions, but I do not feel that I have been introduced to the Common Core nor do I particularly understand it as a teacher or parent of a high school sophomore who will graduate in 2014.
7886664	no
7886720	No
7887091	Common Core standards are more stringent than the state objectives
7887092	none
7887098	I will be more happy with CCSS when they have developed the Science Core.
7887162	When will Pre-K CCSS be written?
7887385	none
7887407	I am new to the state of Oklahoma and would like to know more about the ccss. I don't know if they are nationwide standards or they are just state standards. I have not heard too much about the new standards at this point.
7887571	When will we be able to see the common core standards and a pacing clandar
7887657	None at this time
7887684	Are we going to have some training in the specifics of transitioning?
7887758	Didn't nknow we were getting new standards.
7889904	how will the state dept. afford to pay for test to be graded? Will the writing test cost more class time to administer?
7890763	None

7897367	no
7898292	None
7898728	We have received very little information about these standards, but I have heard from other teachers in the system.
7900612	WHEN WILL I BE NOTIFIED ABOUT TRAINING FOR CCSS?
7900843	none
7903014	Since I am involved with assessing and diagnosing students in the areas of reading and math, it would be very important for me to be more familiar with the transition from state stds to the Common Core Stds. As a workshop presenter, I must also familiarize myself with these standards.
7903753	no now
7905450	No
7913870	I would love to have a workshop where an expert discusses the similarities and differences between state standards and CCSS. There are so many rumors about how our world's will change just because of CCSS. These rumors have just caused fear and frustration.
7919507	No
7934258	No, it is more basic in KDG
7944133	Yes, I would like to see the District or the State publication (once it is complete) that will take the place of the state standards publication. I would like to see the new test that will take the place of the EOI. I would like to see what other English teachers from other states are currently doing in the classroom to implement the new standards.
7946775	When will this be introduced to the teachers in Lawton?
7953245	how it will affect assessment of students OCCTs
7989282	No.

Appendix C: Teacher Interview Questionnaire

1. What makes a great teacher? How important is the job of a teacher? What is a teacher's main responsibility today? How have the responsibilities of a teacher changed over the past few years?

2. Describe a recent educational reform. Do you feel it was effective? Why or why not?

3. What has been the best innovation in education over the past twenty years? What makes you feel that it was a change for the better?

4. What has been the worst educational reform? Why was it bad?

5. How does new curriculum get implemented? Could the process be improved? If so, how?

6. Discuss a time when something about your job changed – you were assigned a new course to teach or you were asked to take on a coaching job or sponsorship. What changed? What did you do in response? How do you feel about change in your classroom?

7. What do you know about Common Core? How do you think the transition to Common Core will affect you as a teacher?

8. In my survey to teachers of this district, 63 of the 249 teachers who responded to the survey calculated their knowledge of Common Core as "None" to Minimal" in this early stage of transition. What do you feel you need as a teacher to equip you for the transition and implementation of the new Common Core standards?

9. Describe your most meaningful professional development experience. What made it such a good experience? What is the best situation for you to learn new ideas for your classroom?

10. Do you have any advice that you would like to give administrators about professional development or how they could better support teachers? (TO ADMINISTRATORS: Do you have any advice for teachers regarding ways to better support administrators and district goals? How can teachers optimize their professional development?)

Appendix D: Focus Group Tasks

The following two tasks will be provided to each focus group separately during the session. (Question 2 will not be administered until Question 1 is completely finished.)

Each of the three focus groups will be meeting at separate times so that the researcher can focus all attention on each group as individuals and as a collective group in their responses. Each group will be comprised of 3-4 teachers to facilitate all members' participation.

The time on task allocation will be 20 minutes. The researcher will serve as timekeeper to alert groups when there are 5 minutes remaining.

One person per group will serve as recorder, and at the end of the 20-minute session, the group will be asked to present their findings orally and through any written documentation.

Specific Groups:

1. English and Science (Kane)
2. English and Social Studies/History (McPherson)
3. Financial Literacy, Economics, Web Design, English (Calishain & Dornfest)

DIRECTIONS TO GROUPS: "Select a person in your group to serve as Recorder for the group's ideas. I will be collecting the document at the conclusion of the activity."

TASK 1. The Common Core State Standards will be implemented by law in the 2014-2015 school year. The following are key design features of the Common Core:

- College and career readiness skills acquired from cross-curricular expectations
- A focus on results rather than means allowing for teacher flexibility and creativity
- Integrated model of literacy that focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills
- Research and media skills blended into Standards as a whole
- Shared responsibility for student literacy development

Your task is to recommend a professional development plan for implementing the Common Core at MacArthur High School beginning March 1, 2012. Although your plan should be effective, specific and realistic, also include an "ideal" aspect to it (e.g., how you would spend extra money if it becomes available from the federal government).

Group 1: English and Science

TASK 2. A performance-based task from Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards is described below:

> Students analyze the concept of mass based on their close reading of Gordon Kane's "The Mysteries of Mass" and cite specific textual evidence from the text to answer the question of why elementary particles have mass at all. Students explain important distinctions the author makes regarding the Higgs field and the Higgs boson and their relationship to the concept of mass. [RST.11–12.1]

Kane, Gordon. (2005) "The Mysteries of Mass." *Scientific American Special Edition.* December 2005.

Physicists are hunting for an elusive particle that would reveal the presence of a new kind of field that permeates all of reality. Finding that Higgs field will give us a more complete understanding about how the universe works.

Most people think they know what mass is, but they understand only part of the story. For instance, an elephant is clearly bulkier and weighs more than an ant. Even in the absence of gravity, the elephant would have greater mass—it would be harder to push and set in motion. Obviously the elephant is more massive because it is made of many more atoms than the ant is, but what determines the masses of the individual atoms? What about the elementary particles that make up the atoms—what determines their masses? Indeed, why do they even have mass?

We see that the problem of mass has two independent aspects. First, we need to learn how mass arises at all. It turns out mass results from at least three different mechanisms, which I will describe below. A key player in physicists' tentative theories about mass is a new kind of field that permeates all of reality, called the Higgs field. Elementary particle masses are thought to come about from the interaction with the Higgs field. If the Higgs field exists, theory demands that it have an associated particle, the Higgs boson. Using particle accelerators, scientists are now hunting for the Higgs.

A. Discuss what a teacher would need to know and be able to do to insure that students know this material.

B. If you were preparing students for a "performance-based test" on this specific topic, how would you prepare them?

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy Strands in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Appendix B, page 180-181, 183, www.corestandards.org.

Group 2: English and Social Studies/History

TASK 2. A performance-based task from Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards is described below:

> Students evaluate the premises of James M. McPherson's argument regarding why Northern soldiers fought in the Civil War by corroborating the evidence provided from the letters and diaries of these soldiers with other primary and secondary sources and challenging McPherson's claims where appropriate. [RH.11–12.8]

McPherson, J. M. (1994). *What They Fought For 1861–1865*. New York: Anchor, 1995.

From Chapter 2, "The Best Government on God's Footstool":

One of the questions often asked a Civil War historian is, "Why did the North fight?" Southern motives seem easier to understand. Confederates fought for independence, for their own property and way of life, for their very survival as a nation. But what did the Yankees fight for? Why did they persist through four years of the bloodiest conflict in American history, costing 360,000 northern lives—not to mention 260,000 southern lives and untold destruction of resources?

Puzzling over this question in 1863, Confederate War Department clerk John Jones wrote in his diary: "Our men must prevail in combat, or lose their property, country, freedom, everything…. On the other hand the enemy, in yielding the contest, may retire into their own country, and possess everything they enjoyed before the war began."

If that was true, why did the Yankees keep fighting? We can find much of the answer in Abraham Lincoln's notable speeches: the Gettysburg Address, his first and second inaugural addresses, the peroration of his message to Congress on December 1, 1862. But we can find even more of the answer in the wartime letters and diaries of the men who did the fighting.

Confederates who said that they fought for the same goals as their forebears of 1776 would have been surprised by the intense conviction of the northern soldiers that they were upholding the legacy of the American Revolution.

A. Discuss what a teacher would need to know and be able to do to insure that students know this material.
B. If you were preparing students for a "performance-based test" on this specific topic, how would you prepare them?

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy Strands in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Appendix B, page 183, www.corestandards.org

Group 3: Financial Literacy, Economics, Web Design, English

TASK 2. A performance-based task from Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards is described below:

> Students analyze the hierarchical relationships between phrase searches and searches that use basic Boolean operators in Tara Calishain and Rael Dornfest's *Google Hacks: Tips & Tools for Smarter Searching*, 2nd Edition. [RST.11–12.5]

Calishain, T. & Dornfest, R. *Google Hacks: Tips & Tools for Smarter Searching*, 2nd Edition. Sebastopol, Calif.: O'Reilly Media, 2004.

From Chapter 1, "Web: Hacks 1–20" Google Web Search Basics

Whenever you search for more than one keyword at a time, a search engine has a default strategy for handling and combining those keywords. Can those words appear individually in a page, or do they have to be right next to each other? Will the engine search for both keywords or for either keyword?

Phrase Searches

Google defaults to searching for occurrences of your specified keywords anywhere on the page, whether side-by-side or scattered throughout. To return results of pages containing specifically ordered words, enclose them in quotes, turning your keyword search into a phrase search, to use Google's terminology.

On entering a search for the keywords: to be or not to be

Google will find matches where the keywords appear anywhere on the page. If you want Google to find you matches where the keywords appear together as a phrase, surround them with quotes, like this: "to be or not to be"

Google will return matches only where those words appear together (not to mention explicitly including stop words such as "to" and "or" […]). Phrase searches are also useful when you want to find a phrase but aren't sure of the exact wording. This is accomplished in combination with wildcards […])

Basic Boolean

Whether an engine searches for all keywords or any of them depends on what is called its Boolean default. Search engines can default to Boolean AND (searching for all keywords) or Boolean OR (searching for any keywords). Of course, even if a search engine defaults to searching for all keywords, you can usually give it a special command to instruct it to search for any keyword. Lacking specific instructions, the engine falls back on its default setting.

Google's Boolean default is AND, which means that, if you enter query words without modifiers, Google will search or all of your query words.

For example if you search for: snowblower Honda "Green Bay"

Google will search for all the words. If you prefer to specify that any one word or phrase is acceptable, put an OR between each: snowblower OR Honda OR "Green Bay"

A. Discuss what a teacher would need to know and be able to do to insure that students know this material.
B. If you were preparing students for a "performance-based test" on this specific topic, how would you prepare them?

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy Strands in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Appendix B, page 180, 183, www.corestandards.org.

Appendix E:
District Plan of Implementation of Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards
XXXXXXX Public Schools
District Transition Plan

By the 2014-2015 school year, our district will be fully implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts for Grades K-12, Mathematics for Grades K-12, and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for Grades 6-12. In order to meet this state requirement, our district will implement the following Transition Plan.

Transition Goals Related to Technology

Curriculum/instruction and Professional Knowledge, Growth, and Development

Year I: 2011-2012
• Conduct a technology audit including infrastructure, hardware, and software each December • Review District Technology Plan presently for E rate • Determine staff professional development needs in the area of technology held for teachers in August • Determine student education needs in the area of technology as it relates to course offerings within the master schedule and integration into the classroom • Create a plan for providing the equipment and skills needed in technology for success with CCSS; Integrate into the District Technology Plan • Explore issues concerning: Increase internet interactivity capability for students, expand supporting peripheral integration into technology integration, expand opportunities to utilize student cell phones.
Year II: 2012-2013
• Implementation of the District Technology Plan
Year III: 2013-2014
• Implementation of the District Technology Plan

Transition Goals

Curriculum/instruction and Professional Knowledge, Growth, and Development

Year I: 2011-2012				
Time	Transition Goals Related to English Language Arts,	ELA	Mat	Literacy History, Science, Technical
Beginning Fall 2011	• Provide Professional Development in CCSS in general and as it relates to: introduction of common core language strategies, learning progressions and the process of unwrapping CCSS	X	X	X

	to identify Common Core academic vocabulary, skill levels, learning targets, big ideas and essential questions using small and large group trainings			
2011-2012	• The Early Childhood Programs (PK-K-1) will begin to transition		**X**	**X**
Beginning Fall 2011	• Develop grade level and content area leadership/learning teams that meet regularly to work both horizontally and vertically to implement [state standards/CCSS in the classroom, in particular, to understand and implement the Standards through the use of resources from OSDE, CCSS, and PARCC including all appendices through small group to whole group sessions-(PLC District Teams, REACH, PLC Leadership Team, Technology Team, and Common Core Leadership Team)		X	X
Spring 2012	• State standards/CCSS side-by-side comparisons (crosswalk) - Year I- crosswalk the CCSS to state standards to identify standards that match and the CCSS that shift grade levels using shared resources	X	X	X
2011-2012	• Provide opportunities for specialized training to implement school leadership that focuses on high achievement, improvement of school culture and rigor -Technology Integration in relation to CCSS, Pre-AP for teachers and administrators grades 6-12, Writing for CCSS, Formative Assessments and Standards Based Training, Great Expectations. Teachers PreK-6th grade – Training opportunities in CCSS (RF) Reading Foundational Skills through Literacy First.	X	X	X
2011-2012	• Address school-wide writing program for English Language Arts and across the content areas - Year I focus informational, explanatory with guidance and support from the ELA High School CCSS Leadership Team	X	X	X

Year 11: 2012-2013				
Time Frame	Transition Goals Related to English Language Arts, Mathematics, Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, Technical	ELA	Math	Literacy History, Science, Technical
	• Provide Professional Development in CCSS in general and as it relates to: integrate CCSS into the current curriculum and instructional strategies (deeper implementation of CCSS strategies, crosswalk the CCSS to PASS that match, begin to integrate CCSS that shift grade levels, identify CCSS that are not included in PASS	X	X	X
	• Conduct an audit of curriculum materials and resources	X	X	X

	• Conduct an audit of technology related programs • The Early Childhood Programs (PK-K-1 including 2) will continue to transition to CCSS during the 2011-2012 school year			
	• Create and implement plan to acquire resources for CCSS instruction	X	X	X
	• Continue to develop grade level and content area leadership/learning teams that meet regularly to work both horizontally and vertically to implement PASS/CCSS in the classroom, in particular, to understand and implement the Standards through the use of resources from OSDE, CCSS, and PARCC including all appendices through small group to whole group sessions-(PLC District Teams, REACH, PLC Leadership Team, Technology Team, Common Core Leadership Team)	X	X	X
	• Address text complexity and outline needed adjustments with existing texts	X	X	X
	• Address informational (non-fiction) text and outline needed adjustments	X	X	X
	• Address Reading Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical			X
	• Address Writing Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical			X
	• Provide opportunities for specialized training (provide examples) list programs as needed that address CCSS and full implementation.	X	X	X
	• Address school-wide writing program for English Language Arts and across the content areas -Year 11 focus on persuasive/argumentative and open-ended questions with guidance and support from the ELA High School CCSS Leadership Team	X	X	X
	• Integrate technology into instruction, particularly problem solving with the use of multiple data sources	X	X	X

Year III: 2013-2014				
Time Frame	Transition Goals Related to English Language Arts, Mathematics, Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, Technical	ELA	Math	Literacy History, Science, Technical
	• Provide Professional Development in CCSS in general and as it relates to: (deeper implementation of CCSS strategies, integration of technology instruction using CCSS/PARCC	X	X	X

	assessment strategies, alignment of learning progressions)			
	• Continue to audit the curriculum materials and resources	X	X	X
	• Continue to implement plan to acquire resources for CCSS instruction • The Early Childhood Programs (PK-K-1-2 including 3rd grade) will continue to transition to CCSS during the 2011-2012 school year	X	X	X
	• Continue to develop grade level and content area leadership/learning teams that meet regularly to work both horizontally and vertically to implement PASS/CCSS in the classroom, in particular, to understand and implement the Standards through the use of resources from OSDE, CCSS, and PARCC including all appendices through small group to whole group sessions (PLC District Teams, REACH, PLC Leadership Team, Technology Team, Common Core Leadership Team)	X	X	X
	• Address text complexity and outline needed adjustments with existing texts	X	X	X
	• Address informational (non-fiction) text and outline needed adjustments	X	X	X
	• Address Reading Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical			X
	• Address Writing Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical			X
	• Provide opportunities for specialized training (provide examples) list programs as needed that address CCSS and full implementation.	X	X	X
	• Address school-wide writing program for English Language Arts and across the content areas - Year III focus on persuasive/argumentative, open-ended questions and citing sources and providing data evidence with guidance from ELA High School CCSS Leadership Team	X	X	X
	• Integrate technology into instruction, particularly problem solving with the use of multiple data sources	X	X	X

Transition Goals for Teacher and Leader Evaluation (TLE)

Year 1: 2011-2012	
Fall 2011	• Become informed/inform key personnel in the district about TLE
Fall 2011	• Attend and/or give input to the TLE Commission
Dec 2011	• Acquire the SDE guidelines for implementing the new evaluation law
Jan 2012	• Form a district team to study the guidelines and develop a plan of action for developing and implementing the new evaluation law

Spring 2012	• Develop a board policy on an effective evaluation system to meet the guidelines of the new evaluation law
June/July 2012	• Recommend the new policy to the school board for a one-year trial in school year 2012-2013
Year II: 2012-2013	
July/Aug 2012	• Conduct informational professional development for teachers and administrators on the new board policy
Aug/Sept 2012	• Conduct training with the board-approved district evaluators on implementing the new policy
Sep 2012 Mar 2013	• Implement the new policy on a trial basis with scheduled opportunities for teachers and administrators to give feedback on the process
Apr/May 2013	• Revise/modify the new board policy based on data collected from the trial implementation
June/July 2013	• Recommend board policy based on new law and trial implementation to board for approval
Year III: 2013-2014	
July/Aug 2013	• Conduct informational professional development for the teachers and administrators on the new board policy
Aug 2013 Onward	• Implement on-going professional development for board-approved district evaluators • Implement new board policy • Implement on-going professional development for teachers and administrators

Transition Goals Related to CCSS Assessment

Curriculum/instruction and Professional Knowledge, Growth, and Development

Year I: 2011-2012
• Monitor PARCC as information regarding CCSS assessment becomes available
• Provide Professional Development on CCSS Assessment (Formative and Summative)
• Incorporate a minimum of one formative assessment in the classroom similar to PARCC assessment items including written responses and the integration of technology
Year II: 2012-2013
• Monitor PARCC as information regarding CCSS assessment becomes available
• Provide Professional Development on CCSS Assessment
• Incorporate a minimum of one formative assessment in the classroom similar to PARCC assessment items each quarter including written responses and the integration of technology
Year III: 2013-2014

• Monitor PARCC as information regarding CCSS assessment becomes available
• Provide Professional Development on CCSS Assessment
• Incorporate formative assessment in the classroom similar to PARCC assessment items Including written responses and the integration of technology
• Incorporate quarterly summative assessment based on CCSS benchmarks following the PARCC/CCSS pattern of testing at 25, 50, 75, and 90% completion

Transition Goals Related to Stakeholder Engagement

Year I: 2011-2012
• Annual Board of Education update on CCSS and Transition Plan Program
• Seek assistance/involvement of Career Tech in REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens
• Seek assistance/involvement higher education institution REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens
Year II: 2012-2013
• Annual Board of Education update on CCSS and Transition Plan Program
• Seek assistance/involvement of Career Tech in REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens • Seek assistance/involvement higher education institution REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens
• Annual meeting with parents regarding CCSS, needed changes in curriculum and instruction and parental assistance at home • CCSS information through media as appropriate
Year III: 2013-2014
• Annual Board of Education update on CCSS and Transition Plan Program • Seek assistance/involvement of Career Tech in REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens • Seek assistance/involvement higher education institution REACH project to transition into career/college ready citizens
• Annual meeting with parents regarding CCSS, needed changes in curriculum and instruction and parental assistance at home
• CCSS information through media as appropriate

Appendix F: Students and Teachers Enhancement Period (STEP)

1st period	7:45 – 8:40 (55 min. – Pledge/Moment of Silence/Announcements)
2nd period	8:45 – 9:35 (50 min.)
3rd period	9:40 – 10:30 (50 min.)
Enhancement Period (STEP)	**10:35– 11:05 (30 min.)**
First Lunch (Group 1)	11:10 – 11:40
4th period (Group 1)	11:45 – 12:35 (50 min.)
4th period (Group 2)	11:10 – 12:00 (50 min.)
Second Lunch (Group 2)	12:05 – 12:35
5th period	12:40– 1:30 (50 min.)
6th period	1:35 – 2:30 (55 min. – Announcements)
7th period	2:35 – 3:00

Students and Teachers Enhancement Program (STEP) represents a designation of 30-minute Enhancement Period at the end of 3rd hour with six class 50-minute class periods (55 minutes for 1st & 6th for announcement/Pledge of Allegiance/moment of silence) with five minutes of passing time between classes and two lunch periods.

Rotation Schedule of Enhancement Period in STEP – 10:35 – 11:05

MONDAY	All teachers facilitate student enhancement with 3rd hour students –OR- Cross-curricular planning teams meet
TUESDAY	English Department collaboration All English students go to History
WEDNESDAY	History Department collaboration All History students go to Math
THURSDAY	Math Department collaboration All Math students go to Science
FRIDAY	Science Department collaboration All Science students go to English

Table 1

Data Collection Sources

Sources	Survey	Interview	Focus Group
Teachers	249	13	12
Administrators	NA*	3	3

**Note*: The online survey was not open to administrators because the questions were teacher-focused and emphasized the classroom setting only and therefore would not be applicable to administrators.

Table 2

Grade Level Distribution of Survey Participants

Grade level	Number of participants	Percent of total participants
PK	11	1.96
K	39	6.95
1	35	6.24
2	26	4.63
3	25	4.46
4	31	5.53
5	34	6.06
6	30	5.35
7	35	6.24
8	33	5.88
9	55	9.80
10	66	11.76
11	73	13.01
12	68	12.12
TOTAL	249	

Table 3

Number of Years at Current Teaching Assignment

Years at current teaching assignment	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
1-5	123	51.04
6-10	60	24.90
11-15	24	9.96
16-20	11	4.56
21-25	8	3.32
26-30	7	2.90
30+	8	3.32

Table 4

Average Number of Students (Current Class Size)

Current class size average	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Less than 10	22	9.17
10-15	29	12.08
16-20	38	15.83
21-25	67	27.92
26-30	66	27.50
30+	18	7.50

Table 5

Level of Common Core State Standards Knowledge

Knowledge level	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
None	35	14.71
Minimal	115	48.32
Moderate	84	35.29
Extensive	4	1.68

Table 6

Provided with Adequate Information about Common Core

Adequate information about Common Core provided	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	18	7.47
Disagree	43	17.84
Slightly Disagree	20	8.30
Slightly Agree	42	17.43
Agree	70	29.05
Strongly Agree	37	15.35
Not Applicable	11	4.56

Table 7

Provided with Adequate Information about Transition to Common Core

Adequate information about transition provided	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	32	13.39
Disagree	43	17.99
Slightly Disagree	21	8.79
Slightly Agree	45	18.83
Agree	61	25.52
Strongly Agree	27	11.30
Not Applicable	10	4.18

Table 8

Provided with Adequate Information about Implementation of Common Core

Adequate information about implementation provided	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	39	16.25
Disagree	57	23.75
Slightly Disagree	22	9.17
Slightly Agree	41	17.08
Agree	50	20.83
Strongly Agree	19	7.92
Not Enough Information	12	5.00

Table 9

Perception of Teaching Abilities Is More Important Than Actual Abilities

Perception vs. actual abilities	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	65	27.08
Disagree	113	47.08
Slightly Disagree	26	10.83
Slightly Agree	15	6.25
Agree	9	3.75
Strongly Agree	3	1.25
Not Enough Information	9	3.75

Table 10

Confident in Understanding of Common Core

Confidence level in understanding of Common Core	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	16	6.69
Disagree	50	20.92
Slightly Disagree	23	9.62
Slightly Agree	43	17.99
Agree	50	20.92
Strongly Agree	9	3.77
Not Enough Information	48	20.08

Table 11

Current Standards and Common Core – More Similar Than Different

More similar than different	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	6	2.51
Disagree	18	7.53
Slightly Disagree	19	7.95
Slightly Agree	52	21.76
Agree	51	21.34
Strongly Agree	5	2.09
Not Enough Information	88	36.82

Table 12

Common Core Requires Significant Altering of Instructional Strategies

Common Core requires significant altering of instruction	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	4	1.68
Disagree	34	14.29
Slightly Disagree	27	11.34
Slightly Agree	46	19.33
Agree	33	13.87
Strongly Agree	6	2.52
Not Enough Information	88	36.97

Table 13

Understanding of Common Core Will Impact Perception of Teaching Ability

Common Core will impact teaching ability	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	6	2.53
Disagree	26	10.97
Slightly Disagree	10	4.22
Slightly Agree	34	14.35
Agree	83	35.02
Strongly Agree	24	10.13
Not Enough Information	54	22.78

Table 14

Frequency of Incorporating Informational Texts

Incorporate informational texts	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	9	3.77
Rarely	22	9.21
Sometimes	73	30.54
Frequently	96	40.17
Always	39	16.32

Table 15

Frequency of an Using Interdisciplinary Approach

Use of interdisciplinary approach	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	2	0.84
Rarely	23	9.62
Sometimes	74	30.96
Frequently	109	45.61
Always	31	12.97

Table 16

Incorporation of Other Core Subject Content

Incorporate other core subject content	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	1	0.42
Rarely	11	4.60
Sometimes	65	27.20
Frequently	126	52.72
Always	36	15.06

Table 17

Use of Variety of Instructional Strategies

Use of variety of instructional strategies	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	1	0.42
Sometimes	18	7.53
Frequently	109	45.61
Always	111	46.44

Table 18

Provide Alternative Explanation or Example

Provide alternate explanation	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	0	0.00
Sometimes	4	1.66
Frequently	72	29.88
Always	165	68.46

Table 19

Use of a Variety of Assessment Strategies

Use a variety of assessment strategies	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	3	1.25
Sometimes	35	14.58
Frequently	109	44.58
Always	31	39.58

Table 20

Confident in Gauging Student Comprehension

Confident in gauging comprehension	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	1	0.41
Sometimes	31	12.86
Frequently	135	56.02
Always	74	30.71

Table 21

Lesson Adjusted for Individual Students

Lesson adjusted	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	3	1.25
Sometimes	74	12.50
Frequently	109	40.42
Always	31	45.83

Table 22

Appropriate Challenges Provided

Challenges provided	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	0	0.00
Rarely	1	0.41
Sometimes	21	8.71
Frequently	144	59.75
Always	75	31.12

Table 23

Confident in Ability to Incorporate other Subject Areas

Confident in ability to incorporate other subject areas	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	1	0.42
Disagree	4	1.68
Slightly Disagree	6	2.52
Slightly Agree	25	10.50
Agree	139	58.40
Strongly Agree	61	25.63
Not Enough Information	2	0.84

Table 24

Collaboration Per Quarter By Department, Team, or Grade Level

Collaborative opportunities per quarter	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
None	9	3.77
1-2	61	25.52
3-4	63	26.36
5+	106	44.35

Table 25

Collaboration Per Quarter with Teachers from Other Disciplines

Collaborative opportunities per quarter	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Never	5	2.07
Rarely	36	14.94
Sometimes	91	37.76
Frequently	78	32.37
Always	31	12.86

Table 26

Availability of Colleague, Mentor, or Instructional Coach

Colleague, mentor, or instructional coach available	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
YES	156	64.73
NO	85	35.27

Table 27

Real-World Application of Incorporating Other Subject Area Content

Incorporation of other subject areas has real-world application	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Disagree	1	0.41
Slightly Disagree	3	1.24
Slightly Agree	28	11.62
Agree	137	56.85
Strongly Agree	67	27.80
Not Enough Information	5	2.07

Table 28

Personal Goal to Incorporate other Subject Area Content for Real-World Application

Incorporation of other subject areas is a personal goal	Number of participants responding	Percentage of participants responding
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Disagree	10	4.18
Slightly Disagree	10	4.18
Slightly Agree	42	17.57
Agree	130	54.39
Strongly Agree	43	17.99
Not Enough Information	4	1.67

Table 29

Focus Groups Task 1 – Professional Development Plan Suggestions

Professional Development Plan	Approximate Cost	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Admin
Experts brought to school site	$500 – $1000	X	X	X	
Teachers sent to workshops IN state	$50 – $500 + cost of Substitute(s)	X	X		X
Teachers sent to workshops OUT of State	$200 – $1000 + cost of Substitute(s)	X			X
Shadow CCSS teachers in other districts in State	$50 + cost of Substitute(s)		X		X
Team of teachers train content areas in small groups	Zero	X	X	X	X
Common Core collaboration with teachers in this school	Zero	X	X	X	X

Table 29 (continued)

Common Core collaboration with teachers in other schools in district	Zero on mandated professional development days/cost of Substitute if release from duty is allowed	X	X	X	X