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LEARNING FROM STUDENT PERCEPTIONS: A DIALOGICAL APPROACH TO CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY

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This work is dedicated to my three children- Ellison, Ava, and Taylor.

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ABSTRACT

As the culture gap between public school students and teachers has continued to grow in the past decade, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) emerged as a theoretical guide to support classroom practices. Despite support for CRP in schools and teacher education programs, many teachers still struggle to actualize the concept. This case study explored teacher experiences with a modified version of CRP with the addition of student voice. Through a social constructivist approach, students shared perceptions of CRP and collaborated in the development of the Student Perception Survey (SPS). Students considered CRP through observable, concrete actions, and these concrete actions were communicated to teachers through the SPS. Teacher participant data was focused on teacher attitudes and responses to student perceptions of CRP. Data was gathered from four urban teachers through semi-structured interviews, written reflections, and classroom observations. Due to the nature of particularistic case study, data collection took place over time: before the SPS, immediately following the SPS, and two months after the SPS. An analysis of teacher data revealed that teachers valued student perceptions, grew from student affirmations, gained new understanding, and adjusted their teaching practices. This study contributes to the research on CRP by including the voices of students, which are often neglected in educational research and reforms.

Keywords: culturally relevant pedagogy, dialogical relationships, student perceptions, teacher learning

CHAPTER ONE

Becoming culturally connected is an ongoing endeavor that can accommodate for the ever-changing nature of culture. Reexamining culturally responsive teaching by looking at culture from different perspectives can help frame the approach in a way that informs teaching practices so that they are more closely aligned with cultural identities as they are expressed by students. (Irizarry, 2007, p. 27)

Demographic Trends in Public Schools

On April 9th, 1990 the cover of *Time Magazine* featured the words "America's Changing Colors." The cover included a vibrant, multi-hued American flag and a question: "What will the U.S. be like when whites are no longer the majority?" In 1990, approximately 60% of the public school population was White. (Snyder & Dillow, 2015, p. 190). Today, White students make up less than half of the student population: 48.8% White, 15.5% Black, 26.5% Hispanic, 5.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.9% American Indian/Alaska Native, 2.9% Multi-Ethnic (NCES, 2016). Projections reported by the U.S Census Bureau anticipate that by 2060, the largest growth in student populations will be seen in two main groups: Multi-Ethnic children at 8.9% and Hispanic [1] children at 33.5% (Colby & Ortman, 2014). Racial and ethnic minority students comprise the majority of public school populations, and the trend is expected to continue.

Despite changes in student demographics, teacher demographics remain relatively unchanged from the 1980's, with White teachers comprising over 80% of all teachers (Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013, p. 6). The cultural and racial mismatch

[1] Hispanic is a term used as a racial identifier within government documentation and will be used when referring directly to government documents or data. The term "Latin@" will serve as a more accurate term in this dissertation.

between students and teachers is a long-recognized issue because it can potentially cause areas of concern in some classrooms (Banks, et al., 2001; Delpit, 1995; Heath, 1983; Irvine-Jordan, 1991; Villegas, 1988). According to research published by the Pew Hispanic Center, 84% of Hispanic students felt discrimination was an issue in public schools (Fry and Gonzalez, 2008). In a recent study of Black students with teachers of various racial backgrounds, Gershenson, Holt and Papageorge (2016) tested for systematic biases related to student-teacher demographics. They found that, "nonblack teachers have significantly lower educational expectations for black students than do black teachers" (p. 222). The disparity between the composition of student populations and the composition of teachers and administrators can lead to misunderstandings and even, discrimination (Oates, 2003; Downey and Pribresh, 2004; Huerta and Brittain, 2009). While it would be ideal for teachers to have shared life experiences and backgrounds with their students, many teachers end up working in schools very different from the ones they attended.

Resolving the Culture Gap through Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Despite a gap in demographics, teachers can still connect to diverse learners and support academic growth in the classroom. Research shows that teachers, regardless of racial or cultural background, can be effective in diverse classrooms when they acknowledge students' cultural capital and value student-teacher relationships. (Goldenberg, 2014; Sampson & Garrision-Wade, 2011). In their research with Latin@ students, Irizarry and Raible (2011) found teachers connected to student backgrounds were considered "exemplary" teachers. These "exemplary" teachers were both home-grown Latin@ teachers and transplant teachers:

> In contrast to the external depiction of urban barrios as pathological, crime-ridden spaces that are devoid of educative resources, effective teachers of Latino students honor the knowledge and resources that do exist there and credit the community with significantly influencing their personal and professional development as teachers. (p. 200)

Connecting with students from diverse backgrounds takes conscious effort. Successful transplant teachers, with backgrounds different than their Latin@ students, made efforts to immerse themselves in the students' community. In addition, they created relationships that encouraged reciprocal learning between teacher and student, student and student.

Meaningful dialogue about effective teaching for students from minority populations and approaches to ensure effectiveness in schools with diverse populations are necessary. Hawley and Nieto (2010) called for educators to acknowledge an "inconvenient truth," that race and ethnicity matter: "Being more conscious of race and ethnicity is not discriminatory; it's realistic" (p. 66). Children are not one size fits all, and being aware of diverse backgrounds is an issue of equity.

One popular approach for the growing diversity in American classrooms was presented by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994), who developed the theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP). Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) defined CRP as, "a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469).

Conceptualization of CRP is based upon Ladson-Billings's research with eight educators who were effective teachers of African-American students. Ladson-Billings was not interested in a particular academic content or a specific curriculum; rather, she found certain teacher dispositions and beliefs that allowed students to thrive in the academic classroom. Ladson-Billing's work continues to be popular, being cited on Google Scholar over 14,000 times.

History of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

CRP was born out of multicultural education reforms which developed alongside Civil Rights movements and gained speed after the 1960s. James Banks (1995) defined multicultural education as "a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates, for this purpose, content, concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history, the social and behavioral sciences, and particularly from ethnic studies and women studies" (p. xii). Multicultural education was an opportunity to reach all learners and encourage democratic schools. However, many in education failed to embrace the concept of multicultural education, and Banks (1993) even acknowledged that the boundaries of multicultural education were broad, with a lack of consensus on aims.

Like many educational reforms, multicultural education continues to be misinterpreted. Critics of multicultural education claim that multiculturalism disrupts society, fractures the unified common culture, and supports a divisive narrative (Barry, 2014; Hirsch, 1987; Postman, 1995; Schlesinger, 1998). Even advocates of multicultural education recognize that the concept is often imposed on schools with little critical application, implanted in a normative curriculum, and focused solely on

content additives or holiday celebrations (Banks, 1993; Dilworth, 2004; Giroux, 1992; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; Vavrus, 2002). Additive approaches to multicultural education can often be even more detrimental to students by disempowering them as objects of study (Banks et al., 2001).

Moving beyond the broad sweep of multicultural education, CRP developed as a pedagogical approach, not a curriculum or content. Rather than focusing on content, Ladson-Billings (1995) suggested three main propositions for culturally relevant teaching:

1) conceptions of self and others

2) conceptions of social relations

3) conceptions of knowledge

CRP can be described as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (Gay, 2000, p. 29). While multicultural content is a significant part of CRP, it is not the entirety. Through CRP[2], students' cultural and social backgrounds are utilized to make classroom learning relevant and powerful.

More recent discussions of CRP focus on the components that move CRP beyond content. Howard (2003) viewed teachers' critical reflection as one of the most significant aspects within a culturally relevant teaching approach. Rather than merely add multicultural content to a classroom, Howard suggested that critical reflection moves teachers away from a superficial approach to teaching diverse students. Critical

[2] While there are a few variations between Ladson-Billing's Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Geneva Gay's Culturally Responsive Teaching, they are used inter-changeably in this study.

reflection is central to many studies on effective teachers (Dewey, 1933). Howard called for teacher educators to center their diversity teacher education programs on critical reflection:

> Facilitation of this process must be sensitive and considerate to the lived experiences that people bring to their current time and space. The purpose of critical reflection should not be to indict teachers for what they believe and why it does not work for students. It is a process of improving practice, rethinking philosophies, and becoming effective teachers for today's ever-changing student population. (p. 201)

Howard's focus on critical reflection is echoed in other CRP contemporaries (Delpit, 2006; Sleeter, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Gay (2013) called for teachers to "teach to and through" their students, and encouraged a social constructivist approach to critical reflection, emphasizing a dialogical relationship of learning for both the student and the teacher.

The field of education is not static, and neither are the theories within the field. As with all educational theories, CRP continues to shift and grow. A recent adaption of CRP has been suggested by Django Paris (2012). Paris was seeking to answer the question, "What is the purpose of schooling in a pluralistic society?" According to Paris, the purpose is to end dehumanizing deficit approaches and a monocultural-monolinguistic based curriculum. While Paris did not disagree with the foundations of culturally relevant or responsive pedagogy, he argued that the terms "relevant" and "responsive" do not go far enough. Paris argued, "They do not explicitly enough support the linguistic and cultural dexterity and plurality necessary for success and

access in our demographically changing U.S. and global schools and communities" (p. 95). Paris critiqued the term "relevant" from Ladson-Billings' definition. He compared "relevant" to the word "tolerance," a word that implies society "puts up" with an issue rather than accept it. So, in lieu of CRP, Paris offered CSP, or culturally sustaining pedagogy. "Culturally sustaining pedagogy seeks to perpetuate and foster-to sustain-linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 95). More recently, Paris and Alim (2014) offered what they call a "loving" critique of CRP and proposed culturally sustaining pedagogy as an "asset pedagogy" (p. 85).

Ladson-Billings (2014) responded to Paris and Alim's critique by arguing that culture and scholarship are fluid. Ladson-Billings noted that CRP was born out of asset pedagogies and not deficits. In addition, she discussed her recent work with *First Wave*, a spoken word and hip-hop program, and reiterated the need for cross-pollination between teachers and students. Similar to Gay's (2013) concept of, "learning to and through" students, Ladson-Billings adapted her work with First Wave in response to interactions with diverse perspectives. While Ladson-Billings was open to a remix of new adaptions with her own original concept, she clearly pointed out they are not all that different. After a synthesis of the two concepts, she left the reader with a last thought:

> In this era of state-mandated high-stakes testing, it is nearly impossible for teachers to ignore mundane content and skills-focused curricula. However, teachers undertaking culturally informed pedagogies take on the dual responsibility of external performance assessments as well as community and

> student-driven learning. The real beauty of a culturally sustaining pedagogy is its ability to meet both demands without diminishing either. (p. 84)

Ladson-Billings's approach to the new adaption refocused readers on the main priority of educators: reaching children.

Culturally sustainable pedagogy is a fresh take on CRP in the literature; nevertheless, it has yet to be conceptually or empirically explored. Called relevant, responsive, or sustainable, the concept of CRP continues to focus on equitable learning and a web of connectedness based on relationships developed within classrooms. The development of CRP has moved conversations away from the multicultural curriculum and led towards a focus on processes and practices.

Defining Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The first tenet of CRP is the conception of self and others. Teachers hold others and themselves in high regard. In a study of Puerto Rican students and Puerto Rican fiction, Nieto (1998) found that culturally-relevant stories shared within the culture helped foster a community of care, and provided a sense of affirmation for Latin@ students. According to Irizarry & Raible (2011), effective teachers of Latin@ students rejected a deficit prospective of teaching children of color, moved past the "color-blind" approach; acknowledged the culture of students, saw students as having valuable knowledge, and encouraged higher levels of critical thinking. Culturally responsive teachers see themselves as critical thinkers with the ability to be "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux, 1985). This tenet of CRP is not self-gratifying but tied in with valuing students as potential agents of change and critical thinkers.

Another tenet held by CRP is the structure of social relations. Creating a strong sense of community and making the classroom a safe environment for critical inquiry are central features of CRP. While encouraging emancipation and empowerment, teachers continue to develop a unified purpose that encourages a dialectical freedom based on community (Greene, 1988). This web of connectedness encourages students to be responsible for each other and responsible to society. Each individual is valued in the classroom community and creates what Paulo Freire (1995) calls a dialogical relationship. This relationship develops through a give and take. Teachers are willing to listen to their students, but the process does not break down into mere therapy sessions. The teacher reflects on what is shared and creates an organic space for inquiry to take place in which students can question power systems seen within society and instructional structures. Similar to dialectical relationships encouraged by Freire, bell hooks (1994) explains: "to engage in dialogue is one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers to cross boundaries, the barriers that may or may not be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences" (p. 130). An open space for discourse is essential to the development of engaged pedagogy through inquiry, dialogue, and shared power. Rather than the teacher positioning themselves as the absolute authority, the teacher provides a safe place for discourse, and encourages a relationship of trust, care, and understanding.

A final tenet of CRP is the relationship of knowledge. Knowledge in the classroom is dynamic, and constantly changing based upon the social, cultural, and economic experiences of individuals (Giroux & McLaren, 1992; Vygotsky, 1978; Woolfolk, 2004). Through practices such as critical reflection, individuals can move

into deeper understandings of their knowledge development. John Dewey (1938) considered critical reflection to be the highest level of inquiry and a pathway to deeper understanding. Building knowledge with students helps develop a critical consciousness (Freire, 1970). Knowledge in the class is not delivered straight from the teacher to the students, but is socially constructed through the community of learners. Students and teacher look inwardly first to become aware; then, they look outwardly towards society to construct and reconstruct the world.

The Problem: Actualizing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Although CRP is widely accepted as a meaningful response to issues of equity in public schools, actualizing CRP in practice can be difficult because the theory can seem abstract to teachers (Leonard, Napp, & Adeleke, 2009; Rozansky, 2010; Sleeter, 2012; Young, 2010). Perhaps the difficulty is due, in part, because CRP is a process and not a formula. For this reason, the theory of CRP can seem complicated and overwhelming for practicing teachers. Howard (2001) attempted to address complications in CRP by utilizing African-American student perceptions to better understand CRP within the classroom. Howard concluded that, "listening to students' voices may reward educators with insights into issues that may have been overlooked in previous discussions on school reform" (p. 146).

A study of student perceptions of specific culturally relevant lessons (Sampson and Garrison-Wade, 2011) indicated the need for student voice as a guide for classroom instruction. "Educators can create supportive learning and school connectedness by relating genuinely, sharing their unknowing with students, and accepting multiple perceptions and perspectives" (p. 302). Even though the theory of CRP assumes

relationships between teachers and students as foundational, many teachers are still confounded by "how" to actualize CRP in their classrooms.

Research Questions

A dialogical relationship within the classroom and critical reflection are both aspects of CRP that have been shown to be helpful for teacher's development of culturally relevant practices. The purpose of this study was to explore teacher experiences with a modified version of CRP, the modification being the addition of student voice in the construction of CRP. The following were the research questions this study hoped to answer:

1) What are student perceptions of culturally-relevant pedagogy?
2) How do teachers respond to student perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy?
3) What attitudes do teachers hold towards student perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy?

CHAPTER TWO

Culturally responsive teaching, in idea and action, emphasizes localism and contextual specificity. That is, it exemplifies the notion that instructional practices should be shaped by the sociocultural characteristics of the settings in which they occur, and the populations for whom they are designed. (Gay, 2013, p. 63)

Review of the Literature

Multiple sources were utilized in this review of literature, including: books, journals, dissertations, and periodicals. These sources were accessed through Eric, EbscoHost, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and PsycINFO. A number of synonyms and related phrases were used, including "culturally relevant pedagogy"; "culturally responsive teaching"; "culturally competent teaching"; "culturally sustaining pedagogy"; "culturally affirming pedagogy"; and "culturally relevant education."

The theoretical concept of CRP has been well-established and thoroughly explored by scholars; however, empirical research supporting CRP is a more recent development. Several empirical studies have confirmed the basic tenets of CRP (Choi, 2013; Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Howard, 2001; Savage et al., 2011; Souryasack & Lee, 2007). Boutte, Kelly-Jackson, & Johnson (2010) confirmed specific theoretical components of CRP including: critical consciousness, identity development, caring relationships, and family/community involvement. Student outcomes and teacher development are both areas of focus for CRP research. In general, the literature reveals actualization of CRP within a real classroom sometimes can be complicated and challenging (Young, 2010).

Student Outcomes

Through an exploration of recent literature on CRP three main areas of student responses were identified: academic gains, behavior, and relationships with teachers.

Academic Gains

Emerging studies on the effects of CRP on academic gains suggested a direct, positive relationship to student learning (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Students participating in CRP lessons increased their performance in class, as well as scores on standardized state assessments and literacy exams (Hubert 2013; Johns, 2008; Nykeil-Herbert, 2010). Many CRP scholars do not consider standardized tests or mainstream grading systems authentic assessments for diverse learners. However, the effect of CRP was often examined through these traditional quantitative measures.

While the current educational environment creates pressure to correlate CRP with academic outcomes due to heavy emphasis on standardized test scores, many studies focusing on CRP identified additional contributing factors to academic achievement such as engagement, efficacy, and motivation (Bui & Fagan, 2013; Christianakis, 2011; Dimick 2012; Hill 2012). In a five- year longitudinal study, designed to address the gap in student learning, researchers explored commonalities and differences between CRP and differentiated instruction. They not only found a gain in academic achievement from pre to post data, they also found CRP to be more suitable than differentiated instruction for students from racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds (Santamaria, 2009). Additionally, in a three-year program focused on CRP, researchers found a correlation among CRP, students' college going rates, and graduation rates (Howard & Terry, 2011).

Effect on Behavior

Correlations between behavior and academic achievement have been extensively documented (Hinshaw, 1992; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler & Feinberg, 2005; Nelson, Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2002; Wentzel, 1993). Building upon our foundational knowledge of behavior and academics, researchers merged CRP and behavior, resulting in the concept of culturally relevant classroom management (CRCM). The literature on CRCM revealed, not only a decrease in student discipline issues, but also an increase in student academic resilience (Gay, Evertson, & Weinstein, 2006; McCarthy & Benally, 2003). In a study of highly effective teachers in an urban elementary school, researchers found that "effective teachers must also be culturally knowledgeable, able to analyze the role of culture in their perceptions of student behavior, and able to use culture to create classroom contexts that support, nurture, and respect students" (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007, p. 344). While academic success and behavior often overlap, CRCM evolved into a separate, but related field of research focused on marginalized populations of students who seem susceptible to suspension and expulsion (Hollingshead, Kroeger, Altus, & Trytten, 2016).

Strengthening relationships

Overwhelmingly, the literature showed CRP can have a positive effect on student-teacher relationships (Coughran, 2012; Friend & Caruthers, 2012; Irizarry & Raible, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2013). Students respond positively to a teacher who demonstrates CRP principles, such as trust, inclusion, and student-centered approaches (Gay, 2013). Similar to behavior, student-teacher relationships have been tied to academic achievement (Antrop- González & De Jesús, 2006; Hollins & Spencer,

1990). In a study of seventh and eighth grade students, Caballero (2010) explored positive interpersonal relationships with students and teachers based upon CRP principles. Caballero's study found that student-teacher relationships have a significant impact on academic success, as measured by the California Standards Test. In addition, teachers practicing meaningful CRP approaches showed an increase in positive student-teacher relationships, despite the race or ethnic background of the teacher (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2011).

Teacher Development

Before CRP can have an effect on students in the classroom, teachers must understand what it is and how to apply it. The research on teacher development of CRP reflected four main areas of focus: educating teachers, struggles with implementation, effective teachers, and student perceptions of teacher classroom practices.

Educating Teachers

One of the most significant reforms to education in regards to CRP is the implementation of preservice teacher programs or courses that seek to encourage awareness of CRP (Castro, 2010; Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1999). An emphasis on CRP in teacher education programs is one way to frame the teaching of students from diverse backgrounds (Banks et al., 2007; Barnes, 2006; Nieto, 2005). Recent research showed gains in cultural responsiveness and diversity efficacy when preservice teachers learn how to apply CRP concepts (Cho & Cicchelli, 2012; Gosselin & Meixner, 2013; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Lake & Rittschof, 2012; Laughter, 2011). In a study developed within an English methods class, Olan and Richmond (2016) used young adult literature for preservice teachers to explore identities of diverse characters

in novels. The course encouraged discussions about what it means to be 'white'. The students also explored counter-narratives and began to question who chooses books for school districts and why those books are chosen. By utilizing young adult literature to develop cultural awareness, teacher educators were able to encourage critical self-reflection in a "low-risk environment" (p. 13).

Michael-Luna and Marri's (2010) case study of teacher candidates placed in diverse classrooms argued that experiential learning assisted teacher education programs in moving beyond the surface of cultural responsiveness: "Preparing new teachers for the seen and unseen threads of diversity in the tapestry of urban educational contexts is a key component in multicultural democratic teacher education" (p. 198). In her observations of preservice teachers, Ladson-Billings (2006) acknowledged there a need for experiential learning in teacher education programs. Many prospective teachers are entangled in theories, but have little experiential knowledge of race, language, or socioeconomic situations within schools.

While there are many studies focusing on preservice teachers learning about CRP, much fewer studies focus on in-service teacher learning. The studies that exist predominantly focused on professional development, professional learning communities, and whole-school reform (Esposito, Davis, & Swain, 2012; McCormick, Eick, & Womack, 2013). Studies on in-service teachers often revealed that many teachers have a desire to connect with diverse students, but they do not have the training to connect in a meaningful way (Douglas, 2015; Howell, Cook, & Faulkner, 2013). In a study of professional development for science teachers, Johnson (2011) noted that participants were open to learning more about CRP. Despite their openness to CRP

concepts, some participants claimed they were colorblind and struggled with including socio-political approaches in their classroom. Professional development in Johnson's 2011 study utilized a Transformative Professional Development (TPD) framework for teaching educators about CRP and supporting their application of CRP in the classroom. Out of the three tenets of CRP, Johnson found there was substantial growth in the teacher's conception of self and others. One teacher responded to the professional development saying, "It changed me as a teacher. I can't go back to the way I was- and hopefully I wouldn't want to- after all the information I have gathered" (p. 195).

Struggles Implementing CRP

Teachers gaining knowledge of CRP is crucial to teaching in the 21st Century. Yet, knowledge and understanding of CRP does not guarantee teachers will be able to effectively work with diverse populations. Actualizing CRP is a challenging and complex task for many teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Morrison, Robbins, & Rose, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). Studies focusing on the struggles of implementing CRP focused on both external and internal obstacles.

External obstacles to actualizing CRP in the classroom were often based upon district or school culture. CRP is already a complex concept with many layers, but an unsupportive administration can make it nearly impossible for teachers to develop a classroom environment conducive to CRP. One of the major barriers to meaningful CRP practices in the classroom was prepackaged curriculum materials, also referred to as *the scripted curriculum*. Low test scores in schools often resulted in a scripted curriculum which is frequently offered as a panacea to any problem-at-hand (Burke & Adler, 2013; Parks & Bridges-Rhoads, 2012; Schmidt & Lazar, 2011). In a study of

mathematics teachers, Ukpokodu (2011) noted that curriculum was one of the main obstacles that inhibited teachers from engaging with a meaningful CRP approaches to instruction. The pre-packaged curriculum was a convenience, but teachers also felt pressured to follow it lockstep in order to maintain scores on state mandated assessments. Even without a prepackaged curriculum, pressure to perform on standardized tests was a major obstacle for teachers. In a study taking place over five years, Achinstein and Ogawa (2012) explored the experiences of seventeen teachers. Whereas many studies exploring the struggles of actualizing CRP focused on White teachers, Achinstein and Ogawa focused solely on teachers of color. This study found that accountability measures created fear and anxiety for teachers:

> Many teachers who participated in this study explained that two elements of accountability policies—curriculum standards and standardized testing—challenged their ability to engage in culturally responsive teaching because state standards and standardized tests do not reflect the cultural resources and histories of students from non-dominant cultural communities. In addition, these teachers explained that the standardized instructional programs and instructional pacing guides that were adopted by their districts and schools to improve test scores forced them to engage in transmission-oriented teaching instead of the collaborative and culturally responsive approaches to which they were committed and trained. (p.36)

In Achinstein and Ogawa's study, many teachers felt threatened by accountability pressures. Teacher who did not feel as much pressure often taught advanced topics not subject to standardized tests or worked at higher-achieving schools.

Clearly, schools labeled as *low-performing* bear the heaviest burdens when it comes to the accountability measures produced at the state and federal levels. According to Achinstein and Ogawa (2012) external obstacles were created not only at state and federal levels, but were eventually reproduced at a more intense level within low-performing school districts.

Young (2010) found a common internal obstacle for teachers is a misunderstanding of CRP. Teachers in Young's study acknowledged the value of having a culturally relevant approach to teaching. However, their classroom practices regularly revolved around superficial celebrations of holidays, foods, and historical events. Participants did not consider several key tenets of CRP such as high academic expectations or social issues. Young ended with a call to action for teacher preparation and professional development programs: "Not enough is being done to extend ongoing support to practitioners who have accepted and are willing to implement scholarly theories into their pedagogy (p. 258). Similar case studies reported related issues of normative cultural additives (Amanti, 2005; Leonard, Napp, & Adeleke, 2009; Rozansky, 2010). Teachers may have believed they were being culturally responsive to their students, yet their understanding of what CRP was limited or even, inaccurate.
In many cases, the struggles to implement CRP were both external and internal. Hyland (2009) described a White teacher in her fourth year working with predominantly Black students. Highland followed the teacher, Andrea, for two years. While the new teacher was open to CRP and supported social justice oriented classroom practices, she still struggled. Hyland described the participant as:

> A teacher who was highly motivated to become a culturally relevant teacher, took numerous courses on multicultural education, and had external support mechanisms in place to develop classroom-based practices and beliefs that support a culturally relevant framework in spite of her racist school context. Yet, Andrea still struggled to fully develop the relationships and ideology that are described as culturally relevant. (p. 109)

Hyland identified three clear barriers in the teacher's ability to actualize CRP tenets: a deficit perception of school, a struggle to balance work and personal life, and erroneous assumptions about students and community. Like most research revolving around teacher development of CRP, Hyland's study ended with a call to better understand the barriers of actualizing CRP.

Effective Teachers

Many studies reminded us that effective teachers recognize complexities of culture and maintain an organic approach to their learners. (Caraballo, 2016; Michael-Luna & Marri, 2010). In a year-long case study by Fitts (2009), a fifth grade class was examined for students' funds of knowledge (FOK) that might support CRP. The teacher utilized FOK to introduce new concepts, create safe spaces for native language discourse, and validate code-switching as a linguistic strength. The teacher's goal was to meet students where they were in their lives and differentiate based upon the needs of each class. Fitts used an example of exploring sports statistics to engage students in a new concept. While connecting to sports was engaging for students, discussions were also needed to scaffold discourse that allowed for students' Spanish dominate language.

Another popular instructional strategy was utilizing music in the classroom (Christianakis, 2011; Durden & Truscott, 2013; Morell, 2009). Lessons and activities cited in the literature as CRP based classroom strategies are growing. In a study of preservice teachers working with eighth grade students, Johnson and Eubanks (2015) researched a lesson that connected popular music with composition skills. The "Anthem" lesson was created by the preservice teachers and implemented in a classroom that served mostly African-American students. In this lesson, students were first asked to engage their prior knowledge of an "anthem" and use their collective understanding to define the term. Next, students explored classical representations of an anthem such as the "Star-Spangled Banner" and created a list of criteria for an anthem. The subsequent phase allowed students to discuss more recent, contemporary songs and decide collectively if those songs met the qualifications of an anthem. After the communal understanding of an anthem had been developed, students were able to choose their own song as a representative of their individual anthem. The last step required students to write an essay defending their song as an anthem, allowing students to express their individual perspective but also requiring them to consider the communal definition of an anthem. Johnson and Eubanks explained that the Anthem lesson supported many tenets of CRP, "By illuminating student voice and choice, the anthem essay lesson allows for collaboration and dialogue about issues of identity, race, tradition, gender, and other social issues that impact students' lives" (p. 35).

The dispositions and qualities of an effective teacher for diverse learners had already been well established. By merging the foundational CRP works from Gay

(2000), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Nieto (1999), a framework for CRP was created by Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011). This framework consists of five central principles:

1) Identity and Achievement;

2) Equity and Excellence;

3) Developmental Appropriateness;

4) Teaching Whole Child;

5) Student-Teacher Relationships.

While early work provided a foundation for CRP, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) developed a framework, and more recent research has examined teacher behaviors that align with CRP tenets. In a study of urban teachers in South Los Angeles, Duncan-Andrade (2007) noted that teachers who legitimized student experiences within the curriculum had higher levels of academic performance. In another study involving Navajo students, both on the reservation and off reservation (Yazzie-Mintz, 2007), a teacher used basket weaving to teach storytelling and invited community members into the classroom to speak. This study found culturally responsive teaching positively shaped both the student and the teacher.

In a school in Boston, Martell (2013) researched his own culturally relevant teaching. As a White male teacher, Martell wanted to study the use of CRP in his highly diverse classroom. Martell increased diverse content in his social studies curriculum and used inquiry based learning to encourage students to question social injustice. After implementing changes in both his curriculum and pedagogy, Martell gathered student perceptions on the new classroom practices. In his study, students reported feeling more empowered and connected to the content due to the changes made by the teacher. The

results of his survey also displayed no statistical difference in positive effects between White students and students of color. In addition to feeling empowered and connected, students requested continued curriculum changes that encompassed more representation of different cultures.

An overarching theme of CRP is building relationships to learn about the unique community of learners. In other words, CRP is not necessarily what teachers teach but how they teach (Gay, 2013). In his study of teacher behaviors, Irizarry (2007) revealed that effective teachers of diverse students recognized students as highly individualized and complex. Irizarry emphasized that CRP is not just about content being matched to the ethnicity of the students sitting in desks. In addition, effective teachers allowed the classroom to be socially constructed. Irziarry indicated:

> Challenging the more formulaic aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy can inform teachers' practices and aid them in promoting the academic success of student by responding to the many ways that culture is manifested among students from diverse cultural backgrounds." (p. 22)

The emphasis on authentic teacher interaction with students was also seen in a study conducted by Sampson and Garrison-Wade (2011). Sampson and Garrison-Wade developed their study to research CRP lessons created for African-American students. Through their study they found that effective teaching practices actually impacted students more than the actual lessons.

> Educators can create supportive learning and school connectedness by relating genuinely, sharing their unknowing with students, and accepting multiple perceptions and perspectives. Although the process of curricular integration is

> complex, the foundation of this process is one rooted in genuine respect and high expectations for the African-American learner. (p. 302)

In addition, Sampson and Garrison-Wade's study found that effective teachers were not specific to race or ethnicity. Students responded positively to both White teachers and Black teachers who reflected tenets of CRP.

Student Perceptions of Classroom Practices

A recent development in research was the use of student voice to explore CRP in classrooms. There are many stakeholders in schools that serve diverse populations. Yet, the most critical stakeholder, the students, has been the least engaged by researchers. Irizarry and Anthrop- González (2007) began conducting interviews with Puerto Rican students to explore the factors that they contributed to their success. One of the most significant themes in their study was coalition-building: "The Puerto Rican students respected their teachers because they were willing to deconstruct traditional teacher-student power relationships and assume positions of humility in order to learn together" (p. 48). In this study, deconstructing power was often seen as a form of caring for students from diverse backgrounds. Irizarry and Anthrop- González revealed that teachers, who were willing to demonstrate a dialogical relationship of reciprocated knowledge, were most valued by students.

Student perceptions of effective teachers appeared again in Garza's (2009) study. Garza worked with both White and Latin@ students to examine an ethos of care as a way to support CRP. Building upon Noddings's (2005) ideas on listening as a form of care, Garza developed a study focused solely on student voice. While relationships built on a disposition of kindness were important to both White and Latin@ students,

the Latin@ students shared additional components as significant to student-teacher relationships. The Latin@ students, many of which were from immigrant families, voiced scaffolding and affective academic support as key elements of caring. The affective academic support cited in the study consisted of teaching approaches that assisted in the development of skills necessary for future careers and higher education. Garza ended the study by revealing a need for more high school students' perceptions.

Two years later, King and Chan (2011) explored differences in teacher perceptions and student perceptions of caring in a diverse school outside of Atlanta. King and Chan utilized a quantitative survey to gain both teacher perceptions of care and student perceptions of care. The results showed statistically significant differences between teacher perspectives and student perspectives across the following themes: classroom management, academic support, interpersonal relationships, and sense of respect and trust.

More recently, Shaw (2016) elicited student perspectives in a multi-ethnic music program. Shaw utilized interviews and questionnaires to explore students' perspectives on culturally responsive practices. Three overarching themes appeared in student perceptions: sociocultural competence, expanding cultural horizons and enhancing cultural validity. Similar to other studies focusing on classroom practices, Shaw cautioned that isolated content representing the race or ethnicity of students did not guarantee that students recognized cultural responsiveness in the classroom. In Shaw's study, a Guatemalan student was asked about the use of a Guatemalan song "Luna de Xelaju." Even though the teacher used a Guatemalan song specifically for her, the student did not feel it was an attempt by the teacher to respond to her culture. The

student dismissed the song stating, “No. He was just like, ‘I bet you’ll like this song’ and I’m like, why?” (p.64). Shaw offers implications for practicing teachers:

> Students’ perspectives gleaned through this study suggest that a content integration approach to CRP centered on repertoire teachers assumed will correspond with students’ cultural backgrounds will not necessarily result in students feeling culturally recognized and validated. Selecting repertoire that corresponds to students’ cultural backgrounds is far from a straightforward task, and potential exists for students to be alienated by instruction based on misguided teacher assumptions about the music they find relevant. (p. 64-65)

The multi-ethnic teacher in Shaw’s study was identified as a teacher who valued diversity and was known for being responsive to students. Despite attempts by the teacher to be considerate and equitable to all students, the students still felt a disconnect. Similar to King and Chan’s study, Shaw revealed there can be a strong variance in perceptions about classroom practices between students and teachers. Student voice is a valuable aspect to CRP literature, and recent researchers continue to discuss their concern with the lack of student perceptions. Unfortunately, ethnic minority voices continue to be marginalized, even when the research developed is for the sake of the diverse student.

Implications of Review

In Christine Sleeter’s (2012) review of culturally responsive pedagogy, she argued that CRP is being pushed to the edges of academic conversations. If ignored, CRP faces a similar fate as multiculturalism. Sleeter’s research synthesis highlighted the marginalization of CRP and argued that, “advancing culturally responsive pedagogy

requires not only a stronger research base but also political work to combat its marginalization due to persistent simplistic conceptions of what it means, and backlash prompted by fear of its potential to transform the existing social order" (p. 563). This current literature review revealed that Sleeter's concerns of shallow or simplistic understandings of CRP are still warranted. Repeated throughout the literature was a warning that CRP cannot be placed into a box of pre-packaged curriculum. While many lessons and activities meet the expectations CRP tenets, CRP was just as much process as it is content.

Sleeter's (2012) review of CRP research also called for action from researchers based on three different areas of need: 1) development of more evidence-based research that documents connections between CRP and student outcomes 2) education of parents, teachers, and leaders about what CRP means and looks like in the classroom 3) reframing of public debate in regards to teaching, especially teaching in diverse and historically underserved communities (p. 578). Since teachers spend a vast amount of time with students and have a direct impact on student success, educating teachers seemed to hold some of the greatest need. Therefore, my study contributed to Sleeter's second call for action, specifically focusing on teachers.

In an attempt to address CRP complexities, Griner (2013) used the Delphi[3] Study technique to create a perception survey based upon qualitative interviews with teachers, community leaders, and parents. The main purpose of Griner's study was to use stakeholder voices to develop and evaluate a "teacher friendly" tool that supported CRP practices in the school (p. 586). The survey was used to share perceptions of the

[3] The Delphi technique is a quantitative approach utilizing questionnaires to develop a consensus based upon expert opinions. In Griner's study, the experts were community members, parents, and teachers.

school's cultural responsiveness. While the survey was considered by most to be valuable, Griner warned readers about using tools as a "quick-fix" solution to deficit thinking (p. 602). Practical CRP tools should be used as *educative curriculum materials* for teachers rather than a superficial quick-fix (Davis & Krajcik, 2005). Educative materials for teachers should involve their feedback, encourage critical reflection, and support transformative change. While Griner's study was a step forward in considering stakeholder's perspectives to educate teachers, students were left out of the process.

One of the crucial aspects shared in recent empirical research on CRP was the value in sustaining a dialogical relationship the classroom. Teachers who were considered effective by students supported a dialogical relationship built upon reciprocated knowledge. A willingness from the teacher to learn from the students made students feel valued. The dialogical relationships discussed in the literature was a common thread that runs throughout Ladson-Billings's original three tenets of CRP: conception of self and others, structure of social relations, and relationship of knowledge. Lack of student perception in both classroom practices and educational research was a major concern. Howard (2001) was one of the first to call for more feedback from stakeholders in the CRP field:

> Finally, teachers must have the will and the courage to learn about the culture, life, and history of African-American people. The acquisition of this knowledge requires more than reading various literature about the African-American experience. It entails talking to parents, students, and community members and immersing oneself in various facets of the day-to-day environment that students experience. (p. 147)

Ten years later, there is still a strong call for student voice in CRP studies. In Sampson and Garrison-Wade's (2011) study using CRP lessons created for African-American children, classroom practices in relationship to curriculum were observed. In keeping with CRP tenets, Sampson and Garrison-Wade's study incorporated student perceptions of their teachers' classroom practices. Perceptions shared in the study were valuable for teachers and their understanding of how to be more effective in the classroom. Sampson and Garrison-Wade continued the call for more student voice in the conclusion of their study: "Finally, it is evident that research on student voice is an important component that requires further exploration to understand and incorporate student perceptions of their curricular preferences" (p. 304). Despite the proven value of student perceptions in relationship to teacher practices, student voice was often neglected.

Conclusion

Reflecting on her research with teacher education programs, Sonia Nieto (2013) wrote:

> Teachers who are successful with students inevitably become sociocultural mediators, that is, they learn about their students, they help them to negotiate academic spaces, and they affirm students' identities while helping them to explore the world beyond their limited realities. (p. 15)

While Nieto's thoughts are not debated, the actual implementation is much more complicated in regards to implementation. How teachers do this? How do they learn from their students? In addition, how do teachers know if what they think matches what student think? To better understand CRP practices, my study confronted obstacles faced by teachers working with diverse populations by utilizing the resource of student voice.

My study explored the experiences of teachers in relationship to their students' CRP perceptions.

CHAPTER THREE

A culturally sustaining stance toward curriculum, pedagogy, and research necessitates that educators and learners reimagine education together. (Caraballo, 2016, p. 20)

Methodology

Through my research, I explored student perceptions and teacher practices, while also gathering data on teacher attitudes towards student perceptions. I included context for teaching in a diverse classroom, teachers' responses to their students' perceptions, and how teachers' sustained or adapted their beliefs and practices over time. This chapter describes the conceptualization of the study. The chapter consists of eight different sections:

1. Aims of Study- Reviews the research questions and states the overall aims.
2. Case Study Approach- Reflects on the particularistic case study approach.
3. Study Overview- Explains the phases of the study along with a detailed timeline.
4. Setting and Participants- Provides detailed information about the research context.
5. Methods of Data Collection- Identifies points of data for the study and provides details for each point.
6. Data Analysis- Describes the processes for analyzing data and ensuring alignment with accepted case study practices.
7. Confidence and Trustworthiness- Discusses the role of researcher as participant.
8. Summary- Introduces a framework for findings.

Aims of study

As stated earlier in chapter one, the research questions guiding this study were as follows:

- What are student perceptions of culturally-relevant pedagogy?
- How do teachers respond to student perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy?
- What attitudes do teachers hold towards student perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy?

The conceptualization of this study was developed with a social constructivist intention. Social constructivism is based upon the assumption that knowledge is mutually constructed rather than constructed in isolation. From this perspective, learning and understanding of the world is shaped from socialization and socialization shapes learning (Abes, Jones, and McEwen, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Vygotsky, 1981). Rather than rely solely on my own understandings of CRP, voices from the community being studied were utilized. The social constructivist approach acknowledged the individual perspectives while also recognizing communal values and beliefs. Because I was an outsider to the community of learners, the perceptions and observations of both students and teachers played crucial roles in this study.

Case Study Approach

According to Stake (1995), qualitative case studies focus on experiential knowledge of the case itself and concentrates heavily on the context of the study with attention given to socio-political influences. I chose a particularistic case study as the methodology for the study due to the complexities of educational research within naturalistic settings. The purpose of the case study was to gain deeper understandings

rather than draw generalizations (Stake, 1995; Stenhouse,1979). Therefore, a particularistic case study methodology seemed suitable for capturing what happens in a diverse classroom during interactions between teachers and students.

This methodology focuses on particularistic and ordinary experiences within a single bounded case that shape complex concepts. My case study was bound by three identifiable qualities: time (the first semester of school), space (data collected was based on events taking place in English classrooms), and participants (four teachers from one department participated). Multiple approaches to data collection were used in the study: interviews, observations, and reflections. Rather than focus on isolated events, particularistic case studies allowed for an exploration of an attitude or behavior over time. Triangulation from the various data points at different moments in time allowed for multiple perspectives (Merriam, 2009). Data was collected prior to the student perception surveys, immediately following surveys, and two months after surveys. The goal of the case study was to create a "thick description" of the experience and attitudes of teachers throughout their experience with the student perception surveys (Geertz, 1973).

The research gathered did not come from student perception survey results themselves, rather data collected was from teachers as they engaged with their students' perceptions. Information gathered from students during the design process was utilized as ancillary data, which was developed to measure a different research question from a different subset of participants to better understand the case. The questions developed by students for the survey served as a window into what students hoped to see in their teachers. The survey was meant to serve as a vehicle for studying teachers' responses to

student perceptions. The survey was created with a social constructivist approach that engaged two crucial stakeholders in CRP: the students and the teachers. Stakeholders are often left out of the process of research or reform because "they are not considered decision makers or sources of knowledge or information" (Stenhouse, 2004, p. 168). The particularistic case study design assisted in gathering insight from teachers and their experience with CRP student perception surveys in order to develop knowledge for utilizing student perceptions in the future.

Study Overview

The use of student perceptions for my study were twofold. The first objective was to make room for stakeholder's voices in empirical research. The second objective was to explore dialogical relationships in the classroom. The following section describes the process of developing the study to explore teachers' experiences I discuss the development of the study through six different phases, described in detail. The description of each phase includes a discussion of collaboration with stakeholders to develop the student perception survey (SPS).

Positioning the Study

Previously, researchers have utilized student perceptions via questionnaires; however, these questionnaires have tended to focus on specific lessons, not on teachers' overall demeanor in classrooms (Howard, 2001; Martell, 2013; Sampson and Garrison-Wade, 2011; Shaw, 2016) and regarding care (King & Chan, 2011; Garza 2009). Previous surveys often investigated teachers in general, as opposed to offering intentional feedback to student's specific teachers. Griner (2013) assessed the school as a whole, rather than offering specific feedback to individual teachers. The surveys in

Griner's study were also completed by community and family members, but did not include students.

Before exploring teachers' experiences, perceptions of students were gathered through anonymous surveys. Gathering student perceptions through anonymous surveys allowed for more honest feedback. Part of the challenge was to develop a meaningful survey to share student perceptions with teachers that would align with data collection. Due to the social constructivist approach, it was crucial to include stakeholders in the development of a student perception survey before the study began at the site for two reasons: 1) No student perception surveys based upon a CRP framework existed. Since no survey of this specific focus existed, the survey served as a pilot. 2) A social constructivist approach was used to include the voices of those involved within the school.

The survey was based upon a framework for application of CRP, developed by Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011). Brown-Jeffy and Cooper's conceptual framework, as mentioned in the literature review, merged the literature from the most significant early scholars on CRP. While Brown-Jeffy and Cooper's framework did not serve as a framework for the research collected in this study, the framework served as a guide for survey development (see Appendix A). In addition, the study included teachers' feedback prior to the administration of the surveys. The activities of the study were meant to do more than just research a possible CRP tool within isolation, and the opportunity for teachers to share ideas or concerns encouraged a social constructivist model that developed opportunities for inclusion.

Timeline

I conducted the study through six phases. While data on teacher experiences was collected during only certain phases, the entire timeline of the study is provided. Table 1 provides basic information about the six different phases of the study. Table 2 clarifies the timeline for when data was collected on teacher responses and attitudes in relationship to students' perceptions.

Table 3.1- Study Timeline

Phase 1	**Phase 2**	**Phase 3**	**Phase 4**	**Phase 5**	**Phase 6**
(6/13-7/28)	**(7/28-7/29)**	**(8/26-9/10)**	**(9/13-9/28)**	**(9/29-9/30)**	**(12/2)**
Build rapport with students, teachers, and administration Teacher participants selected Collaboration meeting with teachers Collaboration with students, students discuss elements of CRP and begin participate in question authoring	First round of teacher data collection: interviews observations reflections Teacher feedback on surveys	Solicit student input Use student questions to develop survey Send draft of student perception surveys to teachers and gather teacher feedback Make necessary revisions based on teacher feedback	Surveys distributed for student use, all English classes complete surveys Teachers receive results of student perceptions surveys	Second round of teacher data collection: interviews observations reflections	Third round of teacher data collection: interviews observations reflections

Table 3.2- Teacher Data Collection

	Phase 1 (6/13-7/28)	Phase 2 (7/28-7/29)	Phase 3 (8/26-9/10)	Phase 4 (9/13-9/28)	Phase 5 (9/29-9/30)	Phase 6 (12/2)
Interview		X			X	X
Observation		X			X	X
Reflections		X			X	X

Phase One. The first phase of this study posed complex challenges. Phase one began by meeting with administration to gain permission to complete the study at the school site. This entailed having access to the school's teachers and students. In addition, administration shared key concerns with doing a study at their site. The concerns included: being considerate of teachers' work time, being mindful of students' classroom time, and using technology to conduct the survey digitally.

Once administrators were in support of the study, a collaboration meeting was arranged with the English department teachers. The English department was chosen in order to pilot the student perception survey before conducting it with the whole school. The meeting, held on July 22, 2016, consisted of four English teachers. I prepared a handout to use during the meeting that would allow the teachers to understand their roles in the study (see Appendix B). In addition, the handout included the framework for CRP in case teachers had questions about CRP. The CRP framework was also included on the handout because it was the foundation for the student perception survey. During our meeting teachers agreed to be participants in the study and collaborators on the student perception survey. The teachers requested that the surveys not take several

days to administer, as seen with many quantitative research surveys. They felt that many urban students suffered from survey fatigue generated by outside consulting groups and external grants. In addition, they requested digital options for the surveys rather than paper and pencil. Finally, a mutually agreed upon tentative timeline was set. During the teacher collaboration meeting, I shared my desire to have surveys include the voices of students. To complete this task, I needed a group of students as collaborators. During this discussion, one of the English teachers offered her sophomore students as an option. After the meeting with the entire group, I met individually with this teacher, and we explored ways to engage students in a discussion of CRP. The teacher wanted students to engage in an activity that would encourage a discussion of both individual and community identities. She wanted to make a safe-space for perspective-sharing before diving into the CRP framework and the formation of survey questions. We decided that the collaboration with students would consist of two days. During these two days, my main role was that of a participant observer.

Day one of student collaboration consisted of building a rapport with students by sharing components of my own identity. I used an activity that I had utilized with my own students while teaching public school. The activity "Circles of My Multicultural Self" was an activity that I adapted from the EdChange Project (Paul Gorski, n.d.). The activity encourages individuals to look at the many different aspects of their identity and shared life experiences (see Appendix C).

Day two consisted of students discussing the CRP framework and formulating questions for the survey. First, students were given handouts containing the CRP framework from Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011). The CRP handout had been broken

down into student-friendly speak (see Appendix D). Students first discussed what each principal of the framework meant to them in small groups. Then they shared out with the entire class. Once students had an opportunity to share their thoughts on each of the five principals of the CRP framework, students worked in small groups to develop question stems for each part of the framework. Students were informed that questions should be based on information they wish they could share with their teachers about the classroom environment and how their teacher teaches. After students had collaborated in groups to develop questions in each of the five areas of the CRP framework, the student handouts were collected.

Phase Two. The second phase of the study involved the first round of data collection from the teachers. Data collection for this portion of the study had two purposes: 1) teacher feedback for survey development and 2) pre-survey data collection. The first round of interviews gathered teacher feedback on the use of student perception surveys in general. At this time, teachers shared their concerns about using student perception surveys to gain more understanding of the CRP. They also shared suggestions and feedback for the development of the student perceptions surveys. An understanding of teachers' responses and attitudes towards their students' perceptions was also gained before administering the student perception survey. The three points of data assisted in understanding how teachers normally respond to daily student perceptions and feedback, including how they accessed the perceptions of their students. Collecting data before administering surveys to students gave a baseline to look at the case over time, especially with the use of the classroom observations and reflections. During phase two, each teacher participated in one full round of data

collection: interviews, classroom observations, and a personal written reflection. Reflection prompts were given first, then interviews were conducted. Some of the interview questions grew organically from information found in the reflections. In addition, classroom observations were conducted with each teacher.

Phase Three. I created the survey based upon student feedback provided in the handouts collected in phase one. Student input included personal perceptions of what makes up a culturally relevant teacher based upon the five areas in the CRP framework. Students were encouraged to author their own questions for each of the five areas. To develop the survey, I reviewed each of the five areas individually. For example, I examined questions in the section Identity and Achievement first (see Appendix B and Appendix D). I reviewed the questions authored by students in this area and looked for patterns. I did this with each of the five principals of the CRP framework. Because teachers had requested surveys that were considerate of students' time, each section of the survey consisted of just five questions, ensuring that the survey consisted of only 25 questions total. In order to maintain a question limit on the surveys, I reviewed the students' questions for repetition and overarching ideas. The questions were merged into five questions per section, keeping the original language and wording of questions as much as possible.

Once I completed the draft of the survey, I sent a copy to the teachers in order to gain further feedback and collaboration. I shared the document with teachers using Google Docs so they could add comments, suggestions, and concerns to the actual survey document (see Appendix E). In addition, if they saw an area of CRP or their classroom environment/teaching that was not covered, they were encouraged to author

questions themselves. The feedback from the teachers guided my revision of the survey draft, and it was developed into a digital student perception survey using Google Forms.

Phase Four. The fourth phase of the study consisted of the development of the student perception survey (SPS) final draft (see Appendix F). The final draft was a collaboration of student question authoring and teacher feedback. It consisted of 25 Likert Scale questions and two short-answer responses. I then inserted the final draft into Google Forms due to the request for digital surveys. Once the SPS was in Google Forms, I created an individual copy of the survey for each teacher. This allowed for the teacher to give the SPS to their students only, rather than all English students at the site. Through an individualized link, each English teacher administered the SPS to their specific class. Teachers were allotted a window of approximately two weeks for students to complete the SPS. Teachers administered the SPS to their class all at one time, and students were only allowed access once. They could not submit multiple responses.

Once the students had completed the SPS for their English teacher, I gave teachers access to the results. Each teacher only received access to their own individual reports of the results. Google Forms created reports for the SPS with graphic organizers indicating percentile accumulations of each question recorded through the Likert Scale. In addition, the Google Form report showed the teacher each short-answer response that was left as feedback for the last two questions, which were the only two short-answer responses on the survey. Results of the SPS were anonymous and did not show student information.

Phase Five. The fifth phase of the study consisted of the second round of formal data collection. This phase began immediately following teachers gaining access to the results of the SPS. Once teachers had received the results from the SPS, they wrote a personal reflection. After completing the reflection, interviews and classroom observations took place.

Phase Six. The last phase of this study consisted of the third round of data collection and was conducted approximately eight weeks after teachers received the results of the SPS. The first round of data took place pre-survey. The second round of data came post-survey. This third round was a post-post survey collection, meant to further understand teacher responses and attitudes over time. Data was collected again by the same three processes: interviews, observations, and reflections.

Setting and Participants

The aim of my study was to understand how teachers respond to their students' perceptions. The study was conducted at Mesa Verde High School (pseudonym) an urban non-profit charter high school in Oklahoma. This charter school, founded in 2001, was non-competitive and does not require testing to enroll. The open enrollment was facilitated through a lottery system that was inclusive to undocumented students. Participants at this school site consisted for four English teachers: one White male and three White females. Each of the teachers had past experience in urban schools but had varying years of experience at Mesa Verde.

Mesa Verde High School

The public charter school sat within the middle of a large urban district that served 45,000 students, with 94% on free and reduced lunches and a mobility rate of

49.7%. These percentages were not unique to urban schools and often serve as complex layers not considered by high-stakes testing proponents and various educational reforms.

There was a concern of using charter schools for a research site due to the fact that many charter schools contribute to the re-segregation of school districts (Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Wang, 2010; Jacobs, 2013; Miron, Urschel, Mathis, & Tornquist, 2010; Ni, 2010). However, for the high school specific to this study, the 2014-2015 student demographics reflected the overall district. The school served a population with 90% Hispanic students, while only 18% of teachers identified as minority. In addition, 81% of students were on free and reduced lunches, English Secondary Language (ESL) students made up approximately 75% of the student population, and English Language Learners (ELL) made up approximately 27% of the student population.

School demographics were compared with one of the local public schools within the district. This comparison of demographics was completed in order to investigate possible re-segregation based upon race, economics, or language. The non-charter school used for comparison was close in proximity to the Mesa Verde Charter. The comparison school reflected similar demographics to Mesa Verde with 75% Hispanic, 87% free and reduced lunches, and 86% ESL. Mesa Verde's population provided a valid source for diverse voices from racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. It also provided a meaningful examination of teacher experiences with a student perception survey while working with students from diverse backgrounds. Reflecting on

the current and potential gaps between teachers and students, Mesa Verde high school also served as a microcosm for the future of public education in the United States. Mesa Verde Charter was comprised of three elementary schools, a sixth grade center, a middle school and a high school. All the schools within the system were spread out within the community it serves, mostly housed in old churches and repurposed business buildings. The middle school recently moved into a space within an old mall that was only 30% occupied by large retail outlets. The Mesa Verde High School, which was the site for this study, was housed in an old elementary school that was built in 1910. The interior and exterior of the school had not seen many updates due to budget constraints. The building still held its abandoned elementary school characteristics: a decaying playground still sat outside, the staircase rails hit most of the high school students at the knee, and the parking situation was an improvised dirt lot crammed between the building and the railroad tracks created by high school students eager to have a place to park their cars. In addition, the school had no cafeteria. The lunch ladies prepared food in a small kitchen the same size of a kitchen you would see in an average house. Students grabbed a disposable tray, filled it up, and left the kitchen to find a seat on the floor in the hallways. On days when the weather was nice, the unstable playground became a favorite spot for students to eat. Many teachers had opened up their rooms to students at lunch time, giving the teachers no down-time at lunch, but also giving the students a chair and table.

Relationships and connections to the school were established through collaborative work initially with the secondary instructional coach. Through a partnership grant between the university and the school district, I had previously

worked with the secondary instructional coach to assist in building English curriculum guides for the district's teachers. Additional relationships and permissions were established through the secondary instructional coach. A meeting was arranged to discuss possibilities of the study in fall of 2015. This meeting consisted of the head principal, the assistant principal, and the secondary instructional coach. Mesa Verde administrators had chosen a restorative justice approach as their main focus for the upcoming school year and were seeking meaningful strategies for supporting their focus. Restorative justice attempts to alter perspectives that see certain individuals as adversaries and rather focus on how individuals are affected by harm, resulting in an emphasis on relationships and an interconnected community (Harrison, 2007; Morrison 2013). The administration's focus on restorative justice practices encouraged their interest in utilizing student perception surveys based on CRP premises.

Through initial exploratory discussions with Mesa Verde administration, I learned that the principals and administrative staff view their school along the lines of a learning and teaching sanctuary for students within the community. In his research of small charter schools, Antrop-González (2006) defined a school sanctuary based upon three main components:

> These components include the establishment of high-quality, interpersonal relationships between students and teachers, culturally relevant curricula that honor students' first language and culture, and where students are not subjected to psychological or physical abuse by their peers and/or teachers. (p. 297)

While the administration supported aspects such as those described by Antrop-González, they were not currently participating in assessment of those beliefs in

practice. The administrative staff hoped to utilize student perceptions as a way to better understand their classroom practices.

Teacher Participants

The participants for this study were chosen through purposeful sampling. Teachers from the English department were suggested by the administration. Participants were first engaged through a faculty meeting where the research study was introduced without the presence of the administration. Participants were able to ask questions and voice concerns during this meeting. The administration requested the English department be involved in the study; nevertheless, teachers were given the opportunity to opt-out. Each teacher participant chose their own pseudonym to remain anonymous.

Dusty. This teacher of seven years had a friendly, jovial personality which fit his assignment to the freshman students at Mesa Verde. Dusty self-identified as a White male. He called himself a gamer and sponsored the Mesa Verde Gaming Club. At lunch time, Dusty allowed students to use his room to play video games on the TV stationed in the back corner of the room. He stayed and supervised because his room filled to capacity every day at lunch with students looking to play a game or looking for a desk to eat lunch. Dusty also sponsored the school's rowing team which took up a good deal of his time after school. Dusty's room had only a few class posters scattered haphazardly around the room. Most of the wall hangings were gaming posters with the exceptions of a Harry Potter poster and a picture of the Tortoise and the Hare. Dusty was the only male participant and also one of the participants who had traditional teacher education background. Dusty also fully participated in a program called the

Urban Teacher Prep Academy. This program was meant to support student teachers interested in going into urban education. In addition to his formal teacher education background, Dusty also had experience working with a non-profit group that supported urban education in the large public school district that encompassed Mesa Verde. Before working at Mesa Verde, Dusty taught at a middle school within the same large, urban school district. Dusty was in his fifth year teaching at Mesa Verde High School.

Jandy. Upon entering Jandy's classroom, there is an overwhelming amount of decorations and information on the walls. The walls of her classroom were almost completely covered. Most of the wall-hangings were personal items: pictures of her family or items she has made by hand. She also had some past student projects displayed. She also had a Google Classroom website with a tab titled "Refrigerator." This was a digital spot where Jandy could showcase student work. Her whiteboard was covered in URL links and passwords to various digital resources. Jandy's classroom had chosen to make her classroom completely paperless. The curriculum, for the most part, was done completely through a set of Google Chromebooks, which Jandy purchased by writing her own technology grant. She had also written and been awarded a recent grant that allowed her to purchase media equipment such as lights, a green screen, and microphones. This equipment allowed her to teach an elective on informational technology where the students produced their own weekly news show for the school and other high schools in the community. Jandy self-identified as a White female who grew up in an area very different than her students. Jandy's suburban high school was predominantly White, middle-class, and she had little to no experience with urban education before coming to Mesa Verde. Jandy, who was in her sixth year teaching at

Mesa Verde, currently taught Junior English, but had also stepped in to teach history classes when needed. She did not have a formal teacher education background. After receiving her degree in Psychology, she was able to get alternatively certified by the state. Her only other previous teaching experience had been in another charter school located in the same urban school district. However, her previous charter school was a for-profit charter, and she left due to what she considers, "unethical" professional practices.

Dolli. With a unique background in mental health counseling, Dolli was the newest teacher to Mesa Verde. Like Jandy, Dolli was alternative certified. She began her professional career working in the mental health field and then later became a drug and alcohol counselor. While Dolli self-identified as a White female, she said she grew up in a predominantly "Hispanic" neighborhood and grew up speaking Spanish. After a career opportunity in Dallas ended suddenly, Dolli served as a substitute teacher in a large, inner-city school district. She described her time there as traumatic, and said she moved back home. However, her ability to speak Spanish and her background in community services, led her to a continued interest in urban education. She worked as a Spanish teacher at a private catholic school that mostly served the Latin@ community on the southside of the city while she worked on becoming alternatively certified. Dolli was in her first year teaching at Mesa Verde where she taught the Senior English classes and elective Spanish classes. Working with upperclassman, Dolli felt she could have a closer connection with her students. She posted her personal phone number on the whiteboard so students had access to her if ever needed and said students used it regularly. Dolli's English and Spanish classes were taught down the street from the

main school building. Due to budget issues and expansion of the charter school based upon district capacity issues, Mesa Verde partnered with a local church to house some of their upperclassman classes. Juniors and Seniors at Mesa Verde walked three blocks to get to several of their classes during the day. Dolli's class served as a Bible school classroom during the weekends. She had hung several academic posters on the walls, most of them focusing on grammar, but a few reviewed writing skills. Dolli said she struggled with her posters being pulled off the wall and supplies being taken during the weekend. On the first day of school, she had no desks or tables, only chairs. Students wrote in notebooks placed awkwardly in their laps.

Mary. The door of Mary's room consisted of more than just her name. She had two noticeable signs posted on the outside of her door. The first sign said "Dreamers Welcome". This sign disclosed that undocumented students could feel safe in this space. The "dreamers" was in reference to the Dreamer's Act first introduced in 2001, which had seen several reattempts and several dismissals by Congress. This bill would have allowed a path to citizenship for children of undocumented immigrants. The second sign on Mary's door was a sign that said "Sooners Ally". This sign represented a university based group that supports LGBTQ students. Mary self-identified as a White female who was pursuing her doctorate in Educational Studies and had formal teacher education training. Mary had been a part of the district for many years. She previously taught at one of the largest public high schools in the district. She shared with me that her departure from this previous school was incredibly difficult. While there was a vast amount of poverty and other issues, she loved her students. The final straw came from an independent consulting group, brought in because the school was considered low-

performing. The consulting group and the administration began requiring a scripted curriculum called *America's Choice Test Prep*. Mary said that the scripted curriculum was overbearing, and she did not become a teacher to prepare students for passing a test. In addition, the scripted curriculum restricted her from using novels in her English classes. Mary is in her second year of teaching at Mesa Verde. She was drawn to the school because it allowed autonomy and mostly treated the teachers like professionals. Mary previously worked with Juniors, but now teaches the Sophomore English classes.

Student Participants

While students were not the primary participants in the study, they did contribute their views of CRP through discussions and question authoring. Student participants were chosen through purposeful sampling. After a discussion with teacher collaborators on possible collaboration with various student groups, teacher participant Mary offered her classes as student collaborators. For the purposes of the student perception survey development, Mary's sophomore English students served as participants. Her students reflected the general demographics of Mesa Verde High School and were not a part of a specialized or elective course.

Methods of Data Collection

Secondary data was collected from school public records to compare demographics to the district as a whole and contextualize the study. In addition, student perceptions of CRP were utilized as ancillary data and to develop the CRP student perception survey. However, the primary data was collected from the four English teachers at Mesa Verde High School. Yin (2012) reminds us that "examining the context and other complex conditions related to the case(s) being studied are integral to

the understandings of the case" (p. 3). Therefore, for the purposes of triangulation, three different points of data were collected: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and written reflections completed by the teachers. There was no theoretical lens to guide data collection or data analysis; rather the study is developed around emergent design. This emergent design allowed for a more inductive approach to the study and gave flexibility, as a researcher, to be more organic based on what was materializing in the data. The data collection took place over a six-month timespan and was conducted during pre-survey, post-survey, and post-post survey.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews were audio recorded. Each participant teacher was interviewed three times, and each interview lasted on average twenty minutes. Initial questions were created with a heuristic approach in mind, and further exploratory questions were asked as needed. Subsequent interview questions were often developed based upon the pervious interviews and reflections.

Sample Questions from Interview One:

- What drew you to teaching at Mesa Verde High School?
- What has your experience been like as a teacher at this school?
- Describe the most difficult student you taught last year…
- Tell me about one of the hardest moments you have had as a teacher…
- Tell me about a golden moment in your teaching career…
- Do you normally try to learn about your students?
- How do you view yourself as a teacher?
- How do you learn about your students?

- How do you feel about culturally relevant pedagogy?
- What were your initial responses to the idea of using the surveys?
- What has been your experience with student perception surveys in the past?

Sample Questions from Interview Two:

- How has your year been going at Santa Fe South?
- Are there any obstacles you have had to face so far this year?
- Has there been in highlights so far?
- Tell me about the process of doing the survey. What were the logistics like for you?
- Do you remember what your initial response was to the idea of using student surveys? Has that response changed at all based upon your experience?
- What is one word you would use to describe your initial reaction to the surveys?
- What was your thoughts after reviewing the results of your surveys?
- Did you learn anything *about* your students? Did you learn anything *from* your students?
- Will you approach the classroom differently? In what ways? If not, why not?
- Has this experience impacted your view of yourself or your teacher identity?
- How would you describe your overall experience with the CRP surveys?
- How do you feel about culturally relevant pedagogy?

Sample Questions from Interview Three:

- How are things going since I saw you last?
- Last time I saw you, I asked you to give me one word to describe your feelings towards the results of the survey. Now that you have had some time, what is one

word you would use now to describe your feelings towards the results of your surveys?

- Since the survey, have you noticed any type of transformations taking place in your classroom? Either with you or with your students?
- What were your students' responses to this experience with the survey?
- Have you approached the classroom differently since the survey? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- Now that you have had more time to reflect on this experience of using the student surveys, has this experience affected your view of yourself (your teacher identity)?
- Have you gone back to view the results of your survey since we spoke last? Why or why not?
- Were you able to see which of the 5 areas of the CRP framework you were the weakest and the strongest?
- Are there any needs for teachers or students *before* taking the survey? *After* taking the survey? (Scaffolding, conversations, etc)
- How would you describe your overall experience with the CRP student perception surveys?
- Any other thoughts?

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations occurred at three separate intervals during the facilitation of this study. Observations were the second point of data in the case study triangulation and assisted in fully understanding the contextualization of the case. Each

classroom observation took place on the same day as interviews or within 24 hours of interviews. Field notes from classroom observations were written in a journal as jottings and then later reflected on through a more formal, narrative text. Classroom observations developed an awareness overlap and allowed for an observation of non-verbal actions that clarified assumptions about teacher beliefs and practices discussed in interviews. In addition, after the survey, classroom observations two and three revealed associations between responses from the student perception surveys and teacher practices.

Teacher Reflections

The last aspect of data collection was written reflections by the teacher participants. These reflections were a component of the data triangulation and took place at the same time as interviews and observations. Teachers were given open ended prompts and encouraged to free write their responses.

The first prompt was meant to gain a better understanding of the participants' definitions of CRP and to understand the meanings they attribute to the term. In addition, the first prompt was meant to gain any possible insight into how teachers interact with student perceptions in the classroom without the use of perception surveys. First reflection: Do you make your teaching culturally relevant to your students? If yes, how do you make it culturally relevant to them and how do you know it is culturally relevant? If you do not make your teaching culturally relevant, why not?

The second reflection prompt was given at the same time teachers received access to their SPS results. This reflection was meant to be a safe space for teachers to purge their initial reactions to their students' perceptions as seen in the SPS results.

Second reflection: Take a moment to view the results of your students' perceptions on the culturally relevant teaching practices in the classroom. What are your initial feelings and thoughts to the feedback students provided?

The third reflection came after almost two months of utilizing the survey to gain student perceptions on teachers' CRP. The prompt was written in a way to allow teachers to tell a story about their experience with their students' perceptions in a creative or abstract way. The last reflection was also an opportunity for teachers to consider the entire process from beginning to end. Third reflection: Think of a metaphor that reflects your experience using culturally relevant student perception surveys in your class. What is that metaphor and how does it represent your experience using the surveys this semester?

Data Analysis

The data was kept confidential by labeling participants with codes throughout the collection process. All points of data were organized by participant code, date, and position in the phasing of the study. Data was kept in a password protected laptop and mobile device. After each round of data collection, interviews were transcribed verbatim for accuracy and to allow full emersion in the data. Transcriptions of interviews were reviewed repeatedly while also listening to the audio recordings.
A modified constant comparison method of analysis was utilized. Once all data was documented and compared, the data was mined through categorical aggregation for emerging patterns and themes (Stake, 2005). The categories and themes were constructed from open and axially coded data. The coding scheme emerged from the data as it was reviewed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The multiple perspectives collected

over a period of time allowed for a holistic picture to emerge from the data and develop themes. These themes were cross-analyzed with all the data sources to clarify meaning. Triangulation and member checking was also utilized ensure trustworthiness. Member checking was made throughout the data analysis process to develop trustworthiness and dependability of the data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam 1998).

Confidence and Trustworthiness

I began this study by initially interacting through the role of participant observer (Patten, 2002). Based upon an invitation from administration and a belief in social constructivist approaches to research, I collaborated with both students and teachers throughout the study. My interaction with both students and teachers came from involvement with them as stakeholders to create CRP perception surveys. I first asked them for concerns they had about their own school environment and values they hold. My hope was to organically facilitate a discussion that merged their values with the CRP framework. As collaborators, we worked together to breakdown the framework and discussed what this looks like in a real classroom. Through a series of visits, I participated with stakeholders allowing them teach me how the framework existed within their context. Once a foundation for the framework had been established, students worked together to formulate questions for the survey that corresponded with each of the five aspects of the framework.

An adoption of disciplined subjectivity was needed in order to examine my own bias throughout the study (Borman, LeCompte, & Goetz, 1986). My insider views developed partially through my connection to the students due to my own ethnic background and growing up in the exact same low socio-economic school district. I also

took into consideration that I am a first generation college student who fell into the category of "at-risk" student early in high school. In addition to insider position with the students, I have worked for many years as a secondary school teacher. My own experiences from teaching in public schools could have distorted data analysis. Due to this potential for bias, I was careful to allow the participants voices to be heard and not insert my own.

As both an insider and outsider to the research setting, it was important for me to examine and reflect upon my own bias. Because of my current professional and academic status, I kept a research journal in order to analyze my own power and positionality (Merriam, et al., 2001; Milner, 2007). This power and positionality was crucial to remember because I was currently pursuing an advanced graduate degree at a namesake university. In addition, I was no longer a public school teacher and held the position as outside researcher. I would have been able to walk away from the site, whereas many of the students and teachers cannot. This was their daily home. I was also careful to not act in a way that could jeopardize the teachers' employment or students' enrollment. Lastly, due to the intense amount of expectations placed on secondary students and teachers because of testing environment and school reforms, I was considerate of their classroom time and energy.

Summary

While student perceptions were used as ancillary data, the findings revealed that students saw CRP as a series of observable, concrete actions. The Student Perception Survey (SPS) was developed in collaboration with Mary's sophomore students. Her students worked in groups to discuss the five principals of CRP (Brown-Jeffy and

Cooper, 2011). Student groups initially struggled with communicating their thoughts on CRP, but eventually adjusted by creating lists of observable actions. These observable, concrete actions were transformed into student-developed statements that reflected what the students hoped to see in their teachers' classrooms.

CHAPTER FOUR

For the most part, discussions about developing strategies to solve educational problems lack the perspectives of one of the very groups they most affect: students, especially those students who are categorized as 'problems' and are most oppressed by traditional educational structures and procedures. (Nieto, 2010, p. 160)

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF CRP

Learning About Students

The hallways of Mesa Verde High School came alive with movement at the beginning of the school year transforming into a charged channel of energy. With a sudden influx of 200 new students, due to district overcrowding, Mesa Verde's hallways seemed even more energetic than ever. The narrow halls pushed the crowd of students together, creating a choreographed dance of bodies that seemed to thrive, despite the undersized proportions. Mesa Verde High school, which was once an elementary school building, revealed its past with subtle details: staircase rails hit most students at the knee, toilets hovered strangely near to the floor, and playground equipment still stood in the side yard.

Students climbed the small steps of the crowded staircase, and gathered in Mary's sophomore English classroom. Mary offered to collaborate with students on the development of the CRP student perception survey (SPS). Students entered her classroom and began an activity called "Circles of Self." This activity made space for students to explore components of their identity and connect with their peers. First, on a sheet of paper, students created a large circle with four smaller satellite circles. Next, in the large circle, students wrote their names. In the smaller circle, students wrote elements of their identity. Mary reminded students to write identities that "define you."

Many students included hobbies like “soccer” player or family relationships like “daughter.” In addition to basic components of adolescent identities, some students included “bilingual” as one of their identifiers. After students had the opportunity to complete the four identifier circles, Mary encouraged students to share their “Circles of Self” with other students at their table. Conversation among the students did not begin right away, but after some awkward silence, the chatter slowly began to hum. Once students shared aspects of their identity, Mary asked them to put a star next to one trait that was most significant to their identity.

The “starred” identity became the focus of deeper reflection as students were asked to freewrite focusing on a time they felt proud to hold this identity. Then students wrote about a time it was difficult to identify with that same aspect of their self. Once students explored an aspect of their identity with deeper reflection, they were asked to consider assumptions and stereotypes of their identities. To blend into the community, Mary participated in the “Circles of Self,” sharing aspects of her own identity. Mary shared, “I am a woman, but I am not a mother.” While many did not want to share, some students volunteered to disclose some of their assumption statements. Multiple times similar ideas were repeated. “I am Hispanic, but I am not Mexican.” “I am Mexican/Latino, but I am not illegal.” “I am Mexican, but I speak English.” Mary listened and extended phrases like “I hear you” or “I feel you.” Once there were no more volunteers, Mary began to wrap up the class. She thanked them for sharing parts of themselves and informed them that they will continue to explore their identities as individuals and as a community tomorrow.

Learning From Students

Students entered the classroom on the second day with more noise and less anxiety. Again, Mary encouraged students to self-select a spot at any of the five tables. Mary felt it was important for students to understand why they were discussing CRP and student perceptions, so she developed a short introductory activity before exploring the 5 principles of the CRP framework. She began with a question based upon a visual written on the whiteboard. She asked her students to look at the words and how they are arranged on the board. Mary drew students' attention to the visuals showing one over the other. She asked, "Are these natural?" There were four relationships presented on the board written as such:

Master	Man	Friend	Teacher
Slave	Woman	Friend	Student

Students discussed briefly in small groups and then as a whole class. The overall class felt that these visuals were not the way relationships should be. Mary asked for a student to approach the board and draw a visual depicting how the relationships should be built. The student confidently wrote "teacher student". Mary asked why he wrote it this way. The student explained to the class that the words should be side by side, not one on top of the other.

Mary then added an arrow to offer a visual for the students: teacher ⟷ student. Next, Mary pulled up a picture on her projector visually representing Ego vs. Eco (see appendix G). Mary asked students to discuss the differences in the pictures and what "message" was being sent in each. Students discussed the pictures quietly at their tables. Many students noticed how the "Ego" picture has one person at the top, and everything

else was below one person. The "Eco" picture, however, was in the shape of a circle with no clear top or bottom. Students pointed out that everything seemed to revolve around one another. Mary asked students which of these pictures represented the type of relationships they would like to have in their own lives. Overwhelmingly, students leaned towards to the "Eco" picture. Mary explained that the "Eco" picture represented no hierarchal order; it was more "ecological". Many students shared that they would much rather be a part of the "Eco" picture rather than the "Ego" picture. Mary ended the discussion by asking students to participate in an activity that encouraged more of an ecological approach in the English classrooms at Mesa Verde.

The exploration of CRP began with students[4] sharing their perceptions of a positive learning environment. When asked to share their thoughts, most students looked away or down at the desk. After a few moments of awkward silence, a few ideas began to arise from reluctant volunteers: listening to music of choice on their cellphones, watching more movies, having more free time, working with friends. After a few students shared their thoughts on positive learning environments, Mary informed the class that they are going to help her understand CRP better.

Before showing students the CRP framework and collaborating with them to develop survey questions, Mary asked the class to share their thoughts on offering feedback to teachers. Adan quickly replied, "I mean, it's only fair that we get to grade them." Ismael affirmed Adan's statement, "It's cool that we get to judge them for once." However, Veronica shared that she was more hesitant. She explained, "Some teachers would be open to it, but other teachers would be upset." Luis agreed with

[4] Pseudonyms used for student names

Veronica, and said that Mary was not like all their teachers, “She makes us feel comfortable.” Lucia interjected, “I would do it but only if it was anonymous. That way I can be honest.” Mary explained that she appreciated their honesty and confirmed that student surveys would be anonymous. They seemed pleased and eager to continue the process.

To offer students a frame for their discussion of CRP, the first page of the student-friendly version of the CRP framework was displayed on the projector (see appendix D). Students sat quietly and did not offer ideas after viewing the framework. In response to the silence, Mary broke the framework into smaller, focused components. In order to help students feel less overwhelmed, she assigned each table only one of the CRP principles. Since the CRP framework consisted of five principles, each group was assigned a principle as follows:

- Lucia’s table received - “Who I am” (Identity and Achievement).
- Adan’s table received- “I can be successful” (Equity and Excellence).
- Luis’s table received- “How I learn (Developmental Appropriateness).
- Veronica’s table received- “The things that affect my learning” (Teaching Whole Child).
- Ismael’s table received- “How I feel in class” (Student Teacher Relationships).

The groups of students, five or six at each table, were encouraged to first discuss the definition of their CRP principle. Each group seemed to have a difficult time defining the principle in their own words. Students at one group listed concrete actions that take place in the classroom rather than writing a definition. Since this seemed to help students progress, Mary encouraged the other groups to also list concrete actions

that fit under their CRP principal. Once students brainstormed positive aspects of a classroom fitting their CRP principle, students were encouraged to write questions. Students were reminded that questions would be developed into a student perception survey, and they were encouraged to write questions based upon things they wish they could communicate about how their teachers teach. Student groups approached their CRP principle in various ways and progressed at difference rates. The following are the descriptions of each group's response to the CRP framework discussion and question development.

Lucia's Group- Identity and Achievement. Lucia first worked with her group to understand what identity and achievement meant. A student friendly definition was provided at the top of the page that reads, "My teacher tries to understand what makes me who I am and respects the different parts of my identity." As the group began to brainstorm, Lucia flipped over the handout and started to write down their ideas on the blank side of the page. Together, her group developed a list of concrete ideas:

- Working in groups
- Spanish/American language
- Food
- Hands on stuff
- Modern movies and music
- Activities, less homework
- Rewards
- Listening to student suggestions

After creating a list of things they would like to see in the classroom, students used their list to write questions. Lucia's group had a wide array of questions. Some of their questions were unique. However, many questions were worded differently, yet still overlapped in regards to the focus of the question. Lucia's group wrote the following questions:

- Does our teacher allow us to speak Spanish?
- Do they hear and reflect what students ask of them?
- Do they make school fun environment?
- Does my teacher let us watch movies or listen to music?
- Does my teacher value my after school time?
- Does my teacher allow for small groups?
- Does my teacher give us the freedom we need?
- Does my teacher have cool books?
- Does my teacher like hands on activities?
- Do they make school a fun environment?
- Does my teacher trust me to choose my classmates for group work?
- Does my teacher have open seating?

Adan's Group-Equity and Excellence. Similar to Lucia's group, Adan's group wanted to create a list in order to brainstorm the idea of Equity and Excellence. The student-friendly definition given to Adan's group was, "My teacher supports learning for all students in class no matter who they are or where they come from." Adan's group shared out loud and then wrote their list on the back side of the handout. Adan's group generated the following ideas for Equity and Excellence:

- Favorites
- Respect to smart kids
- Real meaningful learning
- Behavior and reaction
- Classroom rules
- Sexism
- Bathroom privileges

Before writing their questions, the students read through the list together and decided to pick the items that should be the focus. After a discussion of the items, Adan's group members decided "favoritism" was the biggest issue facing them in classrooms. To note this, students circled the word "favoritism" on their papers. Before writing down their ideas, Adan's group decided they did not want to write down their ideas as questions. Rather, they wrote their ideas as statements. Mary informed them that this was completely acceptable, especially if it made it easier for them. Similar to Lucia's group, some ideas were unique while other ideas overlapped in focus. Adan's group represented Equity and Excellence by writing the following statements:

- Our teacher doesn't have favorites.
- Our teacher treats boys and girls fairly.
- Our teacher targets their anger at certain students.
- My teacher makes lesson plans that have a powerful meaning.
- My teacher teaches lesson that I can use in the real world.
- My teacher shows respect for every student despite any factors that differs them from one another.

- My teacher treats students fairly according to their needs

Luis' Group- Developmental Appropriateness. Luis began his group conversation by reading out loud the student-friendly definition of Developmental Appropriateness, "My teacher is aware that we don't all learn the exact same way and changes the activities to make sure everyone can learn." Similar to many of the other groups, his group struggled with defining their CRP principle in their own words. Starting with a list of concrete classroom actions helped most students brainstorm ideas. Luis worked with his group to create a master list of their ideas. Luis' group created the following concrete classroom actions:

- Hands-on and real life
- Showing fun videos
- Not lecture based
- Acting out
- Vocabulary
- Real life characters
- Less reading
- Pop culture

Similar to Adan's group, Luis and his group members decided to write their ideas in statement form instead of questions because it seemed easier. Again, there were several repeated ideas in their statements. Luis' group provided the following statements regarding Developmental Appropriateness:

- My teacher knows me so well she does things I like to make learning better.
- My teacher uses exciting videos to help me understand.

- My teacher uses examples from pop culture to help me relate to the topic.
- My teacher uses real life characters to help us understand a topic.
- My teacher uses hands-on experiences to help me better understand.
- My teacher lets us do more activities and less reading.
- My teacher uses books with characters I can relate too.
- My teacher uses real life characters to relate to pop culture.
- My teacher uses vocabulary that I can understand to follow along with the subject.

Veronica's group- Teaching the Whole Child. Veronica's group struggled from the beginning with the idea of "the whole child." Mary shared the student-friendly definition with them again in order to assist. She read out loud, "My teacher tries to include elements of my family and my community and tries to make learning relevant." As they continued to struggle, Mary suggested creating a list of things they would like to learn about in class that goes beyond English content. Veronica started her list with the phrase, "Curious about…" As a group, they shared things they were curious about and would like to learn in class:

- Olympics
- Hot swimmers
- Technology
- Campaign
- Financial planning
- Mental health
- Physical health

- Sex Ed
- Cars
- Engines

After their discussion started to wind down, Mary directed their attention to the completed lists. She asked students to reflect on commonalities or patterns they observed in the list. Students indicated that the items on the list were not school issues, but real life issues. This idea sparked the statements students recorded on their handout. Rather than writing statements individually and then combining them as a group, the students in Veronica's group verbally debated in order to develop a consensus. The group members recorded the same three questions on each of their papers:

- My teacher addresses real life issues that I may face.
- My teacher guides me through interesting different topics.
- My teacher involves my opinion in making lessons.

Ismael's group- Student Teacher Relationships. Ismael's group created a T-Chart to explore the CRP principle of Student-Teacher Relationships. The student-friendly definition guiding their brainstorming was: "My teacher makes me feel important and valued and encourages us to do the same for each other." Ismael's T-Chart consisted of "Good" and "Bad" characteristics.

The Good:

- Let's you eat
- Listen to your own music
- Encouraging
- Multiple chances

- Rewards
- Passionate
- Hurtful words
- Protective
- Love

The Bad:

- Bullying
- Favoritism
- Discrimination
- Too much work
- Frustration
- Yelling
- Mean
- Overacting
- Physical punishment

Mary encouraged students to write statements that reflected positive aspects of student-teacher relationships. Unlike Veronica's group, Ismael's group chose to write individual statements rather than develop group statements. Once individual statements were written, students shared their statements with the group. The group decided which statements were the favorites and placed a star next to those statements. Ismael's group decided starred statements were their representatives. Ismael's group wrote the following statements:

- My teacher lets me listen to my own music because she knows it lets me concentrate.
- My teacher makes me feel safe.
- My teacher knows how to encourage and assist struggling students.
- My teacher gives me privileges and rewards that help make me engage in class.
- My teacher helps me when I don't understand something.
- My teacher encourages me.
- My teacher makes me feel protected when I share my opinions.
- My teacher doesn't make fun of me when I say something wrong.
- My teacher is passionate about her job even when she is frustrated.
- My teacher gives students a reasonable amount of privacy.
- Even when we overreact our teacher loves us.

Debriefing with Mary

After the students completed all the CRP handouts, Mary reflected on the process. She communicated that the process seemed difficult for her students. She attributed the difficulty to two main areas: age of the students and timeframe. Mary felt that working with juniors and seniors would have been beneficial to CRP discussions because those students are nearing the end of their K-12 experience. Longer experience, combined with more maturity, might have led to more reflective and insightful comments about the CRP principles. Also, collaboration with students was done within the first week of school. Mary felt that her students were normally more receptive and responsive a month or two into the school year.

TEACHER ATTITUDES AND RESPONSES TO STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Facilitation of this process must be sensitive and considerate to the lived experiences that people bring to their current time and space. The purpose of critical reflection should not be to indict teachers for what they believe and why it does not work for students. It is a process of improving practice, rethinking philosophies, and becoming effective teachers for today's ever-changing student population. (Howard, 2003, p. 201)

July

The following information is based upon teacher attitudes and responses to student perceptions prior to the student perception survey (SPS). This data was collected at the end of July, the first week of school for Mesa Verde.

Dolli

Getting to Dolli's class was not easy. Dolli's students walked three blocks to a local church, which was where Dolli's class was housed. The church was not much larger than a two-story house. It looked like it has been a part of the community since the 1960s. Due to a sudden increase in student numbers, Mesa Verde's upperclassman classes were held in the church rather than the school. The principal and school police officer stood at end of the block across from the church parking lot. They gave a friendly wave to students wandering towards the church.

Dolli rushed around her room preparing last minute details for class. There were no desks or tables for the students in the church classroom. Despite her unconventional surroundings, Dolli excitedly greeted her students and invited them to find a chair. Students self-selected from the 30 metal, folding chairs that were arranged in a large circle. There were no empty chairs by the time students found their way to Dolli's class, so a few students sat on the floor.

As students trickled into the classroom, Dolli distributed notecards to her students and directed them to questions written on the board. Dolli asked students to begin responding to the following questions:

1) What is your name?

2) Where do you work?

3) How do you learn best?

4) What is the best phone number to reach you?

5) If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?

Because there were no desks or tables, many students placed their binders in their laps to write on their notecards. Several other students used each other's shoulders. Students were sitting in a circle, but did not share round-robin style. Rather, Dolli gave students a "talking stick". A student volunteer was asked to share their notecard first.

After a student was done sharing, Dolli said, "Thank you Diego. Who do you want to hear from next?" Diego picked a student to speak next. Then each subsequent student was chosen by the previous person. Dolli later explained that her technique was about learning "connections". She elaborated:

> The girl who wanted to pick out the guy across the room, what is that dynamic about? That helps me not only learn personality types and how they are, but also who their friends are.

Dolli communicated that this was a non-verbal way for her to get to know students. It allowed her to recognize potential leaders, but it also allowed her to see clear connections between students.

As each student shared their formal name, Dolli asked if they preferred to be called something else. Next, Dolli asked students to share their response to question number two. In a class of over 30 students, only two did not have jobs. Several students worked at family businesses, while many others worked evening jobs at restaurants. During the notecard sharing, Dolli explained to her students that she would rarely assign homework in order to support their work and family obligations. Dolli also wanted their cell phone number in order to send out reminders. When they got to this third question she informed students that they might get text message reminders from her occasionally. The fourth question asked students to reflect on their own learning. Dolli said that this allowed her to differentiate better at the beginning of the year. The last question, focused on traveling, was meant to be light-hearted and break the ice. Most responses revolved around wanting to go somewhere with beautiful girls or wanting to go somewhere peaceful like an island paradise. Because Dolli's class was so large, the notecard sharing took almost the entire class period.

Before the bell rang, Dolli took a few minutes to about herself with the class. Dolli shared that she was excited to be in her first full year at Mesa Verde. She pointed out that she was excited to be working with Seniors and shared her overall motto for the class: "Stand beside you not in front of you and definitely not behind you. We are a team." To further extend that idea, Dolli directed students to her own personal cell phone number listed on the board. She informed them that they could call or text her anytime they had concerns or questions. She emphasized repeatedly that she wanted them to reach out to her if they ever needed anything. As she ended the introduction of

herself, Dolli reminded students to use her phone number in a respectful way. She insisted, "You will respect me. I will respect you. We will respect each other." Dolli only had a few minutes remaining in the class, so she ended with an instructional strategy called an exit ticket. The exit ticket required students to reflect on what they learned today. Dolli shared several times with her students that her hope was they learn at least one thing each day. On this particular day, students learned about each other. Dolli encouraged them to write down something they learned about their peers or their new teacher. Dolli spent the entire hour on the first day of class giving students the space to share individual information but also communal information through both the notecard activity and the exit ticket.

Dolli used the word "great" to describe her initial thoughts on receiving student feedback. Her positive stance was based on the need for teachers to know what their students were thinking. Dolli explained, "I think, especially with this population. It is essential… This will be essential for other teachers to know about their kids." Her stance on gathering student perceptions was driven by her focus on the students:

> I think anything involving going to the kids and saying 'give me your true, honest, and anonymous opinion, be as brutally honest as you can.' I think they would like it. If I were a student, I would say- 'Oh, you value my opinion. That is fabulous. Let me share it with you good, bad, and ugly'… I think they would respond great.

Dolli's desire to assist students was clear, and she felt appreciated when students reached out to her. In her first reflection, Dolli explained that she hoped students would use her cell phone for more than just questions on assignments. It was important to

Dolli that her students know she was compassionate towards the obstacles many of them face. Dolli insisted that her students felt comfortable reaching out to her:

I make sure my kids know that I am here for them to talk to 24/7 (providing them with my cell phone number), giving a ride home after school, talking to them during my planning period, before and after school, buying them a lunch if they're hungry, etc.

During her interview, Dolli shared that her background in mental health partially propelled her desire to be there for students when called upon. At her previous teaching job, she felt she could not help students or make a difference. She claimed, "They had so many holes in their souls that I couldn't even come close to filling any little gap of anything. Whether it be teaching Spanish, or spirituality, emotionally, or anything. It was next to impossible." This inability to fill the gaps led her to feeling "ineffective." However, words of affirmation from past students assisted with Dolli's commitment to teaching. Before gaining an actual teaching certificate, Dolli worked as a long-term substitute teaching Spanish. In her interview, she recalled a golden moment during this time as a teacher:

> Getting cards from the kids, you know? Even a hug. Or them saying, 'oh my gosh, I learned so much from you. I love you.' You know, the moments where you are like, 'I made an impact, and they are going to remember my name.' Getting that validation as to why I got into this profession and stayed there. Um, that is beyond remarkable.

Dolli often claimed to have an awareness of her students' background, mostly attributing previous work in community health as valuable experience. In her first reflection, the opening sentence stated, "I like to think that I make my teaching

culturally relevant to my students. I am aware of the culture and environments they are growing up in, although I have no personal experience in that way of life." Dolli offered an example of this knowledge by discussing the notecard activity. She explained that her knowledge of her students' backgrounds was why she has them list their work obligations on the notecard.

While Dolli felt her community health experience assisted in her knowledge of her student population, she shared that she had a disconnect with adolescents and their digital use: "I do struggle with understanding their constant and almost addictive need to socialize by having an electronic device on their person all the time." Dolli compared their digital lives as a "false reality." The digital lives of her students was the only area Dolli claimed as a disconnect.

However, as our conversation continued, Dolli revealed that racial differences caused a disconnect with her students at a previous school. While working in another state, Dolli was a substitute at a school located in a low-income area of a large city. This school was much larger than Mesa Verde and her class was in a portable building. During the interview, Dolli claimed students came and went as they pleased, and administration offered little to no supervision. She described being "scared" of her students. One particular incident involved a student approaching her with his hood pulled over his head and holding something that looked like a weapon. The student was suspended for his actions. Dolli described this former school as, "the worst time of my life." She declared that it was even worse than working in mental health. It also caused her to question whether or not she wanted to stay in teaching. During this discussion she referred to her previous students as "monsters." Dolli said, "They are monsters. You

know?" As I interviewed Dolli, I was curious as to what made the difference in Dolli's connection between the previous population of student and her current population of students.

> Me: I wanted to go back to the mentioning that they were monsters. What do you feel was the difference between them as opposed to the students you are working with now at Mesa Verde?
>
> Dolli: That particular school, they're mainly black. Students were very low income. I don't know if it was the home life that was so treacherous or, I have no idea. I didn't stay long enough to get to know what the problem was. I got out pretty quickly. There was no respect for authority figures, for adults, for themselves for each other. It was as if they were owed something….

Dolli admitted that she felt a disconnect to her previous students and began reflecting on her own upbringing with a community similar to her current students. Dolli said she grew up with mostly "Hispanic friends" and learned to speak Spanish from them. She felt that being "Hispanic" was what makes her current students more respectful.

> Me: Do you feel like there is something different about Mesa Verde itself? The school environment that is different than what was happening at the other school that maybe influenced the kids?
>
> Dolli: I'm going to sound like a total racist right now. The Hispanics tend to grow up with a certain amount of respect for their elders. I think that is what happens here, more so. I wasn't raised around any other minority. So, I can only speak to Hispanics. Knowing that, I know that they are held accountable. Also

being able to speak Spanish. It helps too because they can see that 'oh, this white lady decided to go ahead and learn my language.'

Dolli felt that her childhood experiences and the ability to speak Spanish helped develop an understanding of her students. Dolli again admitted that she knows this "sounds racist."

After further discussion she expressed that her fear at the previous school wasn't just the students; it was also the school environment set by the administration. The previous school was much larger than Mesa Verde. Because Mesa Verde was a smaller school, she felt that the administration could get to know students more personally and be more supportive. Dolli also claimed students at Mesa Verde received much more support and resources than her previous students.

Throughout her reflection and interview, Dolli reiterated that she knew her students' culture. Dolli felt that sharing cultural knowledge with other teachers was essential because it had helped her "know" them and assisted in her teaching practices:

> In my opinion, the majority of them already have a baseline as to how to treat your elders. I would find as a new person coming in, not knowing what to think about cultural relevant whatever. I would find that incredibly helpful and essential. I find that unfortunately, some teachers that I have worked with don't care that these kids are providing for their entire family. 'You do your homework anyway. If you don't, you fail'. Having an understanding that these kids are responsible, I mean, this culture, these group of kids, for the majority, have a ton of other responsibilities than others. And I'm blessed to know that in advance.

After Dolli reflected on her knowledge of the students, I asked her to explain ways in which she evaluated her knowledge.

> Me: When it comes to the classroom, do you have ways that you can tell whether or not you are truly responsive to your students and their needs and their culture?
>
> Dolli: Right now, I rely on non-verbal feedback. I know not all of them are going to say, 'Slow down. Stop.' Whatever. I know they aren't going to do that. But reading their body language too. It is a huge thing. Are they engaged? Are they not? This kid over here had his head down almost the entire time…. So just body language and feedback. Having a mental health background helps too because not all of my paranoid schizophrenics are going to say, 'I'm experiencing delusion'. You have to be able to see that on your own. Not verbal cues, body language.

In addition to body language, Dolli pointed out the importance of conversations. She said she can learn a lot about her students by having informal conversations. Particularly, Dolli shared that one-on-one conversations were key to her knowledge. While she did not share any specific strategies for having discussions with her students, she said that doing an interview with them was a part of their graduation packet at the end of the school year. She looked forward to the end of the semester when she would interview them and ask, "Where do you see yourself in the future?"

Respect was the key word Dolli uses when she discussed how she responded to her students. When introducing herself to students in class, she declared, "You will

respect me. I will respect you. We will respect each other." In Dolli's reflection, she emphasized respect again:

> With these kids, I have found respect goes a long way. I make it my goal every day to show my students what respect and patience truly is by demonstrating that myself. When they show me disrespect or intolerance, I can use my own demonstrations as examples of how they need to or should behave.

Throughout Dolli's communications, Dolli directly expressed the idea of "respect" eight times.

In addition to a strong focus on respect, Dolli also placed emphasis on compassion. She explained that her experience working in mental health helped her develop compassion. Dolli wrote in her reflection, "I try to ensure that my students know and are aware of my compassion toward their responsibilities in their home lives." While Dolli said she responded to her students with compassion, respect was the dominant response reflected by Dolli.

Jandy

Jandy's classroom stood in stark comparison to Dolli's classroom. Jandy, a teacher at Mesa Verde five full years, had the room of a well- established teacher. Beyond having the bare essentials like desks and tables, Jandy's Juniors entered a classroom decorated with warm, inviting visuals. Most of her wall art seemed to be from previous student projects. She had several personal touches: a wall decked out with her own family photos, comfy seating like pillows and yoga balls, and inspirational quotes. In addition to the visual contrast with Dolli's class, Jandy's class had internet

access. Not only did the teacher have internet access, the students had a one-to-one Google Chromebook environment.

While Jandy did not have a "getting to know you" activity, Jandy's class was set up to be a digital community. When students first accessed the class website, they saw a tab titled "What We are doing Today." On the first day of class, students worked individually and communally through different tasks to assess their efficacy with Google Chromebooks. Once tasks and projects were completed throughout the year, students could post to the "Refrigerator" page on the class website. This class website page allowed for students to showcase and share the work. Jandy ended class with a conversation about her teaching objective, which was listed on the board: "I can explore and learn to use my Chromebook appropriately." As an exit ticket, Jandy asked students to complete a quick questionnaire on the class website about their Chromebook experience on the first day of class.

Jandy's initial thoughts on the SPS were positive. When asked about her thoughts on using the SPS, Jandy responded, "I think it could be really interesting. I kind of like to see what my kids come up with. I don't think they get a lot of voice." The emphasis on her students having a space to use their voice arrived again in her reflection. Jandy wrote, "…my students need a voice in the classroom." Jandy wanted her students to be able to not only display English skills but also have a space to communicate their opinions and thoughts. Again in the interview, Jandy explained student voice was two-fold for her. She was interested to hear the feedback from her students, but also liked that the survey would be written by collaborating with students. She shared that surveys and forms could be useful, but often students did not understand

the wording of the survey itself. She said many of her students got stuck and yelled out, 'What does this mean!'

While Dolli's past experience as a mental health worker drove her need to make a difference, Jandy had a different focus on her teaching. Jandy had taken considerable time to make her classroom feel like a home and wanted her students to feel comfortable. However, Jandy's focus on making a difference leaned towards skill building and preparation for living and working in a digitally engaged world after graduation. Her students dove head first into becoming confident with the Google Chromebooks. She later shared the significance in why she embedded technology so quickly:

> The world assumes our kids are digital natives. They are supposed to be able to figure anything out. These kids don't. They are not there at all. I have kids who don't know how to send an email. I just don't think you can go to college and not know how to send an email. You are going to need to email your professor and check you grades and register for classes online…. That is why I do it. They kind of need to be digital natives because of the assumption.

As seen with Jandy's exit ticket activity, asking students to evaluate their confidence with digital tools was important to Jandy. However, Jandy did not want to just expose students to digital resources, she wanted to know they could apply this knowledge confidently.

Jandy came into teaching through an alternative certification process, and this drove her to question her effectiveness as a teacher. In her reflection, she shared that she did not receive the same training as teachers who went through a traditional teacher

education program. Her hardest moments in teaching did not come from misbehaving students or disparaging parents. Jandy's hardest moment was walking into class feeling inadequate as an alternative certified teacher. Jandy's concerns of being inadequate were increased because she was working with students who were not proficient in English. Jandy's golden moment, shared below, reflected the need to feel effective with the content and skills she offered her students. She described having to fill in for a teacher that was going to be absent for a long time due to maternity leave:

> One of our History teachers had a baby. She not only taught U.S. History, it was also an EOI subject. So when she was out, well, I thought, 'what would you cover in history?' You know, I will try. A lot of the kids, you know, they were really responsive. The kids said, 'you should teach history!' It felt good to get something across. When she came back, she was like, 'They know this stuff. Thank goodness.'

Students in Jandy's room worked every day on the computers. During this time, Jandy encouraged autonomy by the rule of three: "First you ask a friend. Then you ask Google. Then you ask me." Jandy's push for independent and autonomous digital learning reflected her earlier comments about assumed digital native status for students. She pointed out that while her students might have cell phones, they may not have the skills to use technology in an academic or professional manner. Using technology met the desire of students' needs to be digitally connected, but Jandy also wanted to meet an academic and real-world need for her students.

Jandy admitted some small amounts of cultural disconnect in her reflection. While her disconnect was not as tense as Dolli's experiences at a previous school, Jandy

recognized that she could not teach the same way she was taught. In Jandy's reflection she indicated that being culturally responsive was not "something I knew I needed to do." Jandy also shared that she came from a "different background than her students." However, her discussions of a disconnect never directly focused on race, ethnicity, or language.

Jandy revealed several things that she learned quickly about her students at Mesa Verde. First, she learned her students needed plenty of time to build a community with one another. Second, she learned that her students needed visuals when tackling a new concept. Her progression towards utilizing collaborative learning and visuals was initially led by observations, but eventually she said that it was fortified with some professional development:

> I know this is culturally relevant because I can see how these things are helpful to my students, and I have taken the time to really get to know them and their culture. I have also had some professional development opportunities to help me learn more in this area.

Jandy expanded her discussion of the professional development that helped her know her students better. The professional development was facilitated by a woman, who was "from Mexico." The facilitator shared with participants that Mexican students are "talkers." Jandy claimed she learned from this professional development that her students might need to talk their way through a concept or idea. She shared her moment of realization by explaining, "I'm not teaching me, so I need to get to know these students, and how they want to learn, and how they are going to be able to learn." Jandy explained that professional development assisted in "knowing her students better."

Jandy shared that any additional knowledge of students normally came from talking to them and making simple observations:

> I try to learn about them just by talking to them. Like really getting to know them. With like, this whole family environment, they want to talk to you. They want to tell you about their day. It's not like, 'this teacher is trying to get to me'. Sometimes you can't get them to leave.

In addition to personal observations and professional development, Jandy claimed Mesa Verde's emphasis on community had assisted her progression towards knowing her students. Jandy pointed out that Mesa Verde's sense of community had almost caught her off guard. Her previous experience, both as a student and as a teacher at a different school, had not prepared her for the sense of family encouraged at Mesa Verde. Beyond informal conversations, Jandy did not share specific ways of evaluating whether or not she was meeting the needs of her students. I asked Jandy to share with me how she evaluates whether or not she was effectively connecting with her students, essentially she knows that she knows, Jandy replied, "I don't know that I do know for sure… I will go on assumptions."

When asked how she was responsive to her students, Jandy often returned to the idea of "voice." In her reflection, Jandy tried to offer a concrete example of how she responded to her students: "I quickly learned that my students need a voice in the classroom." While "voice" was mentioned by Jandy as a way for her to respond to her students' needs, she also insisted on it being a part of the student feedback forms. When asked if she had any concerns for the development of the student feedback forms, Jandy replied, "I like that this survey will have a student voice." She went on to explain

that the SPS would allow students to use their voice to evaluate teachers, but also the SPS itself should be worded by students. Throughout her reflection and our interview, "voice" was Jandy's response to her students' needs, but she never offered concrete examples of how students used their voice in the classroom.

Mary

Mary's students gathered with nervous excitement. While many of them knew each other, this was their first year in Mary's English II class. Mary, similar to Jandy, had been at the school for several years. Her room also had the feel of an established teacher. The door of Mary's room displayed signs welcoming many different types of students who might often feel marginalized. She also added many comforting elements to her classroom: Scentsy Pots to fill the room with soothing smells, lamps to add softer light, and brightly colored curtains to cover the aging windows.

Students meandered through Mary's door and self-selected a spot at one of the five tables in the room. Mary began the class by distributing notecards. On the notecard she asked students to complete the following statements:

1. My name is…
2. I work at….
3. I like to learn by…
4. If I could punch any celebrity, I would want to punch…

Students began to fill in their notecards, and Mary floated around the room kneeling at each table to check for understanding. During this time, she noticed several students who looked very confused. She first asked them in English if they understood. If she received no response, she asked, "¿Hablas español?" While Mary does not speak

Spanish, she explained that she attempted this past year to learn small Spanish phrases in order to support her students' needs. If a student responded to her question in Spanish, she quietly asked the table if anyone would be willing to assist the ELL student. Each time Mary asked for assistance, a student from the table volunteered to translate and offered support to their peer.

Once notecards were completed, students stood in a circle and shared their notecards round-robin style. Mary later pointed out that the first three questions on the notecard were significant to the classroom environment. First, students read their name out loud instead of reading from the roster herself. Because Mary came from a different cultural and ethnic background than her students, she believed it was important to hear the names spoken by each student. She felt this assisted her in more accurately pronouncing their names, which allowed her to honor their identity. The second notecard question was included because Mary knew the majority of her students had to work part-time jobs to assist their families. Asking students to share their employment allowed her to know more about her students and gain a better understanding for how much out-of-school time was related to a job. The third question asked on the notecard was a question Mary felt any teacher, should ask- no matter where they teach. Mary wanted to know from their own perspective how they learn best. If students don't know how they learn best, she wanted them to start thinking about it.

The last notecard question asked students about punching a celebrity. Mary explained this question was meant to be lighthearted and break the ice. As students went around the circle sharing which celebrity they would want to punch, some the female students wanted to punch Taylor Swift, for being "fake". According to students, Taylor

Swift used relationships to get famous. Several students had random celebrities like Taylor Swift or rival sports figures. However, overwhelmingly, many of the students wanted to punch Donald Trump. While the last question was meant to be silly and playful, this year it took on a darker tone than previous years due to our sociopolitical climate. Mary later shared that she had asked that question before, and it had never had a heavy political response. But after listening to her students go around the circle, she said the sociopolitical response "makes sense". Even though Donald Trump had not yet won the presidential election at this time, students felt he posed a threat.

Mary's first two days of class were spent collaborating with students to develop the student perception forms. She did not want to dive straight into a theory or concept without allowing the students to explore the relevance to who they are as students. Mary insisted on spending a day allowing students to explore an identity activity in which they shared a piece of themselves and established a sense of community and trust. Mary vocalized that she hoped to have more than just a discussion about CRP. She wanted to have something meaningful leading up to the CRP discussion that really connected with students.

Mary's initial response to the SPS was positive. In her first reflection, Mary discussed the need for trust: "personal connection can make the path to learning much easier to embark on together." Later, Mary elaborated on the need to create a connection with her students by discussing the student perception forms. When asked about her initial thoughts on using student perception forms Mary replied:

> I think it is great, and I think it is needed. I think a lot of teachers- and I'm sure I fall into this category- don't listen enough to student feedback. It is healthy in

any relationship to listen to feedback: romantic, professional, colleagues. You have to have feedback both ways. Most relationships fail because of communication or failure of trust. I think it is so important.

Earlier in the interview, Mary had voiced strong negative views on the current testing environment of public education. She had experienced intense micro-managing of classroom teaching due to testing pressures. Mary actually left her last school because she had been informed that novels should not be taught since they were not on the test.

Me: A lot of your experiences revolve around overwhelming assessment. So do you have any fears or concerns that this student perception form could just become another type of assessment?

Mary: Oh! Honestly, no. Because I trust my students. They don't know me right now. I mean, the class I had prior last year knew me. These kids don't know me personally right now. But I am still open to it.

Many of Mary's discussions focused on pressures teachers face in her state. One pressure mentioned twice in the interview was district and state-level assessments. At her previous school, the administrators were driven by test scores. Being considered effective based solely on test scores often made Mary "question my ability as a teacher." In addition to testing pressures, low teacher pay had left Mary burnt out. She felt that lower teacher pay, combined with testing pressure, had impacted her view of herself as a teacher in two ways:

Questioning my ability or my effectiveness would be first. Then second, financial reasons. I could go work retail and make $50,000 as a store manager. And the job I am in, I am at $36,000. You know? But it's like, when I think

> about my long term teaching, it is so important. But then I think about my quality of life being able to afford things. Teachers should not have to work three jobs to pay for going to the dentist or an injury or medicine. That's bullshit. You shouldn't have to worry about your fucking survival when you are a civil servant.

Mary shared that these pressures had forced her to question her commitment to the teaching field. With all the pressures on teachers, it was often difficult to find the energy to continue. However, when asked to share a positive aspect of teaching, Mary choose the affirmations of her students as the strongest golden moment:

> I like teacher appreciation week because some of my kids will write me cards. When I left my previous school, some of my kids wrote me goodbye letters. Some wrote me encouraging notes like 'keep swimming'. It keeps me going, and I know that they care. I know school is hard on them and hard on us. Our success as teachers is tied to scores. So, students' feedback of appreciation was great. They did it because they wanted to.

Mary revealed in her reflection that "knowing" her students did not come immediately. She realized that there was a disconnect between her and her students. Mary described her teaching as a journey that was full of normal new teacher mistakes. Her heart was in teaching because she had, "fallen in love with English literature through the Romantic poets and by the mysterious land of Narnia." While she was excited as a new teacher to share her passion of English literature, Mary wrote in her reflection, "My favorite narratives were penned by white, educated men from the British Empire." Because she loved English texts so much, she assumed her students would also love them. Through a

progression of different realizations Mary came to understand that her learners were not exactly like her. She wrote:

> Most of them hated English literature and also despised many of the books they were forced to read in school because they were 'boring'. Also, being from a WASP background, I was the minority in my classroom. Most of my students were African-American or Latino/Latina.

While Mary struggled initially with a cultural disconnect, she shared that attending grad school helped her to better understand her students. Two elements from grad school were specifically mentioned as being influential in Mary's understanding of her students. The first concept that Mary felt guided her knowledge was the concept of intrinsic motivation. She said that an understanding of intrinsic motivation assisted in her realization that students must be able to make personal connections to the material presented. In addition, Mary specifically mentioned a professor guiding her to a better understanding by posing a reflective question that was based upon Mary's frustration with the Glencoe McGraw-Hill textbook. The question that vividly stayed in her mind was "Someday one of your kids will ask you, 'Why don't any authors we study look like me or sound like me?'" Mary calls this moment a "revelation."

Mary compared her pedagogical knowledge to business writing. She referred to the common saying "know your audience." I asked Mary to elaborate on how she gets to know her students:

> Conversation. You know? One on one conversations. It is so important. If you don't know them, you don't know their prior experiences and can't make those connections in learning. Conversation. Looking at their written expressions.

Giving them more autonomy to choose to draw something or write something. To make things their own. So expression.

Conversations were the focus of her process for knowing. Similar to Dolli and Jandy, Mary was not completely sure how she measured or reflected on her knowledge of students. She pointed out that she was "still learning." She shared that engagement was important. Similar to Dolli, she explained that she saw engagement through body language, "I like to have eyes and ears. I go by body language." Mary went beyond body language and added an element not yet discussed by any of the teachers. Mary said social media played a part in knowing whether or not her students are engaged. If she saw student sharing on social media, she felt they made some connection.

Mary wanted her students to know that she cared and stated in her reflection that, "Kids care when they know you care." To Mary, caring led to connection. Once she connects, then they are more intrinsically motivated to participate. Mary also wanted to establish relationships with her students that encourages trust. The signs on the front of the door said "Sooners Ally," indicating a safe place for LGBTQ students. Additional signs displayed, "Dreamers Welcome," reflecting a welcome environment for undocumented students. In Mary's reflection she wrote that developing a "communal feel" was important to her. She went on to say that personal connections developed a sense of community. Mary wrote, "kids care when they know you care." She said she shows students she cares about community through the décor in her room but also by reading texts similar to students' backgrounds.

Mary said in her interview that student-teacher relationships begin with "Being sensitive to the human side. Humanity." Mary extended her emphasis on trust to her

discussion on utilizing student perception surveys in her class. She shared that the student surveys were an extension of the trusting relationship with her students. She explained, "You have to have feedback going both ways. Most relationships fail because of lack of communication or trust. I think it is so important." Because Mary had shared several negative experiences related to administrative pressures placed on assessment, I asked Mary if she feared the student feedback could become just another type of assessment. She quickly responded, "Honestly, no. I trust my students."

Dusty

Dusty's classroom was housed in the main building like Jandy and Mary's classes. Dusty had been at Mesa Verde as long as Jandy. However, his room was mostly barren, with a large television in the corner and a few gaming posters on the wall. The desks were neatly arranged in traditional rows facing the front of the room. When students entered Dusty's classroom, Dusty asked them to observe the seating chart posted on the SmartBoard. Each Freshman student anxiously scanned the SmartBoard to find their assigned seat. This class was overflowing with 34 students, and it got crowded quickly. Once the bell rang, Dusty approached the freshman students and immediately threw out a question: "What sucks about the first day of school?" Students seemed confused, and some asked if he wanted them to write down their response. Dusty clarified by stating he just wanted them to share out loud. Silence filled the room.

After getting no response to his question about how school "sucks", Dusty proceeded to spend the next five minutes reading the rules out loud to students. In addition to the rules, he also read the expectations and proposed activities. This verbal run-down of class requirements consisted of everything from the cell phone policy to

"FU Fridays," which were weekly summative assessments. Following Dusty's review of class rules, he introduced a five-minute bell-ringer activity. Dusty compared his bell-ringer to the game of Boggle, which none of the students seemed to recognize. He asked if anyone has ever played Boggle, and no one raised their hand.

Dusty dismissed the bell-ringer activity and began to take roll from his class roster. He called out individual names, mispronouncing many of them. He poked fun at himself by referring to a YouTube skit produced by comedians Key and Peele. In this skit, a Black substitute teacher mispronounced mainstream, trendy names of White students. Dusty promised to let students watch the video at the end of class if they got all their work done. As Dusty continued taking role by calling students' names out loud, one girl interjects, "You can call me Jazz!" Dusty did not respond and continued moving through the names on the list.

After taking roll, Dusty informed students that he wanted to "hear their voice" and he wanted to "get to know them." Dusty proposed that students write a formal letter. He spent several minutes reviewing key components to a formal letter such as date, heading, and salutation. Dusty pulled up a visual as a model, which was a letter he had written to introduce himself to the students. Dusty quickly read his letter to the class, taking a deep breath between paragraphs. After speed reading his letter out loud to students, he informed students that he wanted to know three main things about them: who they are, what they do, and what they want to do. Dusty stopped after this point to take a "thumb poll" for understanding. Dusty told students that he liked to use the thumb poll as a polling technique because "I don't have time to listen to everyone." Students were encouraged to show a thumbs-up if they understood, a thumbs down if

they did not understand, and a thumb to the side for "eh." Students wrote quietly for 10-15 minutes while Dusty moved through the room to offer assistance. Similar to Mary, Dusty utilized individual volunteers to assist ELL students who were having a difficult time with the language.

Dusty ended the activity by discussing the "why" for the formal letter writing. He said that many students probably want to know "What purpose this will serve in the future?" Dusty dove into a monologue about career and college readiness. At the end of his short talk, he asked students to write down three other ways a letter can be useful. Very few students wrote anything down. After less than a minute of wait time, Dusty ended class with the promised Key and Peele video titled, "Substitute Teacher."

Similar to the other three teachers, Dusty seemed receptive to collecting student perceptions:

> I welcome it. Any type of criticism I can get, good or bad will help me improve my practice. Whatever they want to say, bring it on. If they want to be anonymous, I don't care. I don't need to know who is saying it as long as they are being honest.

While Dusty's first statement began with a positive stance, the next sentence contained the word "criticism." Out of all four teachers, Dusty showed the only element of negativity in the initial stages of student perception survey development. However, Dusty added that there was real value in the student feedback forms if they meet two criteria. First, the feedback forms must be "specific and measurable." Dusty wanted feedback that would assist him in the refinement of his classroom practices. Secondly, Dusty repeated several times that the forms should be anonymous. Even if his students

make comments about him being "the worse teacher in the world," Dusty wanted his students to have a space where they can be completely honest. In his reflection, Dusty shared, "I often fall short of the mark." Dusty repeated several times throughout our conversations, both written and verbal, that he was in need of "refinement." He said even if they are brutally honest, he realizes that he needs to "take it" and "fix it."

At the beginning of our conversation, Dusty's affirmation came from administrative feedback. Dusty shared multiple negative experiences from previous positions that involved what he considered critical and unconstructive feedback. Dusty's negative experiences began early with student teaching. He shared that the mentor teacher had a death in the family. Against the policies of student teaching, the school put Dusty in full control of the classroom as if he were a long-term substitute. He described the environment as "vitriolic" and "hostile." Dusty disclosed, "People every day would tell me I was terrible, and I wouldn't ever get a job." Dusty claimed he hoped to receive more constructive feedback, but often felt attacked. However, at Mesa Verde, Dusty said the environment was very different. He appreciated the positive support and feedback he received from his administrators. At Mesa Verde there was, "no, 'gotcha' environment."

While Dusty never directly mentioned student appreciation as a driving force for his commitment to teaching, he mentioned several times that he enjoyed students. The "adults are the challenge" for Dusty. His golden moment as a teacher came during a one-on-one experience with a previous student who was autistic. Dusty says a major moment of pride came from seeing his student be successful because of individual modifications Dusty made for the student:

He loved video games. So I let him translate an assignment into a Minecraft assignment. He re-created the school. He built all these signs in the school so you could interact with the signs which had the top quotes from the book. The characters were a recreation of the book's characters, places, and belongings.

Even though it was lunch time, Dusty's room overflowed with students. His room was so full of students eating their lunch with him that it was difficult at times to continue the interview. At one point in time during the interview, Dusty reiterated that students are important to him:

Dusty: Like the thing that keeps me here, always, is the kids. You know? I tune the adults in the building out.

Me: I can see that by what is happening in here right now. Your room is full of kids who are sharing your room to each lunch with you.

While Dusty sought affirmation from professional colleagues and administrators, his discussion came back to students. Similar to Mary, Dusty shared that seeing students thrive keeps him in the teaching profession.

Dusty never mentioned any direct cultural disconnect with students, but did describe a negative experience a co-worker. Dusty argued, "He was inappropriate with students. He turned it into a racial issue, not a professional issue. Like, he was, like 1/20 Black or something. He was saying I was discriminating against him because he was Black."

In regards to students, Dusty began his reflection by stating his cultural responsiveness was "falling short of the mark." He continued to write the following in his reflection:

> In the past, I have done some differentiation. Say, fairy tales by telling the Hispanic versions of the story. In a world literature unit, I've covered immigrant stories and experiences from Mexican, Columbian, Japanese, and Irish authors to build empathy for others that have experiences similar biases as they have.

Again, at the end of this reflection, he wrote that he "failed to meet the mark." Dusty said that he was aware that he was off target, but felt this was due to a "lack of design for the cultural component."

Despite his feelings of not always "meeting the mark," Dusty did feel he was in the right place working at Mesa Verde. Dusty claimed conversations with his students assist him in knowing who they are. He also pointed to conversations outside of the classroom. When asked how he knew he was meeting his students' needs, Dusty replied, "sometimes just speaking to previous teachers and their parents." He shared working at the school has given him and other teachers "understanding of what culture is and what it is like". While he admitted he could use some refinement, he did not feel that he holds "xenophobic beliefs" like many new teachers who entered the school. He offered an example of cultural terminology used by the students: "Like the way the kids call us 'mister' and 'miss'. Teachers say, 'Mister who?' No that is not what it is. It is their culture, like saying maestro, or master, or priest, or pastor. A term of affection. A term of endearment for our authority."

In his interview, Dusty focused on trust as his response to students. He said he built trust through "conversations." Dusty referred to "trust" three times in his interview and connected it each time to informal conversations. However, he never gave tangible examples of conversations that built trust. He attempted to explain by saying, "As we

begin to build trust, it will be through conversations in person, really deep relationships. Other times not so much. Maybe the occasional conversation, like: 'I'm having trouble and need help.'"

September

This section describes experiences with the same Mesa Verde teachers at the end of September. Since I saw them last in July, teachers had administered the student perception surveys (SPS). They also received the results of the SPS within three days prior to this visit. The results of the SPS shared student perceptions with teacher in two ways: cumulatively scored quantities responses and individual open-ended responses. First, student responses to quantitative questions were shared through pie charts showing percentages based on the five-point scale of "always," "often," "sometimes," "rarely," and "never." In addition to the pie charts, teachers were able to see anonymous, individual open-ended comments.

Dolli

Two months later, Dolli was still fighting the tech battle. As students entered the crammed church classroom, Dolli shoved a box towards the students. In black permanent marker the box was labeled- "Feed Me Your Phone." Dolli reminded her students that the box was necessary because of the vocab test. Students had a hard surface in which to do their classwork, and they find a seat at one of the several church banquet tables. When I was here last, Dolli did not have desks or tables for her students. Now, over 30 students shared only five rectangular tables, each sitting about six to seven students. Because the classroom was small and oddly shaped, students barely had enough room to move. Walking through the class to interact with students was even

more of a challenge. In addition to the challenges of her classroom interior, Dolli lost about 10 minutes from each class period because Dolli let students come in five minutes late and leave five minutes early due to their walk from the school to the church.

As students finished trickling in, Dolli turned to me to share her frustration with her classroom setting. Last week, the school went into lock-down because of a robbery happening nearby. Dolli said she had no clue about the lock-down until later in the day after it was over. With no intercom and no internet, she felt very isolated. The small room with banquet style tables was also causing other frustrations. The close quarters had led to large amounts of cheating during exams:

> First, I caught several cheating. What they would do is take a snapshot of my assignment and share it throughout the other classes. So this vocabulary test, I worked my butt off. I made six different tests. Well, actually 12. I gave each class different vocabulary words, so none of them had the same words. And then I made two tests for each class. So that's a total of 12.

She pointed out, "I am grateful to just have a classroom at all, but it is still frustrating." Dolli's breaking point with the cell phones was the cheating. It has led to the need to "feed" the phone box. Dolli told me the box was her attempt to adjust to the challenging surroundings.

Dolli reiterated that the technology addiction was still a struggle for her. Despite several warnings, students still did not listen. Dolli described her student responses when she first started taking their phones away: "You would have thought I was just the devil."

Dolli directed her attention back to the class and made one last effort collecting phones. She counted several times and revealed that she had one less phone than she had bodies in the room. A student fessed up that he did not put his phone in the box. She demanded he drop his phone in the box, but he repeatedly insisted that he did not have a phone. A three-minute debate developed in which the student doggedly defended not having a phone at all to put in the box. Finally, a fellow student across the room looked at Dolli and yelled, "Miss, quit putting him on blast!". Dolli laughed and gave in.

Dolli placed the cell phone box down and picked up the stack of vocabulary tests. While she distributed the vocabulary test, a student asked if they could re-take the test if they failed. Dolli sighed, and reminded the student of the school's "Re-Assessment Policy" which allowed students to re-take tests for mastery, meaning they can endlessly retake tests. Dolli did not hide her feelings about this policy and exclaimed, "Supporting failure! I hate this policy."

During the vocabulary test, I saw a list of book titles on the board: *Thirteen Reasons Why*, *Black Like Me*, and *Flowers for Algernon*. *Thirteen Reasons Why* was the only one in the list that was circled. I quietly asked Dolli about the list. She explained that students were about to begin their first novel in the class. She offered to let them choose the novel as a class. She seemed frustrated while she spoke. She explained that even though she gave them a week to give her a list of suggested titles, these were only three titles that were offered. She said she was disappointed that no one seemed "into it". Despite a lack of contributions, she let them vote and students overwhelmingly voted for *Thirteen Reasons Why*, a novel about a teenage girl who commits suicide.

As our conversation about the books ended, I noticed all but two students were done with the test. A couple of girls were drawing on each other's arms, several boys were flipping water bottles, and some students talked about the homemade tamales being sold at lunch. Most students were asleep. One student asked if they could have their phones back now. Dolli informed them that there was still about 15 minutes left of test time. There was a huge audible groan. Dolli laughed and sassed the students, "You guys need to learn self-discipline! This is insane. You guys can't even sit and be quiet for five minutes." (It had actually been 13 minutes). Dolli continued, "I am not giving the phones back yet, and you will not get the shakes or sweats." Three students, not in Dolli's current class hour, wandered into her room just to chat. They hung around Dolli's desk. One of the boys asked for his journal. She reached into her desk drawer and handed the journal to the boy. Dolli commented, "Thank you for sharing. There was some really powerful stuff in here." Now that the last two students were done with the test, Dolli gave in and passed the "Feed Me" box around. She yelled over the chatter, "Next time we have a test, expect no phones. We have let a few bad apples ruin the bunch. Have a good weekend!" Each student pulled their own phone from the box's mouth and prepared for their walk back to the high school building.

Dolli's initial reaction to using the SPS was positive. However, in this second interview taking place in September, Dolli said something that was not shared in her July interview: "I was a little bit hesitant because I was like, 'Man! I'm new and these kids already hate me because I'm new." She then began laughing and said, "I was thinking, 'I wonder how this is going to go.'" Dolli never mentioned this hesitation during the Pre-Survey interview and reflection. Prior to the SPS, Dolli's response was

overwhelmingly positive, but her hesitancy was now clear. In her September reflection, she reflected on her hesitancy and wrote, "Upon viewing the results of the student surveys, I felt somewhat of a relief."

I asked Dolli to tell me one word that described her gut reaction to the student responses: "One word… [long pause]. I guess surprise really." Dolli related that she was surprised for two main reasons. First, she was surprised that the majority of the students took it seriously.

> Me: This surprised you? How was this different than maybe something else that they haven't taken seriously?
>
> Dolli: I don't ever have assignments on their phones. They were able to listen to their music, and do all that. So that was a component.
>
> Me: So the technology aspect?
>
> Dolli: The technology aspect for sure. And then me saying, 'This is a big deal you guys. This means a lot to me and to Mrs. Myers.' I made it clear that without them this could not happen. So it made them feel very important and special with it. So they knew their feedback was essential. And plus, I said, 'Now you are grading me. Now it's your turn to be the teacher here.' So I think with all of those together.

Dolli had 118 students take the survey which was a challenge because Dolli did not have an internet-wired class. Dolli explained that she had her students use their phones to take the survey: "It went so easy. If there was a kid that didn't have their phone, they would wait for their buddy to finish then use the buddy's phone. That was just the easiest thing ever… I was like, 'Yes, you have permission to be on your phones,

on the internet." While she told me this last part, she was laughing so hard she could barely talk.

As Dolli reflected on the process of looking over her students' perceptions, she pointed out a specific question that surprised her. Number 15 on the survey read, "My teacher involves my input when making assignments and lessons." Students scored this statement with the following possible responses: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never. Dolli remembered seeing low percentages of "Always" and "Often" in this part of the student survey. She explained her surprise by pointing out the novel choices on the board:

> Because we had been talking about these for the past couple of weeks. I had instructed them to give me an idea about books, instead of reading British Literature for English 12- which is classically what you always do. Mesa Verde lets the teacher do whatever they want essentially. So I put it in the kids' hands. That's where I was like, 'Come on man! I told you guys, give me the title, the author, and a quick two-sentence synopsis. Then we will vote on it.' Only, of course, like five kids turn in options... So I don't know if they saw that as 'that's my input'. So that's the one that really surprised me.

Another component of the student perception results that surprised Dolli was a consistent low percentage in every question, as if two or three kids scored her low every time. At first Dolli said she allowed this to bother her:

> You know what was so funny? Like the majority looks good. You know? But, it's like that one kid or two kids that were just like, 'never, ever, nah, nah, nah,

nah.' I'm just like, you little shit head! You're just doing that cause you're a jerk and don't like me.

In the beginning, those few negative responses really nagged at Dolli. However, after viewing the results several times, she noticed it was about the exact same percentage on each question. She chose to expand her view to see "the big picture" and look at how her teaching practices are viewed by the majority of her students. Dolli requested to do the survey again with her students later in the semester because she felt it was really valuable to her students and also to her, "I mean, it affected me, you know, and for the better."

Dolli explained she emphasized anonymity and confidentiality to her students while taking the survey. It was important that she let them know she would not be seeing who submitted the feedback, she would only see the overall scores. She knew those things would be "huge to them."

At the beginning of the school year, Dolli had written her cell phone number on the board. She wanted her students to have access to her if they needed anything. Dolli meant it when she said "anything". During the interview, she related a story to me that actually happened the Friday before I came to visit. Dolli was sitting in her classroom, when her phone rang during lunch period. One of her female students was on the other end of the phone crying because her friend could not breathe. The two friends had walked down the street to a fast food place. and one of the females started to have a panic attack. Dolli ran out to her car to assist the girls. On Dolli's run out to the parking lot, she spotted the principal. He was standing across from the church supervising students moving to and from the school. Dolli said she "grabbed him," and they both

drove together. Dolli described her assistance to the student, and claimed that her training in the mental health field was helpful in this moment. After the incident was over, Dolli very firmly remembered the principal turning to her and affirming, "You're the people whisperer!" Dolli said hearing those words from her "boss" made her feel: "proud" "good" and "confident".

After describing this ordeal with the female student, Dolli described her thoughts on student perceptions. Dolli was originally knocked back a bit by the survey results. She uses the word "hesitant" a second time in the interview. She admitted to struggling with lower scores, but then made the choice to look at the big picture. In both her reflection and interview, Dolli pointed out that the open-ended feedback at the end of the survey helped her work through the negative scores. The survey had 25 quantitative questions where students evaluated their teacher on a scale. The end of the survey had two open-ended questions. First, "If you scored your teacher as 'Never', please offer your thoughts to help explain why that area was low". The last question on the survey was also open-ended and asked, "If you scored your teacher as 'Always' please offer your thoughts to help explain why the score was so high." Working through the negative scores was not easy for Dolli, but having the positive feedback at the end helped her "feel good." Dolli had a sense of fear that she was not an effective teacher due to her negative quantitative scores. However, she described it as a "relief" to see so much positive feedback at the end of the survey. Dolli reflected, "Students feel as if they are learning useful skills in my class. I was glad to see that some view the class as challenging; I know that I'm doing my job properly." Skill development was a big deal for Dolli since her students were mostly Seniors. She wanted them prepared for the

world they would face. She pointed out that she had high standards for them. However, skill development was not the only thing she wanted them to learn. She wanted students to understand that English was important, but she was also there for them "as a human." Dolli hoped her students think, "'Yeah, you're here for me as a person, not just as a student.'" Immediately after viewing her survey results, she wrote her reflection. Dolli ended her reflection by writing, "I was able to see that I was making a difference in the majority of my students' lives. That is what matters. That is why I keep doing what I am doing."

Before Dolli's students shared their perceptions through the survey, Dolli felt that she had two areas of life experience that assisted her knowledge of students. First, "knowing" her students came from experience as a community health worker. Dolli said that this background assisted her with understanding the struggles many of her students face. Second, growing up with predominantly "Hispanic" friends enabled Dolli to speak Spanish and connect to the culture. The three other teacher participants in the study all point out that they have very different backgrounds than their students; however, Dolli was the only one who claimed a connection to students' backgrounds and experiences before they started teaching at Mesa Verde.

After Dolli viewed her students' perceptions, she shared that she learned something new about her students: "They are compassionate." Compassion was one of the major abstract nouns Dolli kept using in her Pre-Survey interview and reflection to describe how she responded to her students. This time, Dolli used it to describe the students rather than herself. Again, Dolli was surprised: "I mean, I've learned that they have the capability to be compassionate and put themselves in my position. Understand

where I'm coming from. That was a surprise too, them being able to have that." Dolli explained that seeing her students' compassion was surprising partially because of their "immaturity." She often only saw the typical teenager side of her students. She reflected on a moment when she was frustrated with their immaturity:

> It was last Friday, right after I helped that little girl. I came into this class. Well, actually, I came into the parking lot, and I almost fell out of my car running to two kids that were in a fist fight. So, that adrenaline of helping her with the mixed adrenaline of breaking up the fight, mixed with this crazy class. I was, I mean. I lost it with them. I did raise my voice.

Despite feeling frustrated during this moment, she learned that her students were compassionate. According to Dolli, it felt good to know they had the ability to be compassionate towards her. She laughed, "I mean it's easier to be a butthead. It's not easy for these teenagers to be nice and friendly."

After the survey, Dolli wanted to be more "conscious." She pointed out that she often assumed they did not care, but realized her actions could sometimes lead to a "shutting down" by her students. When connecting CRP to her student's perceptions, Dolli claimed, "It's essential with these guys. I like to think I tried to do it every day, to put myself in their positions and see where they are coming from." Dolli referred to her students' perceptions in the survey and claimed that she wanted to grow as a teacher and be in a place where she needs to be.

Prior to the results of the SPS, Dolli used several abstractions to describe how she responded to students. Overwhelmingly, Dolli's practice was guided by "respect" with elements of "compassion" and "patience." All these ideas still resonated with Dolli

in September. Dolli again used "respect" seven times during the interview alone: "Every time that I have to reprimand students, I go, 'Do I ever disrespect you? No? Okay. Then why are you disrespecting me?" During our September interview, Dolli shared her frustration that she thinks it was a generational issue. As a child, she was told, "I'm the adult" and "because I said so." She did not question respect as a child, and used the same logic with her own daughter. Dolli was frustrated that her current students did not follow the same expectations. She explained, "With these children, it's not about respecting your authority figures or respecting your elders. It's about, 'They didn't show me respect, so I'm not going to show them respect.'"

Dolli pointed out that some of her scores were lower than she wanted: "You know, I don't want to be 66.9%. I want to be 75% or 80%." She claimed the survey made her feel that she was mostly, "on the right track." However, she referred to the need to "push." Dolli said, "I just, if I just push myself a little harder. You know?" In addition to setting goals with hard numbers, Dolli was looking forward to opportunities to "push" herself.

Based on feedback Dolli received from her students, she rethought her curriculum. She wanted to work in more ways to make students feel valued. Before the survey, she had been toying with the idea of doing something more personal with her curriculum. Her idea was to develop a unit called "About Me" month. The student feedback was the "push" for Dolli to go ahead and put "About Me" into motion. She said, "This just encouraged me more to go ahead do 'About Me' month!"

Jandy

Jandy's classroom had been transformed into a television news set. In the middle of the classroom stood a giant green screen, which was surrounded by cameras, lights, and microphones. Jandy's 11th grade students were crowded together in different groups around the room. Some groups were in heated debates about a news story they were creating, while other groups laughed and playfully taunted each other's ideas. The goal of this whole-group meeting was to develop new segments or new topics for the *Mesa Verde News*, a *YouTube* channel Jandy created with her students.

Jandy was the only English teacher to have a one-to-one digital set up in her class obtained through a grant. Jandy decided to combine her proficiency for technology with her content area and, *Mesa Verde News Channel* was born. Jandy proudly bragged on her students and their work:

> We make the news. Everyone loves it. They come up and quote it to me. I can hear people walking down the hall, and they say what they hear on the news. It's just fun. I don't really have to do anything. I just sit there and laugh at the kids. I make them do everything. Like, 'This is your news'. Go figure out what need to go on it. You figure out what needs to happen, what to talk about, and what to do with it.' They made the little intro, they made the music, they made, I mean everything! It is really cool to see them, like doing what that. And, people are responding well. The schools around the area watch it!

I asked Jandy if that meant the other Mesa Verde schools like the elementary and the middle school. She responded:

> No! Like the other southside schools. One of their principals actually called. She had a $1,000 grant to make some news. She was just going to forget about it. But then she saw we were doing it. So now Central[5] High School is doing the news too!

Jandy explained that once her students learned that many other schools would be watching, they wanted to pull in elements that would relate to their community on the southside, like segments about the State Fair and the local Daddy-Daughter Dance.

I watched as the students independently worked their way through the brainstorming meeting. Jandy sat quietly only offering suggestions when asked. They began by starting a list of the two segments they knew they wanted to keep. The first segment was "Word in the Hall," which was a student opinion segment. Jandy's students chose a current event topic and interviewed Mesa Verde students between passing periods and during lunch to get their thoughts on the event. One boy used his cell phone to access the news channel and pulled up the segment that had already been published online. In this particular episode of "Word in the Hall" students were being interviewed about their "Dab for the day." Dabbing is a hip-hop move that became wildly popular after it was used by several NFL football players to celebrate a touchdown. In the segment, students shared something they are excited about then showed their best Dab.

After showing the "Word in the Hall" segment, the students showed the segment, "What Grinds My Gears." In this segment, students chose a topic that frustrated them. The anchor sat in an old-fashioned leather chair surrounded by an

[5] Central is a pseudonym given to the high school

office scene full of luxurious furnishings and old-world décor. Classical music began playing in the background. Then, the anchor turned slowly in his chair and faced the camera. As he faced the camera he asked in a very formal voice, "You know what grinds my gears?" The classic music ended, and the sound of record abruptly stopping screeched in the background. The student on camera broke into a fast-paced rant. This particular rant was about "using Google to go to Google." Apparently, many students in Jandy's class did not realize their Chromebooks were Google based. When they wanted to use the Chromebook to search the internet, many of them would type "google" into the search bar in order to get on Google. What they did not realize was they are actually already on Google. The rant ended with the student yelling, "You don't have to search Google for Google!" The other students broke into hysterical laughter.

Jandy reminded students that their proposals for new segments were due at the end of the hour. The meeting started to turn into bedlam as the students all started talking over each other. Finally, one student suggested that groups would have five minutes to put together a solid proposal explaining their segment and why it should be included. Students unanimously agreed to the plan.

Once the whole group was together again, proposals were discussed. One disputed segment was called "Beautiful Mesa Verde" where students shared an aspect of their school community that they appreciated. Another hotly debated segment was "Heads Up," in which a student yelled "Heads Up!" and then threw a ball to see who would catch it. Jandy looked concerned at the mere description of this segment. Lastly, a group of students wanted to do an "In Memoriam" segment that would be used when the community lost someone important. Despite the overall message shared in the

proposal, the group of students wanted to start with Harambe - the gorilla who died at the Cincinnati zoo last year.

As the class came to an end, students shared their favorite news story about a local university. The students went on a field trip and visited the university with their equipment. While on the university campus, the Mesa Verde students interviewed "minority college students" about their experiences in college. The small group of lingering students discussed this as one of their best original ideas and how much they appreciated Jandy supporting it.

Similar to Dolli's feelings of hesitancy, Jandy's feelings of nervousness were not shared prior to the student feedback. Initially, Jandy had showed positive reactions. In September, Jandy shared that she felt "excited and nervous" when initially discussing the SPS. Despite feeling nervous, Jandy said she felt "satisfied." Jandy recalled her thoughts on her receiving the results of the SPS three days ago:

> Jandy: You just never know. I feel like I'm normally happy by the end of the day, so probably my kids like me. They aren't making me miserable. But if they aren't? But it would be good to see, you know, where I am needing improvement on some things. But a lot of time you don't want to hear that.
>
> Me: Was your nervousness completely in relationship to just the students or was there anything else about this idea that made you nervous?
>
> Jandy: Just the students. You never want to hear that they don't like what you are doing.
>
> Me: Do you feel like that response has changed at all based on your experience with the survey? That 'excited' and 'nervousness'?

Jandy: I think it is still the same. The ones that are negative always stand out. Jandy admitted that she was initially somewhat "nervous" in the beginning, but in September she felt "satisfied." I asked Jandy what made her choose the word "satisfied" to describe interacting with her students' perceptions.

Based upon the feedback she received in the student perception survey, she felt "good" about where she was with her students. Jandy wished she had invited someone else to come in to administer the survey in order to support honesty from her students. Jandy directly told them, "Answer honestly. I'm not even going to walk around." She reflected that it was difficult to read the results in the beginning, "I focused on the negative comments, and quickly found myself trying to think how I could prevent any students from feeling bad in my room." Jandy closed her reflection by saying, "I really just try to have a room that students want to be in and try to be a human that people would want to be around."

Jandy, like all four teachers, specifically mentioned open-ended feedback as helpful. Positive feedback helped lesson the sting of the negative comments. It helped her see, "that there isn't a whole lot that needs to be changed." The positive feedback confirmed that she was effective despite being alternative certificated and coming from a different background than the students. Question one on the survey read, "My teacher gives us opportunities to make choices." Jandy described her students as "excited" when they discussed that question: "They were like, 'The Gatsby thing we are doing. I like that!' It reaffirmed some things I was doing. I give them choices a lot."

In July, Jandy shared that the high-point of her teaching career came when students affirmed that they really learned something about history from her even though

she wasn't a permanent history teacher. Being a good teacher was incredibly significant to Jandy, "You never want to hear that they don't like what you are doing. What if nobody likes what you are doing? You start to ask, 'What have I done with my life?'" Prior to the survey, Jandy shared concerns about her classroom due to the laptop one-to-one setting. These concerns appeared again in her post-survey reflection. Jandy revealed:

> One particular area that was low- and it should be- was getting to know each student as an individual. I have found this to be more difficult now that we have been using Chromebooks daily in my class, and it's definitely an area that I will have to figure out how to improve on as we move forward. My coworker and I have talked about how difficult it has been to get to know our kids this year, and that's my favorite part of the job.

Before gathering student perceptions, Jandy had feared that technology was interfering with relationships. Later in our interview, Jandy alluded directly to her reflection and pointed to technology, something she now clearly knows was an issue for her students: "I'm providing feedback. But it's not as much face to face. Now that we are finally reading a novel and having class discussions, I get to know them a little bit more." Jandy appreciated claimed the student feedback reminded her to have face-to-face interactions more often. Students at Mesa Verde had a sense of family and wanted to talk and know one another. Reading through her student responses reminded Jandy about the need for her students to have connections with their peers but also with her.

Although Jandy cared about her students, having a culturally responsive approach was not on her radar: "It's not like I came in the room and thought to myself,

'today I will be culturally relevant,'" though the SPS helped her to be "more aware." Jandy reflected, "As long as you are willing to teach the way they want to be taught, I think you are kind of doing it… You can't just focus on 'this is how I was taught.'"

Before the SPS, Jandy focused heavily on the idea of "voice." When discussing being responsive to students' needs, Jandy mentioned voice several times. While this idea seemed valuable to Jandy, she did not directly mention intentional ways she supported voice in her classroom. However, the week after reviewing her students' perceptions, Jandy shared that she developed ideas to embed more classroom discussions: "Probably the lowest score was getting to know the kids. I could see that they do not feel like I am getting to know them, so we gotta change it up and communicate a lot more."

With the influx of 200 new students, Jandy had been concerned about establishing relationships. Having more students in class, combined with a heavy focus on utilizing Chromebooks, made Jandy feel "pressured." She admitted, "It makes you feel like, 'I don't have time to talk to you.' But really I do. I used to do it a lot more." Jandy said she planned on holding herself accountable by working in more face-to-face opportunities for discussion in class.

Immediately after the survey, some the students blurted out to Jandy that her reading selection for DEAR time (Drop Everything and Read) should be reviewed. One of her students said, "Do you even have cool books?" Jandy laughed at herself and said she responded by saying, "Of course I have cool books, I think." Jandy pointed out that since the student survey, she planned on revisiting her DEAR book section.

Mary

During the lunch hour, students lined both sides of the hallway, sitting on the floor eating their food. School cooks served food from a small kitchen downstairs, but no cafeteria existed in the building. In the stairwell, leading up to Mary's room, a group of students sat together. They served each other a meal brought from home, and the large casserole dish of food was spooned onto their friends' plates. Additional students ate outside in the grass or on the cracked, asphalt basketball court to eat. Many more students gathered around the elementary playground equipment eating their lunch from a swing or the steps of the twisty slide.

The lack of a formal cafeteria was apparent in Mary's classroom. Her room was full of the familiar sounds and smells of a lunch-room cafeteria: gossiping students, clattering trays, crunching of milk cartons. However, this was not a cafeteria with supervising administration and lunch ladies; this was Mary's classroom. Because students lacked eating space, Mary let students eat in her room.

Mary seemed overwhelmed. Her normal, cheerful demeanor was replaced by a frantic attempt to get last minute details for class ready while she also supervised an overflowing room of students. The bell rang indicating the end of lunch. Students filtered out. Mary explained that she wanted to provide a space for her students to eat at a table rather than a floor or stairs. She was flustered as she sputtered, "It's not that they are annoying, not that at all. I just require some alone time. That is how I reflect and regroup. Even during my 1st hour, students come in and out. So I just…" Mary took a long pause and a few breaths. Then she finished, "I need a break." Prior to the new influx of over 200 students, Mesa Verde still not did not have a cafeteria. However,

portioning students into a rotation of classrooms for lunch was a pretty simple solution. Now, with hundreds of new students, the walls of the old building and the teachers showed their limits.

During the chaos of lunch, Mary wrote the directions for her class activity. The prompt read, “For our generation, countless tattoos represent symbolic meaning through their images and words. If you could have any tattoo that has symbolic meaning to you, what would it be?” Mary elaborated on the prompt by showing students an image of a pirate ship that meant a lot to her. Purple clouds surrounded the ship, and it was wrapped in a red rose. She explained several different aspects of the image and how it represented different components of her life. Mary encouraged students to ask questions, both about the image of the ship and Mary’s life.

Once students explored the concept of symbolism through Mary’s personal example, she put the directions on the board so students could refer to them throughout the hour:

1) Use your phone to search for images.

2) Draw your image on copy paper and color it. Remember colors can have deep meanings too.

3) On the back of your paper, write a 7 sentence paragraph describing what your image is and what it means to you.

Students quickly searched for images with symbolic meaning to them. Mary went to her computer and turned on soft music in the background. The music, from a YouTube playlist, was in Spanish. As I wondered through the room I overheard a student say, “I love her [the teacher’s] music. It is always so soothing.”

Mary constantly floated around the room checking for student understanding and offering assistance if needed. One boy got up from his seat and approached Mary. He quietly asked if the four computers in the back of the room were functional. Mary giggled and explained the computers had not worked in over a year. The boy looked defeated. He shared that he did not have a phone to look up images. Mary quietly explained that several other students in class did not have a phone and shared with a friend. He slid back into his seat, leaned over to a partner, and asked to borrow the phone.

Students stayed on task throughout the class. As class ended, students slowly trickled towards the back of the room to turn in their art and their written response. One student, in particular, still worked as the other students cleaned up their areas. This young man worked diligently on creating a detailed image of a helmet. His paragraph read:

> The Spartan helmet means for me. The helmet means to [me] that I am a warrior because I never give up. The lightening represents pain but it slowly fads [sic] away. The sun represent [sic] that even though you are in a bad mood or a bad place there is always something that will show you light and guide you. The heart represents that i [sic] have no heart and i [sic] cant [sic] love. The dark moon represents that i [sic] have my days at night. The hair i [sic] just made it look like mine lol! The strips on the top of the helmet shows that a path always has a beginning but also an end.

It had been two months since I last saw Mary, and I was curious to find out if her thoughts had changed at all in regards to gathering student perceptions. Mary did not communicate the same feelings of hesitancy or nervousness reflected by Dolli and Jandy. She recalled feeling "excited" at the thought of knowing more about her students' feelings. She said her response had not changed since the beginning of the study, and she was "grateful" to experience the SPS.

When asked to choose one word to describe her initial reaction to the results of the SPS, Mary quickly responded with "surprised". She elaborated:

> Some of them put 'Never' on the question, 'My teacher doesn't know me' or 'My teacher involves things I am passionate about.' That made me sad because I thought one of my strengths was being really good to show pop culture stuff. So that let me know there is a miss there. But on 'engagement' I had like 87%, so I was like 'this is cool.'"

Mary then directly referred to two questions on the SPS. Question 14 read, "My teacher knows me so well that they use things I like to make learning better. Question 18 read, "My teacher gets to know me as an individual. There were some survey questions that she did not score as high as she originally predicted. However, Mary specifically mentioned an 87% score on a survey question she felt measured "engagement". In Mary's comments she quickly moved her thoughts away from the negative scores to questions which she felt reflected a perspective from the students.

Mary initially focused on negative student comments; however, she soon shifted and focused on the needs of the students. She acknowledged that looking at the cumulative percentages was beneficial. She did not want to worry too much about

individual scores. She argued that students "could have had a bad day", and that she did not take it too personally. She also felt that the lack of a Spanish option could have influenced a few of the students' abilities to understand the survey. She thought that might be why they marked 'never' on each question.

Overall, Mary described her experience with the student perceptions of her CRP as "good." However, most of all, she said she was "proud of my kids for being active." Using their voice to actively communicate their classroom experience was important at any school, but Mary argued that some teachers at Mesa Verde push content without really connecting to the students. Having students offer honest feedback was valuable to both the teachers and the students at Mesa Verde. Despite some negative responses, Mary reflected, "I trust the voices of my students. I know I need to listen and learn."

In the two months since the SPS, Mary seemed much more overwhelmed. She said that her students were doing "really well." Mary happily worked with them, but at the same time, she felt incredibly tired. Mary currently worked three jobs. Her teaching job was her full-time employment. It was difficult for her to make ends meet on her teacher's salary, so she also worked every Saturday at a retail shop. In addition, Mary was a graduate student. In order to gain tuition waivers, Mary worked as a graduate assistant for the university. As well as her financial and work demands, she struggled with family stresses. Last year, Mary's mother almost died twice. Therefore, Mary had a large amount of responsibilities in regards to her mother's health. Mary reiterated that her students make her happy, but she was struggling with life:

> It's all my life stuff. Like if it weren't for the positive feedback I got… [pause]. I mean I got some negative feedback which is good on the survey because it helps

me. But if it wasn't for those open-ended… [pause]. I would have, yeah, not quit or anything. Just wanting to breathe. The positive helped.

Mary felt that the open-ended feedback uplifted her. Yet, even more so, it was constructive. She pointed out that it was the most exciting part of her experience with the SPS.

The open-ended feedback gave Mary confirmation for things she was doing well. The open-ended feedback also made her feel even more appreciated because she knew it took extra effort on the part of her students. She explained that the open-ended feedback was not a required component of the survey. Since the comment section was voluntary, it was "a big thing" for her students to take time to leave positive feedback for her. Mary wrote about the open-ended feedback immediately after receiving the results of her student survey. In her reflection, she wrote: "Looking @ [sic] my results, I'm encouraged. I admit most days I feel extinguished cognitively, emotionally, and physically. Yet, reading this feedback energizes me, restores me, validates me."

When discussing CRP during her post-survey reflection, Mary claimed, "I feel like it is something I am strong at, especially in comparison to my peers because I have a lot more educational background on it. But I think it is something I can do better…" Mary pointed out that she was very personable, but this does not mean she was always effective with every student.

Several times Mary discussed her assumptions. She assumed her use of pop culture would resonate with the students, and she assumed being personable would make all students feel connected. Mary said she realized that not all students saw it from her perspective. Mary referred to her lowest scoring question on the survey. Question

18 on the survey read, “My teacher gets to know me as an Individual.” Mary admitted that this low score was “disappointing” because she really valued community. She wanted her students to feel a part of the community. She wanted them to know she cared about them as a human. Mary believed that the quiet kids were probably the ones who felt she doesn’t try to get to know them. While the student perceptions of this question disappointed her, she was grateful to have the information showing her where she needs to “adjust.” Mary assumed most of her students felt connected to her community of learners, yet she realized that her assumptions were not validated by students in some key areas. Mary did not dismiss the low scores or her students’ feedback because she saw their perceptions as valuable. In her reflection, Mary suggested that her students’ perceptions actually gave her new knowledge. She wrote, “I know I need to listen and learn. Just like I instruct them, they also teach me.”

Before gathering student perceptions, Mary mentioned trust as a key component in her relationship with students. Mary’s trust was reciprocal; she wanted her students to trust her, but she also said she trusted them. This sense of trust was still very present in Mary’s post-survey discussions. Mary indicated that she “trusts the voices of my students.” Mary claimed that she trusted her students’ voices “because I know they value me.”

Mary believed she was responsive to her students because she created an environment of trust, but she still had the desire to grow as a professional. She wrote in her reflection, “I feel I have a strong direction to focus.” Having more informed knowledge gave Mary specific goals for her growth as a teacher. Mary was a busy professional and graduate student with many financial and family stresses. Despite her

exhaustion, she said being valued by her students drove her to be more "positive and be more grateful." In addition, Mary said she realized now that she needed to focus on "student interests and getting to know them better." Mary had a continued focus on trust but saw opportunities for new goals. In the last lines of her reflection she wrote, "One word to tag my strengths- #valued. One word to tag my opportunities- #invest."

Dusty

Dusty rearranged his traditional rows of desks into a circle, and his students responded with either groans or confusion. Many students mumbled their confusion under their breaths. One young lady finally exclaimed, "Mister! Why are the seats in a circle?" Dusty explained that they were going to participate in their D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read) time first, then the class would participate in something different. Dusty directed students to find a seat in the circle and reminded them to read silently for 25 minutes.

Without much more commentary, Dusty grabbed a magazine, crossed his leg over his knee and began reading. Many students looked at one another, then they began to search for something to read. A small handful of students wandered over to a somewhat bare bookshelf and pulled a book from Dusty's class "library." Out of the 24 students, approximately 15 students were on their phones. Only three students seemed to be reading on their phones. The remaining students with phones were texting, playing a game, or browsing social media. There were even a few selfies being taken. While there were few students reading books, one fidgety boy held Ayn Rand's novel, *Anthem*. He stared at the wall, not the book. The only noticeable activity from the boy was the tapping of his foot. A student close to him held a dictionary in his hands, and he

displayed similar behaviors: eyes staring into space feet tapping the legs of the desk. Two other novels were in the hands of Dusty's freshman students: Evelyn Waugh's *Handful of Dust* and Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons*. Again, it seemed the book was a prop as students randomly thumbed through the pages.

Once the 25 minutes of silent reading was over, Dusty declared, "We are going to build a community in this room." He walked over to the SmartBoard and directed students to a list of guidelines:

1. Come from your heart
2. Listen from your heart
3. Trust you will know what to say, no need to rehearse
4. Say just enough

Dusty read off the rules for the circle and offered commentary: "There is no need for 're-storying'. Your experiences are valued." Then he added, "You don't have to give an answer you think the teacher wants to hear." After class, Dusty explained that the circle was a suggestion from his principal. Dusty concerns about the results of his SPS led him to seek out the principal for guidance. The principal offered a process called "restorative circles" as a starting point.

After viewing the guidelines for the restorative circle, Dusty handed a student a fake flower and explained that this was the talking stick. He then proceeded to ask the first question, "What is one aspiration you have for high school?" Wait time lasted 30 seconds. One girl finally responded with a list: grades, out of trouble, makes lots of money, college, and the white robe. (At Mesa Verde a white graduation robe signified special honors). After the first girl responded, students sat in silence. Dusty informed

students that they should probably just respond round-robin around the circle instead of having volunteers. Students waited anxiously for their required turn. The flowered "talking stick" moved rapidly through each set of hands as students quickly shared a response. Some responses were seemingly simple like, "make good grades." However, some responses were brutally honest: "Be good so I can move back in with my momma" and "Be the first one in my family to graduate high school."

After every student in the circle shared a response to the question, Dusty said they were going to play a game called "When the Wind Blows." Dusty would begin a statement with "The wind blows if…" He told students they should stand up and move to the middle of the circle if they agreed with the rest of the statement. This part of class moved quickly:

Question 1: "The wind blows if you want to pass you first semester of high school."

Response: Many students moved to the middle of the circle, but 13 students stay seated.

Question 2: "The wind blows if you want to make it to the varsity team of your sport."

Response: A handful of students moved, but most of the class stays seated.

Question 3: "The wind blows if you want to achieve an athletic honor."

Response: Similar to question 2, a very limited amount of students moved to the circle.

Question 4: "The wind blows if your family is happy you are at this school."

Response: 10 to 15 students moved to the inside of the circle.

Question 5: “The wind blows if you want a robe other than a regular black one.”

Response: Only three out of the 24 students stayed in their seats.

Question 6: “The wind blows if someone in your family has already graduated.”

Response: Six to eight students moved to the inside of the circle.

Question 7: “The wind blows if someone in your family has set a good example for you.”

Response: Same six to eight students stayed in the circle.

Question 8: “The wind blows if you want to graduate and set a good example for others.”

Response: Whole class moved to the inside of the circle.

Question 9: “The wind blows if you want to attend a trade school.”

Response: Approximately 10 students moved to the inside of the circle.

Question 10: “The wind blows if you want a scholarship to help pay for college.”

Response: Again, approximately 10 students moved to the inside of the circle.

After question 10, a student interjected. We wanted to help Dusty create questions. Dusty declined the student’s request. He turned to the student and said, “Maybe you can help later.” Then Dusty directed the class back to the regular circle. Dusty proceeded to ask one last question:

Question 11: “The wind blows if you have someone like family depending on you for help.”

Response: Over half the class moved to the circle. I counted approximately 12-15 students.

Dusty told students to go back to their seats and asked, “What are some distractions that could keep you from you achieving your goal?” A male student yelled across the circle, “Yo! Give me the flower!” He waved for someone to pass the talking stick his way. Once he received the talking stick, the student explained that his friends were a distraction. The extroverted student’s actions seemed to encourage more voluntary sharing. One student shared “my family” was a distraction. Another student claimed “teachers” were a distraction. Many students vocalized that some of their teachers did not make them feel valued because they were not the type of students who made good grades. Several students shared this same feeling and claimed they wanted to be treated equally by their teachers. A few students clapped in response to the call for equal treatment. Unexpectedly, the extroverted young man exclaimed, “Oh! I have another!” and began waving for the talking stick again. Dusty responded with a “shhhhh” to quiet the vocal student waving frantically for the taking stick. Based on Dusty’s prompting, students began sharing round-robin again. As the flowered talking stick moved around the room a list of distractions was shared from multiple students: my cell phone, boys, friends, anger. The vocal young man interjected out of turn by exclaiming, “Myself!”

Dusty stopped the circle and reminded students to speak from their heart. He pressed, “Be honest. Some of your answers weren’t real.” The extraverted young man was waving his hand and claimed he wanted to share more about his distractions. When Dusty dismissed him, the boy argued with Dusty and claimed he wanted to share more about how he was a distraction to himself. Dusty ignored the student and opened the floor to the rest of the circle again. At this point, multiple students responded to the

question saying, “myself.” Dusty ended the circle and announced, “Now we are going to do some role playing.” The students showed confusion by the term “role playing,” and asked for clarification. Dusty did not respond to the questions.

Before giving the scenario for the role playing, Dusty stated, “I don’t want this to be a guilt trip, but I do want there to be some small amount of shame because of how you have behaved all year.” After making this statement, Dusty explained the scenario by pointing out that the students should imagine they were the teacher. He explained, “Let’s say you put a lot of work into the lessons, but people don’t want to learn. They are a distraction and not engaged.” Before this moment, students were mostly engaged during the circle. However, this was the first time students began to talk over Dusty and each other. There were several giggles floating around the room as Dusty asserted, “If you were in my shoes, how would it make you feel?” Dusty again insisted that students discuss this round-robin style. One student interjected, “Do we have to?” Dusty encouraged the round-robin sharing, and the flower talking stick moved through the circle with several similar responses, “I guess I would feel not valued;” “I guess it is the kids’ fault;” “I would feel mad;” “I would feel sad;” “I would feel frustrated.” One student claimed, “You can only reach the ones you can reach.” Dusty responded to the student by replying, “That is actually a really good teaching philosophy.”

The majority of the class no longer listened or participated in the circle. The giggling and chatter continued to get louder. Dusty shared that he felt let down by the students, but that he also let down the parents, the principals, and the public. Students no longer listen. Even the more serious students were starting to giggle. One boy on the opposite side of the circle blurted out, “Bleach in his coffee!” Everyone laughed. Dusty

responded by saying, “We will talk about that later!” At this point in the circle, students were completely disengaged. One girl recorded the chaos on her phone while she giggled. Several students grouped together on the sides of the circle taking SnapChat selfies. Dusty looked up at the clock. He informed the class that had had planned on doing a closure activity but then said, “we don’t have time now.” He asked for a quick thumbs up or thumbs down in response to how well students liked the circle. No thumbs were raised either up or down. No one participated at all. The bell rang and students began to quickly shuffle out the door. Dusty looked up and said with a sigh, “I think that went pretty well.”

Similar to Dolli and Jandy, Dusty’s September interview revealed some initial hesitation about the SPS. He did not share the hesitation previously in July. When asked to remember on his initial feelings, Dusty’s responded: “I was excited. No. Not excited, I was willing to do it.” Similar to Dolli and Jandy, Dusty only shared positive statements about potentially utilizing student CRP perceptions through a survey. Now, Dusty changed his thoughts from “exciting” to “willing.” He explained that he was willing because he knew there was a need for “meaningful feedback” in order to grow as a professional. Dusty shared this same willingness – but not excitement – in his written reflection by stating he wanted to grow in order to meet the needs of his students.

Dusty’s student perceptions were not what he was expecting. Unlike Dolli and Mary, Dusty did not use the word “surprised” to describe his initial reaction to the survey results. Dusty’s word was “dismay.” I asked Dusty to elaborate why “dismay” was his one-word reaction, and he responded, “I was anticipating higher result. Like,

you know in general? When I'm reviewed by admin, I normally get really high reviews." Dusty's negative reaction to the results of the survey was also present in his written reflection. He wrote:

> My initial feeling to the feedback my students provided are mixed. Many of the students had affirming things to say, but as the questions entered deeper into the teens and twenties, I noticed that the charts began to become more lopsided, moving away from 'always' and 'often' dominating the pie chart to the lower end categories.

After viewing the results, Dusty was a little shaken. He explained he was grateful that he could talk openly with his principal about the survey results and was willing to give the restorative circles a try. However, his feedback distressed him. Dusty shared that when he was going into the circles he was scared to ask why the students did not feel valued. He was "terrified" that their public response was going to be, "because you are an asshole."

Dusty was partially fearful of this type of student response because of some feedback he received on the open-ended section. Dusty, like Dolli, used the term "shitheads" to describe students. Dolli used the term to describe the small handful of students who marked 'never' on every question. However, Dusty used the term "shithead" to describe some of the negative open-ended comments he received from students. Dusty shared that one student wrote, "My teacher is fat and needs to lose weight." Dusty tried laughing at the comments. He described his directions to the students before the survey. He informed me that he wanted students to be completely honest, but he also wanted them to be constructive:

> I did it the same way I do the STAR test. I told everybody they can use their phone or a computer. I gave them my instructions which was, 'Don't put answers you think are going to be pleasing to me. I want you to answer honestly. And if you have anything to say at the end, please make it something I could act upon.'

Dusty laughed at the student comment about his need to lose weight and said, "Well, I asked for something actionable. I guess I can work on that."

He claimed to have a "preliminary theory about why the kids don't feel valued." Dusty was the only teacher participant who had freshmen students. He claimed that many of the students came out of the middle school where their grades were adjusted in order to promote them out of the building. He believed he was trying to hold them accountable for their academics, and the students were "taking it personally." He pointed to some comments he overheard in the restorative circle as evidence. Dusty admitted that his theory might be wrong and does not account for all the negative feedback. Despite Dusty's thoughts the negative student perceptions, Dusty did reflect on moving forward. He wrote, "I am glad for the information, and look forward to challenging myself to address the perceptions of my students and their needs in the classroom." He then shifted his thoughts towards the students:

> Regardless of whether my opinion of things is right, there is still a perception. And that perception needs to be addressed. I feel like even if I am doing everything rights [sic], if the kids think I am not, then I'm not addressing something correctly.

Even though the open-ended feedback contained some negative personal comments, Dusty said this same section of the survey brought him "a little sense of pride." Dusty mentioned several of the questions were very low, so he is aware that he has things to "work on." However, he brought up the open-ended feedback multiple times in both his reflection and interview. Dusty felt the open-ended feedback was "affirming". Dusty shared, "The responses at the end were mostly affirming. Like there were a lot of really good things. The kids obviously like me as a teacher and care about me as an individual. That is affirming."

Dusty, similar to the other participants, focused on how the positive open-ended feedback section had more comments than the negative feedback section. Dusty requested more space in the survey for "authentic feedback." The scaled questions were useful for him to get a quick view of the overall class, but the specific positive open-ended feedback was considered more "authentic" to Dusty. He hoped to have more opportunities like this in a future survey.

Before the SPS, Dusty admitted that he "falls short of the mark" when it comes to being culturally responsive to his students. CRP, in Dusty's words, felt "amorphous" and "vague". However, Dusty felt that he knew his students pretty well based on "conversations" and felt that he was one of the "best in the building" at having a CRP.

In September, Dusty claimed he felt "adequate to well" in regards to CRP. Dusty elaborated on his idea of his cultural responsiveness in the classroom:

> I feel like I expose the kids to a variety of cultures. I feel like I honor their own personal culture. I also feel like I do a good job of integrating popular culture in the classroom. Like making things somewhat relatable… Saying things like

> ‘swag’ and ‘YOLO’. I know those are like four years old now. But you know, like the stuff about ‘dabbing’ and bottle flipping. I will make corny jokes like, ‘How do a magician dab? He does the abra ka-dabra.’

When Dusty said the last line of his joke, he threw his arms up in the “dab” pose. As he did this last part, he laughed at himself. He said he knows it is “corny,” but he hopes students see that his intentions are good.

Despite Dusty’s attempt to connect with pop culture, he realized now that he had stopped including student voice and student engagement because he had shifted focus when the influx of new students had come into Mesa Verde. Learning to know them again had become a priority for Dusty based on the SPS. He explained:

> I don’t think I’ve done as good as a job this year getting to know the kids. Part of that is because I was with the same group of kids for like three years. I already knew them so I quit including stuff like that in my planning because I already knew them. So I need to start adding stuff like that again and getting to know them individually.

Dusty reflected that he viewed himself as a “learner”. This was his teacher identity before the SPS. I asked if this changed at all now that he read his students perceptions. Dusty replied that we should always be learning. The survey had only impacted his view of himself “a little bit.” Through the SPS, he realized that he had made some assumptions about his teaching. He reflected:

> The instance you think that you are at the top, humility will come and knock you down a peg. I always want to learn, and I think that maybe I have gotten a little bit cocky. I think there was a dose of humility in the survey.

Dusty also realized he had made an assumption about his students' abilities. Through the SPS, Dusty said he had learned that his students actually had the ability to "think objectively." Despite the feelings they might have towards Dusty, he claimed that the students took the time to leave him specific objective feedback that was constructive to his teaching. This was a pleasant surprise for him.

When I asked Dusty to share information or new knowledge he has gained from his students, he quickly addressed the "cool books one" (Dusty was referring to question 20 on the survey that read, "My teacher has cool books in this class. When I read, I can connect to the story and the characters"). Dusty shared that when he saw the score to the "cool books" question his response was, "Well, duh! No wonder they don't want to read." After seeing the scores Dusty admitted, "I know most of my books suck."

At the beginning of the school year, Dusty claimed to value trust. He also said he responded to students by listening. However, in our post-survey interview, Dusty shared that the new influx of students negatively impacted his current teaching practices. He said this semester felt like being a new teacher all over again. Even though he taught for over five years, Dusty pointed out, "It feels like going back to the beginning, some of those same frustrations I had a long time ago." Mesa Verde had received over 200 new students who were not previously a part of the Mesa Verde elementary or middle school programs. Dusty pointed out that this was a big deal because Mesa Verde had a strong community. He explained, "The biggest part of that community is a culture of no violence. Like that has been really difficult to break some kids out." Dusty said that the new students had a hard time adapting to Mesa Verde's community.

Dusty shared he now recognized the challenge he had ahead of him. The survey gave him a better focus for the issues in his class. For the past few weeks the issues felt too big to deal with. Now, he had a path. Dusty claimed he planned on approaching his classroom different based on the SPS feedback. He specifically mentioned two questions that were low and needed his attention. Question 14 read, "My teacher know me so well that they use things I like to make learning better." Question 15 read, "My teacher involves my input when making assignments and lessons." Dusty explained that he wanted to address the areas of his teaching that were weaker in his students' eyes. However, he was not sure how to do that: "I don't know exactly how I am going to do it, but I am really going to take time to think about it." Dusty did not have any tangible goals for approaching his classroom differently. Yet, he did have a personal plan. Dusty hoped to find time so he could, "Try to reflect on how I can improve things."

December

It had been two months since I last visited the teachers at Mesa Verde. When I last saw them, they had just received the results of the SPS. Now, they had several months to reflect on the process.

Dolli

Students slowly trickled into Dolli's classroom, taking full advantage of the extra five minutes she gave them to get to the church building. It was the week right after Thanksgiving Break, and Dolli was preparing to finish a film titled *(Dis)Honesty: The Truth about Lies*. The film explored the cognitive reasons humans lie. Dolli did not have a television in her room so she used her projector to show the film. In addition to no television, Dolli did not have a projector screen, so she displayed the film on the

folding doors of the church classroom. Students attempted to move their seats to where they can see, but many of them ended up on the floor. While the film played, several students slept. A few students in the back started chatting and giggling. Dolli yelled a phrase in Spanish. Then she switched to English telling the students they were being "inappropriate." The film ended, and Dolli took the remaining few minutes of class to discuss the students' upcoming autobiography project. She began by communicating her appreciation for all their hard work. She then gave some whole-group commentary about the rough drafts and shared some opportunities for growth. Dolli ended by mentioning she will continue meeting with students one-on-one to offer feedback. There was only five minutes of class left and Dolli dismissed her students. As they filtered out of the room, she yelled, "Love you guys!"

Over the timespan of the study, Dolli's thoughts on engaging with student perceptions went from "great," to "surprised," to "hopeful." In our last visit together, Dolli chose the word "hopeful" to describe how she felt about her students' perceptions. Dolli was hopeful she could continue to adjust her teaching to meet her students' needs. She admitted that the negative scores still occasionally captured her attention. However, despite the negative scores, she hoped she could change her students' perceptions over time.

Dolli claimed she would like to share the results with her students. She wanted to acknowledge that she had read their feedback. Dolli wanted to tell her students, "This is what you guys graded me on, so let's talk about this." Dolli claimed making a space to talk openly about the SPS was something "we have to do for them." Dolli felt that engaging in a discussion about the survey, rather than just moving on, would be

"beneficial" to her students. Discussing the survey results was a part of Dolli's attempt to be, "as open and honest with them as possible."

Dolli informed me that she had "enjoyed this experience." She asked if the teachers can have the survey again in order to get new feedback from their students:

> I know they enjoying having that control. It's like 'I get to grade you now.' It gives them power. So, I think I would really like to do it again. I would really like to discuss those results from the first one and the results from the next one with my students. To say, 'What did change? What changed with me and what changed with our class instruction?' I think that would be really cool.

Dolli emphasized that the survey was as valuable to her students as it was to her: "The experience has been incredibly beneficial- I think for me and for them too."

Before the SPS and immediately after the SPS, Dolli could not answer questions about her teacher identity. Mary considered herself a "scholar," Dusty considered himself a "learner," and Jandy considered herself "creative." Each one mostly kept to that identity throughout the study. However, Dolli did not have one July through September, and she was never able to clearly describe her teacher identity. Now, in December, Dolli felt like she had a teacher identity. Her teacher identity revolved around being "nurturing and loving." She wanted her students to feel like they were receiving "unconditional love."

Dolli said working with her students this year had affirmed her ability to provide them support, "regardless of whether or not they want to be buttheads." Dolli felt one of her greatest moments of pride as a teacher happened when she was able to assist a student who was a having a panic attack. Those moments continued for her in the past

few months. She explained, “I’ve had a lot of students come to me, more than I thought would with personal issues.” She first told me about a female student who thought she was pregnant. Then she informed me of a couple of students who wanted to drop out of school. She added that a student called her at 2:00 a.m. because he was being kicked out of the house by his mom. Each one of these events ended with a student telling Dolli how much they appreciated her help. Dolli reflected that she knew she was different from other teachers, but knew that she was “doing something right” since her students continued to reach out to her.

In December, Dolli’s students worked diligently on their autobiographies. The autobiographies were born out of the “About Me” month that Dolli discussed as a new goal during our visit in September. She had wanted to initiate the “About Me” month sooner, due to the feedback she received on the SPS. During this most recent classroom observation, Dolli mentioned to her students that she had not seen them work so hard on a paper before. In Dolli’s written reflection, the autobiographies were her central focus. In this reflection, she used the word “realize” several times to express moments of awareness and new knowledge. Dolli reflected:

> They are currently writing their autobiographies, and with that, I have learned that the children who have had a more difficult time growing up, tend to make less appropriate or healthy choices than those who have grown up in relatively healthy, supportive environments. While some of my students have language and cultural barriers, other have experienced extreme violence and neglect.

Further into the reflection Dolli wrote she realized how important it was for her students see “my unconditional love, acceptance, and patience.” Dolli shared that reading the

autobiographies had not been easy because she found herself up late at night reading their papers. She reflected, “I’ve noticed a lot of these kids have already lived a lifetime.” Many of these late night reading sessions ended with her crying herself to sleep. However, Dolli claimed she was grateful that her students were comfortable enough with her to be open with their stories. Dolli shared that her students faced different obstacles, some of them faced bigger obstacles than she ever imagined. Their stories helped her see their struggles more clearly.

Dolli shared that her student perceptions were a learning experience for her. Dolli had reviewed the CRP framework before the survey. Additionally, after the survey, each teacher was sent a copy of the framework again to use with their student perception results. When I asked about the CRP framework, Dolli simply responded, “Yes, it all makes sense to me. It was easy enough to follow.” While Dolli did not elaborate on her understanding of CRP in general, Dolli specifically mentioned her new awareness specifically in relationship to her students. Dolli mentioned her students multiple times as the bearer of her new knowledge. Dolli shared towards the end of her last interview, “I enjoyed this experience. They helped me understand things that I wasn’t even aware of. It’s altered a part of my instruction that I never even thought of having before.” Her only question was, “Are we able to do it again?”

Throughout our time together, Dolli shared a strong sentiment of “respect.” Dolli often responded with some form of the idea of “respect” when discussing her classroom practices. While visiting with her at the beginning of school, Dolli mentioned “respect” eight times. In September, directly after the student perception survey, Dolli

mentioned “respect” seven times. The idea of “compassion” was also present as a response to students; however, these ideas were not as prevalent as “respect.”
Two months after the student perception survey, “respect” was only mentioned one time in any of Dolli’s data points. Dolli’s responses now reflected actions she was taking to adjust her classroom practices. She shared two easy additions to her classroom practices, like checking for understanding more often and offering reflective questions rather than telling.

During this last visit, Dolli emphasized two key elements of her classroom practice initiated after receiving the results of her SPS: her own personal story and student autobiographies. These were both goals originally mentioned in September, but now they were actions Dolli was taking. Dolli first decided to share her own personal story with all her students. She felt this was important in order to establish a more personal relationship with the students. Originally, she had shared her personal story with a small group of students immediately following the survey in September. Based on some of the positive reactions she received from the small group of students, Dolli decided to share her personal story with all her students before they began writing their autobiographies. Dolli did not offer any details about this personal story. However, she did say, “I am still currently struggling with it, and nobody knew about it.”

Another change Dolli initiated was the “About Me” month. This was something she toyed around with as a new teacher, but had never committed to implementing it. After reading the results of the student feedback, Dolli reached out to her curriculum director. Reaching out to the curriculum director and sharing some of the SPS results really gave her the push she needed to put the unit into action. In December, it was

apparent students were working diligently on their autobiographies. Students were developing both an essay and a poster.

While discussing adjustments she made in her classroom practices, Dolli pointed out some transformations she saw in her students. She carefully insisted that she could not draw a direct correlation between her actions and student changes in behavior and academics. However, Dolli did notice transformations after initiating changes in her classroom. First, Dolli believed sharing her personal story assisted in student willingness to open up and share their own autobiographies. Dolli explained, "I think by me sharing something that deep, personal, and private, helped a lot of them go, 'Well, she shared that, so I'm just gonna go ahead and tell her this.' So, I'm really glad it helped them." Dolli believed her personal story, combined with the autobiography project, helped students know that she "cares." In addition, Dolli thought it helped students be more interested in writing. She was glad to see them academically engaged in the writing process. Even more so, she pointed to behavioral transformations that were taking place in the classroom. Dolli gave an example based on two young men who have had "deplorable" behavior prior to the SPS. Dolli used the term "180 degrees" to describe the transformation she saw in them.

Jandy

Jandy's class began with quiet computer work, but then shifted dramatically after the bell-ringer assignment. Jandy asked her students to stand up. She informed them that she wanted to hear their perspective before building her grammar unit. Jandy began to utilize an instructional strategy called "Four Corners." During this activity, students were given a prompt and asked to take a stance: strongly agree, agree, disagree,

or strongly disagree. Jandy labeled each of the four corners in her room with a sign that showed a stance.

Jandy read the first prompt and also showed it on her SmartBoard. The prompt read, “I have a deep understanding of grammar rules.” Jandy’s students eagerly moved around the room to stand in the corner that best represented their stance. The class almost evenly split between the “agree” and “disagree” corners. Jandy asked students to voluntarily share their thoughts on why they went to a particular corner. She quietly jotted down notes while listening to her students verbally shared their thoughts. After students finished sharing, Jandy gave students another prompt, “My teachers have done a good job teaching grammar.” At this time, there was a huge shift to the “agree” corner, and only three students remained in the “disagree” corner. Jandy asked students to share some of the effective ways teachers had taught grammar. Again, Jandy took notes while students discussed. Her third statement for students was, “I know where to put commas.” The room came alive with movement as students overwhelmingly shifted to the “disagree” corner. Jandy pointed out that their movement was in sharp contrast with the first statement about a “deep understanding of grammar.” Jandy asked them to explain why they moved to “agree” for understanding grammar, but overwhelmingly moved to “disagree” for commas. Students shared multiple perspectives on why there was a conflicting responses. Jandy again took notes. One student felt that commas were not the same as grammar. He argued, “Commas are punctuation, not grammar.” Many students agreed with the young man. Jandy continued to take notes throughout the entire “Four Corners” activity. Jandy now made a fourth statement, “I think we should forget the rules and let people write however they want.” As students finally filtered into their

spots, almost all the students stood in the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" corner. Only two students were standing in the "agree" corner. Jandy encouraged the "agree" corner to share their thoughts first. Most of their responses revolved around preference and not enjoying grammar. After all voluntary students had shared their thoughts from the different corners, Jandy offered one last statement: "I think I need more practice with grammar and punctuation." She emphasized the last part of that statement, "and punctuation." At this time, the entire class dispersed between the "strongly agree" and "agree" corners. Just like the other statements, Jandy allowed students to share their perspectives on their stance. During the entire "Four Corners" activity, Jandy's junior students continuously stayed engaged in dialogue with both Jandy and each other. The activity took approximately 20 minutes of class time and did not require any technology other than a visual of the prompts.

After the "Four Corners" activity, Jandy asked students to go back to their desks and log onto a website called *Kahoot*. Through student cheers and excitement, it seemed that Jandy's students were familiar with the *Kahoot* website. With the students, Jandy called the activity a "game", but later in her interview she explained that it was a formative assessment to guide her unit for grammar. Students logged onto *Kahoot* using their real name or a fun nickname. Jandy pulled up her Kahoot account on the Smartboard. Students' names and nicknames popped up and bounced around as each student logged on. Jandy hit "play game" and *Kahoot* started an interactive trivia game with the students. The first question gave students example sentences with comma errors. Students tried to identify the sentence that uses the comma correctly. Once everyone had responded, the game displayed the percentage of students who responded

correctly. In addition, it showed the top five respondents based on the quickest responses. When seeing the leader board, students responded with a series of hysterical shrieks and laughter.

The game continued in this fashion as it covered 20 grammar questions each with a range of different sentence errors. The game kept track of the top respondents for each individual question, but it also kept track cumulatively of the top five students and their ranking in the game. With each question and display of rankings the students got louder and more competitive. Students cheered and taunted each other as if at a basketball game. While they cheered for individual players, several of the students started to cheer for the class. The percentage of students answering correctly began to grow. One girl yelled out, "We are starting to get it!" After the game was over, Jandy quieted the class by asking them to reflect on what elements of grammar they felt should be the focus on the most of the upcoming grammar unit. Jandy encouraged them to discuss with an "elbow partner" as she walked around the room listening to the partners evaluate their own performance.

While Jandy's thoughts on her students' perceptions changed slightly over time, she continued to focus on her students' needs. At the beginning of the school year, Jandy used the word "interesting" to describe her thoughts on gathering her students' perceptions through a survey. In September, immediately following the survey, Jandy used the word "satisfied". September was also the first time she shared feelings of "nervousness" prior to the SPS. Now, in December, Jandy described her thoughts on the process of gathering her students' perceptions. Jandy chose the word "growth." She

explained, “Probably growth because it gave you the chance to see where you could grow.”

While Jandy expressed that the survey encouraged growth for herself, most of her responses revolved around her students. In Jandy’s reflection, she wrote about the value in collecting her students’ perceptions through a survey that was developed with actual students:

> Overall, I liked the process of the survey. It was nice that our kids got to create the questions that were used. It was a great way for me to see what they want out of their teacher. Also, the voice of the questions helped my students understand what was being asked.

During our interview, Jandy again discussed her thoughts on student voice. During this discussion, Jandy shared some of her thoughts on being nervous about the feedback. She said:

> I like it because we don’t really get student voice as much as we probably should. But I could also see that it is scary. Sometimes you are almost asking like, ‘Am I a good person.’ It can be pretty intimidating. But, I think it is also important to probably get that. If someone is in my room, and they might be unhappy with how I am being. I am kinda sarcastic sometimes. There are some kids who don’t like that. They kinda don’t get it. You kinda get a feel for like, ‘Okay, most of them understand it and think it is cool. Or this class does not like this.’

Similar to the other teachers, Jandy appreciated knowing students felt she was an effective teacher. It had been important for Jandy to hear that her students had learned

something. In our previous conversations and her reflections, feeling appreciated as a teacher was present more than once. In December, Jandy alluded to affirmation again.

When Jandy discussed "growth" as being her one-word reaction to the student perception surveys, she ended her thought by focusing on her students' responses. She said, "Probably growth because it gave you the chance to see where you could grow. And areas that the kids seem to respond well to." Affirmation did make a brief appearance, but Jandy's focus had shifted heavily towards her new awareness and adjustments in knowledge.

In previous reflections and interviews, Jandy shared an awareness that she came from a different background than her students. However, CRP was not something that Jandy thought about daily on a conscious level. Although Jandy directly said CRP was not a conscious act for her, she expressed her thoughts about CRP in her last reflection. Jandy wrote:

> Culturally relevant teaching is so important at my school, and I think we don't address it enough. I often see new teachers shocked as they try to understand the dynamic of the school. It is not like what most of us grew up with, and some people really struggle with understanding why.

Jandy had not seen any major transformations in her students. However, she did say that the experience of the SPS had affected her awareness of CRP. Jandy explained, "I feel like I am more aware of it elsewhere in my field. Like, I get more irritated when people seem like they are not trying to be there and know the kids." She claimed that it was important for teachers to have this knowledge. She clarified, "I think the biggest

thing for teachers, you know we have talked about, 'Well, I teach Day of the Dead.' That kind of stuff. Like what is it?" The "it" Jandy was referring to was CRP.

Jandy also mentioned the five principles laid out in the CRP framework. She explained that teachers should be having conversations about the five principles of CRP rather than just focusing on adding lessons over "Day of the Dead." Jandy finished her thought and said, "That way they know that they aren't only teaching about the culture, but more like holistic teaching." She went on to request opportunities for gaining more knowledge about CRP and the framework that guided the survey. Jandy reflected, "I feel like conversations could be helpful." Jandy shared that she wanted to know more about CRP. Twice in Jandy's interview she mentioned being aware that she comes from a different background than many of her students. She admitted she was always trying to "figure them out" and wanted more guidance.

Jandy insisted that conversations about CRP and the SPS should not be "top down" approaches. She did not want an administrator to come in and view a teacher's results with an attitude that reflected, "clearly your children don't like you." She wanted to have conversations based on areas of CRP that the teachers want to know more about and "how to make it better."

Jandy hoped to have more support and guidance for learning more about CRP, but also felt that the surveys allowed her to know more about her students and herself. In the last paragraph of Jandy's reflection, she wrote:

> Personally, I'd like to see culturally relevant teaching being talked about more, and I think the survey would be great for all teachers, especially in schools that are different from the schools they attended in their youth. I think it was an easy

way to get a feel for my students and my class. Some answers may be difficult to read, but as long as you have an open mind, you can learn from them.

At the beginning of the study, Jandy emphasized "voice" as the way she responded to her students. Even though this was a value important to Jandy's teaching philosophy, there were no real concrete examples of this abstract idea. However, in September, Jandy set goals for embedding more face-to-face interaction to offset the heavy technology focus in the classroom.

Jandy's goals were based upon feedback she received through the SPS. One action she had taken was engaging in conversations with other teachers. She spoke with a fellow teacher and admitted that she had concerns about the lack of interaction in her class. Another conversation she pursued was with her English department. Jandy hoped to discuss the SPS with the other teachers in order to gain more understanding and grow professionally. Unfortunately, Jandy said meeting with her department did not go the way she had hoped. Jandy shared, "I think it was mostly just other people trying to figure out what other people got. Like the student who got a 100% and is like, 'So, what did you get?'"

When I visited her in December, Jandy had layered in face-to-face interactions with her students, as seen in the "Four Corners" activity where students discussed aspects of Grammar with Jandy and their peers. Jandy was excited to see all the interaction taking place in her class and felt the *Kahoot* game would help her adjust her grammar lessons. Jandy shared in her interview that she had seen no "drawbacks" since the SPS, and had only experienced growth. She explained that she would continue "naturally progressing" and she was "getting to know them even more."

Mary

In December, Mary's class was in the middle of a unit on human rights. On the board Mary wrote the essential question for the day's lesson, "Is there really liberty and justice for all?" Mary informed the class that they were going to finish the film from yesterday. The film, *Undocumented in America*, was a documentary that followed a family in North Carolina. The father was being deported in 120 days, even though he had been working, paying taxes and volunteering in the community for over a decade. Through the first part of the film, seven students had their heads down. At first it seemed that most of them were asleep. However, as the family's story progressed, it was clear that four of the "sleeping" students actually had their heads down because they were crying. As the film drew to an end, the father involuntarily left his family. At this point several more students cried.

After the film ended, Mary asked several discussion questions. The first question was, "Did Miguel Cortes break the law?" All the students overwhelmingly agreed that Mr. Cortes broke the law. Then Mary asked, "Do you feel that all laws are moral?" This question sparked much more debate. Some of the students insisted that there should be a path to citizenship, especially for individuals like Mr. Cortes who had a job and paid taxes. One student argued that Mr. Cortes probably paid more taxes than President Trump. This comment turned some students' conversations towards Trump's Immigration plan. Mary then asked another question, "If someone says that Miguel is an illegal alien, what would you say to them?" The discussion simmered down. The students were mostly silent. No one responded. Mary tried to prompt more students by saying, "As a human, how do we confront this problem?" Students still seem engaged;

they just did not seem to know what to say. Mary looked at the clock and realized class was almost over. She reminded her class that they would start reading *The Book Thief* this week. They would need to keep in mind their conversations about human rights issues as they began the book.

Mary's original one-word response to a potential SPS was "great," then she used "surprised" in September immediately after she received her survey results. In December, Mary chose the word "fulfilling" to describe her overall thoughts on interacting with the SPS. Mary explained her word was "fulfilling" because it offered two perspectives. The first perspective was the open-ended feedback which allowed her to hear the individual voices of students. However, the second perspective gave more of a big picture view of the data by quantifying scaled responses. Mary felt it gave more of a communal voice to students.

Mary referred back to feeling "surprised." She was surprised because she saw some of her "always" and "never" scores drop in a few of the scaled questions. In Mary's reflection, she wrote about her "surprise" with some of the responses to the questions. Mary reflected that even though she was "surprised/disappointed" she would still honor her students' perspectives. She wrote, "I pride myself on my ability to personally connect to teenagers. But, here, the data doesn't lie."

Two months after teachers had received their student perception results Mary was still holding onto comments left in the open-ended feedback of the survey. She emphasized the feedback from students was "really affirming." This affirmation was needed especially in this moment because of a recent vote in her state. Mary's state voted against a penny tax which would have given a pay-raise to teachers and increased

school budgets. Mary brought up her own financial obstacles and explained that student affirmations were essential. She said, student affirmations "keeps me in the business."

Mary informed me that she reviewed her SPS results several times the first two weeks. Lately, Mary's work and personal life kept her from having time to review the results. However, Mary did go back to glance over the open-ended positive feedback. In Mary's reflection she wrote about her experience with the survey and devoted a section to the open-ended feedback. She wrote: "For the most part, I was satisfied with my feedback. The best part was the open-ended answers my students provided. On days when I feel worn down or undervalued, I read these for refreshment."

Each teacher in this study began with some amount of assumed knowledge about their students. Most of their assumed knowledge was based upon prior experiences or informal conversations with students. Mary shared several details about her assumed knowledge in the first paragraph of her written reflection:

Often times, we trust our own experiences. We figure what we see is reality. Each scene, action and color is captivated by our limited sense. Before viewing my students' survey results, I thought I had a legit estimate of how I did. This self-validity came from my past experiences in higher education focused on students' motivation, literature, and culturally relevant pedagogy. Similarly, I was affirmed by my popularity and likeability from former and present learners.

At this point in Mary's written reflection, she shifted from reflecting on her assumed knowledge and began to share thoughts about the survey and how it helped to reshape her view:

> When comparing myself and the experience with student feedback to a metaphor, I choose glasses. Not everyone needs prescription lenses, but when we are diagnosed with our specific visual impairments, we can wear glasses to help us see better. This is what my results did for me.

Mary's assumed knowledge allowed her to see, but what she saw was somewhat out of focus. Mary explained that the survey was like a pair of glasses that helped her to focus her eyes and see things more clearly.

When discussing CRP in general, Mary hoped to continue to learn more. She said the data was presented in a way that was easy to read, but more connection to CRP would be helpful, "Like something based off this input from your students, these are your strengths and these are your opportunities, specific to that diagram." Mary referred to the CRP framework when she said "that diagram". She said she was able to see a big picture of her students' perspectives, but connecting that to the different aspects of CRP was more difficult. She suggested offering a guide for teachers that would help them "pinpoint" different areas of the CRP framework to the survey results.

There were two questions from the SPS Mary wanted to discuss: 14 and 18. These two questions were the only questions Mary shared with me from her SPS results. They were mentioned in both her reflection and in her interview. Question 14 read, "My teacher knows me so well that they use things to make learning better." Question 18 read, "My teacher gets to know me as an individual." Mary never shared her exact percentages on these questions, but she did describe the results as being "disappointing." The disappointment came because she thought the scores would be much higher. The assumption about those particular scores was based on Mary's view

of herself as a personable teacher. Mary shared that it "humbled" her. She explained that, "Just because I'm a likeable teacher, doesn't mean I know my students as individuals." Mary clarified that the results had not impacted her view of herself as an effective teacher, but she did have some new awareness, "It lets me know that I need to slow down and be more individual. Not on a learning perspective, but on a personal perspective with each student… I think that's just part of continuing the relationship." Throughout Mary's interview she shared aspects of her teaching that she saw differently now. Mary learned from her students and gathered more informed knowledge through their perceptions. In the last paragraph of her reflection Mary reinforced the glasses metaphor: "Like putting on a pair of glasses, this survey helps me see what my students feel and need."

At the beginning of the school year, Mary's thoughts on being responsive to her students revolved around the idea of "trust." While trust was still valuable to her in December, Mary started to set goals immediately after she read the results of her student perception survey. She felt she was very personable, but saw opportunities for growth and labeled them "#invest" on her reflection in September.

During our visit in December, I asked Mary about any transformations taking place in her classroom. Mary shared with me a specific, tangible action developed since reading her students' feedback:

> Well, the day Trump was elected, it was a very emotional day at our school. Two of my former students came in and were crying and were angry. I let them vent because – of course – there is persecution there and fear. But I let my kids write openly about how they felt about it. I told my principal about this too just

> because they needed it. I kept them at home because I told them they could write explicits [sic]. I would not judge them for that. The only person who would see it was me or one of my professors. If kids cannot share in written or verbal expression here, then where can they? This is their public forum.

Mary said that some of her students wrote down their fears. She remembered one of her students wrote, "There is no way he can deport 11 million people, right?" However, another student wrote about how she was going to confront her fears, "I'm going to better myself and educate myself so I can change things." Mary then refereed to another question on the student perception survey. She said it read something like, "My teacher gets to know my struggles." Mary was glad that many students enjoyed her class, but the student perceptions helped her see that she needed to make more of a connection with them. Mary was glad she allowed students time to slow down and reflect on the election in a "realistic" way. Mary shared that this process was "empowering" for her.

Dusty

Students in Dusty's room gathered together in small groups intently looking over each other's shoulders at Chromebooks. Many of them browsed the United Nations website. A small group of students were building their own website using a digital resource called *Weebly*. Over the noise of academic chatter, one student questioned a peer, "The most peaceful country in the world is Iceland?" A few moments later a student exclaimed, "Whoa! The U.S. has 20 metric tons of nuclear waste!"

Dusty briskly moved around the room assisting students, but took the time to explain that students were working on a project, similar to Problem Based Learning[6].

[6] PBL is an innovative instructional strategy guided with a research-based framework developed by the Buck Institute for Education. PBL was developed to encourage 21st Century literacies and real-world relevant learning.

First, they researched a global social issue based on information gained from the United Nations website. Based on their research, students were going to write a blog about a social issue important to them. Next, students would use Weebly to digitally house and share their blog. Eventually, students would write a series of blogs over their chosen social issue. At the end of the semester, students would present their project to the class. This was actually an individual project but Dusty was allowing them to help each other by sharing information or offering technical assistance.

Out of 26 students, only six seemed occasionally distracted by a YouTube video or a shoe advertisement. Dusty stayed in constant motion floating from one table to the next offering assistance. He laughed and patted kids on the back. One student brought Dusty to a stop with a discussion about the "bee crisis." He told Dusty that he was "bored with mainstream topics." Dusty encouraged the student to dive into the bee idea. Then, Dusty stepped back to a position where he could get a view of the whole class. He interrupted the progress and asked students for their attention for a moment. Most students stopped and quietly looked up. He offered them a friendly reminder that they still had a blog to write. He noticed that many of them were focused on the images for their website, and he wanted to remind them to continue writing.

After the bell rang, several students still discussed their global social issue as they placed their Chromebook into the laptop cart. Even though class was over, many students bombarded Dusty for the "Google login" because they wanted to work on their project from home. Dusty reminded them that the project was not homework, yet several students insisted because they were eager to continue working on their project. One young lady was very persistent. After the girl left, Dusty spun around and

whispered, “Normally she is so disengaged. This is really surprising.” Dusty finally got all the students out of his room and exclaimed, “It’s so awesome how excited they are! Did you see all that? I feel I should have done more of this all along. Less traditional reading and writing. More of ‘This is your baby. Create it!’”

At the beginning of the school year, Dusty said he “welcomed” the SPS. While he used the word “criticism” to describe students’ perceptions, he shared mostly positive thoughts. In September, immediately following the SPS, Dusty used the word “dismay” to describe his thoughts on his students’ perceptions. From July to September, Dusty experienced the largest shift in attitude between the four teachers.

Two months after receiving his student perception results, “necessity” was the word Dusty chose to describe his attitude. He explained, “I’ve got a lot of things to change if this is what their perception is.” Dusty shared that he took his students concerns seriously. He felt this was necessary because he believed perceptions shaped his students’ reality. In his reflection Dusty wrote, “My experience with student perceptions has shown me that I need to me more sensitive to the old phrase, ‘actuality is reality.’”

Dusty said that hearing his students’ perceptions was “overwhelmingly positive.” He still felt frustrated by the students who may have not taken the survey seriously. However, again, he used the word “positive” to describe his experience. Dusty described his shift from “dismay” to “necessity” by explaining, “They are the reason we are here.” Dusty was referring to students when he said “they.” He further explained, “If we don’t take their feedback into account and don’t make modifications, then what is the point?”

In December, Dusty felt excited to see his students appreciating the change in the curriculum. In his interview he explained that students were researching but also checking themselves for accuracy. Dusty pointed to his efforts to have better "interpersonal relationships with the kids." From the beginning of the school year, Dusty pushed learning but realized that he lacked a connection with his students. After reflecting on student positive feedback, Dusty made some significant changes to his classroom. Dusty could not hide his delight with his students' new level of participation. During his lesson he was smiling from ear to ear and exclaimed, "It's so awesome how excited they are!"

In Dusty's July reflection, he wrote about his classroom practices and his culturally relevant pedagogy. Dusty offered an example of how he differentiates literature due to his student population. He wrote, "I've covered immigrant stories and experiences from Mexican, Columbian, Japanese, and Irish authors to build empathy for others that have experienced similar biases they have." He goes on to admit in this first reflection that he tried, but feels he failed to "meet the mark" when it comes to being culturally relevant.

Now, in December's reflection, Dusty shared that he could see more clearly the issues he had in his classroom. He wrote, "I hadn't built the strongest relationships with many students at the time of the survey, and I think it showed." Later in his interview, he brought up the lack of connection with students again. He explained:

I'm making an effort to have better interpersonal relationships with the kids. I think that might have been one of my problems at the beginning of the year anyway. With the last two cohorts of students, I made really strong efforts to get to know them individually.

You know- them and their lives. I didn't really that that with this group. I was trying to hammer: learn, learn, learn. So I have been trying to make that change. I think that might be part of what the issue was. In the survey results, they seemed alienated from me.

Dusty said this more informed knowledge reminded him of his original teacher identity, the "learner." He elaborated, "I forgot one important lesson this year that I had to relearn- to be malleable. Dusty claimed that he did not want to be "so rigid that I break."

Similar to the other three teachers, Dusty wanted to administer the SPS again. He wanted to follow-up to see if this new knowledge of his students' perceptions had helped him grow. However, next time he wanted to have more guidance about CRP. Dusty recommended a "scholarly article" or any resource that could help teachers fortify their understanding of their students' perceptions and CRP. Dusty even suggested that the student survey, combined with guided reading, should count as professional development.

Dusty claimed that he had learned from his students and hoped to continue utilizing their perceptions in order to help him grow. The last two lines of Dusty's reflection showed a similar perspective expressed in Mary's reflection with assumed knowledge and informed knowledge. Dusty ended his reflection by comparing his experience with vision or a lack of vision. Dusty compared himself to a "blind man trying to describe an elephant's leg." He continued to write, "I think that, prior to the survey, I was really blind to some big issues in my current pedagogy."

Before gathering student perceptions, Dusty claimed to value "trust" and engaged with students through "discussions." However, he never gave tangible examples of building trust and facilitating discussions. Two months after receiving his students' perceptions, Dusty was trying to work on his goal of "transparency." Dusty wanted to work on being transparent both with the students and with his administrators in order to make necessary changes. He admitted that he had not established strong relationships with his students this year. After the SPS, he recognized this and attempted to reestablish a connection with students through the restorative circle. The activity did not go as well as he had expected.

Dusty shared that he reviewed the survey results again, this time in collaboration with his assistant principle. He said he did this based on the need for transparency. He explained, "I didn't want to be like, 'Hey, the kids were happy. Moving On.'" The new conversation with the assistant principal sparked the project based learning idea. Based on his student feedback, Dusty sought assistance from other educators in his building and also adjusted his instructional practices. Dusty saw a change in his students and was excited about the project based learning activity in his class. Dusty claimed he was seeing three specific areas of transformation in his students: "more engagement," "more self-regulation," and "checking for accuracy." During Dusty's class, he had pointed out that he had never seen his students so engaged. He exclaimed, "Did you hear all that? I feel I should have done more of this all along!" Dusty did not draw an exact correlation to the transformation based upon the project based learning in his class, but he did proudly share details from a scene that took place in his classroom before my visit:

The kids are researching, and one kid read this statement, something like, ‘Every minute 30 people die of hunger in the world.’ Another kid pulled out a calculator and said, ‘Man! That is like 40,000 people dying. That can’t be right.’ They got online and searched for the actual statistic. I had to guide it a little bit but it is really nice to see. When asked to reflect on the past two months, Dusty said, “Things are good. Things with the kids are better. I am starting to get the class where I want it to be. Not exactly where I want it, but better than it was.”

CHAPTER FIVE

When comparing myself and the experience with student feedback to a metaphor, I choose glasses. Not everyone needs prescription lenses, but when we are diagnosed with our specific visual impairments, we can wear glasses to help us see better. This is what my results did for me… Like putting on a pair of glasses, this survey helps me see what my students feel and need. (Mary, December Reflection)

Overview of Study

This study explored both student perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and teacher attitudes and responses in relationship to student perceptions. Student perceptions were gathered as ancillary data and used to develop a social constructivist approach to engaging key stakeholders. Through student collaboration the Student Perception Survey (SPS) was developed based upon the CRP framework from Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011).

Teacher participant data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, written reflections, and classroom observations. Due to the nature of the particularistic case study, data collection took place over time: before the SPS in July, immediately following the SPS in September, and two months after the SPS in December. By December, a total of 137 pages of data was collected: 86 pages of interviews, 12 pages of written reflections, and 39 pages of field notes. Data was first examined sequentially by participant. Then modified constant comparison was used for analysis, and the data was mined through categorical aggregations for emerging themes and patterns.

Discussion of Findings

Mary's analogy of the eyeglasses reflects the overarching significance of this study; by creating an intentional space for student perceptions of CRP, a new sense of clarity was gained. While the adults thought about the classroom in theoretical

abstractions, the adolescents did not. The Mesa Verde students thought about CRP in terms of observable concrete actions. For example, Veronica's group wrote "My teacher involves my opinion when making lessons." Students were able to communicate directly with teachers what they wanted their teacher to do. Before the SPS, Mesa Verde teachers focused on abstract responses to students such as respect, voice, and trust. Teachers had a difficult time identifying concrete activities and classroom practices that represented CRP. The concrete student-developed statements from the SPS assisted teachers in gaining a stronger understanding of what CRP actually looks like in the classroom, which led to new classroom activities and a modified classroom practices.

The research questions in this study focused primarily on teacher attitudes and responses in relationship to student perceptions of CRP. The following themes were based upon emerging patterns found in all four teachers during all three moments of time. The four major theme strands identified were:

1. There is value in listening to students
2. Student Affirmation Can Direct Teacher Growth
3. Students Can Inform Teacher Understanding of CRP
4. Student Perceptions of CRP Can Change Teacher Practice

The chart below documents representative teacher comments that assisted in the interpretation of the four key theme strands.

Table 5.3: Representative Comments for Key Theme Strands

	July	**September**	**December**
There is Value in Listening to Students	I think, especially with this population, it is essential. - Dolli I like that this survey will have a student voice. – Jandy It is healthy in any relationship to listen to feedback… - Mary I welcome it. Any type of criticism I can get…- Dusty	It made them feel very important and special. - Dolli I found myself trying to think how I could prevent students from feeling bad. -Jandy I trust the voice of my students. - Mary Regardless of whether my opinion of things is right or the kids' opinion of things is right, there's a perception. That perception needs to be addressed. - Dusty	I would really like to discuss results from the first and results from the next with students. - Dolli It was a great way to see what they want out of their teacher. - Jandy I pride myself on my ability to personally connect to teenagers. But, here, the data doesn't lie. - Mary They are the reason we are here. - Dusty
Student Affirmation Can Direct Teacher Growth	Getting cards from the kids…Even a hug. - Dolli It felt good to get something across. - Jandy It keeps me going. - Mary People every day would tell me I was terrible.- Dusty	That's why I keep doing what I am doing. - Dolli What have I done with my life? - Jandy Reading this feedback energizes me, restores me, validates me. - Mary The kids obviously like me as a teacher and care about me as an individual. - Dusty	I've had a lot of students come to me, more than I thought would with personal issues. - Dolli Probably growth because it gave you the chance to see where you could grow. - Jandy On days when I feel worn down or undervalued, I read these for refreshment. - Mary It's so awesome how excited they are! - Dusty
Students Can Inform Teacher Understanding of CRP	Hispanics tend to grow up with a certain amount of respect for their elders. - Dolli I have taken the time to really get to know them and their culture. - Jandy Conversation. One on one conversations. - Mary	I've learned that they have the capability to be compassionate… - Dolli I just need to be more aware, more aware of what they are thinking. - Jandy Just like I instruct them; they also teach me. - Mary Well, duh! No wonder they don't want to read. -Dusty	They helped me understand things I wasn't even aware of. - Dolli Some answers may be difficult to read, but as long as you have an open mind, you can learn from them. -Jandy Like putting on a pair of glasses, this survey helps me see what my

	Like the way the kids call us 'mister' and 'miss.'- Dusty		students feel and need. - Mary I was really blind to some big issues in my current pedagogy. - Dusty
Student Perceptions of CRP Can Change Teacher Practice	You'll respect me. I'll respect you. We'll respect each other. - Dolli My students need a voice…-Jandy Kids care when they know you care. – Mary As we begin to build trust, it will be through conversations in person. - Dusty	I don't want to be like 66.9%. I want to be like 75% or 80%... -Dolli So we gotta change it up and communicate a lot more. - Jandy One word to tag my opportunities- #invest. - Mary Try to reflect on how I can improve things. -Dusty	I think by me sharing something that deep, personal, and private, helped a lot of them… - Dolli Getting to know them even more. -Jandy This is their public forum. –Mary I feel I should have done more of this all along! - Dusty

In the following sections, each theme is discussed in detail. The discussion of each theme includes the following:

- A brief summary of the findings
- An interpretation of the theme
- An examination of the theme in relationship to previous empirical research on CRP

There is Value in Listening to Students

Through each phrase, teachers gave one-word responses that summarized their feelings about student perceptions. The one-word responses led to further discussions and framed classroom observations. Below is the chart representing the shifts in attitude over time.

Table 5.4: Teacher One-Word Reponses

Teacher Participant	Pre	Post	Post-Post
Dolli	Great	Surprised	Hopeful
Jandy	Interesting	Satisfied	Growth
Mary	Great	Surprised	Fulfilling
Dusty	Welcome	Dismay	Necessity

Prior to the SPS, teachers readily anticipated the potential use of student perceptions. All four teachers communicated that the SPS could potentially give students a sense of ownership in the classroom. In September, immediately after viewing the results of the SPS, teachers tended to be ambivalent. The shift in attitudes conveyed in the one-word responses were a reaction to student critiques and low ratings elucidated in the SPS that were unanticipated. Teachers were caught off guard by low scores. During this time, teachers admitted feeling anxiety before actually administering the SPS. Dolli shared that she initially felt "hesitant." Jandy also shared that she felt "nervous" before the SPS. Despite the shift in attitudes, teachers continued to consider the SPS as a "valuable" resource for generating insights into student attitudes. For example, Mary wrote in her reflection, "I trust the voices of my students. I know I need to listen and learn." Even Dusty, who described some of his students as "shit-heads," admitted that the opinions of students should be acknowledged and addressed. In December, two months after the SPS had been administered, teachers confronted some lingering unease by admitting that reading student perceptions had been "intimidating," "scary," and "humbling." Eventually, after the shock subsided, teachers shifted back to positive overall assessments of their experience. Moving past the individual low scores

and negative feedback was difficult, nonetheless, all four teachers made a conscious decision to look for the "big picture." Jandy said that she chose the word "growth" in December because her students' perceptions helped her grow as a professional.

While dismantling the traditional classroom power structure was intimidating, the Mesa Verde teachers valued the input of their students. Dolli noted, "Some answers may be difficult to read, but as long as you have an open mind you can learn from them." The theme of "There is value in listening to students" reflects Ladson-Billings's (1995) first tenet of CRP: the conception of self and others. The teachers at Mesa Verde saw themselves as critical thinkers and displayed a willingness to be "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux, 1985). Ultimately, teachers wanted to grow as professionals and saw their students as potential agents of change.

Teachers at Mesa Verde demonstrated attributes of effective teachers documented in the literature. Perhaps, most importantly, they were ready to learn with and from their students. Irizarry (2011) developed a school-wide survey with Latin@ students and discussed the importance of meaningful interaction between Latin@ youth and their educators:

> The interactions among individuals of different cultural backgrounds does not have to be jarring, intimidating, or something to be feared, although encountering new forms of diversity and inhabiting or co-inhabiting unfamiliar spaces can be uncomfortable at times. However, the educational success of Latinos is predicated on teachers meeting students 'where they are.' (p. 36)

The teachers at Mesa Verde expressed feelings of intimidation and hesitation in regard to CRP. However, the teachers did not let fear denigrate the quality of their interaction

with students. Rather, teachers consistently focused on wanting to be the teacher their students said they needed. Teachers at Mesa Verde tried to put into practice Irizarry's message to meet students "where they are." According to Sampson and Garrison-Wade (2011), dialogical relationships assist teachers in maintaining a meaningful CRP. Based on their research of CRP curriculum written specifically for African-American students, Sampson and Garrison-Wade found that teacher practices actually had a stronger influence on students than the curriculum. Their research revealed, "Educators can create supportive learning and school connectedness by relating genuinely, sharing their unknowing with students, and accepting multiple perceptions and perspectives" (p. 302). By using the SPS, the teacher participants at Mesa Verde reconnected with their identities as learners and shared their "unknowing" with students.

Student Affirmation Can Ignite Teacher Growth

Even before the SPS, all four teachers focused on affirmations, and a focus on affirmations only increased immediately following the SPS. The positive, open-ended comments from students were affirming, but teachers also felt the feedback carried more weight because it took more effort to write out comments than the scaled quantitative questions, which were simply a click of a button. Several of the teachers thought students struggled with sharing positive feedback in class due to a fear of being teased by their peers or lack of maturity. Dolli felt that the SPS gave students a safe space to share their support of a teacher's efforts in the classroom without the scrutiny of their peers. In December, during the last phase of the data collection, teachers continued to refer to the open-ended feedback. One significant, affirming moment for Jandy was hearing how much her students enjoyed the autonomy given to them during

their Gatsby project. This specific positive feedback inspired Jandy to continue coming up with activities where students were given choices.

Student affirmations motivated teacher participants and inspired the development of meaningful learning experiences in the classroom. Unfortunately, the current pressures teachers face in public education create obstacles to implementing meaningful CRP. Each teacher at Mesa Verde shared stories of struggles and frustrations due to endless testing pressures and draconian accountability measures that left them feeling demeaned as professionals. In addition to testing and accountability pressures, the teachers were some of the lowest paid in the country and often admitted to fretting over money. The weight of all the pressures in education were clear in Mary's reflection when she wrote, "I admit most days I feel extinguished cognitively, emotionally, and physically." The other teachers in the study also communicated feeling "beaten down" from teacher bashing and a constant torrent of bad news. Rather than engage in honest discussions about social and institutional injustice, teachers felt scape-goated for societal ills. In contrast, the SPS allowed teachers to gain a glimpse into how much they were appreciated. Mary said the SPS, "energizes me, restores me, validates me." It is important to note that the critiques from students encouraged critical reflection in the teachers; however, affirmations from students also ignited teacher growth and development.

The anxiety and fear felt by the teachers at Mesa Verde was reminiscent of Achinstein and Ogawa's (2012) study of seventeen teachers of color who did not feel they could fully engage in meaningful CRP due to administrative and legislative pressures. The teachers at Mesa Verde appreciated that the SPS was not linked to

administrative accountability. In addition, the written feedback from students offered motivation to teachers to keep developing meaningful learning experiences.

Mary realized that she needed to "slow down" even though she felt the pressure to prepare students for testing. Sometimes pressure pushed Mary away from what she considered meaningful assignments and towards lessons designed to address specific standards. Mary's struggle was similar to the teacher narratives from a recent study that explored the impact of school reform in an urban middle school (Urbanski 2016). The findings suggest that the policies created at the state and federal level actually impede learning rather than encourage it. Urbanski argues, "Among all the narratives being negotiated, the current urban reform narratives of testing and accountability hold the most power and lead to narrow practices of teaching and learning, particularly in writing instruction" (p. 101). Based upon the feedback from her students, Mary knew there was a need to slow down, but she also said their affirmation inspired her to do more. Mary felt she was meeting their academic needs, but not meeting their personal needs. Slowing down allowed Mary to stop her planned lesson on the day of the 2016 Presidential election to give students a public forum for their thoughts and fears. She described this moment as "empowering" for both her and her students.

Students Can Inform Teacher Understanding of CRP

Teachers in this study did not have an intentional means for knowing whether or not they were meeting students' needs. In July, teachers expressed misconceptions and assumptions about CRP and student beliefs. However, after receiving SPS results, all four teachers focused on the contrast between assumed knowledge and new, informed knowledge that was based upon feedback from students. After the SPS, teachers

reported feeling a sense of focus, a focus derived from student input. Mary wrote in her reflection, “Like putting on a pair of glasses, this survey helps me see what my students feel and need.” Dolli repeated several times that she had been “affected” by the SPS results and started rethinking some of her instructional strategies. In September, Dusty’s students were observed during D.E.A.R time “reading” the Dictionary, irrelevant literature, or their cell phones. One of the questions on the SPS specifically asked about the books used in class. Dusty said his response to reading the low scores was, “Duh! No wonder they don’t want to read!” Through the SPS, Dusty learned that his students could be “objective.” In Dusty’s December reflection he wrote, “I think that, prior to the survey, I was really blind to some big issues in my current pedagogy.” Dusty shared that the SPS brought a sense of humility and reminded him that as a teacher, he still needed to be a learner. From July to December, Dusty made a clear shift from assumed knowledge to informed knowledge.

Gay (2013) discussed how CRP has evolved over the past decade and argues that CRP must be as much about process as it is about curriculum and content shifting the focus from teaching “to” students but also “through” students’ cultural lenses and experiences (p. 67). CRP tools cannot be formulaic or easy fixes because culture is a dynamic and complex aspect of human life. To use CRP in a meaningful way that leads to academic success, teachers must be more organic in their responses to students.

Irizarry (2007) found effective teachers recognized that CRP practices should be localized and individualized, and indeed, Jandy explained that the SPS helped her become much more “aware.” This awareness extended beyond her own classroom as she perceived other teachers’ practices. Jandy said she had become “irritated” with

teachers who embedded content like “Day of the Dead” and assumed they were being culturally responsive to the Latin@ students at Mesa Verde.

Shaw (2016) found that CRP classroom practices can sometimes alienate the very students they are designed to help. Alienation caused by cultural assumptions became apparent to Dusty after he received the results of the SPS. Dusty explained: With the last two cohorts of students, I made really strong efforts to get to know them individually- them and their lives. I didn’t really do that with this group. I was trying to hammer: learn, learn, learn. So, now I have been trying to make a change. I think that might be part of what the issue was. In the survey results, they seemed alienated from me.

Before the SPS, Dusty used immigrant stories as an attempt to be culturally responsive. In addition, he felt his references to pop culture helped him establish legitimacy with students. After seeing his students’ perceptions, Dusty realized his perceptions of CRP were not matching his students’ perceptions. The SPS revealed that content and isolated references did not help students feel connected or engaged.

Student Perceptions of CRP Can Change Teacher Practice

Teachers’ responses to their students’ perceptions were not static. Teachers began with abstractions of their teaching, shifted into teachers’ setting focused goals, and then ended in teachers taking action. Before collecting students’ perceptions, the teachers used abstract nouns to describe how they responded to students. Immediately after the student perception surveys, teachers responded by moving away from abstractions into concrete goals. These goals were rejoinders to the results of the SPS. Approximately two months after the SPS, teachers started taking steps to adjust and

adapt their teaching practices. Jandy began to enact more authentic instructional strategies, like the Four Corners activity, which encouraged collaborative discussions, student self-assessment, and metacognition. Dusty moved away from his rigid, lecture-based teaching style and implemented a project-based learning approach. In addition to the actions taking place in the classroom, three of four teachers reached out to other educational professionals for help. Dolli reached out to her curriculum director, which led to her decision to share her own personal story with students. Jandy reached out to fellow teachers at her school concerning her worries about the emphasis of technology in her class. Dusty reached out to two separate administrators in his building for assistance. Discussing his weakness was not easy for Dusty, but he felt that "transparency" was the only way he would grow.

Despite a culture gap, the teachers at Mesa Verde held positive beliefs about students, although they struggled with developing actions to support their beliefs. Seeing concrete examples from students assisted teachers with moving from abstractions and into actions. This last theme resonates with the last two tenets of CRP developed by Ladson-Billings (1995): structure of social relations and relationship of knowledge. The SPS was developed in collaboration with students who shared their unique views of CRP. Student comments focused on concrete actions and provided clear examples to teachers of what students hoped to see. By allowing students to provide feedback, teachers were able to see themselves in a new light.

Often, teachers may be open to the purposes of CRP, but struggle with its actualization in their classroom (Johnson, 2011; Young, 2010). Actualizing CRP was initially the emphasis of my study, but as the study progressed, it became clear that CRP

was no panacea. However, through dialogical relationships, genuine actualization of CRP seems possible. The ability to develop trusting relationships in the classroom happened with meaningful dialogue between students and teachers. All four teachers wanted to be culturally responsive to their students but did not know how to begin. By utilizing the SPS, teachers were able to engage in dialogue through written expression and ask hard questions about classroom practice. By creating an intentional and safe space to "hear" students, teachers developed specific actions to meet the needs of their culturally diverse students.

Discussion of Student Perceptions

What are student perceptions of culturally-relevant pedagogy? While the exploration of student perceptions were ancillary data, student voices were valuable and insightful. During the "Circles of Self" activity, students demonstrated the pluralistic nature of their identities. While being Latin@ was significant to many, students displayed that their cultural identity was one of many components to who they are. Sometimes getting to "know" students meant admitting to a level of unknowing. As researchers and educators, it is important to learn about our students, but it also important that we learn from our students. Each of the five principals of the CRP framework were explored along with a student-friendly definition:

- Identity and Achievement- "Who I am"
- Equity and Excellence- "I can be successful"
- Developmental Appropriateness- "How I learn"
- Teaching Whole Child- "The things that affect my learning"
- Student Teacher Relationships- "How I feel in class"

Students had a difficult time discussing what these different principles meant. Rather than discuss these five principles through abstractions and philosophical perspectives, students began to connect to each through a serious of concrete classroom practices. Students were clear on what they hoped to experience in a classroom setting and their preferences veered toward autonomy, enhanced relationships, and real-world relevance.

CRP is as much about teaching practices as it is cultural content (Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2011). As seen in Dusty's "restorative circles," students did not fully engage in the difficult discussions Dusty was hoping for despite his lack of previous relationship building. While students did not feel that could openly share their perspectives with Dusty in the "restorative circles," Dusty's students did openly share on the SPS. Several teachers used the word "surprised" to describe how they felt about comments from students on the SPS. Both Jandy and Dolli were not only surprised that their students fully completed the survey, but they were taken aback that students took the time to leave open-ended feedback. Dolli was surprised that students shared comments demonstrating high levels of compassion. Hearing compassionate commentary from her students was not expected. Many of the teacher participants felt that the anonymity of the SPS gave students a venue for sharing their honest thoughts. Teacher assumptions about student participation were reflected by Lucia during the development of the survey. Lucia explained that she would only be open to the SPS if it was anonymous. The SPS created an intentional, safe space for students to voice their perceptions.

Implications

Nieto (2013) suggests that student perceptions are a valuable component to the building of knowledge, but not the end-all-be-all:

> This focus on students is not meant to suggest that their ideas should be the final and conclusive word in how schools need to change. Nobody has all the answers, and suggesting that students' views should be adopted wholesale is to accept a romantic view of students that is just as partial and condescending as excluding them completely from the discussion. (p. 165)

External sources of information are important, but teacher learning can also be enhanced by engaging with one of our most worthwhile resources- students. Eventually, teachers at Mesa Verde recognized that students were valuable funds of knowledge in regards to CRP. The high school students at Mesa Verde had spent at least nine years in school and their perspectives should have held some weight.

Building upon Griner's (2013) study, which engaged community and family members in CRP, this study used student voices to transform CRP from an abstract idea to actualized interactions. Nieto (2013) writes, "Ironically, those who spend the most time in schools and classrooms are given the least opportunity to talk" (p. 188). Rather than focusing on abstract theoretical ideas, Mesa Verde students instantly associated different principles of CRP to concrete teacher actions. Having concrete examples developed by students assisted in teacher understanding and actualization of CRP. None of the Mesa Verde teachers conveyed a "color-blind" mentality that dismissed or downplayed the cultural experiences of students. Rather, each teacher had a clear desire to be responsive to their students. Despite this desire to be responsive, teachers seemed

to hold a large amount assumed knowledge. Transformation does not come through isolated trainings. Studies by Sleeter (2012) and Young (2010) reiterate the need to assist teacher growth through CRP.

Development with Stakeholders

SPS development needs to be a communal effort on the part of both teachers and students. Therefore, a sense of community should be established before SPS development. Unfortunately, the SPS development for this study took place the first week of school. This immediate jump into the SPS development did not allow time for students to build trust among one another and with the teacher as facilitator of the SPS development. In addition, teachers should be engaged through collaborative face-to-face sessions for the development of the SPS. While digital tools are efficient and productive, collaborative sessions allow for more perspective sharing and honest feedback.

SPS Administration

For the SPS to maintain a level of authenticity for both the students and teachers, a level of care and intentionality should be in place. First, and foremost, schools using an instrument such as the SPS should understand why student perceptions are important. Because they trusted their administration, the teachers at Mesa Verde were able to fully engage with the SPS as a meaningful instructional tool. Second, the distinctive qualities of student populations should be considered, especially in regards to literacy and language. The SPS should be written for students, not adults. The language of the questions should be on par with the reading level of the students. In addition, native language options should be available for English Language Learners. Third,

length of the survey is critical when considering student populations. While the need for validated surveys with multiple question types is desirable, teacher reflection requires full student participation. Surveys that require a student to sit still and read for 50-60 minutes may be detrimental to the quality and quantity of authentic feedback. Last, all four teachers involved wanted total honesty from their students. They felt honesty was partially served through the anonymity of the surveys, but many students needed assistance on the survey. Teachers were fearful that their assistance could influence student responses. Teachers suggested having someone else administer the SPS to the class in order to protect students' anonymity and trust.

Follow Up

Finally, follow up is crucial for both teachers and students because it is a key component to the intentionality and meaningfulness of perceptions. Teachers need to be cognizant of creating sufficient space for discourse to develop. Rather than be used as a formulaic tool, the SPS should be utilized to encourage a "stance of inquiry" (Griner, 2013, p. 18).

In this study, all four teacher participants wanted further discussions and resources that would help them continue to flourish and enable them to learn more about CRP. Whether it be through Professional Learning Communities (PLC) or through guidance from leaders in the building, teachers need to be given the space to share, brainstorm, and learn. In addition to teacher follow-up, students need to have their perceptions acknowledged. Teachers can acknowledge student feedback by pointing out areas of strength and areas for growth. By sharing the results of the survey, teachers acknowledge that their students' voice has value.

Limitations

While this research makes a contribution to the discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy, it is limited. A research journal was kept in order to reflect upon my own power and positionality. However, my participation in the survey development may have influenced teacher participant responses in interviews and reflections.

Another limitation is the setting--one high school in an urban area—and the participants--only four teachers. Generalizations to other urban high schools cannot be made, based on the limited amount of participants and the distinctive setting. The four teacher participants were all English teachers with experience ranging from two to six years. While it was useful having an entire department participate in the SPS, the study was limited to only one content area--English. Students and teachers within different content areas may have responded differently. Teacher participants in this study were relatively new to the teaching field. With no teacher participants with experience beyond six years, the study is limited in the range of experiential perspectives.

The range of disposition to student perceptions was also unexpectedly limited. None of the teacher participants had ever experienced student perception surveys prior to the study. This lack of interaction with student perception surveys allowed for a clean slate in regards to attitude and experience and teachers were open to the idea. The study findings may have changed if a range of dispositions and experience would have allowed an examination of teachers who were resistant to student perception surveys. Only engaging with four teacher participants limited the scope and range; however, a limited amount of participants allowed for a deeper understanding of the experience.

The last clear limitation is the environment of Mesa Verde. Teacher participants consistently commented on the supportive, family-like environment at Mesa Verde. Each teacher mentioned that the positive environment was distinctly different from other schools in which they had worked. The positive environment played a role in the relationships between teachers and students, but also in the relationships between teachers and administrators. Part of the mission at Mesa Verde was to support ideals of restorative justice. The learning community promoted familial bonds between teachers and students and took most discipline measures off the teachers' plates to enable "teachers to teach." The environment may have influenced students' willingness to offer meaningful feedback and fully participate in the SPS. All four teacher participants discussed their gratitude for a supportive administration multiple times. One teacher said that Mesa Verde was the first school where she did not feel the presence of a "gotcha!" mentality, where administrators seemed obsessed with pointing out faults and shortcomings. All four of the teacher participants mentioned wanting to teach at Mesa Verde because it had a reputation as a positive work environment. At Mesa Verde, there were no fears or hesitations that the SPS would be used to punish or reprimand teachers. Teachers at a different kind of school might respond differently based upon less open relationships with students and administrators.

Suggestions for Future Research

In his book *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Paulo Freire (1973) posits that a dialogical approach is a humanist approach:

> Knowledge is not extended from those who consider that they know to those who consider that they do not know. Knowledge is built up in the relations

between human beings and the world, relations of transformation, and perfects itself in the critical problematization of these relations. (p. 96)

Engaging with student perceptions can provide teachers with a more well-rounded, inclusive knowledge of CRP. One of the most significant themes in this study was the idea of "knowing".

Further research could be conducted to explore teacher self-perceptions and their relationship to student perceptions. To what extent do teacher self-perceptions match students' perceptions? Also, in what ways can the SPS assist teachers in gaining more hands-on knowledge of CRP? This research could also be used in comparative case studies examining professional development for in-service teachers. It would be interesting to look at two groups of teachers—one participating in traditional professional development over CRP and another group using the SPS as a foundation for their professional development. Other studies might examine the correlations between student perceptions of teacher's CRP and student achievement.

Conclusion

To whom can I be responsible, and why should I be, when you refuse to see me?... Responsibility rests upon recognition, and recognition is a form of agreement.
-Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man

Chapter five opened with Mary's insightful eyeglasses metaphor. Mary's metaphor is a strong reminder to both researchers and practioners of the value in truly "seeing" the needs of students. Ironically, in much educational reform today, students' perceptions have become invisible. With the current changes in student demographics, the need to adapt teaching practices is imperative. Ultimately, students have the most to gain- and the most to lose- from CRP.

By engaging with student perceptions, both teachers and researchers can develop dialogical relationships that can deepen understanding. Freire (1973) writes:

> The role of the educator is not to 'fill' the educatee with 'knowledge,' technical or otherwise. It is rather to attempt to move towards a new way of thinking in both educator and educatee, through the dialogical relationships between both. The flow is in both directions. (p.109)

CRP is more about process than content. The teachers at Mesa Verde were willing to interact with the SPS as a means to further develop their CRP and trusted the authentic voices of students to help them get there. CRP enhanced the quality of teaching without the threats of test results or rewards/reprimands. CRP did not alienate teachers or students, but instead, seemed to provide an impetus to nurture and inspire.

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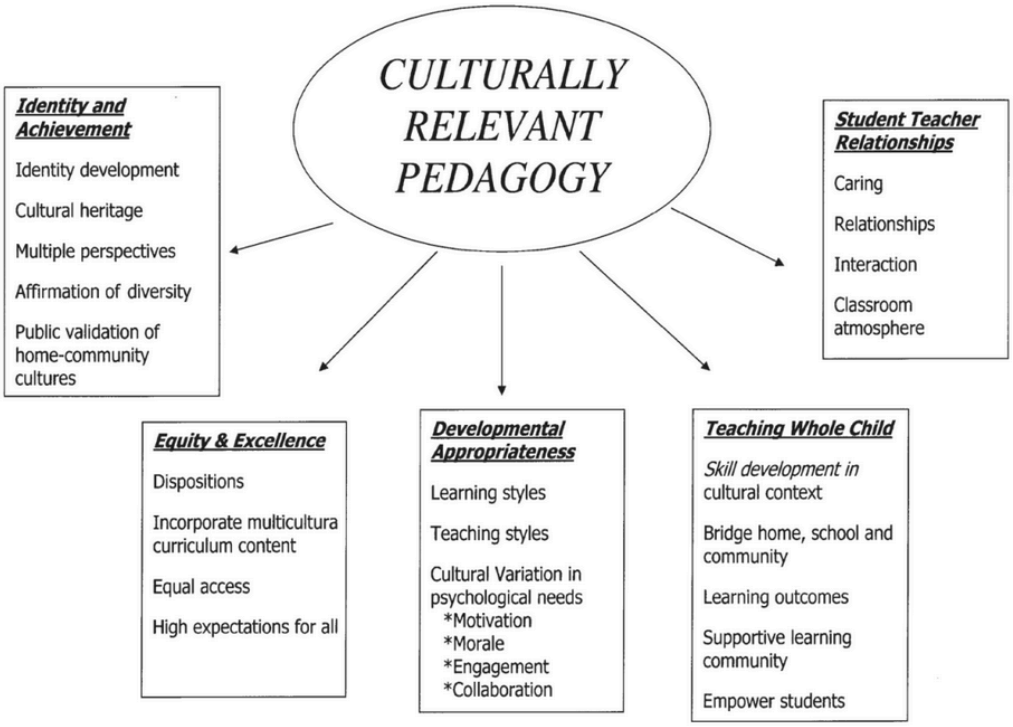
APPENDICES

Appendix A- CRP Framework (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011



Appendix B- Handout for Teacher Collaboration Meeting

Research Study: Culturally Relevant Teaching

Academic School Year 2016-2017

* Data Collection for the Study (all 3 happen in each round of data collection)

Reflections

Observations

Interviews

Tentative Timeline for the Study

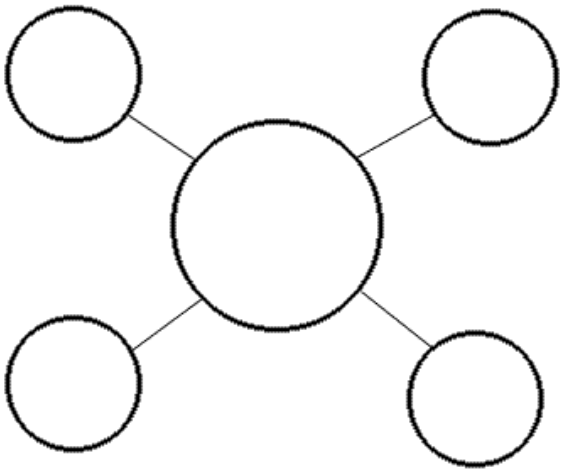
July 2016-	Begin work with teachers & students to develop survey questions
	* First Round of Data Collection
August 2016-	Draft of survey
September 2016	Gather feedback on survey from students and teachers
October 2016-	Distribute surveys to students via Google Forms
	Survey results to teachers
	*Second Round of Data Collection
November 2016-	Survey made available to the rest of the school
December 2016	*Third Round of Data Collection

Appendix C- Circles of My Multicultural Self

Circles of My Multicultural Self

This activity highlights the multiple dimensions of our identities. It addresses the importance of individuals self-defining their identities and challenging stereotypes.

Place your name in the center circle of the structure below. Write an important aspect of your identity in each of the satellite circles -- an identifier or descriptor that you feel is important in defining you. This can include anything: Asian American, female, mother, soccer player, educator, Buddhist, scientist, or any descriptor with which you identify.



1. Share a story about a time you were especially proud to identify yourself with one of the descriptors you used above.

2. Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your identifiers or descriptors.

3. Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are. Fill in the following sentence:

I am (a/an) _____ but I am NOT (a/an)_____.

So if one of my identifiers was “cheerleader,” and I thought a stereotype was that all cheerleaders is that they are dumb, my sentence would be:

I am a cheer leader, but I am NOT dumb.

Instructions for Circles of My Multicultural Self: Ask participants to pair up with somebody they do not know very well. Invite them to introduce each other, then follow these steps:

Ask participants to write their names in the center circle. They should then fill in each satellite circle with dimensions of their identity they consider to be among the most important in defining themselves. EX: middle class, Jewish, educator, sister

In their pairs, have students share two stories with each other. First they should share stories about when they felt proud to be associated with one of the identifies and then share a story about a time it was painful to be associated with one of the dimensions.

The third step will be for students to share a stereotype they have heard about one dimension they identity that fails to describe them accurately. Ask them to complete the sentence at the bottom of the handout by filling in the blanks; "I am ----- but I am not a -----." Provide your own example first.

Probe the group for reactions to each other's stories. Ask whether anyone heard a story she or he would like to share with the group.) Make sure the person who originally told the story has granted permission).

Advise participants that the next step will involve individuals standing up and reading their stereotype statement. You can either simply go around the room in some order or have people randomly stand up to read their statements. Start by reading your own statement.

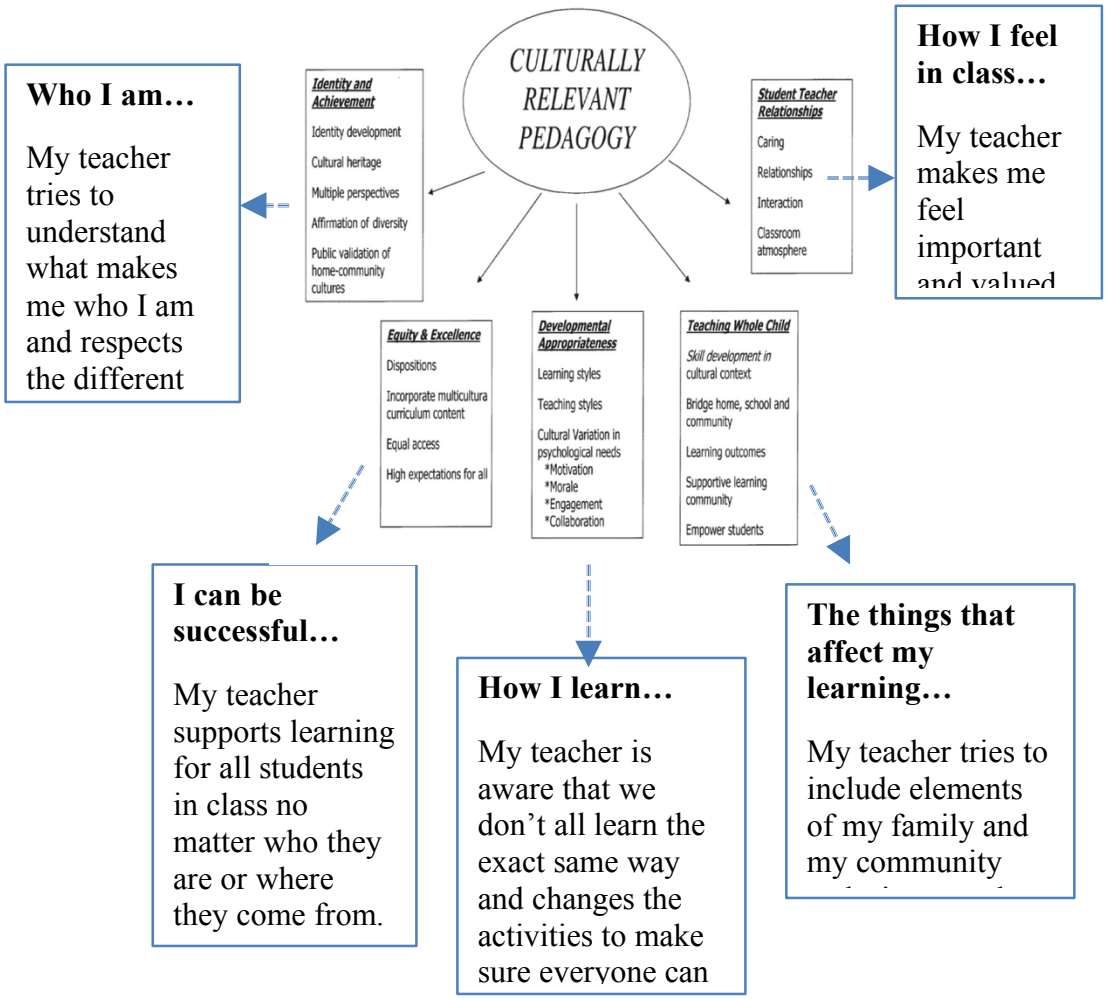
Several questions can be used to process this activity:

How do the dimensions of your identity that you chose as important differ from the dimension that people use to make judgments about you?

Did anyone hear someone challenge a stereotype that you once bought into?

Where do stereotypes come from?

Appendix D- CRP Framework for Student Collaboration



Identity & Achievement

Who I am… My teacher tries to understand what makes me who I am and respects the different parts of my identity.

- Identity development
- Cultural heritage
- Multiple perspectives
- Affirmation of diversity
- Public validation of home-community cultures

Example Question: Does my teacher value my culture?

Equity & Excellence

I can be successful…My teacher supports learning for all students in class no matter who they are or where they come from.

- Dispositions
- Incorporate multicultural curriculum content
- Equal access

Example Question: Does my teacher make me feel like I can be successful in this class?

Developmental Appropriateness

How I learn…My teacher is aware that we don't all learn the exact same way and changes the activities to make sure everyone can learn.

- Learning styles
- Teaching styles
- Cultural variation in psychological needs: motivation, morale, engagement, collaboration

Example Question: Does my teacher try to use things in the lesson that are engaging to us?

Teaching Whole Child

The things that affect my learning…My teacher tries to include elements of my family and my community and tries to make learning relevant.

- Skill development in cultural context
- Bridge home, school and community
- Learning outcomes
- Supportive learning community
- Empower students

Example Question: Does my teacher include content that is relevant to our community?

Student Teacher Relationships

How I feel in class… My teacher makes me feel important and valued and encourages us to do the same for each other.

- Caring
- Relationships
- Interaction
- Classroom atmosphere

Example Question: Does my teacher make me feel like I can share my opinions?

Appendix E- Rough Draft of Student Perception Survey Sent to Teachers for Feedback

Question stems based on student suggestions and CRP Framework (see draft notes in hard file)

Clustered the statements that had similarities

Because there is some overlap in some of these principles, I moved some statements due to a better fit in other principles

Reworded to add clarification for some statements

Principle 1- Identity and Achievement

My teacher gives us opportunities to make choices.

My teacher values the cultural backgrounds and languages of students.

My teacher respects all opinions and suggestions offered in class.

My teacher makes me feel valued.

My teacher respects my family and work obligations.

Principle 2- Equity and Excellence

My teacher makes learning meaningful and helps me understand why learning certain topics is important.

My teacher sets high standards and expectations for everyone.

My teacher shows respect for every student despite how they learn.

My teacher treats each student in this class fairly based upon their needs.

My teacher makes me feel like I did a good job when I try my hardest.

Principle 3- Developmental Appropriateness

My teacher guides me through difficult topics and supports me when I struggle.

My teacher uses hands on experiences to help us better understand difficult topics.

My teacher uses real life events and real life characters to help me relate to the class content.

My teacher knows me so well that she uses things I like to make learning better.

My teacher involves my input when making assignments and lessons.

Principle 4- Teaching the Whole Child

My teacher addresses real life issues that I might face.

My teacher knows how to keep the class fresh and engaging.

My teacher gets to know me as an individual.

My teacher teaches us things that are useful for understanding the real world.

My teacher has cool books in this class, and when we read, I can connect to the story and the characters.

Principal 5- Student Teacher Relationships

My teacher makes us feel safe enough to share our opinions.

My teacher will not make fun of me if I get an answer wrong.

My teacher is patient and tries to encourage struggling students.

My teacher makes us feel like I belong, and we are all a part of a community.

My teacher is passionate about teaching, even when he or she is frustrated.

Original Student Statements:

Principle 1- Identity and Achievement

My teacher values my after school time.

My teacher gives us the freedom we need.

My teacher allows us to work in small groups.

My teacher trusts me to choose my classmates or partners for in class work .

My teacher has cool books.

My teacher allows us to speak Spanish.

My teachers allows us to be bilingual.

My teacher hears and reflects what students ask of them.

Principle 2- Equity & Excellence

My teacher treats students fairly according to their needs.

My teacher shows the same respect to both boys and girls.

My teacher shows respect for every student despite any factors that differs them from others.

My teacher teaches lessons that I can use in a real world setting.

My teacher creates meaningful learning.

Principle 3- Developmental Appropriateness

My teacher uses real life characters and life events that I can relate to.

Our teacher uses books with characters I can connect to.

My teacher knows me well so she uses things I like to make learning better.

My teacher uses real life characters to help us understand the topic.

My teacher uses hands on experiences to help us better understand.

My teacher uses popular culture examples to help me understand the subject.

Principle 4- Teaching the Whole Child

My teacher address real life issues that I may face

My teacher guides me through difficult/interesting topics

My teacher involves my input in making lesson plans

Principle 5- Student Teacher Relationships

My teacher never makes fun of me when I say something wrong

My teacher makes me feel safe.

My teacher makes me feel protected when I share my opinions

I get rewarded when I turn in assignments.

My teacher encourages me to do my work.

My teacher helps me when I don't understand something.

My teacher knows how to keep class fresh and engaging.

My teacher knows how to encourage and assist struggling students.

My teacher lets me listen to my own music because she knows it lets me concentrate.

My teacher is passionate about her job even when she is frustrated.

Appendix F- Final Draft of Student Perception Survey

Question stems based on student suggestions and CRP Framework

- Clustered the statements that had similarities
- Because there is some overlap in some of these principles, I moved some statements due to a better fit in other principles
- Reworded to add clarification for some statements

Scaled Response Options:

1 – Never

2 – Rarely

3 – Sometimes

4 – Often

5 – Always

Principle 1- Identity and Achievement

My teacher gives us opportunities to make choices.

My teacher values the cultural backgrounds and languages of students.

My teacher respects all opinions and suggestions offered in class.

My teacher makes me feel valued.

My teacher respects my family and work obligations.

Principle 2- Equity and Excellence

My teacher makes learning meaningful and helps me understand why learning certain topics is important.

My teacher sets high standards and expectations for everyone.

My teacher shows respect for every student despite how they learn.

My teacher treats each student in this class fairly based upon their needs.

My teacher makes me feel like I did a good job when I try my hardest.

Principle 3- Developmental Appropriateness

My teacher guides me through difficult topics and supports me when I struggle.

My teacher uses hands on experiences to help us better understand difficult topics.

My teacher uses real life events as examples to help me relate to the class content.

My teacher knows me so well that she uses things I like to make learning better.

My teacher involves my input when making assignments and lessons.

Principle 4- Teaching the Whole Child

My teacher addresses real life issues that I might face.

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My teacher gets to know me as an individual.

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My teacher will not make fun of me if I get an answer wrong.

My teacher is patient and tries to encourage struggling students.

My teacher makes us feel like we belongs, and we are all part of a classroom community.

My teacher is passionate about teaching, even when he or she is frustrated.

Appendix G- Ego vs. Eco picture used with student collaboration