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K-12 Teachers' Perceptions of the TESA Program and its Impact on Teacher-Student Relationships

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Kathy Howard

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2015

Abstract

K-12 Teachers' Perceptions of the TESA Program and its Impact on Teacher-
Student Relationships

by

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MLIS, Trevecca Nazarene University, 2005

MA, Tennessee Technological University, 1991

BS, Tennessee Technological University, 1989

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2015

Abstract

Administrators in a school district in north central Kansas implemented the Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA) professional development program (PD) to address ineffective instructional practices of K-12 teachers. TESA PD was designed to build and promote teacher-student interactions, enhance students' academic performance, teach students self-discipline, and improve the class environment so that students can work and study in diverse settings. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of 10 teachers who integrated teaching interactions from the TESA program into their daily lessons. Brophy and Good's expectation theory holds that teacher interactions with students are impacted by exchanges between teacher and student and served as the conceptual framework. Qualitative data were gleaned from in-depth interviews, observations, and questionnaires and were analyzed using open coding and category construction for patterns, relationships, and themes. Findings indicated that TESA PD assisted these 10 teachers in how to build relationships with their students; how relationship building impacted teacher-student relationships; and how teacher expectations of students, regardless of students' achievement level and diverse backgrounds, impacted student academic performance. To improve relationship building of teachers and students, it is recommended that the TESA PD program be ongoing. Implementing the TESA interactions may contribute to positive social change by allowing students to connect to and communicate with the teacher; accept direction and praise from the teacher; and trust the teacher, which, ultimately may lead to higher levels of academic success.

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Dedication

In memory of my mother, Katherine V. Cleaves (1943-2004), whose journey in education was too short but steady. She touched the lives of many preschool students.

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I extend my sincere gratitude to the numerous people who encouraged and supported me as I completed this journey at Walden University. Sincerely and with humility, I offer my gratitude to my mentor and my guide, Dr. David Weintraub. I owe him a great debt in regard to the completion of this project. I also wish to thank Dr. Pamela Harrison for her insight into this project. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Mary Howe, without whom this project would not have been possible. Many thanks to, my children, Symphony Nicole Hall and Christopher Aviant Howard, Jr. for their patience and understanding for the past few years while Mommy was a little busy. I also would like to thank the administrators of the school district for allowing me to share their time and space to conduct this research. I am truly grateful to the volunteers who participated in the study. Without you, none of this would have been possible. A special thank you goes to Lynn Feneis, my editor. Words cannot express my gratitude.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; 2002) was signed by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002, as the basis of an education agenda. The initial purpose of NCLB was to improve students' academic achievement. One goal of NCLB was to ensure that all children have an unbiased, equivalent, and noteworthy chance to acquire a high-quality education. To ensure that schools would meet mandates for high-quality education for all students, NCLB also required schools to demonstrate accountability measured by adequate yearly progress based on high-stakes testing of student performance. According to Johnson (2011), high-stakes testing refers to large-scale standardized testing that produces data that can be used to determine whether schools are meeting preset, state-determined achievement standards. Specifically, NCLB includes mandates that high-stakes testing is implemented in Grades 3 through 8 and once in high school. NCLB includes requirements that states assess (a) the science skills of all students once during each of three grade spans and (b) the English skills of English as a second language learner annually. Schools also may demonstrate performance measures using value-added assessments: numerical measurements of the change between (a) achievement scores from standardized content area achievement tests separated by time and (b) assessment of what any change in scores actually represents (Finn, Ryan, & Partin, 2008). NCLB required every school and student to achieve proficient performance in reading and mathematics by the 2014 school year. However, at the time of this study, more than 44 states have requested exemption from the law for their schools, and many states, including Kansas, have been granted the exemption

(House, 2013).

The mandates of NCLB (2002) require educational institutions to address the needs of students with diverse academic capacities and cultural backgrounds. Hochberg and Desimone (2010) suggested that professional development is essential to the standards-based accountability movement because it can provide teachers with the knowledge necessary to promote improved outcomes for the diverse students they serve. Professional development can help educators implement changes in the classroom environment (Dee & Jacob, 2011).

One program that promotes changes in the classroom environment is the Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA) professional development program. In particular, this program provides professional development training plans for building and promoting teacher-student interactions, enhancing students' academic performance, teaching students self-discipline, and improving the class environment so that students can work and study in diverse environment (Los Angeles County Office of Education [LACOE], 2008). TESA also fosters teacher awareness of the ways that their perceptions of students affect their expectations of those students (LACOE, 2008). However, at the time of this study, little was known about the program with respect to the perceptions of teachers who participated in the training and implemented the teacher-student interactions. Section 2 of this study presents a detailed review of literature about professional development, focusing on the components of the TESA professional development program.

Problem Statement

The LACOE (2002) designed the TESA program for teachers of all grades and nationally authenticated the program in 1974. Since its development, schools nationwide have used the program and extensive quantitative data have been accumulated about the use of the program (LACOE, 2002). However, at the time I conducted this study in 2012, little was known about the program with respect to the perceptions of teachers who participated in the training and implemented the interactions. At the local level, this was true in one particular school district in north central Kansas, the focus school district in this study. This condition existed despite that fact that district administrators in the focus school district suggested that administrators at the local school level determine the quality of professional development by examining the effectiveness of the training process (upon the conclusion of the training) as well as the impact the training has after it has been applied in classroom settings.

Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) found that instituting an active learning environment is necessary for educational improvement. Smith, Hardman, and Higgins (2006) suggested that effective professional development should concentrate on activities in which teachers observe, coach, and share their lessons with other teachers in an effort to lead educational change. According to administrators in the focus school district, professional development can be viewed as a system of constant growth and learning that shapes the ability of the instructional community to meet to the needs of all learners. Administrators in the focus school district suggested that quality professional development is necessary to increase teachers' understanding and implementation of

effective teaching strategies (behavioral changes) that will allow them to empower all students to reach their highest potential in learning. Because administrators in the focus school determined that such training could be provided to teachers using the TESA professional development program, since 2003, they have required teachers to complete the program. Understanding the teachers' perceptions of TESA training and implementation of the interactions is important because this understanding will contribute to the body of knowledge about the impact of the TESA professional development program. This understanding can benefit school communities in identifying TESA as a possible form of professional development that may have a bearing on teachers' selected instructional practices and improve students' academic success. I extrapolate on the importance of this study in the Significance of the Study section.

Nature of the Study

I developed one central research question to guide this study. The central research question was, What are K-12 teachers' perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students? I also developed five subquestions:

1. How do teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?
2. How are teachers' expectations different for the high, average, and low achievers, if at all?
3. How do teachers perceive that ethnic, racial, or cultural background affects their students' success, if at all?
4. During class, how do the teachers ensure that they call on students of all

abilities equally?

5. How are teachers attempting to get to know all of their students so that they can build personal relationships with those students?

Using a case study design to answer these research questions, I collected qualitative data using interviews, observations, and a questionnaire. On my behalf, TESA coordinators in the focus school district e-mailed my invitation to participate in my study to TESA-trained teachers. The choice to participate in the study was voluntary for the teachers. The interview questions were open-ended, which gave the educators an opportunity to share personal opinions and classroom stories as they answered the questions. In Section 3 of this study, I present the procedures for retrieving the collected data and the analyses of data in more detail.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of a sample of teachers who integrated teaching interactions from the TESA professional development program into their daily lessons. In particular, I conducted this study to discover how the teachers perceived that the TESA professional development program influenced relationship building with their students. Gaining an understanding of teachers' perceptions with regard to TESA training and implementation of the interactions is important because the generated data may be (a) applied in research, practice in the field of education, and professional development training and (b) used to promote social change.

Conceptual Framework

In part, I based the conceptual framework for this study on Brophy's (1985) and Good's (1981) research on the effect of teachers' expectations of students. Good defined teachers' expectations as interpretations that teachers make about the imminent behavior or academic achievement of their students, interpretations that are based on what the teachers know about the students at that moment. Good identified two kinds of teacher expectation: self-fulfilling prophecy and sustaining expectation. The self-fulfilling prophecy effect occurs when teachers' expectations for students are inconsistent, a condition that can lead teachers to conduct themselves in ways that may be damaging to students' learning. The sustaining expectations effect occurs when teachers assume that levels of student achievement will remain consistent and, therefore, try to help students maintain that level of achievement rather than move to the next level of achievement (Good, 1981).

According to Good and Brophy (2003), teachers form expectations for individual students' learning based mainly on their perceptions regarding the influence of student characteristics (e.g., race, class, physical appearance, gender, and physical and emotional challenges) on learning. Sometimes, teachers base their expectations of students on more objective information, such as past accomplishments, diagnostic labeling, test scores, and group placement of students (Good & Brophy, 2003). Expectations can influence teacher communication with students, such as the asking of questions, giving of feedback and expression of personal regard (Good & Brophy, 2003).

An understanding of Good and Brophy's (2003) research on the effect of

teachers' expectations of students is important in this study. Understanding this concept is important because the developers of the TESA (LACOE, 2002) professional development program used Good and Brophy's expectation theory research as the basis of the program. In particular, the developers focused on the concept that teachers can and often do have a significant effect on the educational achievement of students (LACOE, 2002). In addition, the underlying concept of teacher perceptions and expectations of students drove the development of this study's design and research questions. Finally, understanding that teachers' perceptions can and often do have a significant effect on the educational achievement of students was essential to the interpretation of the data I collected for this study and the understanding of its value.

Definitions of Terms

Adequate yearly progress (AYP): Defined by each state based on NCLB mandates, AYP is the required minimum level of overall improvement in school performance each year in the state; improvement goals vary by school type and student classification (NCLB, 2002). Federal agencies base a school's eligibility to receive funding, such as Title I funding, on whether or not the school has met AYP (NCLB, 2002).

Highly qualified teachers: As described in NCLB (2002), highly qualified teachers are those who are fully licensed in their state of residence to teach the grades and subjects to which they have been assigned by their school employer.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): Enacted in 2001, NCLB is a federally mandated educational initiative that set academic goals for reading, math, and science as well as

professional development for educators (NCLB, 2002).

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy is a person's conviction of his or her capacity to be successful in particular circumstances (Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Gerbino, & Barbaranelli, 2011).

Self-fulfilling prophecy: This concept refers to an initial expectation that can cause a person to respond in a way that is consistent with the expectation (Watzlawick, 2010).

Teacher Expectation Student Achievement (TESA): TESA is an in-service professional development behavioral change training program for teachers (LACOE, 2002). The purpose of the TESA professional development program is to promote equitable teacher interactions with all students as a means of improving students' academic achievement (LACOE, 2002).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

In this study, I made two assumptions. First, I assumed that the 10 participants in this study would answer the interview questions openly and honestly. This was a fair assumption because I assured the participants that I would keep their responses confidential. Because participation in this study was voluntary, it was unlikely that teachers would volunteer to participate if they intended to be dishonest. Rather than be dishonest, participants could choose to stop participating in the study at any time. I assumed that the participants effectively implemented the interactions they learned during the TESA training sessions.

Although the likelihood that participants were dishonest in this study is minimal, the potential for participant dishonesty was a limitation because if participants were

dishonest, the data I collected would not accurately reflect conditions in the school with regard to TESA training. Similarly, the potential that teachers did not effectively implement the interactions they learned during the TESA training sessions was a limitation in this study because if teachers were ineffective in their implementation, their perceptions of the outcomes of their interactions would likely be distorted. Another limitation in this study was that I could not ensure specific characteristics of the teachers who participated. For example, I was unable to ensure that the population of teacher participants was diverse or that the teachers were at the same stage in their TESA training. A lack of diversity among the participants may have skewed the results toward one specific perspective, while including teachers at various levels of training within such a small sample may have limited my ability to consider the impact of this characteristic on the participants' perspectives. Finally, because I used convenience sampling to recruit participants and because of the small sample size, my results are not generalizable to other teachers in the school district or others schools in the state, and thus my study is limited in that respect.

I confined the scope of this study to teachers' perceptions of the TESA professional development program and its perceived impact on relationships with students. I did not access student achievement records or conduct statistical comparative analyses to determine actual impact on student achievement. I delimited this study to teachers from a school district in north central Kansas; I did not include students, administrators, or parents.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because the study results may be (a) applied in research, practice in the field of education, and professional development training and (b) used to promote social change. In terms of research, this qualitative case study may provide evidence of specific instructional practices and a type of professional development that can contribute to the increased academic success of all students. Few studies using the TESA professional development program currently exist; I addressed this gap in the literature because the implementation of TESA interactions may contribute to the academic success of all students. This study also may have significance for stakeholders in education who make decisions about professional development training activities and who are responsible for meeting national, state, and local benchmarks for student achievement.

This study may have further significance in terms of professional development training. Because I will submit the findings of my study to the appropriate district administrators, those administrators may consider my study results when exploring options for improving student outcomes in other district schools. Specifically, administrators may consider the potential for TESA training to improve student outcomes through improved teacher-student interactions.

Finally, this study may have significance in terms of social change. Specifically, results of this study provide new insight into teacher perspectives about the TESA program and the potential for training and the implementation of teacher-student interactions to improve students' success at all levels of learning. If the TESA program

can be used to improve student outcomes in school, students will be more likely to complete their course of study and earn their high school diploma. This final outcome is significant because, when compared to students who graduate from high school, students who do not graduate from high school are more likely to be unhealthy (Schiller, Lucas, Ward, & Peregoy, 2012) and are more likely to become incarcerated (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & Kewal-Ramani, 2011). Thus, social change can be fostered through improved student outcomes in high school and improved quality of life after high school.

Summary

As a result of the NCLB (2002), schools have been required to help all students to achieve proficiency in reading, writing, math, and science by 2014. Although some states, like Kansas, have requested and have been granted a NCLB waiver (House, 2013), schools administrators continue to use high-stakes testing to assess student performance and achievement. School administrators strive to improve student outcomes through professional development opportunities for teachers that improve teacher effectiveness. One such program is the TESA program, which focuses on teacher-student interactions, enhancing students' academic performance, teaching students self-discipline, and improving the class environment so that students can work and study in diverse environment (LACOE, 2008).

At the time I conducted this study, little was known about the TESA program with respect to perceptions of teachers who participated in the training and implemented the interactions. In addition, little was known about the perspectives of teachers in one particular school district in north central Kansas with regard to participation in the TESA

program training. For these reasons, I conducted a qualitative case study of one school district in north central Kansas. I used convenience sampling to recruit 10 teacher participants from the district who had been trained using the TESA professional development program and collected data using a questionnaire, classroom observations, and a teacher questionnaire. Using Creswell's (2009) 6-step method for analyzing qualitative data, I coded the data to identify patterns, themes and subthemes, which I organized to answer my research questions.

In Section 2, I present a detailed review of literature relevant to this study. In Section 3, I discuss the methodology for this study, including a description of the qualitative case study research design and an explanation of the procedures I used to collect and analyze my data. In Section 4, I present the results of my data analysis. In Section 5, I summarize my findings, present my conclusions, and give my recommendations for action and further study.

Section 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of teachers who implemented teaching interactions from the TESA professional development program. A qualitative case study design was used to determine what impact the teachers perceived the program had on teacher and student relationships. In this literature review, I discuss topics pertinent to this exploration: classroom interactions, professional development, outcomes of professional development, and TESA. I also include a discussion of the literature related to the methods and methodologies used in this study and found in the literature.

First, I discuss NCLB and professional development, followed by NCLB and implications recognized in the Kansas district. Next, I discuss professional development in general and then the TESA professional development program in particular. I follow up the discussion of the TESA program with a review of the literature on classroom interactions in general. Finally, I discuss literature related to the methods and methodologies used in this study.

To conduct my literature review, I used the ERIC database to search for current articles from peer-reviewed educational journals. In addition, I used the reference lists from journal articles to identify other pertinent articles for review. Initial search terms included *teacher expectation* and *student achievement*. Other search terms included *professional development*, *instructional classroom teaching strategies*, *Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement*, *No Child Left Behind*, and *value-added assessment*.

No Child Left Behind Act and Professional Development

The No Child Left Behind Act was designed to initiate educational reform and serve as a framework from which all stakeholders could work together to build stronger and better schools (Bush, 2001). According to President G. W. Bush (2001), the act held the capacity to shape the minds and characters of all students in the nation, regardless of their backgrounds. Professional development is included within this framework for districts by offering grants that could be used to improve teacher quality.

Professional development using inquiry was developed in an attempt to establish a link between teacher participation in inquiry and changes in teacher practices (Ermeling (2010). The goals were to look at specific components of a case study group and over time see the effects of classroom management. The aim was to solve instructional problems in the classroom through teacher inquiry. There was a plan put into action that teachers implemented to address a need to assist with student learning. Even though the group developed the plan, the individual teacher had to implement the plan for individual student learning (Ermeling, 2010). There is not a recommended amount of time or number of interactions required by the group to complete the problem as long as there is adequate time to make a connection between instructional choices and student improvements. Teacher inquiry professional development training could link instructional planning and student improvement together and that could potentially lead to changes in the teacher and possibility raise academic standards. NCLB (2002) supports ongoing professional development, another training that used common formative assessment that occurred over 4 hours with teachers; the common formative

assessment was organized into a 6-week cycle that occurred in three parts: pacing, common assessment development, and item analysis and implication (Frey & Fisher, 2009). Pacing involved planning the curriculum and instruction based on what the teachers were looking for in student outcomes. Common assessment development involved developing assessment items based on standards that are associated with students for specific grade levels. Item analysis and implication involved student performance and the implication of the teacher (Frey & Fisher, 2009). Teachers discussed what was needed to address incorrect responses from the students and interventions for future planning. Students who read on grade level increased significantly, the starting score was 573 in 2001 and increased to 746 in 2005.

What stood out most in the Frey and Fisher (2009) were required targets were met for all subgroups. The process of going through the common formative assessment professional development training offered four benefits to teachers (Frey & Fisher, 2009). First, teachers' knowledge of grade level content was developed by planning common assessments and developing interventions with their peers to facilitate the standards required for students. Second, writing common assessment helped the teachers strengthen their skills with assessing students. Third, this model helped the teachers to think about what it is they know about their students and the implication of instructional application and how to include instruction with student assessment. Similar to the TESA program, teachers realized their change in thinking as they went the training

Professional development connects teaching and academic content and uses statistics to measure student learning (NCLB, 2002). The Adaptive Teaching

Competency approach did not recommend a particular method of teaching, but looked at teacher competency and the teacher adjusting his or her instruction to individual students (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009). This professional development included four characteristics of teacher competency that ties to student achievement. First, content knowledge, the teacher has to meet the needs of the student where he or she is in the subject matter. There has to be an ongoing diagnosis of subject content and monitoring of student learning. Second, measurement of diagnosis, the teacher has to make instructional decisions with regards to the learning outcomes needed for student success. Third, teaching methods, the teacher should make sure the instructional materials chosen are varied and foster active learning for the students. Lastly, classroom management, teachers should make sure classroom management supports the other three characteristics in which the students are supported and the activity is managed during instruction (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009). There were nine 3-hour content focus coaching sessions in which the teachers were observed in their classrooms. Adaptive Teaching Competency professional development, through content-focused instruction academic achievement, can be increased. A longer coaching period might be necessary to change teacher behavior (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009).

NCLB (2002) mandates that all scholars must become skilled at their grade level in reading and math by 2014. The PHAST PACE professional development model trained teachers to teach multiple components of reading interventions designed for students who were disabled in high school (Lovett et al., 2008). The focus of the PHAST PACE program was to address the decoding, reading rate, and comprehension problems

of the students. Several pieces tied to this model are long-term mentoring and coaching, collaborative learning, and teachers building informal learning communities inside and outside of the classroom. Training is spread over two semesters for teachers to implement the program, along with constructive feedback from site visitors and ongoing support.

The PHAST PACE training encompasses four key instructional strategies. First, the teachers are provided the theory and rationale for the importance of each strategy. They are taught about effective reading instruction and the implications of deficits for struggling students (Lovett et al., 2008). Second, the teachers are given the opportunity to model skills and strategies and create lesson plans. PHAST PACES content and skill development training is completed off-site with the teachers. Third, the teachers practice the learning skills and strategies in pairs and small groups. Mentor teachers visit beginner teachers on-site to observe the teachers practicing the learned skills and strategies. Lastly, teachers are given feedback from the mentor teacher (Lovett et al., 2008). Mentor teachers are in constant contact with the beginner teacher for constructive feedback through phone conversations, as well as e-mail. Student reading outcomes, and their relationship to the teachers' perception with program training and implications, suggested a different kind of evidence regarding student achievement. The students who participated in the PHAST PACE program were not randomly assigned in the classrooms. The value in using the PHAST PACE professional development to address the literacy needs of all high school students, and this program can provide teachers an opportunity to meet the needs of their students (Lovett et al., 2008).

NCLB (2002) gives states and school districts monies for programs they can use

to support and improve academic achievement. These programs should include high-quality training for teachers that is grounded in scientific research. NCLB mandates that states will be held accountable for preparing, training, and improving the quality of their teachers. The Total Literacy Connection professional development program group noted an opportunity in teacher knowledge and professional development that policymakers find critical to educational reform (Nielsen, Barry, & Staab, 2008). There were three collaborative formats used during the Total Literacy Connection: Literacy Academy, Literacy Learning Labs, and Literacy Teams. The teachers attended the literacy academy monthly where all of the participants met for two professional developments on a subject related to reading development and instruction. The teachers attended the literacy learning lab a week in the fall and a week in the spring during the school year. The teachers worked in small groups, listened to presentations, shared ideas, visited each other's classrooms, and developed instructional plans on-site (Nielsen et al., 2008). Literacy Teams grew from the literacy academy and literacy learning lab at individual schools. Participants in the project used 2 days a month for instructional-related interactions and team activities. The time was used for study group activities, to examine student data, to discuss student individual and group needs, and to create an action plan for instruction (Nielsen et al., 2008).

Three conditions were identified that supported teacher professional development growth, teachers believed that when professional development was rooted in their school and classroom they learned more, they believed professional development needed to focus on clearly defined instructional goals, and teachers needed access to time and

resources that supported student learning. Teachers listed modeling, feedback, and shared training as activities that effected change in their instruction to students. Because of this professional development teachers saw themselves as change agents. Teachers also discussed changes they introduced and changes they had no control over. Teachers looked at their change in instruction as a result in improving student achievement (Nielsen et al., 2008). As a result of this study educational reform should be about recognizing and constructing the working conditions of teachers (changes from without) and catering to their values and beliefs (changes from within).

While most of the studies evaluated consider some form or impact of professional development on teachers' content knowledge and preparation. Some of the studies included the effects on students learning outcomes. Some set out clearly to discover the efficacy of programs on personal changes of teachers' perceptions, opinions and training as well as student change and teacher approval. Student success is dependent on teacher excellence and can be accomplished through effective professional development (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009).

NCLB (2002) mandates that highly qualified teachers are placed in all classrooms, consequently school districts have responded by placing more emphasis on professional development. The act itself necessitates school districts to assign thousands of dollars to ensure and improve teacher quality (NCLB, 2002). Reading at a basic level on national reading tests account for almost 70% of fourth graders in the inner city. The academic achievement gap continues to widen between the rich and poor and the Anglo and minority. According to former President George Bush (2001), in the U.S., no student

should be left behind; all students should be educated to the best of their abilities and the NCLB law puts forth this framework in hopes to achieve that goal.

Kansas and NCLB Mandates for Standardized Testing

NCLB (2002) is made up of a 1,000 pages that calls for accountability, instructions for funding professional development, and teacher quality. Every student is required to score at or above proficiency in three different grade levels, 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12 in reading and mathematics by 2014. Each state is required to submit an accountability plan that sets proficiency standards and a detailed plan for schools to the U.S. Department of Education (U S Department of Education, 2010). Once the plan is received the DOE can approve, reject, or recommend changes to the plan. Student achievement proficiency standards will differ across each state (NCLB, 2002). The president and congress believe that every student can learn and their schools should be held accountable for their learning. However, this act has caused a big disturbance because the federal government has the authority to control the sustainability of public schools systems. Many state schools have been labelled as failing and some have even been closed because of federal government control (Caillier, 2007).

According to Caillier (2007), Kansas and 34 other states published AYP results for reading and mathematics achievement tests in elementary, middle, and high school grades. Only 52% of the states are meeting the requirements needed for NCLB. The state of Kansas was granted a NCLB waiver Thursday, July 19, 2012. The waiver is set to expire at the end of the 2013-2014 school year (Shroyer, & Yahnke, 2012).

Professional Development

Professional development comprises activities considered to increase, in some way, the skills and knowledge of educators (Abbot, 2012) so that they can best help students learn (Blank & de las Alas, 2010) and achieve academically (Pan & Franklin, 2011). In the 1970s, responsibility for providing professional development shifted from colleges to school districts (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011). According to Allen et al. (2011), this change afforded teachers the opportunity to gain information about curriculum, teaching, and student learning. In a study of 1,000 educators, the participants identified response opportunities, feedback, and personal regard as features of professional development that affect change in behavior, such as the affects that the classroom application of interactions learned in professional development (Bausmith & Barry, 2011). Teacher education and professional development program information regarding teacher/student relationships and how they interact is important. Teacher/student relationships are important to preventing discipline problems (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2012).

Adkins-Colman (2010) suggested the connection between professional development and the knowledge and skills of educators is questionable and argued that increasing students' academic achievement by having teachers engage in professional development is not possible. Dunn and Mabry (2011) contended that professional development has failed and that the failure is due partly to the lack of input by all stakeholders.

Professional development has been linked to student achievement. Lakshmanan,

Heath, Perlmutter, and Elder (2011) examined types of professional development, teachers' instructional practices, and the academic achievement of students. Lakshmanan et al. examined teacher efficacy and the instructional practices of science teachers. The setting was an elementary and middle school for over 3 years. The Science Teacher Efficacy Beliefs Instruments was used to measure teacher efficacy five different times. Instructional practices were assessed four different times during classroom observations using the Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol. The professional development strategies increased teacher self-efficacy but not the outcome expectancy (Lakshmanan et al., 2011).

Harris and Sass (2011) explored the impact of a variety of factors on student achievement, with a focus on the impact of teacher professional development. Harris and Sass looked at professional development training and teacher productivity using an administrative database in Florida. The data allowed Harris and Sass to tie student achievement to individual teachers in the classroom and link the data to the teachers' professional development training. The results were generally positive based on teacher experience but little to no evidence supported teacher efficacy.

In a study at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor, several teachers participated in professional development sessions that ranged from short to long program development sessions, similar to those offered in the TESA professional development program (Viadero, 2007). The teachers who attended the longer sessions focused more on academic content and accepted the changes more than the teachers who attended the shorter sessions (Manner, Cuthrell, Stapleton, & Ledford, 2014). The test scores of

students of the teachers who attended the longer sessions increased more than the scores of the students of teachers who attended the shorter sessions (Manner et al., 2014). The National Staff Development Council (NSDC; as cited in Viadero, 2007) conducted a professional development program study that included eight public schools that had shown improvement in student achievement. Because the program was similar to the TESA professional development program and addressed collaboration, learning opportunities, accountability, and student achievement, the NSDC (Henderson, 2011) described the program as an interaction model.

McMaken and Porter (2012) found that teacher professional development also can impact classroom practices. In the study, which lasted 3 years, the researchers used a sample of 287 teachers who were teaching mathematics and science in 30 schools in 10 districts in five states. Based on data McMaken and Porter collected using surveys, the researchers concluded that specific focused professional development with effective interactions increased teachers' use of those interactions in the classroom.

Impact of Professional Development on Student Achievement

Over the years there has been much discussion on how important professional development is for teachers and their ability to raise student achievement once completed (Avalos, 2011). Professional development and the impact on academic achievement are now recognized by researchers, policy makers, and theorists. Around 1985, many school districts assigned 5 days per academic school year for professional development often times referred to as Baker Days (Avalos, 2011). Since the federal government has become involved with teacher training and the impact on academic standards, districts

have given teachers more time for professional development training (NCLB, 2002). The first step for districts in addressing this challenge is to make available professional development opportunities that will benefit teachers in addressing student achievement (Avalos, 2011).

There are four major purposes that professional development serves within a school. Professional development should improve teacher performance, correct ineffective practice, launch the foundation for carrying out policy, and facilitate reform (Biancarosa, Bryk, & Dexter, 2010). Teachers have to take action in addressing their own personal change and professional needs when it comes to professional development and how to raise academic standards (Avalos, 2011). Once the teacher completes the professional development training they should have the knowledge, understanding, skills, and abilities needed to reflect on their participation and training in order to meet student needs, communally and individually (Biancarosa et al., 2010).

School districts and administrators now have a larger accountability than in previous years for training teachers in various types of professional development in their learning environment. This is confirmed by the past few decades' of research into school effectiveness which emphasizes the importance of professional development (Ermeling, 2010; Frey & Fisher, 2009; Lovett et al., 2008; Nielsen et al., 2008; Vogt & Rogalla, 2009).

Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement Program (TESA)

Results of early studies by Brophy and Good (1970) motivated researchers to explore the concept of expectations in the classroom. It was the subsequent expectation

theory on which LACOE (1979) based the TESA professional development program with the goal of moving teachers toward more meaningful and equitable interactions with all students. LACOE (2002) chose these interactions because research indicated that teachers could differentiate their behavior in order to increase student achievement.

The TESA interaction model is made up of 15 interactions designed to improve student achievement. The interactions are grouped into five units of three strands each, and teachers participate in one 3-hour session per month during which one unit is covered by a TESA coordinator (Canter, Kester, & Miller, 2000). Teachers then practice using three interactions (one per strand per unit) with their students each day for a month (LACOE, 2002). The teachers also are required to observe others and be observed; following these scheduled observations, teachers discuss areas of success or concern (LACOE, 2002). Teachers of any subject in Grades K through 12 can participate in TESA training (Canter et al., 2000).

The TESA professional development program includes three strands (A, B, and C) with five units each in the interaction model (LACOE, 2002). The five units included in Strand A, response opportunities, are (a) the equitable distribution of units (the student is given the opportunity to respond or perform to academic situations provided by the teacher), (b) individual help (each student is given individual help by the teacher), (c) latency (the student is given enough time to respond to a question before the teacher provides assistance or ends the opportunity to respond), (d) delving (additional information is provided by the teacher to help the student respond to the question), and (e) higher level questioning (the teacher asks challenging questions that require a student

to do more than recall simple facts; LACOE, 2002). The five units included in Strand B, feedback, are (a) affirm/correct (feedback is provided by the teacher to the students about their academic achievement), (b) praise (teachers praise students for their academic performance), (c) reasons for praise (a reason for praise is provided by the teacher to the students for their academic achievement), (d) listening (eye contact is provided by the teacher to the student to indicate that that the response was heard), and (e) accepting feelings (the students' feelings are recognized and accepted by the teacher in a nonevaluative manner; LACOE, 2002). The five units included in Strand C, personal regard, are (a) proximity (as the student works on the assignment, the teacher is positioned physically close to the student), (b) courtesy (expressions of courtesy is provided by the teacher when interacting with the student), (c) personal interest and compliments (questions, compliments, or statements are provided by the teacher related to personal interests or experiences of the student), (d) touching (the student is touched by the teacher in an acceptable, respectful, or friendly manner), and (e) desisting (misbehavior of a student is handled by the teacher in a calm and courteous manner; LACOE, 2002). TESA guides teachers to observe their actions in three areas: managing students' responses to questions, providing feedback, and validating personal regard for students. Each month, teachers practice an interaction from each strand (Gewertz, 2005). I present the three strands and associated units in Table 1.

Table 1

The TESA Interaction Model

Unit	Strand		
	A Response opportunities	B Feedback	C Personal regard
1	Equitable distribution	Affirm/correct	Proximity
2	Individual help	Praise	Courtesy
3	Latency	Reasons for praise	Personal interest/compliments
4	Delving	Listening	Touching
5	Higher level questioning	Accepting feelings	Desist

The TESA professional development program requires teachers to be observed by other teachers who have participated in the TESA program; teachers must be observed once per unit (Swan, 1990). Teachers who are doing the observing are instructed to look for evidence of implementation of interactions across the strands for each of the particular unit they are observing. Interactions were representative of a number of strategies used to help teachers improve teacher-student interaction as a means of improving student achievement (Gibbons, 2003).

For example, for Unit 1, the observing teacher would look for evidence of equitable distribution, affirm/correct, and proximity (LACOE, 2002). Prior to the observation, the teacher being observed is to identify for the observing teacher five high-achieving students and five low-achieving students; the observing teacher will not know the identities or seating locations of the identified students (LACOE, 2002). When the class has ended, the observing teacher will give the teacher being observed an objective

score form on which the observing teacher has recorded interactions he or she has identified during the observation (Gewertz, 2005). LACOE (2002) designed the observation process as a teacher-to-teacher peer evaluation so that the teachers observed would not feel threatened by the observation. According to LACOE (2002), teachers look forward to receiving constructive criticism regarding their teaching because the teachers may use the feedback to facilitate change that may help increase students' academic achievement.

Classroom Interactions

The focus of several studies on interactions in the classroom has been teacher questions, learner responses, or the effect of questions on student achievement. This discussion is the result of my review, comparison, and contrast of studies by Smart and Marshall (2013); Brown and Kennedy (2011); Fisher, Jones, Larkin, and Myhill (2010, 2006); Naz, Khan, Khan, Daraz, and Mujtaba (2013); and Warfa, Roehrig, Schneider, and Nyachwaya (2014).

Clear Instruction

Clear instruction is defined as instruction that offers a strong explanation of the task, boosts student participation, and triggers students' prior knowledge (Slavin, Lake, Davis, & Madden, 2011; Porche, Pallante, & Snow, 2012). Clear instruction should allow for student practice and immediate teacher feedback (Kim, 2013). Through communication, perceptions become matters of reproduction, change, and conversation, often involving adjustments in the thinking process for the individual. Communication also helps shape importance and stability for perceptions before making them public.

When students are challenged to think and reason about a particular subject and communicate the response of their thinking with others, they learn to be clear and decisive in their spoken and transcribed explanations (Henning, McKeny, Foley, & Balong, 2012). In order to lead an effective class discussion the teacher should be able to expect, handle, and make sense of random and often times peculiar responses from students with diverse backgrounds. The teacher should also be able to keep the discussion focused on the instructional task for the day (LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2012).

Asking Questions

When teachers ask high-level questions, they allow for different points of view, some of which may not be wrong, for example, replies that present additional approaches to responding to question (Henning et al., 2012). Teachers are then able to encourage student participation by making the students feel good about their response given (Henning et al., 2012). Equally, teachers avoid discouraging student participation by accepting all responses given. Dudley-Marling (2013) found that conversation in the classroom was directed by one person, typically the teacher, resulting in students restating specific concepts or simple facts when asking questions. The researchers noted that this situation was in contrast to classrooms where students were given the opportunity to explore higher level questions and teachers engage in an equitable distribution of questions. In studies conducted by Fisher et al. (2010) and Naz et al. (2013), the researchers focused on teacher-student interactions and teachers' use of response opportunities in the classroom.

Fisher et al. (2010) found that teachers mostly asked factual questions with

predetermined answers and those teachers continually rephrased questions until correct responses were given. In 2013, Naz et al. studied teacher/student interactions which involved teachers having to make choices about what to ask students based on what the teacher or students had said previously, a process similar to delving. Using a grounded theory approach, the researchers sought to determine how the role of questions supported or increased students' academic achievement. To make this determination, the researchers videotaped 54 teacher lessons, and recorded each question the teachers asked in their lessons. Next, the researchers coded the questions based on their type and function within the interactions in the classroom. The results showed that the questions teachers asked prompted critical thinking, were factual, and were based on the students' understanding and literacy but did not require lengthy responses from the students (Naz et al., 2013). In the study, teachers were more concerned about the outcome of the lesson and less interested in latency or helping students on an individual basis (Naz et al., 2013). Naz et al. concluded that the type of question being asked can affect the type of student response given, thus possibly increasing academic achievement.

Korthagen, Attema-Noordewier, and Zwart (2014) explored teacher/student interactions in the classroom over a period of 2 and a half years. Korthagen et al. examined who was in control of conversations, how effective classroom discussions were, how conversations were built using prior knowledge, and the effectiveness of teacher and student responses. Korthagen et al. found that teachers who thought they were doing a good job of allowing students time to speak in reality did not give the students adequate time.

Since the early 1900s, researchers have called for professional development on questioning skills (see Stevens, 1912). More recently, Black (2004), like Stevens, concluded that professional development to improve teachers' questioning skills will increase the amount of higher level, effective questioning in which teachers engage students. Other researchers who have explored professional development with regard to questioning techniques teachers have suggested that teachers need training to enhance their questioning skills (Dybdahl & Black, 2010; Farahian, & Rezaee, 2012; Johnson, 2011; Rich, 2011).

Feedback

Smart and Marshall (2013) examined teachers' questions and feedback to students' responses during a science lesson to investigate the types of questions teachers asked during science lessons, discover how the teachers used questioning to involve students, and identify various types of feedback (e.g., affirmation, praise, listening) that the teachers gave to students. Smart and Marshall collected data during 14 lessons given in two science classes in Singapore. Smart and Marshall observed that when teachers interacted with students, the teachers provided effective feedback by listening, accepting feelings, praising, and offering reasons for the praise based upon the students' responses. In addition, when teachers interacted with students in this way, students' academic achievement increased. Finally, Smart and Marshall found that teachers' feedback to students' responses were more important than the type of questions asked by the teachers.

When offering feedback to students, it is beneficial for teachers to begin with a compliment before discussing what the student has done incorrectly (Swart & Nathanson,

2011; Halperin, Smith et al., 2013). When students receive affirmation and praise from teachers and listen to teachers' high-quality language, they are encouraged to perform at a higher level of thinking (Halperin et al., 2013). Halperin et al. (2013) found that feedback, specifically the use of praise, can help to improve students' academic outcomes. Halperin et al. found that praising the use of good writing skills was especially helpful for improving outcomes.

Warfa et al. (2014) conducted a mixed-methods study to examine teachers' growth and their interactions with students in the classroom over an extended period. The researchers recorded, transcribed, and coded the interactions they observed in this study, a process used in the TESA professional development program. Over the course of 7 years, Warfa et al. gathered data from teachers in 12 classrooms. Like Smart and Marshall (2013), Warfa et al. found that teachers' feedback to students' responses were more important than the type of questions asked by the teachers. In order to improve teacher-student interactions, districts must offer effective professional development that offers opportunities that align with the intended outputs.

Literature Related to the Methods and Methodologies

Qualitative research is informative because it allows researchers to observe problems in a realistic environment using the texts of everyday life and because it develops as the research progresses (Creswell, 2007; Turner, 2010). Qualitative research highlights the abilities of individuals who are not studied or measured statistically (Koro-Ljungberg, Mazzei, & Ceglowski, 2013). Seashore, Dretzke, and Wahlstrom (2010) examined the performance of three different school leaders. In this quantitative case

study the researchers looked at classroom instruction, collaborative leadership, and the importance emotional intelligence in motivating students and their impact on teacher effort. Merriam (2002) suggested that qualitative researchers want to know how and why people act the way they do. Creswell (2007) noted that a case study allows researchers to conduct studies in depth with single or multiple participants over a continuous period of time. I chose a qualitative approach for this study because it allowed me to capture the perceptions of the participants in a realistic environment.

Many different types of methods are available for conducting qualitative studies. Hatch (2002) discussed different approaches to conducting case studies, including ethnography, ethnomethodology, participant observation, interview study, focus group, artifact analysis, grounded theory, narrative, phenomenology and case study. The most well-known types of case studies include grounded theory, narrative, phenomenology, case study, and ethnography. Creswell (2007) described each of these five in detail. Grounded theory is a design used to develop a theory that is not already in existence for a particular phenomenon; it generally includes a large number of people who have experienced the given phenomenon. A narrative study is more appropriate for detailing the sequence of events or describing a particular event or life; it is based upon a story.

Phenomenology is a study in which a researcher describes the meaning behind a particular phenomenon, such as a program. A case study is a study within a bounded context; it has boundaries in space and time. In a case study, a researcher might investigate a certain person, program, school, or district. Ethnography is a study in which a researcher explores a particular group, such as an ethnic group, the female population of

a school, or teachers in a school. Based on Creswell's descriptions, I decided that a case study design was most appropriate for my study. Avalos (2011) conducted a qualitative case study regarding professional development and how teachers learn and transform their knowledge into preparation for the benefit of student achievement. Avalos also suggested that professional development should occur over an extended amount of time. Smart and Marshall (2013) conducted a case study to observe how teachers interacted with students, the teachers used effective feedback by listening, accepting feelings, praising, and offering reasons for the praise based upon the students' responses. Similarly, many of the same strategies are used in the TESA professional development program by teachers with their students.

The choice of qualitative design to study the concept of professional development is evident in the literature. I asked how questions and wanted to construct the realities of the participants in regard to incorporating the TESA interactions. Because the purpose of the study was to identify the impact of TESA professional development from TESA trained teachers and the impact on their students' academic achievement, I chose to conduct a case study. Researchers have minimal to no control over responses by participants that answer how and why questions (Yin, 2009).

I chose a qualitative case study method because the purpose was to examine how effective teachers used the TESA interactions to interact with their students. Comparable studies have been conducted when asking how and why questions and having the opportunity of many possibilities to the answers for the research questions.

Epstein, Galindo, and Sheldon (2011) conducted a case study to overhaul

comprehensive school reform that included a grant to implement professional development that included all stakeholders. Jacobs, Assaf, and Lee (2011) conducted a case study and reported positive results when teachers participated in on-going professional development that used multiple instructional strategies. The design allowed for the examination of procedures to conduct studies in depth with multiple participants over a period of time. The qualitative approach for this study was chosen because it allowed me to capture the perceptions of the participants in a realistic environment (Creswell, 2007). I wanted to create the authenticities of the participants in regard to their experience with TESA and the impact if any on academic achievement of their students.

In this case study, the teachers who were using the interactions with their students were from different schools in Kansas. The case study methodology provided the unexpected answer to likely conclusions (i.e., different school sites, subjects taught, lesson plans, etc.) that could have influenced the teachers (Merriam, 2009). For this case study, I used interviews, observations, and questionnaires to provide data for a thorough analysis of teachers' perceptions on the impact of the TESA professional development program regarding potential increased academic achievement. Qualitative research exemplifies working and interacting with people to understand their lives and their perceptions to provide rich descriptions of their experiences (Creswell, 2009).

Summary

The problem addressed in this study was professional development and how it can be viewed as a system of constant growth and learning that shapes the ability of the instructional community to meet to the needs of all learners. This charge has increased

the need for quality professional development to increase teachers' understanding and implementation of effective teaching strategies that will allow them to empower all students to reach their highest potential in learning. For this study, the problem centered on the TESA professional development program and how teachers implemented the strategies from the program to build relationships with their students. It is probable that these students may be vulnerable when teachers' expectations for them are inconsistent, a condition that can lead teachers to conduct themselves in ways that may be damaging to students' learning. The purpose of this study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of a sample of teachers who integrated teaching interactions from the TESA professional development program into their daily lessons. The focus is on the perceptions of K through 12th grade teachers in a Kansas school district.

As schools face the pressure to meet the NCLB mandates, school districts are constantly searching for educational strategies to support every student. While researchers indicated there are many professional development programs that report positive results when teachers participate in on-going professional development, there are also researchers who indicated some of the programs have some embedded problems. Smart and Marshall (2013) found that teachers interacted with students using effective feedback by listening, accepting feelings, praising, and offering reasons for the praise based upon responses from their students. Henning et al. (2012) indicated that teachers are able to encourage student participation by making the students feel good about their responses. Section 3 is a description of the detailed methods that were used to collect the data for this study.

Section 3: Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of a sample of teachers who had implemented into their daily lessons interactions from the TESA professional development program. By conducting this qualitative case study, I generated data about the perceptions of teachers regarding the ways in which the program impacted their relationships with their students. Gaining an understanding of teachers' perceptions with regard to TESA training and implementation of the interactions is important because the generated data may be (a) applied in research, practice in the field of education, and professional development training and (b) used to promote social change.

In this section, I describe the research design, repeat the research questions, and identify the context of the study. I discuss the ethical protection of participants and my role as the researcher in this study. identify inclusion criteria for participants and processes for data collection and analyses. Finally, I present evidence of quality in my study.

Research Design

Because the purpose of my study was to explore real-world experiences of my study participants using open-ended questions, a qualitative study design was appropriate for my study. In addition, the only available study in which researchers explored aspects of the TESA professional development program was a quantitative study conducted by the LACOE (1979), a study in which the researchers measured the growth of students' academic achievement using statistical methods. For this reason, my choice of a

qualitative design to study the TESA professional development program was a novel approach.

In a case study, the researcher conducts an in-depth exploration of a particular person, group, event, activity, or program (Creswell, 2009) rather than an historical, phenomenon regarding a person, a process, an institution, or a social group (Hatch, 2002). Case study research is useful when researchers want to investigate real-life situations in detail while accounting for important contextual conditions that influence a phenomenon (Yin, 2009). According to Yin (2009), because there often are many variables in a case study, this type of research design relies on multiple sources of evidence, including interviews, observations, and questionnaires, as well as a theoretical plan to guide the collection of data and analysis procedures. Because the purpose of my study was to explore teacher perceptions with regard to a particular program, the TESA professional development program, a case study approach was appropriate in this study.

In addition to the case study approach, qualitative approaches include ethnographic, grounded theory, narrative, and phenomenological approaches. When determining which research method to use for this study, I considered all of these options. In ethnographic studies, researchers explore cultural groups; often these cultures are foreign or exotic in some way (Merriam, 2002). I did not choose to use an ethnographic approach in this study because I did not study individuals from a specific culture. The goal of grounded theory is the development of a theory based on the perspectives of participants who provide data that can be categorized and compared with data collected from other groups of participants and which serves as the driving force behind the

direction of future data collection and analyses (Creswell, 2009). Because I collected data from one small sample of participants, and did not do so for the purpose of generating theory, grounded theory was not an appropriate approach to use in my study.

In narrative studies, the data represent the experiences of participants as told through their own life stories (Creswell, 2009). After researchers analyze the data, they present them in narrative form, with a clear beginning, middle, and end (Merriam, 2002). In this study, using narratives about participants' lives would not have generated the data I needed to answer my research questions; therefore, a narrative approach was not appropriate for my study and, thus, I rejected this option and did not seek this type of data during data collection.

In phenomenological studies researchers examine the lived experiences of participants in order to understand the essence of a particular human experience (Creswell, 2009). By using this method to collect data, researchers also embrace the idea of lived experiences as a philosophy for interpreting and understanding the data that emerge from the details of people's lives (Creswell, 2009). It is the subjectivity of the collected data that is important in a phenomenological study (Hatch, 2002). In this study, I was less concerned with teachers' lived experiences as a human condition than I was with their experiences as they related to the TESA professional development program in particular. Thus, a phenomenological approach was not appropriate in my study.

Research Questions

I developed one central research question to guide this study: What are K-12 teachers' perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students? I also

developed five subquestions based on concept statements about the TESA program provided by LACOE (2002).

1. How do teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?
2. How are teachers' expectations different for the high, average, and low achievers, if at all?
3. How do teachers perceive that ethnic, racial, or cultural background affects their students' success, if at all?
4. During class, how do the teachers ensure that they call on students of all abilities equally?
5. How are teachers attempting to get to know all of their students so that they can build personal relationships with those students?

Context of the Study

This study was framed within the context of a school district in north central Kansas. The school district of focus in this study included 14 elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and one alternative center. Of the teachers in the district, 95% were fully licensed, and of those fully licensed teachers, 97% were designated as highly qualified. With regard to all teachers in the district, years of experience in education as well as personal knowledge about the implementation of TESA in the classroom varied. The varied levels of experience among the teachers provided the context of this study, in particular the participant base that provided rich perspectives concerning the impact of the TESA professional development program and how it might

affect the academic achievement of students within the district.

Ethical Protection of Participants

While analyzing and interpreting data, problems involving making ethical decisions can arise (Creswell, 2009). Johnson (2011) emphasized that the protection of human participants is of importance in any study because of the potential for physical or psychological harm. Because of this potential for harm, during all phases of this study, I took precautions to protect my participants in accordance with the requirements of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB; study Approval 02-28-12-0062222). Before collecting data, I procured permission from the represented school district assistant superintendent and Walden University to conduct the study and required all participants to sign a consent form.

In addition, I ensured the protection of participants by providing them with a consent form indicating the purpose, procedures, and nature of the study as well as how I intended to use the data I collected. In the consent form, I also explained to participants the confidentiality of the data I would collect and informed the participants of their right to refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. Finally, I informed the participants of their right to ask questions, have their privacy protected, and obtain a copy of the completed study. By providing this information to the participants, I enabled them to make an informed decision about whether or not they wished to participate in my study. In doing so, I ensured their ethical treatment.

I ensured the protection of participants by keeping the data I collected secure. I kept all collected data confidential and stored electronic data from participant interviews,

classroom observations, and questionnaires in a password-protected file stored on my personal laptop, which was accessible only by me. I kept physical data along with the audio recordings of each interview in a binder, which I kept inside a locked filing cabinet in my home office.

Role of the Researcher

My role included transferring collected data from the focus school district to my home office for assessment and analysis. I am a high school media specialist who resides in Tennessee and have served as a middle school science teacher and high school biology teacher for the past 21 years. I am a certified TESA coordinator. TESA coordinators are trained to lead the five-session TESA professional development workshop series. I received my TESA certification after a 3-day training workshop I attended in Atlanta, Georgia, in March 2010. During that time, I exchanged contact information with two teachers from the focus school district who were training to replace the TESA coordinators in Kansas. I had never met the two teachers prior to the TESA training and had no prior information about the focus school district. I had no previous relationship with any of the other participants in the study or individuals from the school district.

Any personal bias and personal judgment that I may bring to the study was clarified in the validity and reliability section of the study (Creswell, 200). To ensure that I did not inflict prejudicial views upon the data, I recorded reflective memos and recorded negative or varying information that might run counter to the themes and subthemes for my own reflection (Creswell, 2007). As the principal investigator in this study, I was solely responsible for collecting, recording, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting all the

data related to this study. Moreover, all data references in this study were de-identified to make sure there were no connections or undesirable impression on the teachers or focus school district.

Criteria to Participate in the Study

To participate in this study, teachers had to be employees of the focus school district located in north central Kansas. Teachers had to be identified as highly qualified by the State of Kansas and must have participated in the TESA professional development program. No participants were excluded based on gender, ethnicity, or any other demographic.

According to Merriam (2002), the number of participants in a qualitative inquiry varies based on questions asked, data collected, analysis progressed, and resources supported by the study. Ultimately, Merriam indicated that the number of participants in a study should be adequate to answer the research questions being posed. Similarly, Mason (2010) suggested that sample size should be determined by the researcher's capacity to obtain conceptual saturation. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggested that conceptual saturation can occur in as few as 6 interviews or require as many as 12. Based on these perspectives, I determined that 10 participants would be appropriate for my study but remained aware of the potential need to expand my sample size if I did not reach conceptual saturation.

Data Collection

Prior to collecting data, I received approval to conduct the study from Walden University's IRB as well as from the superintendent of the focus school district, the two

TESA district coordinators, and the building principal of each participating school. Using convenience sampling, I collected data from 10 teachers using observations, interviews, and a questionnaire, three modes of data collection Glesne (2011) and Merriam (1998) identified for qualitative research.

Each interview question was created with the study's central research question and subquestions in mind. The central research question which looked at K-12 teachers' perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students was addressed via Interview Questions 1 through 10. Interview Questions 1 through 10 are background questions designed to gain an understanding of the participant's perceptions of the program and the impact of teacher/student relationships. Interview Questions 11 and 12 addressed Subquestion 1. Interview Questions 13 through 15 addressed Subquestion 2. Interview Questions 16 through 18 addressed Subquestion 3. Interview Questions 19 through 21 addressed Subquestion 4. Interview Questions 22 and 23 addressed Subquestion 5. Interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

On my behalf, the TESA coordinators in the school district sent an e-mail to all highly qualified teachers inviting them to participate in my study. Teachers who were willing to participate contacted me via e-mail so that we could schedule mutually convenient times for the teachers to be observed, participate in the interviews, and complete the questionnaire. Each teacher agreed to participate in all three phases of data collection.

At no time did I offer the participants compensation for their involvement in this study, and all participants signed a consent form before I collected any data from them.

Because data collection required that I travel to another state, I maximized my time at the research site and collected all of my data over the course of 1 week. During the course of this study, I kept all collected data confidential, in part by assigning participants alphabetic identifiers and stored electronic data from classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires in a password-protected file stored on my personal laptop, which was accessible only by me. I kept physical data along with the audio recordings of each interview in a binder, which I kept inside a locked filing cabinet in my home office. Per Walden University protocol, I will keep all data secure for 5 years following the completion of this study, after which time I will destroy all the raw data and erase all audiotaped records.

Interviews

To collect data from participants during interviews, I used a 23-item, semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix A). To ensure my understanding of participant responses to interview questions, I asked clarifying questions. Then, to follow up on participant responses and elicit more details, I used probing questions. According to Creswell (2009) and Merriam (2009), the use of probing questions is an effective method of following up on a participant's responses and can assist the interviewer in clarifying participant responses, generating more detail than a participant initially offered about a topic, or garnering examples. As a guide for probing questions, on the protocol, I identified to which research question each of the interview questions applied. I used data I collected from the interviews to answer the central research question with regard to teacher perceptions of the TESA program. The interview protocol was followed and the

questions were adapted from information in the TESA Coordinators Manual.

I developed the protocol based on the participants' individual perspectives related to the question, and recorded and listened for indications that may expose deeper meanings (Merriam, 2009). Merriam (2009) suggested that by asking open-ended questions, the researcher aims to follow up with participants responses to gain a deeper understanding of the area of interest. I based my study's research subquestions on various LACOE (2002) concepts:

- Subquestion 1: teacher expectations are reflected in the behavior of teachers through questioning, feedback, and affection;
- Subquestion 2: students benefit when teachers (a) are aware of equal access issues in their classroom and (b) learn to model equitability and respect for individual student differences;
- Subquestion 3: teacher expectations are influenced by student characteristics: gender, race, social class, past achievements, and physical and mental challenges;
- Subquestion 4: students benefit when teachers ask students questions that require them to do more than merely remember the answer from reading, previous instruction, or another source; and
- Subquestion 5: rapport between teacher and student is essential to build personal relationship.

The subquestions were written using terminology specific to the TESA program. All interviews took place in the teachers' classrooms before school, during teacher planning

periods, or after school. I informed the participants that I was going to audiotape the interviews using a cassette recorder. When possible, I conducted the interviews on the same day I observed the teachers in their classrooms. Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Questionnaires

To collect written responses from participants, I used a five-item questionnaire I developed for this study (Appendix B). The questionnaires were created using information from the TESA Teachers Manual. According to Good (2012), questionnaires give individuals the opportunity to express their views about a particular topic, and the results can be used as part of an overall assessment of an effective program. Although I developed the questions for the questionnaire following the same guidelines suggested by Merriam (1998) for developing interview questions and could have asked these questions during participant interviews, I chose to ask the questions in a questionnaire to allow teachers additional time to reflect on their perspectives before offering responses. I made this decision because I used data I collected from the questionnaires to answer the central research question with regard to teacher perceptions of the impact of the TESA program and improving student relationships with teachers, an especially critical element in this study.

Observations

To collect data during observations, I used a form I developed for this study, which included (a) data categories for five domains (physical setting, participant data, type of activity, content of teacher-led discussion, and subtle factors) and (b) blank space

for my reflective notes (see Appendix C). The data collected during the observations were in the form of field notes. The form was a template with tables that included a section for field notes and a section for researcher reflections and can be found in (Appendix D).

I based these domains on those indicated by Merriam (1998): physical setting, participants, activities and interactions, conversation, subtle factors, and researcher behavior. The categories classroom and accessories made up the physical setting domain; the categories gender, approximate age, ethnicity, and other people present in the classroom made up the participant domain; and categories related to whether the teacher taught a lesson, gave a presentation, or engaged in some other activity made up the type of activity domain. For the content of the teacher-led discussion domain, I observed what topics the teacher discussed with the class, and for the subtle factors domain, I observed activities that occurred during class but which appeared to be separate from the planned lesson or presentation, nonverbal communication, physical teacher direction, and unstated meanings in words. The reflective notes I recorded were in essence field notes and included my observations about teachers' implementation of the 15 TESA interactions. Each observation lasted approximately one class period (average of 50 minutes). Data collected from the observations were used (a) to generate a general description of the study participants and the classroom environment and (b) to provide evidence of teacher implementation of TESA interactions, both of which provide readers a means of understanding the overall conditions in the classrooms on which the teachers' perceptions about the TESA program were based.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, I analyzed them in two different ways. First, I used the data I collected during the observations to compile the descriptive findings associated with the participants' demographics, the teachers' implementation of interventions, and the classroom environments. Second, I used Creswell's (2009) six-step method for analyzing qualitative data to analyze the data I collected during the interviews and using the questionnaire.

In Step 1, the researcher organizes and prepares the data for analysis; this process includes the transcription and recording of collected data (Creswell, 2009). To complete this step, I transcribed all the interview data and recorded them in electronic format. I also recorded electronically all teacher responses to the questionnaires. In Step 2, the researcher reads all of the data in order to form a preliminary idea of the information presented and its overall meaning (Creswell, 2009). Reading the data in this manner also allows a researcher to identify the tone of the information collected; whether there is enough depth in the data to generate rich, thick descriptions; and how much of the information may be usable (Creswell, 2009). To complete this step, interviews were audiotaped and transcribed within 24 hours after the interview concluded. The transcription allowed me to look for themes and subthemes that ran throughout the study.

In Step 3, the researcher starts to code the material by breaking up ideas into sections of data and organizing them into categories (Creswell, 2009). Because Creswell (2009) suggested that (a) using the most descriptive words possible to label the categories and (b) color coding information could be useful techniques during the data analysis

process, I used these techniques in my study. To complete this step, responses from the teachers were color coded using color pencils when the response appeared more than one time from each individual. I used field notes and reflective memos with the data collected and placed the information in categories using terms listed from the teachers.

In Step 4, the researcher describes the concepts that are beginning to emerge as categories and organizes the developed categories into perhaps five to seven common themes that appear most often in the data (Creswell, 2009). This step is critical in the analysis process because complex analysis involves not only the description of common threads in the data but also the discovery of how the threads are interrelated (Creswell, 2009). To complete this step, the data collected were based on themes and subthemes that emerged from the data set (e.g. effective TESA training, high expectations for all students, no bias, and personal relationship building with students).

In Step 5, the researcher determines how to present the themes; a common method for doing so is the use of narrative (Creswell, 2009). I determined that a narrative would be the most appropriate way to present the data from my study. To complete this step, I determined that a narrative would be the most appropriate way to present the data from my study. Tables were also included to give a visual representation of the information that was written. In Step 6, the researcher interprets the data in order to convey its meaning (Creswell, 2009). To complete this step, my intentions were to make sure, in order to report the heart of the teachers' responses; the information (clarification, importance, and understanding) was summarized and presented as a sequence of strategies in accordance with the research questions presented.

Validity and Reliability

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), researchers must address validity and reliability in research projects to demonstrate their scientific value. However, “one of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured as in quantitative research” (Merriam, 2002, p. 202). Creswell (2009) noted that validity and reliability for qualitative research does not carry the same implications as it does for quantitative research. Merriam (2002) suggested that researchers seek to demonstrate that their findings are accurate, dependable, and ethical. Interview questions were piloted by two teachers from my school district. Because of some confusion with clarity of questions an interview guide was developed at the suggestion of a former committee member. Interview questions were submitted to the IRB team and only one interview question was asked to be re-written regarding biases for clarity.

A researcher can ensure that his or her findings are accurate and dependable by identifying potential researcher biases (Merriam, 2002). I used various strategies of validity to avoid reporting data that might have been biased, incomplete, or compromised. I did not intentionally bring biases to this study and was impartial to the data during the collection and analysis processes. To increase the validity of the outcomes gained from this study, there were three different data collection methods used. Participants were sent their own transcript to review for accuracy and my findings for member-checking. The member checking process included determining accuracy by

sharing final results with the teachers and giving them an opportunity to edit or correct any errors. An analysis using multiple sources of data (observations of teachers in their classroom teaching a lesson, interviews of the 10 teachers, and a completed questionnaires' from the 10 teachers) was used to determine whether teachers made connections in building relationships with their students. A researcher also can ensure that his or her findings are accurate and dependable by providing rich and thick descriptions of the findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I provided rich and thick descriptions of my findings. In addition, I ensured the accuracy of my findings by transcribing and recording the interview and survey responses on which I based my interpretations and generating reflective notes about my observations. I ensured I conducted ethical research by securing appropriate permissions to conduct my study, providing participants with informed consent, and keeping all collected data confidential.

Summary

This study was a qualitative case study in which I explored the classroom experiences and perceptions of a sample of teachers who had implemented into their daily lessons interactions from the TESA professional development program. My research questions were focused on teachers' expectations for varying levels of students, how teachers communicate those expectations, how teachers perceive their perspectives about students affect students, and how teachers ensure equal engagement with all students on various levels. To answer my research questions, I collected data from 10 teachers in a school district in north central Kansas during interviews and through a

written questionnaire. To be able (a) to generate a general description of the study participants and the classroom environment and (b) to provide evidence of teacher implementation of TESA interactions, I also collected data through classroom observations. I analyzed the data I used to answer my research questions (gathered through the interviews and using the questionnaire) using Creswell's (2009) six-step method for analyzing qualitative data.

Section 4: Research Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of teachers who implemented strategies from the TESA professional development program into their daily lessons. Through this qualitative case study, I explored the perceptions of teachers on how the TESA program influenced relationship building with their students. This section includes a discussion of my findings based on the data I generated, gathered, and recorded for my study. I organized my findings into two sections: descriptive findings and findings associated with my research questions. First, however, I discuss the procedures I used to manage my data.

Data Management

Data for this study were collected through individual teacher interviews; observations of instructional lessons in reading, math, English, and science; and a completed survey questionnaire from each teacher. An e-mail message presenting the study was sent to the TESA coordinators in the Kansas district with permission from the district's assistant superintendent. The coordinators forwarded my e-mail to TESA-trained teachers to solicit volunteers for the study. Teachers holding Kansas certification in any subject area who were TESA-trained and taught in Grades K-12 were eligible to participate in the study. Ten participants volunteered to participate in the study, and their e-mails were forwarded to me from the TESA coordinators.

To gather data during the interviews, I used an interview protocol with 23 open-ended questions (Appendix A). Nine individual interviews were conducted in the participants' classroom, and one interview was conducted in the teachers' lounge because

the teacher's classroom was being used for a class by another teacher. The length of each interview was approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Each interview was recorded using a digital recorder; the interviews were then transcribed on the computer into a Word document. All 10 of the participants interviewed were e-mailed a copy of their interview transcriptions.

To gather data during observations, I developed an observation data collection form (Appendix C). I recorded my observations on the form by hand and also wrote reflective notes on the same form. Each observation occurred during a class period for each teacher and lasted approximately 60 minutes. For all 10 observations, I recorded field notes using criteria recommended by Merriam (2009) for any observations and modifications that were used for this study. These criteria included the physical setting of the classroom, the participants in the classroom, the instructional objectives of the lesson, the instructional strategies used during the lesson, the instructional assessments used during the lesson, and student and teacher interactions that occurred during the lesson. The observation tool also allowed for the collection of my reflections, as well as field notes in relation to each criterion. The data were transferred to a Word document.

Survey questionnaires related to the TESA professional development program were sent via e-mail to each participant. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire during their free time, seal the questionnaire in an envelope, and return it to me upon my arrival after interviewing and observing them. Survey questionnaires were collected from each participant after I completed data collection. The questionnaires included five questions related to the TESA professional development program and were

transferred to a Word document. Physical data were organized by participants' (a) interview questions, (b) completed observation forms, and (c) completed teacher questionnaires. The transcriptions were placed in a binder, which were kept inside a locked filing cabinet in my home office.

Descriptive Findings

In this section, findings that reflect the characteristics of the sample, the classroom environment, and the implementation of teacher interventions are presented. I present these descriptions to provide the reader with an overall sense of the teachers and the conditions in the classrooms on which the teachers' perceptions are based, including the implementation of TESA interactions. These findings are reported in tables and in narrative form. In addition, in this section, I present the frequency data for the teacher questionnaire.

Demographics

Of the 10 participants, four were elementary teachers, four were middle school teachers, and two were high school teachers. Levels at which teachers taught included kindergarten and Grades 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9. The teachers had a combined total of 62 years of teaching experience and 43 years of TESA professional development training. I present these participant demographic data in Tables 2 and 3. All of the teachers were European American females.

Table 2

Participant Demographics: Frequency

Demographic	<i>n</i>		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Grade			
Kindergarten	1		
First	2		
Fourth	1		
Fifth		2	
Sixth		2	
Ninth			2
Subject			
Math		1	1
English		2	1
Science		1	
Years teaching			
< 5	1	3	1
6-10	2	1	1
11-20	1		
Years teaching with TESA training			
< 5	2	3	2
6-10	2	1	

Table 3

Participant Descriptions

Participants	Grade	Subject	Years Teaching	Years Teaching with TESA Training
Elementary				
A	First		6-10	6-10
B	Kindergarten		11-20	6-10
C	First		6-10	< 5
D	Fourth		<5	< 5
Middle				
E	Fifth	Math	6-10	6-10
F	Sixth	English	<5	< 5
G	Sixth	Science	<5	< 5
H	Fifth	English	<5	< 5
High				
I	Ninth	English	6-10	< 5
J	Ninth	Math	<5	< 5

TESA professional development training is a requirement for district licensure for new teachers in the school district. All of the participants in this study reported having to attend TESA training to learn the interactions they implemented in their classrooms. However, because approximately 30 teachers from the district participated in the training, the 10 participants in this study did not necessarily all train with each other. The participants' TESA training appeared to follow protocols for training as outlined by LACOE (2008). Each participant in this study participated in training for 7 months. Teachers met once a month to learn the 15 interactions and discussed three interactions during each of their monthly sessions. They observed others and were also observed. Participants used a coding sheet and tallied the interactions they observed to show how often teachers implemented interactions. Teachers submitted their observations to the district office and in groups at the subsequent training, and participants discussed their results. The district reported levels of teacher achievement by school. Achievement levels were either low, average, or high.

Classroom Environments

I collected data on classroom environments during classroom observations. Specifically, I collected data on five domains: physical setting, participant data, type of activity, content of teacher-led discussion, and subtle factors. I have organized my discussion of the results of my findings for classroom environments by these domains. I present a summary of these findings in Table 4.

Table 4

Classroom Observations: Frequency of Participant and Classroom Characteristics

Observable domains	<i>n</i>		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Physical setting			
Traditional desks and chairs	1	3	2
Tables and chairs	2	1	
Both	1		
Total	4	4	2
Participant data			
Gender (female)	4	4	2
Ethnicity (European)	4	4	2
Number of students in classroom			
1-8	2		
9-16			
17-24	2	1	
25-32		3	2
Age range of students			
5-6	1		
6-7	2		
9-10	1		
10-11		2	
11-12		2	
13-15			2
Content of activity/discussion			
Math		1	1
Reading	3	2	1
Science	1	1	
Total	4	4	2

Note. $N = 10$. At the elementary school level, $n = 4$, at the middle school level, $n = 4$, and at the high school level, $n = 2$.

Physical setting. Of the 10 classrooms I observed, six had traditional student desks with separate chairs; three had small tables with chairs; and one had desks, tables, and chairs. In rooms with the desks, the desks were arranged in straight rows. In rooms with tables, the tables were arranged randomly; each table had four chairs. In the room with desks, tables, and chairs, the desks were arranged on one side of the room and the tables were arranged on the other side; all of the desks and tables had chairs. Of all of the classrooms, three had a separate carpeted area where students would gather to participate in certain lessons. These same three classrooms had restrooms, sinks, and cubbies for the students' belongings. All classrooms supported student learning with an abundant amount of reading material, as well as posters and academic signage on the walls.

Participant data. The number of students in the classrooms ranged from as few as seven to as many as 32. Female students outnumbered male students in most of the classrooms. The students ranged in age from 5 to 15 years. No one particular race of students appeared to need individual help more than students of any other race. A teacher's aide assisted the teacher in one of the first grade classrooms, and in a fourth grade classroom, the teacher shared office space with four other adults who were not a part of the classroom.

Type of activity/content of teacher-led discussion. I observed six participants teaching a reading lesson, two teaching a science lesson, two teaching a math lesson, and one conducting a tutoring session (reading lesson). All participants used the interactive board and document cameras for their lessons. In the three elementary level classrooms that had a carpeted area in addition to tables, students moved back and forth between the

two areas during the course of the lesson. Participant C was interacting with her students, while one student was at the document camera presenting the science lesson. In the middle and high school settings, the participants moved throughout the classrooms constantly.

Subtle factors. All of the participants used nonverbal communication that included facial expressions, change in body position, and respect for the personal space of the students. For example, Participant E chose to touch the student's desk rather than the student to gain his attention because "He does not like to be touched." In this case, the participant viewed the desk as an indirect part of the student.

Teacher Implementation of Interventions

I collected data on teacher implementation of TESA interventions during classroom observations. I recorded the data on an observation collection form in a section for reflective notes. During the course of the 10 observations, I was able to observe all 15 of the TESA interactions for Unit A (equitable distribution, individual help, latency, delving, and higher level questioning), Unit B (affirm/correct, praise, reasons for praise, listening, accepting feelings), and Unit C (proximity, courtesy, personal interest/compliments, touching, desist).

During my observations, I noted that the physical arrangement of many classrooms facilitated the free movement of participants throughout their classrooms, which allowed teachers to be within close proximity of their students, to offer individual help, and to listen to student conversations during the lesson. Also, this proximity allowed participants to redirect students when necessary. Off-task and disruptive students

were redirected when teachers walked in their general direction. Disruptive students were also redirected when the teacher touched students' shoulders, desks, or tables.

Although not a function of proximity, I also observed that teachers redirected off-task and disruptive students by calling each student by his or her first name or saying, "I can wait." Redirection of students, a part of TESA interventions, occurred often during the science lesson with the high school students. I also observed latency among six teachers who asked questions requiring a student response. In five classrooms, teachers used high level questioning and delving to help the students think critically during class discussions. All participants demonstrated the interaction delving by (a) introducing lessons with a comment or brief discussion pertaining to a previous lesson and (b) using rephrasing and clue giving techniques. The participants appeared to ask questions of the majority of students, gave them enough time to answer when called upon, and quickly gave feedback to their students during open discussions related to the lesson. Teacher B praised one of her students for giving the correct response and stated why the student was being praised. Participant C consistently responded to correct student responses by saying, "Kiss the brain." The students knew that *kissing the brain* meant they had given the correct response to a question.

Frequency Data for Interviews

All of the participants indicated that the 7-month training had been an effective and worthwhile endeavor. Participant F identified self-awareness as "extremely helpful" for her and stated that it "opens the window to take a look at yourself." With regard to the training, teachers described a new sense of awareness and growth as they discovered,

through peer feedback, how inequitable their interactions with students often were. One of the participants indicated that she took from the training whatever she put into it. Participant C commented that she gained “integrity and validation for self.” Participants indicated that they wanted to be open and honest during the training to receive feedback that would increase the number of interactions in which they engaged with all of their students. None of the participants mentioned any negative effects of the TESA training or the implementation of the strategies. I present the data for frequency of teacher responses from interviews in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5

Teachers’ Responses: Perceptions of the TESA Program

Perception	<i>n</i>
Effective training	10
High expectations for high, average, and low achievers	10
No bias for student success	10
Building personal relationships with students	10

Table 6

Teachers’ Responses: Impacts on Relationships with Students

Impact	<i>n</i>
Classroom communication teacher and student centered	7
Critical thinking questions to students of different abilities	6
Bloom’s Taxonomy used to guide questioning of students of different abilities	4
Classroom communication student centered	2
Classroom communication teacher centered	1

Participants indicated multiple positive effects as the result of implementing TESA interactions, including being able to (a) reach every student, (b) interact equitably with all students, (c) listen to students, and (d) allow students enough time to respond when teaching the curriculum. Participants also stated that TESA interactions were effective because they could be implemented immediately after they were introduced in the training sessions. Participant A stated, “The TESA professional development has not fixed the problem of me interacting equitably with every student but the TESA training has created an awareness of how I should be interacting with every student in my classroom.” Many participants commented that they learned that students need time to formulate a response to direct questions from the teacher. Participant H remarked, “Through TESA, it taught me how to wait, give kids a chance to respond. So many times we rush our students. We don’t give them enough time to think or respond.” These interactions align with Unit 3, latency, from TESA’s interaction model (LACOE, 2008).

Not only did teachers identify positive effects of TESA training, they indicated a desire for further opportunities to hone their expertise in implementing TESA interactions. Participants wanted to improve their skills with more follow-up activities after the 7-month training. Participant C stated, “I always check on my survey [TESA training feedback form] that we need to revisit the TESA professional development after a couple of years.” Follow-up training can reinforce the strategies that are used throughout the year.

Frequency Data for Teacher Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to generate data about teachers' perceptions of how the implementation of TESA interactions in the classroom impacted student achievement. This concept is represented in the second half of the central research question: "What are K-12 teachers' perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students?" In Table 7, I present the frequency data for participant responses to the questionnaire.

Table 7

Teacher Questionnaire: General View and Aspects of TESA Program

Survey concepts	Elementary	Middle	High	Total
Qualities, characteristics, and/or abilities that typify successful TESA students				
Self-reflection	3	2		5
Patience	2	1	2	5
Leader	1	2	2	5
Impact of TESA program on student achievement				
Motivated students	3	2		5
Improved attendance	2	2	1	5
Student success before and after implementing TESA professional development				
More success after TESA interactions implemented	4	4	2	10
Interactions used frequently to measure achievement				
Proximity	2	3	2	7
Listening	2	2	2	6
High level of questions	1	3	1	5
Latency	2	3	1	6
Gains after the implementation of TESA professional development				
Decrease in discipline	4	4	2	10
Compliments each other	1	3	2	6
Setbacks after the implementation of TESA professional development				
More attention to low achievers	1			1

Findings Associated with Research Questions

In this study, I explored the perceptions of 10 teachers who were trained using the 15 interactions developed with the TESA professional development program and how this program affected their teaching strategies and relationships with their students. I

explored the experiences and views of teacher participants who taught in a small Kansas district. In the data obtained from interviews, observations, and questionnaires, I compiled themes on the strategies that teachers used in their classroom. I found no nonconforming or discrepant data.

Central Research Question

The central research question was the following: “What are K-12 teachers’ perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students?” TESA professional development is a behavioral change program, the purpose of which is to encourage teachers to interact equitably with all students. A secondary purpose of the TESA program is to heighten teacher awareness of perceptions about students’ academic achievement and how those perceptions could affect teacher expectations for students (LACOE, 2002).

I answered the first half of my central research question using data from Interview Questions 3-10. With regard to teachers’ perceptions of the TESA professional development program in general, I found four themes (effective training, high expectations for all achievers, no bias, and personal relationship building). I answered the second half of my central research question using data from the questionnaire. With regard to teachers’ perceptions as they impact their relationships to their students, I found two themes (student success after implementing TESA professional development and decrease in discipline problems after implementing TESA interactions).

Subquestion 1. Subquestion 1 was the following: “How do teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?” All of the participants

communicated classroom expectations with their students at the beginning of the school year. Participants communicated expectations to students as a shared responsibility, and communication was addressed as both teacher- and student-centered. To demonstrate understanding of the expectations, students repeated what the teachers communicated. Some teachers listed expectations on the board, and other teachers would listen to student conversations when the students were discussing the expectations. Participant C stated, “Expectations are created democratically, [and] we set expectations together.” A positive teacher-student relationship increases the level of participation in the classroom, which aligns with the feedback strand from the TESA’s interaction model (LACOE, 2008).

Subquestion 2. Subquestion 2 was the following: “How are teachers’ expectations different for the high, average, and low achievers, if at all?” All 10 participants indicated having high expectations for all level achievers in their classes. Participant E remarked, “I expect all of my students to improve academically.” Participant F stated,

My expectation is that all are going to get here [participant held hand above head] and I don’t think it is fair to set a high achievers goal here [hand still above head] and somebody that has a low achiever here [hand at waist level]. You’re cheating that low achiever.

High expectations align with the expectation theory discussed in the review of literature (Brophy & Good, 2003). When teachers clearly communicate their expectations to students in the classroom, teachers can build better relationships with students, resulting in improved academic outcomes.

Teachers expected high achievers to be (a) class leaders, (b) challenged to act as role models, and (c) self-directed learners to understand and demonstrate class expectations and to help to facilitate the learning of other students. Teachers expected average and low achievers to show equal growth in academic performance. Participant A commented, “I expect them to be able to reach the benchmark as well.” The participants suggested that teachers give more attention to low achievers than they do to average or high achievers. Participants indicated that the TESA program helped teachers to academically challenge the low-achieving students gradually as teachers call upon the students to perform. Participant B stated, “It might take them longer to get there, but they are expected to learn and demonstrate the same skills.” Participants mentioned that they taught the same concepts to all level achievers, but that students completed different activities based on their academic performance. Participant D explained, “TESA makes students feel they are all a part of the same process/activity.” The teachers’ actions determined who is most important, smart, and capable of performing in the classroom. These high expectations for all achievers align with Unit 1, equitable distribution, from TESA’s interaction model (LACOE, 2008).

Subquestion 3. Subquestion 3 was the following: “How do teachers perceive that ethnic, racial, or cultural background affects their students’ success, if at all?” All of the participants indicated that there was no bias in teacher expectations of student success; teachers did not consciously base expectations for student success on the students’ racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds. The participants did not believe their bias had an effect on the academic performance of their students.

Subquestion 4. Subquestion 4 was the following: “During class, how do the teachers ensure that they call on students of all abilities equally?” All participants called on every student consistently during class. More than half ($n = 6$) of the participants consistently asked critical thinking questions, and four participants used terms from Bloom’s taxonomy to ask higher level questions. Also, participants indicated that they used the popsicle stick random response system to ensure that every student received a question.

Subquestion 5. Subquestion 5 was the following: “How are teachers attempting to get to know all of their students so that they can build personal relationships with those students?” All 10 participants attempted to develop relationships with all of their students at the beginning of the school year. Participants built relationships with their students by having conversations with the students and reading student biographies Participant A indicated that she knew more about her low achievers because of their behavioral problems. Participants used interest surveys, collective biographies, and outside playtime to build personal relationships with their students. Participants also developed relationships with students using getting-to-know-you activities and by facilitating a daily class meeting at the carpet (the class gathers on a carpet in the classroom to discuss classroom activities and responsibilities for the day). Participant E stated, “I am real: sharing, collaborating, and talking. I live in the community. It is beyond reading, writing, and math.” Teachers can create a caring environment by being honest and developing an interpersonal relationship with their students. These strategies used by teachers to build relationships with students align with the personal regards strand from TESA’s

interaction model (LACOE, 2008).

I used the first question on the questionnaire to examine qualities, characteristics, and/or abilities that typify an academically successful TESA student. The teachers indicated that academically successful TESA students have leadership skills and are patient, open to change, able to self-reflect, aware of themselves, and able to control themselves. Participant B wrote, “Constant self-evaluation and self-awareness is essential if academic improvement is to be made.” Students who build relationships with teachers are more likely to be academically successful.

In the second question on the questionnaire, I asked teachers to describe the impact the TESA professional development had on student learning after it was introduced in the classroom (I based this question on the LACOE [2008] concept statement that the focus of the TESA program is the impact of teacher behavior on student success). To answer this question, teachers most often listed improved attendance and student motivation as outcomes of the implemented interactions from TESA. Teachers also identified more time to work, increased student confidence, and increased student engagement as outcomes of the implemented interactions. Participant D stated, “I feel that TESA has created more awareness when it comes to equitable interaction with all of my students.” Positive attention from teachers may result in positive academic success with students.

In the third question on the questionnaire, I asked teachers to compare their students' current academic achievement with their students' academic achievement prior to the implementation of the TESA professional development in the classroom. Teachers

indicated that their students were more successful after the implementation of the TESA interactions. Words and phrases used by the participants to describe this condition included “more students successful after the TESA training,” “feeling of a safe environment for the students after the TESA training,” and “more participation from students after the TESA training.” Participant B stated that “students have developed a passion for learning since I have begun to use the TESA interactions in my classroom.” Success can be measured by a students’ academic progress.

The fourth question on the questionnaire included examples of how teachers implemented the 15 interactions from the TESA professional development to measure academic achievement with students. For this question, the most often identified interaction was proximity and the least often identified interaction was courtesy. The distance between the teacher and the students make the location of the students (proximity) important. The physical distance between a teacher and student is noted as important in the TESA interactions. Participant A commented, “More time is given for student/teacher interaction allowing more time for students to complete assignments.” Participant D stated, “I provide all students with higher level questions and give them wait time before expecting a response.” Participants claimed that the 15 TESA interactions helped to improve teacher and student relationships.

In the last question on the questionnaire, I asked teachers to describe causes of student gains or setbacks after the TESA professional development had been implemented in the classroom. All 10 participants reported a decrease in discipline problems as a gain observed after implementing TESA interactions in their classrooms.

Words and phrases used by the participants to describe this condition included “increased gains because of higher expectations,” “correcting and affirming students so that they feel comfortable responding to questions,” and “allowing the student the opportunity to respond freely.” Participant E stated, “If anything, I feel that student gains have increased due to my high expectations for all students.” Participant F indicated that she had to remind herself to give (a) wait time before expecting students to respond to a question and (b) explanations for praise. Participant F also suggested that she was struggling to achieve student equitability when asking questions. She stated, “I am still catching myself giving more questions and wait time to my low achievers.” Participant F identified the giving of more attention to low-achieving students as a setback related to the implementation of TESA interventions. She stated that the expectation after TESA training is that equal time will be given to students regardless of their academic achievement.

Discrepant Data

I found no data that ran counter to the findings; therefore, no discrepant data needed to be explained or rewritten. The understanding of relationship building by participants varied by means of perception based on their implementation of the TESA training. These findings are attributed to the influence of personal experiences and interpretations as is related to individual implementation of the strategies used in the classroom. There was no evidence of such confusion among participants based on the responses noted in emerging themes and subthemes.

Patterns, Relationships, and Themes

Several reoccurring themes were noted while reviewing interview transcripts and field notes. Throughout individual interview sessions, participants mentioned personal experiences relative to building relationships with their students. Themes and subthemes that emerged from this qualitative case study were effective training, high expectations for all students, no bias for student success, and personal relationship building.

Central Research Question

The major themes that emerged from the primary research question included effective training, high expectations for all students, no bias for student success, and personal relationship building. All 10 participants stated that the 7-month training was effective based on their responses from the interview guide questions. When asked about the effectiveness of the TESA professional development training, the participants stated that the training forced them to re-examine how they were responding to their students. The participants indicated that they were aware of their interactions with their students and they ensured they were implementing the TESA strategies that aligned with the expectation theory (Brophy & Good, 2003) in the classroom. The teachers found that changes in their behavior affected their relationships with their students. Participant H felt that the training was effective because everything was organized for the entire training. Effective implementation of the program assumes that teachers cumulatively practice the interactions as they are presented unit by unit. Teachers must strategically organize and implement all five units of the TESA interaction model in their class to ensure the best academic results (LACOE, 2008).

When asked about the expectations they have for their high achieving students, average achieving students, and low achieving students, all participants stated that they expected all their students to perform at a high level. Regardless of the students' learning ability, the teacher participants asked the students to complete the same activity. Teachers noted that the training improved their awareness of having the same high expectations for all of their students. Participant D stated that, while she understood that there are gaps in the academic levels between students, her expectations were the same for all of her learners. Participant D claimed that it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that the low achievers in the classroom improve academically.

When asked if their expectation of student success was based on the students' ethnic, racial, or cultural background, all participants noted that they did not judge their students' performance based on racial identity. The teachers noted that the TESA training increased their awareness of the ethnic, racial, or cultural background of their students. Participant D responded that her job was to help her students improve; race or cultural background did not play a role in the expectations she had of her students. All of the teachers believed that they never looked at a student and judged academics based on the student's ethnic, racial, or cultural background.

When asked about building personal relationships with their students, participants stated that they started building relationships at the beginning of the school year. The use of seating charts helped teachers learn their students by name. The participants also used other methods to build teacher-student relationships. For example, Participant H greeted her students at the door and she asked them about their weekends to show interest in their

lives outside of school. Student profile sheets, biographies, and journaling their personal stories allowed students to share information about their families and their hobbies, thus creating a closer relationship between teacher and student.

Research Subquestion 1

Research Subquestion 1 asked the following: “How do teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?” Subquestion 1 was answered using data from Interview Questions 11-12. In the data, two subthemes emerged. The subthemes were expectations set the first day of school and class communication.

Subtheme 1: Expectations are set the first day of school. During the interviews, all of the participants reported communicating expectations to their students on the first day of school. Participant I noted that, at the beginning of the year, she set her expectations soon as her students entered the classroom. On Day 1, Participant C communicated her expectations using cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control (CARES). CARES is not a part of the TESA training, but was used at the beginning of the year to set teacher expectations for students. Participant G gave students a folder on the first day of school that included teacher expectations. Forms containing teacher expectations were distributed to students in the first day back packet. Participant H asked all of her students to have all forms completed and returned with a signature from the parents or guardians; Participant H kept the forms on file in a binder in the classroom.

Subtheme 2: Classroom communication. Based on the review of the interview data, all of the participants communicated classroom expectations to their students to

make sure that their students understood classroom expectations. Participant F had students discuss expectations among themselves and then the students shared that information with the teacher during class discussions. Students communicated with the teacher, and their fellow students, the expectations for the class. Participant H noted that the students also participated in shoulder talks and read alouds and modeled expectations as a form of communication. In a class taught by Participant G, students received a quiz as a team on the classroom expectations. Each student was required to indicate understanding of the classroom expectations on a form that was also signed by the parents of the student.

Research Subquestion 2

Research Subquestion 2 was answered using data from Interview Questions 13-15. In the data analysis, one subtheme (expectations for all achievers) emerged from the theme high expectations for all students. The participants expected all achievers to be leaders, act as role models, and be self-directed learners in the classroom.

Subtheme 1: High expectations for all achievers. Based on the review of data collected from the interviews, all participants indicated having high expectations for all level of achievers in their classrooms. Participant A noted that she expected all of her students to reach the first grade benchmark. She expected success from all of her achievers, and she expected them to be leaders, follow the rules, and be role models for each other. Participant C also had similar expectations for her students and stated, “I don’t care if you are high, middle, or low.” Participant B expected all of her students to perform at a high academic level regardless of their performance level.

Research Subquestion 3

Research Subquestion 3 includes two subthemes about the subject of improper discussion (e.g. bias and race) are included as a subtheme. Research Subquestion 3 was answered using data from Interview Questions 16-18. In the data analysis, I found two subthemes that emerged from the theme no bias for student success. The subthemes that emerged were no bias in expectations of students and no improper discussion with colleagues. The random response system allows teachers to call on all students equitably. Giving all students a chance to respond to questions using opinions, explanations, and evaluations of material covered. Teachers serve students by concentrating on the child's academic growth and putting aside their own preconceived ideas of students and their academic performance.

Subtheme 1: No bias in expectations of students. During the course of the interviews, all of the participants indicated that they had no bias in their expectations of their students' academic success in the classroom. A few participants noted that they did not consciously base expectations for student success on the students' racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds. Gender, race, or cultural bias was not used by any of the participants as a way to identify the academic expectation for their students. Participant B stated that the TESA training was the most significant for her when covering Unit 1 of the TESA interaction model that included the discussion on student racial, ethnic, and cultural background. Participant F did not judge her students' academic success on ethnic or racial characteristics. Participant D also commented that she did not judge her students based on race or economic status. Participant E believed that, while teachers see the

physical appearance of their students first, the TESA training taught her to look beyond her students' physical appearance and focus on their academic performance. Participant B stated that her job was to help her students improve academically; race or cultural background did not play a role in her expectations of her students.

Subtheme 2: No improper discussions with colleagues. During the course of the interviews, all of the participants indicated that there were no improper discussions with any colleagues about students' academic success in the classroom. Participant C noted that she has never had an improper discussion with a colleague about student performance based on race, ethnic, or cultural background. Participant G agreed and stated that her academic expectations of her students were never formed from a students' ethnicity or cultural background. Participant J noted that she reviewed students' academic progress and not the students' skin color. The 15 interactions used in TESA training puts in perspective how teachers should treat all students.

Research Subquestion 4

Research Subquestion 4 was answered using data from Interview Questions 19-21. Three subthemes emerged from Theme 2 (high expectations for all students). The identified emergent subthemes were higher-order thinking questions for all achievers, critical thinking questions, and the use of Bloom's taxonomy.

Subtheme 1: Higher-order thinking questions for all achievers. Based on the review of data from the interviews, all of the participants indicated that they ask students higher-order thinking questions in the classroom. Teachers expected students to respond to questions using opinions, explanations, and evaluations of material covered. The

popsicle stick random response system was used to ensure that all students were called on equally. Participant B noted that if she changed the level of questions, some of her students may not have opportunities to think through the questions before responding. Participant H made sure that all of her students were engaged in the classroom discussions because she believed that all of her students had something to contribute to the discussion. Participant I taught students how to take tests; students who are able to evaluate and process information may perform better on the multiple choice questions seen on high stakes tests.

Subtheme 2: Critical thinking questions. Based on the data from the interviews, all participants indicated that they asked students to respond to critical thinking questions in the classroom. Participant C allowed her students to ask for help from a friend to ensure that the students demonstrated critical thinking skills when working out a problem. Participant B did not use memorization in her classroom; rather, she asked students think critically with other students in the classroom. Participant F also stated that all of the questions she posed in the classroom required students to think critically. The teachers asked questions that required critical thinking; they wanted to ensure that all students were prepared to demonstrate critical thinking skills, especially on high-stakes tests.

Subtheme 3: Use of Bloom's Taxonomy. Based on the review of data collected from the interviews, most of the participants indicated that they used Bloom's taxonomy with the majority of their students in the classroom. Recall questions are the lowest level of Bloom taxonomy and involve restating information. Recall consists of remembering

and reciting key facts, ideas, definitions, and rules the most common form of questioning. Participant F stated that making sure that students can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate their responses when asked a question made for better classroom discussion. Participant J used Bloom's taxonomy to ask all students the same types of questions. Participant J claimed that she had all students create their own word problems in math and reteach the problem and solution to another student. Many of the teachers used questions from the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy, which required students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate during learning tasks.

Research Subquestion 5

Research Subquestion 5 was answered using data from Interview Questions 22-23. In the data analysis, three subthemes emerged from the personal relationship building theme. The emergent subthemes were expectations set the first day of school and class communication. The identified emergent themes were use of team activities, use of student profiles, and strategies used at the beginning of the school year.

Subtheme 1: Use of team activities. Based on the data collected from the interviews, most of the participants indicated that the use of team-building activities with students helped to construct teacher and students relationships. Team building was created using "getting-to-know-you" activities by the teacher with students. When time permitted, teachers inquired about their students' weekend to let the students know they cared about their lives outside of school. Participant C played a "get-to-know-you" game" to allow her students a chance to build personal relationships with each other. The starburst game was used to build relationships by Participant C. The starburst game is a

method for students to become acquainted with each other and was used as a tool for activating higher-order thinking in classroom discussions. Students thought they were simply receiving a treat or reward. The teacher explained that each student had to share the number of facts that corresponded with the number of starbursts candies they received. For example, if a student had two pieces of candy, then the student had to share two facts. Starbursts were also used to emphasize team work in class competitions. For example, the winning team may have had a player or several players who did not score as many points as their teammates; however, the team was successful because they worked together to succeed. In other group activity, students were given two starburst candies. Each question was grouped by the color of starburst candy. For example, red meant that the student had to identify a favorite food and blue meant the student had to identify a favorite sport. Participant J also used group activities so her students could become better acquainted with each other.

Subtheme 2: Use of student information. Based on the data collected from the interviews, most of the participants indicated using student profiles with the majority of their students to become acquainted with them. A student profile offers information about a student, which can be presented and used in different ways. Student profiles included data submitted by a student, as well as information added by the teacher to provide a global understanding of the student. Teachers often used surveys, biographies, and journals to gather information from the students. Collective biographies were used to provide information about students and their families. The participants read interest surveys and student biographies completed by the students to determine student interests.

Participant I encouraged her students to share personal stories when journaling to gain information that might help to facilitate relationship-building with the students.

Participant F had students complete profile sheets that included information about student hobbies, favorite foods, favorite colors, and favorite subjects. Participant B had parents complete collective biographies to become more acquainted with her students. When profiles sheets were completed, Participant H conducted conferences with her students. Teachers used the student profiles to help them understand their students by noting the students' academic strengths, weaknesses, and preferences for learning.

Subtheme 3: Strategies used at the beginning of the school year. Based on the data collected from the interviews, participants indicated using strategies to build relationships most often at the start of the school year with their students. Participant H noted that she wanted to use strategies that were positive. Anytime a new student would arrive, Participant D would revisit the techniques used from the beginning of the school year to ensure that they were effective in creating a learner friendly environment. For example, she offered students individual assistance when they needed help. Participant I stated that she worked on getting to know her students all year long. She wanted to make sure her students felt comfortable in the classroom and did not use sarcasm in her communication with students. Participant I viewed sarcasm as a form of shaming students, which could lead to a negative learning environment.

Evidence of Quality

I ensured the accuracy and trustworthiness of the data that I collected for this study. First, I was diligent during data collection to be sure I accurately recorded the data

I generated. I ensured accuracy by audio recording the interviews, recording my observations by hand, writing reflective notes during the observations, and using survey responses the teachers wrote themselves. Then, I transcribed the audio data and electronically captured the observations and survey data. This process helped ensure I had not made any errors and that my electronic records accurately reflected the original data I generated. Second, during the interviews, I ensured that I understood participants' responses to interview questions by asking clarifying questions. Third, I collected sufficient data to be able to generate rich and thick descriptions of my findings. Fourth, I used an established method for handling the data during the analysis process. I provide samples of my efforts to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the data I generated during the observations and interviews and using the questionnaire (see Appendices D, E, and F). I followed the data analysis procedures that align with the case study approach.

Yin (2009) stated that two procedures can increase the strength of a case study: using various sources of evidence and forming a chain of evidence. Data were collected using multiple sources that included interviews, observations, and questionnaires (looking for consistencies or discrepancies) from the elementary school, middle school, and high school in a school district in Kansas. The member checking process included determining accuracy of the tentative findings of the study and sending the information to the participants via e-mail. Member checking required taking data and interpretations back to the participants so they can confirm the credibility of the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985).

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the classroom experiences and perceptions of a sample of teachers who integrated teaching interactions from the TESA professional development program into their daily lessons. The teachers described their experience with the TESA professional development training program, and they believed that the training impacted their relationships with their students. The teachers noted that they had higher expectations for all achievers. The teachers also built personal relationships with their students and believed that more of their students experienced success after implementing TESA interactions.

The training and use of interactions were described as a way to offer response opportunities, feedback, and personal regard to students as a way to impact their relationships to their students. I reviewed teachers' questionnaires for the TESA professional development training program. Teachers indicated a consistency with the TESA professional development program; they focused on the implementation of the 15 interactions used to impact relationship building. The teachers used the 15 interactions during their classroom activities, which indicated they followed the programs' recommendations. Section 5 includes my summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future study.

Section 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

In this section, I provide an overview of my study, an interpretation of my findings by referencing outcomes in Section 4, and connect the findings to related literature before identifying implications for social change. Finally, I provide recommendations for action and further study.

The TESA professional development program, a behavioral change program centered on 15 classroom interactions, was designed for teachers of all grades and was nationally authenticated in 1974 (LACOE, 2002). Although quantitative data have been accumulated about the use of the TESA program (LACOE, 1979), at the time I conducted this study, little was known about the teachers' perceptions of and experiences with the program. For this reason, I conducted this qualitative case study to explore teachers' perceptions of the TESA program as it impacts their relationship with students, which may affect students' academic achievement.

Those eligible to participate in this study were teachers in the focus school district who held a Kansas teaching certificate for any combination of subject areas in Grades K-12 and who were TESA-trained. Of the eligible TESA-trained teachers who I e-mailed to participate in my study, all 10 eligible teachers agreed to participate. Prior to participating in this study, the participants had participated in TESA training for approximately 7 months and had implemented a number of the TESA interventions in their classrooms. There was one central research question and five research subquestions on teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the TESA professional development program as it relates to building relationships with students.

Data sets collected from participants included interviews, classroom observations, and questionnaires. TESA coordinators in the school district sent an e-mail to all highly qualified teachers inviting them to participate in my study. Ten teachers, who were willing to participate in my study, contacted me via e-mail so that we could schedule mutually convenient times for the teachers to be observed, participate in the interviews, and complete the questionnaire. I used a 23-item, semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix A). A 5-item questionnaire was developed for this study (see Appendix B). To collect data during observations, I used a form I developed for this study, which included (a) data categories for five domains (physical setting, participant data, type of activity, content of teacher-led discussion, and subtle factors) and (b) blank space for my reflective notes (see Appendix C). The data collected during the observations were in the form of field notes. The form was a template with tables that included a section for field notes and a section for researcher reflections (see Appendix D)

Data were analyzed in two different ways. First, data collected during the observations were used to compile the descriptive findings associated with the participants' demographics, the teachers' implementation of interventions, and the classroom environments. Second, interview and questionnaire data were analyzed using Creswell's (2009) 6-step method for analyzing qualitative data. Interviews, observations, and survey questionnaires were transcribed and recorded in electronic format using a Word document. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed within 24 hours after the interview concluded. Responses from the teachers were color-coded using color pencils when the response appeared more than one time from each individual. A narrative was

used to present the data from my study. Tables were included to give a visual representation of the information that was written. For example, Table 1 included the TESA interaction model, Table 2 included the participant demographics, Table 3 included the description of the participants, Table 4 included my classroom observations of the participants, Table 5 included the participants' perceptions of the TESA program, Table 6 included TESA's impact on student relationships with the teacher, and Table 7 included the aspects of the TESA program.

Data were summarized and presented as a sequence of strategies in accordance with the research questions presented. After completing my data analysis, four themes and 11 subthemes emerged from this qualitative case study:

- Theme 1: Effective training
- Theme 2: High expectations for all students
- Theme 3: No bias for student success
- Theme 4: Personal relationship building

The following subthemes emerged

- Expectations set the first day of school
- Class communication
- High expectations for all achievers
- No bias in expectations of students
- No improper discussion with colleagues
- Higher-order thinking questions for all achievers

- Critical thinking questions
- Use of Bloom's taxonomy
- Use of team activities
- Use of student information
- Building relationships at the beginning of the school year

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of this qualitative case study were addressed in the central research question and the five subquestions. The literature review, including the conceptual framework, was used to develop an understanding of the themes and patterns that emerged from this study.

Given the nature of the questions that were used to direct the development of this study, I used an expectation theory approach. According to the expectation theory, teachers have interpretations of each student (Good & Brophy, 2003). I used the expectation theory in this study to make sense of the K-12 grade teachers' perceptions of the TESA professional development program and its impact on their relationship with their students. When building relationships, teachers can form expectations about students based on their perceptions regarding the student individualities and how the student performs academically. This analysis of the teachers' combined perceptions and teachers' expectations of their students aligned with the expectation theory.

Interview Findings

Student success is dependent on teachers receiving relevant training and support that increases professional growth and can be accomplished through effective

professional development (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009). When asked about the effectiveness of the TESA professional development training, all of the participants believed that the training was effective as implemented in their classrooms. The participants described the training as helpful in becoming aware of their possible biases against students. Participant B indicated the need to be “open and honest” during the training to receive feedback that would improve interactions with her students. Teachers must form their expectations for students’ learning based on the students’ academic performance rather than from personal bias (Brophy & Good, 2003).

Teachers were asked about their expectations for their high, average, and low achievers. Following training, the teachers had the same expectations for all students, regardless of students’ achievement level. Teachers must assume that the levels of student achievement will remain consistent. This assumption verified the work of Good and Brophy (2003) who noted the relationship between student achievement and teachers’ expectations. Teachers create expectations about students’ behavior and academic success based on what the teachers know about the students at a given moment in time (Good, 1981).

Observation Findings

Data from teacher implementation of TESA interventions were collected during classroom observations. The data were recorded on an observation collection form (Appendix C) in the section for reflective notes. During the course of the 10 observations, I was able to observe all 15 of the TESA interactions, Unit A (equitable distribution, individual help, latency, delving, and higher level questioning), Unit B (affirm/correct,

praise, reasons for praise, listening, accepting feelings), and Unit C (proximity, courtesy, personal interest/compliments, touching, desist). Korthagen et al. (2014) explored teacher/student interactions in the classroom and found that teachers who thought they were effective when allowing students time to give a response actually did not allow the students adequate time to respond. Teachers in Korthagen's study were not TESA-trained. In this study, latency, higher level thinking, listening, and proximity were four of the interactions listed by the teachers used most frequently in their classroom.

Data collected from the observations were also used to generate a general description of the classroom environment and study participants. This information provided a means of understanding the learning environment in the classrooms that aligned with the 15 TESA interactions. Specifically, data were collected using five domains: physical setting, participant data, type of activity, content of teacher-led discussion, and subtle factors.

During my observations, I noted that the physical arrangement of many classrooms facilitated the ability of teachers to move freely throughout their classrooms. Proximity (arm's reach) refers to the location of students in the classroom and the distance between the student and the teacher (LACOE, 2008). Wanaka and Ruhl (2008) and Fernandes, Jinyan, and Rinaldo (2011) agreed with the tenets of TESA interaction proximity and how seats are arranged in the classroom. Teachers in close proximity of their students can offer individual help and give students individual assistance resulting in increased student performance (Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). Many times, classroom seating arrangements dictate teacher proximity to students (Fernandes et al., 2011). TESA-

trained Participants I and J had desks that were arranged in T-shaped rows for their students. Participants G and H arranged desks in groups of four. Students who sat in arranged T-shaped rows were more likely to participate in class discussions.

The observation process allowed me to learn how the 10 participants implemented the interactions of the TESA professional development program. All 15 interactions were observed in the physical setting of the classroom. I observed teachers helping and listening to individual students more in the smaller classroom setting and in the classroom with a teaching assistant. During my observations, seven participants taught a reading lesson, two taught a science lesson, and two taught a math lesson. The type of activity does not dictate students' behavior or learning, but the instructor's teaching style dictates whether or not students can connect the learning to their lives (Wannarka, & Ruhl, 2008). If the focus of the activity is shared among all students, the teacher can ensure that all students are on task and can learn.

Questionnaire Findings

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire to generate data about the implementation of TESA interactions in the classroom and their perceptions of the impact of the program on student achievement. Participants expected success from all achievers and expected all students to become leaders in the classroom. After the TESA program was introduced in the classroom, the teachers purposefully developed opportunities for equitable distribution responses when students were asked questions. The results of my study coincide with those of Vogt and Rogalla (2009). Vogt and Rogaland noted that student success is associated with multiple aspects of teacher interactions in the

classroom. Smart and Marshall (2013) claimed that the increased proximity of the teachers to students can lead to a decrease in student disciplinary action. Teachers used the tenets of TESA to teach students self-discipline, creating a decrease in discipline in the class environment so students can work and study without disruption (LACOE, 2008). The results of my study concur with those of Wubbels and Brekelmans (2012), who believed that teacher/student problems led to setbacks in student academic achievement. Teachers took a personal interest in their students and gave compliments because of the established relationships that were built.

Implications for Social Change

At the heart of Walden's mission statement is social change. The findings of this study present implications for positive social change in the field of education at the K-12 level. I found that implementation of TESA interactions can help to build positive relationships between teachers and students. School leaders should provide teachers with an opportunity to build relationships with their students, using the TESA program. Students who have close, positive, and supportive relationships with their teachers may also reach higher academic success (Vogt & Rogalla, 2009). The TESA model may provide teachers with strategies to help students feel a personal connection to the teacher, communicate with the teacher, accept direction and praise from the teacher, trust the teacher, and achieve at higher levels of academic success.

Recommendations for Action

Because the participants indicated that the implementation of TESA contributed to improved student relationships, the following are recommendations that should be taken by local officials, based on the findings presented in this study.

1. School principals should observe classrooms to make sure the TESA model is being taught throughout the entire school year
2. School principals should complete the TESA professional program training along with their teachers to create a trainer program so more educators can become TESA certified
3. School principals should complete the TESA professional development training to explain the programs' basic concepts and objectives.

Completing the training will allow them to stimulate interest in identifying potential volunteers for the in-service as well as hire those who appear to use TESA tenets

4. School principals should support follow-up or additional TESA professional development training after teachers have completed the 7 month training to ensure that teachers are consistently using the TESA tenets in their classrooms

The findings of this study will be disseminated to the school district's assistant superintendent and the study participants so that school administrators can improve the implementation of TESA in the district. As requested, I also will share my results with LACOE, the home office of the TESA professional development program.

Recommendations for Further Study

Because research on this topic has been limited, there are opportunities for further investigation of TESA. In the findings from this qualitative case study, I offer insight into building relationships between teachers and students. One possible area of recommendation for future research may include a study to explore the impact of implementing TESA on student academic achievement. The researcher could collect data using interviews, observations, and surveys. Conducting such a study in the same school district in which I conducted this current study may identify improved student achievement using the TESA professional development interactions in the classroom.

To determine if the TESA program improves student outcomes, a quantitative study could be conducted. The researcher could compare individual student test scores over the course of 1 year for students of teachers who have participated in TESA training (and who purportedly implement the 15 TESA interactions in their classrooms) and students of teachers who have not participated in TESA training. This current study included 10 teachers from three schools: one elementary school ($n = 4$), one middle school ($n = 4$), and one high school ($n = 2$). Because it is possible that older students may respond differently to the TESA interactions, another idea for future research could be a single-case study involving only teachers at the high-school level. Replicating the study in the high school only, and including teachers from every grade level within the school district, may provide different results with regard to teachers' perceptions of the TESA program and its impact on student achievement.

Researcher's Reflections

This study grew out my concern for students who struggle to pass state standardized tests. As an educator, I want to encourage students who are struggling academically to overcome obstacles to achievement so that they can experience success. My goal is to provide information about how TESA professional development training can lead to the professional growth of educators. As teachers improve their pedagogical skills through TESA professional development training, student academic outcomes may improve in their classrooms.

Identifying a specific problem around which I could develop a study was overwhelming. Once I determined the problem on which I would focus, it become easier to develop research questions and identify the type of study I needed to conduct to answer those questions. The most challenging part of the study was analyzing the data. During the data analysis process, I had to understand, interpret, and convey the meaning of the data as a whole. I learned the importance of organization and arrangement during the process of coding, grouping, and keeping track of the participants' responses.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to building relationships and interacting with students; rather, teachers must determine what strategies work for each child because it is the responsibility of the teacher to help every child achieve success. While there is no magical formula for student success, I found that the TESA professional development program, when implemented with consistency and commitment, may improve student success. While I remain open to any practices that will increase student achievement, based on the results of this study, I believe that the implementation of

TESA interactions disseminated through the TESA professional development training program is critical for the improvement of student outcomes in the Kansas school district. This end result may be realized when teachers and students develop interactions that enhance student learning.

I do not believe that I had any preconceived notions about how the research would unfold because I explored the perceptions of educators from a state neighboring the one in which I work. It was important for me to recognize that the study would be valuable even if the data did not convey the information that I thought should be told. The results would still provide information about how professional development training, along with teacher implementation of TESA interactions, could influence academic achievement when integrated. What I learned about myself during this study is that I am a great listener. I did not make any comments to any participants before, during, or after the data collection process because I did not want to influence the unfolding of the data in any way, deliberate or otherwise.

Concluding Statement

Based on the participants' perceptions and the literature review of this study, I concluded that teachers should make every effort to set high expectations for and interact equitably with all students to increase academic achievement. Rowan and Miller (2007) noted that school reform policies that include research-based professional development programs could improve the quality of teaching and support increased student learning. The TESA professional development program is one such research-based program that contains detailed procedures and interactions that teachers can use to improve the quality

of teaching and support increased student learning.

In the data I obtained through interviews, observations, and questionnaires, I found that the majority of teachers who participated in this study used the TESA-based interactions consistently in their classrooms. The findings provide evidence for professional development that builds positive relationships between teachers and students. Positive outcomes for students result when teachers participate in professional development that is ongoing, includes the use of various strategies, and supports the curriculum with improved instructional practices (Jacobs et al., 2011). By participating in professional development that is focused on improving the quality of teaching and supporting increased student learning, such as that offered through the TESA program, teachers can increase the academic achievement of all students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Background

1. Describe the position you currently hold at your school and your teaching experience, including your current position and grade level(s) taught.
2. How many years has TESA been a part of your school?

Central Research Question: “What are K-12 teachers’ perceptions of TESA as it impacts their relationships to their students?”

3. Describe the training you participated in to prepare you to implement the TESA program into your classroom.
4. What was your impression of the effectiveness of this training?
5. Describe the time and work requirements you are expected to fulfill as part of the TESA program.
6. Describe a typical cluster meeting at your school.
7. What do you see as some of the positive and negative effects of TESA in your classroom?
8. How has the TESA program contributed to the collaboration of professionals in your building?
9. How has there been any effect on the working relationship among those in the building?
10. If you could improve one thing about TESA, what would it be?

Subquestion 1: How do teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?

11. How do you communicate your expectations to all of the students in your classroom?
12. How do you make sure that all of your students understand your expectations?

Research Subquestion 2: How might the teachers' expectations be different for the high, average, and low achievers, if any?

13. What expectations do you have for your high achieving students?
14. What expectations do you have for your average achieving students?
15. What expectations do you have for your low achieving students?

Research Subquestion 3: How might the teachers know whether their ethnic, racial, or cultural background affects the students' success, if any?

16. Have you ever based your expectations of student success on your student's ethnic or racial background? How do you know?
17. Have you ever based your expectations of student success on your student's cultural background? How do you know?
18. Explain if you have ever had any improper discussions with your colleagues related to your student's success based on their ethnic, racial, or cultural background and your level of expectations?

Research Subquestion 4: During class, how do the teachers call on students of all abilities equally?

19. What level of questions is asked of your high achieving students and how often?
20. What level of questions is asked of your average achieving students and how often?
21. What level of questions is asked of your low achieving students and how often?

Subquestion 5: How are teachers attempting to get to know all of their students to build personal relationships?

22. What techniques or strategies are used to get to know all of your students on a personal level?
23. How often are these techniques or strategies used throughout the school year?

Appendix B: Teacher Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to aid in a study on the Teacher Expectation Student Achievement (TESA) Professional Development (professional development) Program. The intent is to get a general view of what teachers perceive about various aspects of the professional development program regarding student achievement. Please do not place your name anywhere on this questionnaire. I will email a copy of this questionnaire so you may complete it prior to my visit. Please fill this out on your own time, and not during school time. When you are finished, please place the questionnaire in a sealed envelope and I will pick it up during my visit.

1. What qualities, characteristics, and/or abilities typify an academically successful TESA student?

2. Can you describe the impact on student learning after the TESA professional development has been introduced in your classroom?

3. Can you compare your students' academic achievement now with your students' academic achievement prior to the implementation of the TESA professional development in your classroom?

4. Which of the 15 interactions were used frequently from the TESA professional development to measure academic achievement with your students?

5. Can you describe the cause of student gains or setbacks after the TESA professional development has been implemented in your classroom?

Thank you for taking the time to fill this questionnaire out, your input is valuable.

If more space is needed please use the back of this sheet.

Appendix C: Observation Data Collection Form

Date:

Timeframe:

Participant:

Field notes	Researcher reflection
<p>I. Physical setting: <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Conference room <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description Accessories: <input type="checkbox"/> Audiovisual equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Computer technology <input type="checkbox"/> Props Description: II. Participant data: Teacher gender M F Approximate age of teacher _____ Ethnicity of teacher _____ Year as school teacher _____ Description: Others present: <input type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description (number, gender, approximate age and ethnicity only): III. Type of activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description: IV. Content of teacher-led discussion: V. Subtle factors: Nonverbal behavior of teacher: (facial expressions, mannerisms, change of positions, of personal space, etc.) Unplanned activities: (interruptions, teacher responses to others, etc.) Other factors: (degree of planning/preparation; skill in introducing, leading, and concluding activity; observed level of comfort with activity) Observer behavior: (comments, location in room, activities) Other:</p>	

Appendix D: Sample of Observation Notes

Teacher A

1st grade 10:00 - interview

Appendix D: Observation Data Collection Form

Date: Monday 5/7/12 Time Frame: 8:30-10:00 Participant: Teacher A

Field notes	Researcher reflection
<p>I. Physical setting: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Conference room <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description: Really big and Roomy Accessories: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audiovisual equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Computer technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Props Description:</p> <p>II. Participation data: Teacher gender M (F) Approximate age of teacher _____ Ethnicity of teacher C Year as school teacher _____ Description:</p> <p>Others present: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description (number, gender, approximate age and ethnicity only):</p> <p>III. Type of activity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lesson <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description:</p> <p>IV. Content of teacher-led discussion:</p> <p>V. Subtle factors: Nonverbal behavior of teacher: (facial expressions, mannerisms, change of positions, of personal space, etc.)</p>	<p>lots of tags, carpet area, lots of visuals on the wall lots of bulletin boards, walls converted to bulletin boards white boards for writing lots of reading material. lots of visuals in the classroom ceiling fans cubby area for student</p> <p>students moved to tables to take spelling test. praise students then said why she praised him. pictures of students posted *lifelong guidelines - student worked well by themselves.</p> <p>1. spelling test 2. journal writing 3. Book Read on carpet</p> <p>Constantly moving, very patient with students, soft voice, latency, - reinforcement by saying how well a student behaved</p>

* what other TESA pieces were used during the lesson.

lots of latency

Teacher A

* one teacher
came in
students
continued
to work
and talk.

Field notes	Researcher reflection
<p>Unplanned activities: (interruptions, teacher responses to others, etc.)</p> <p>Other factors: (degree of planning/preparation; skill in introducing, leading, and concluding activity; observed level of comfort with activity) Well planned use of time</p> <p>Observer behavior: (comments, location in room, activities)</p> <p>Other: Walked through out the room entire table</p> <p>Set in back of room small chair.</p>	<p>Quiet activity - words for next week.</p> <p>lots of praise for students and they knew why she was giving them praise.</p> <p>students asked good question "what is the base word"</p> <p>- today was reading for the students.</p>

≡ Why do you need to explain to people what you are thinking.

- (wait time.)
- (praise)
- (communication)
- (close to students)
- (Repeats what students says)

- lots of different questions and change of activities.
- gave students lots of time to come up with the answer.
- call student by name.

Appendix D: Observation Data Collection Form

Date: Monday 5/7/12 Time Frame: 1:55-2:25 Participant: Teacher D

Field notes	Researcher reflection
<p>I. Physical setting: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom <i>5 different teacher desks</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Conference room <input type="checkbox"/> Other Description <i>appears to have several other tutors share in that room</i> Accessories: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audiovisual equipment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Props <i>clothes, stars, books</i> Description:</p> <p>II. Participation data: Teacher gender <input checked="" type="radio"/> M <input type="radio"/> F Approximate age of teacher _____ Ethnicity of teacher _____ Year as school teacher _____ Description:</p> <p>Others present: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <i>3 total</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers <i>2 other females walked in during tutoring session</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Parents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <i>two other adults Females</i> Description (number, gender, approximate age and ethnicity only):</p> <p>III. Type of activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other tutoring Description: <i>Reading activity</i></p> <p>IV. Content of teacher-led discussion:</p> <p>V. Subtle factors: Nonverbal behavior of teacher: (facial expressions, mannerisms, change of positions, of personal space, etc.)</p>	<p>Round tables / 5 chairs per table.</p> <p>lots of deco on walls (clothes, papers)</p> <p>- desktop, laptop, smartboard</p> <p>- pictures of students</p> <p>- ceiling fans; opened windows</p> <p>- Question of the Day?</p> <p>- lots of visuals</p> <p>- Always thanked student, regardless of situation.</p> <p>- 1 female (AA)</p> <p>- 2 males (AA, C)</p> <p>- Reading through word list</p> <p>- students choose reading books; teacher reads title of books.</p> <p>- teacher touched student to calm him down, pointed to student's paper to help with guided reading</p> <p>- eyes on your own paper.</p>

- teacher explained or let student explain why she took pencil.
- patience with student

Teacher D

Field notes	Researcher reflection
<p>Unplanned activities: (interruptions, teacher responses to others, etc.)</p> <p>Other factors: (degree of planning/preparation; skill in introducing, leading, and concluding activity; observed level of comfort with activity)</p> <p>Observer behavior: (comments, location in room, activities)</p> <p>Other: ELL tutor, made personal phone call, student listening to conversation</p>	<p>- Teacher pulls student back into lesson.</p> <p>- Teacher seated with students on their level</p> <p>- Continue to called students names</p>

- Reading as a group.
- Went really quickly before allowing student to respond to question.
- very quiet voice for tutoring.
- teacher reads, students give the responses ~~for~~ for the blank.
- continued to call on ~~one~~ particular student, using his name,

Appendix E: Sample of Coded Interview Responses

Research Subquestion 1. How will the teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?	
Participant	Theme
A	Well I will put on the board the steps for directions, I will have my class schedule on the board, I will often times number my expectations with my fingers and have them repeat the first thing, second thing, third thing in ways that are hopefully clear to everybody, those students that need more support will have them broken down a little more specific, I start day one with class expectations
B	at the beginning of the year my expectations are set by democracy, my kids, we create our own rules, I know where I am leading towards and I am trying to navigate them in that direction, I give them the empowerment of saying “oh we should do this”, my expectations are set through democratic collaboration at the beginning of the school year
C	Starting from day one we do our CARES, cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control, they are taught not just academically but I am responsible and they are also for their emotional, moral well-being, as well as their learning environment, we discuss at the beginning of the school year, before each lesson we meet up on the carpet, we do a mini lesson, we songs, chants, we model, repetition, praise, validation, they all know it is okay to make a mistake
D	Focus on objectives, or skills for that week in reading, talk about this is what I will be looking for, as I am listening to your conversations, having them, we discuss it as a group, so that they understand what that skill is or the objective, as far as behavior we talk about, we have cooperative leaning, something that tied into the reading curriculum, talk about expectations for each one of those, I make it clear, at the beginning what I am looking and listening for, definitely have discussion at the start of the school year
E	We talk about expectations at the start of the school year, a rubric is used to examine and discuss class assignments, the key is having clear expectations, sometimes we use learning contracts, students have to have a portfolio for class and have expectations written, students have multiple opportunities to hear expectations, expectations are written on the board similar to standards, some days I hear student talking about expectations for assignments, I have asked students their opinion about expectations for the course
F	I communicate expectations at the beginning of the school year, students will remind each other of expectations when working on assignments, I over hear their conversations, I try to run a democratic classroom, let them think that they have made the decisions about expectations for the course, we use rubrics and portfolios for the class, expectations are written on the board, sometimes I will repeat the expectations for an assignment for the students, I am continuously repeating expectations throughout the school year
G	I have my students complete an achievement contract at the beginning of the school year, the expectations are listed on the board, my students remind each other of expectations for assignments sometimes, we talk about expectations together, I remind students of expectations as we move through the school year, I try to make sure my expectations are very clear

Research Subquestion 1. How will the teachers communicate their expectations for academic achievement to the students?

Participant	Theme
H	I model expectations for my students, we have lots of conversations at the start of the school year, my students talk to each other all the time about expectations for assignments, I repeat the expectations to my students daily, I try to include my students when discussing expectations, sometimes they will have good input to include for expectations, expectations are listed on the board, sometimes I gently remind the students of our assignment expectations
I	class contracts at the beginning of the school year with expectations included, I ask students to have parents sign contracts so they will know my expectations, We discuss expectations daily, often times I overhear my students reminding each other of class expectations, they correct themselves a lot of the times, in the past we have work on expectations together, expectations are written on the white board as reminder, I will sometimes ask a question and have the students to repeat the expectation if they are off task
J	students take home contracts for parents to sign at the start of the school year, I try to live up to the expectations I set for my students, we write expectations on the board as a reminder, I repeat expectations when students are off task, I hear students reminding each other of expectations, I look at assignments to see if students are following and understanding my expectations, the first day of school is big and gentle reminders as we progress through the school year

Appendix F: Sample of Coded Survey Responses

1. What qualities, characteristics, and/or abilities typify an academically successful TESA student?	
Participant	Theme
A	one who is open to change and self-reflection, gets to know other students and use this knowledge to increase student engagement, a TESA student is able to make sure he/she is receiving the best education possible
B	one who can reflect on teaching practices as they pertain to themselves, constant self-evaluation and self-awareness, these two qualities are essential if improvement is to be made
C	self-control, patience, self-esteem, and leadership
D	aware of each student in their classroom, makes an effort to get to know their classmates, patience, be honest and sincere with their peers
E	Be on time for class, open to new ideas, aware of self, be able to control self, listen and pay attention, be a leader, reflect over class material, patience
F	Take advantage of all opportunities, control one self, be aware of self, attendance, reflect over lessons, be open to others suggestions, be able to lead, work hard and have patience
G	Ask for help when needed, have leadership skills, be open minded, reflect on day's activities, have patience with peers and teacher, be in control of self, stay focused,
H	Leadership abilities, open to suggestions, patience is a great quality, ask questions when they do not understand, aware of self-behavior, train themselves to pay attention, focus and not daydream, respect for others
I	Have patience, have self-control, have leadership skills, self-awareness, be open to change, respect others, be polite, are prepared for class (supplies, etc), submit assignments on time
J	Come to school daily, have good leadership skills, be able to control self, be open to new resources and tools to create assignments, reflect at the end of the day, participate in class, turn in assignments when due, patience,

Curriculum Vitae

Kathy Rena Howard

Education

- 2014 (expected) EDD, Administrative Leadership for Teaching and Learning,
Walden University, Minneapolis, MN**
- 2005 MA, Library and Information, Trevecca Nazarene University,
Nashville, TN**
- 1991 MA, Educational Psychology and Counselor Education
Tennessee
Technological University, Cookeville, TN**
- 1989 BS, Secondary Education, Biology, Tennessee Technological
University, Cookeville, TN**

Experience

- 2014-present Assistant Principal, Cane Ridge High School, Antioch, TN**
- 2010-2013 Library Information Specialist, Cane Ridge High School,
Antioch, TN**
- 2011 Adjunct Professor, Everest College Phoenix, Santa Ana, CA
- 2007 Adjunct Professor, University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ
- 2005-2010 Library Information Specialist, Hunters Lane High School,
Nashville, TN**
- 1999-2005 Teacher, Whites Creek High School, Whites Creek, TN**
- 1992-1999 Teacher, DuPont Tyler Middle School, Hermitage, TN**

- 1990-1992** **Admissions Counselor, Tennessee Technological University,
Cookeville, TN**
- 1988** **Resident Advisor, Tennessee Technological University,
Cookeville, TN**
- 1984, 1986, 1987** **Substitute Teacher, Fayette Comprehensive High School,
Somerville, TN**

Honors and Accomplishments

- **Principal Designate, DuPont Tyler Middle School.**
- **Principal Designate, Whites Creek High School.**
- **Principal Designate, Hunters Lane High School.**
- **Science Department Chair.**
- **Leadership Development Process Participant.**
- **Vanderbilt Virtual School Grant Recipient.**
- **National Institute of Health Participant.**
- **Vanderbilt Minority Engineering Summer Research Program Participant.**
- **Teacher Training Institute for Math, Science, and Technology Participant.**
- **SECME Summer Institute-University of Miami Participant.**
- **SECME Summer Institute-University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa Participant.**
- **SECME Summer Institute-University of Georgia Participant.**
- **MNEA Distinguished Classroom Teacher-1999.**
- **WCHS Teacher of the Year-2004.**