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The Cooperating Teacher's Role Within the Context of a Coteaching Clinical Practice Model

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

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Brandi Marie Seither

MA, Baldwin-Wallace College, 2009

BS, Baldwin-Wallace College, 2003

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

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December 2021

Abstract

The School of Education at Walter Baxter College (WBC; a pseudonym), a private, 4-year, liberal arts college located in the Midwestern United States, has not integrated role conceptualization training for cooperating teachers who have partnered within a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. The problem was that cooperating teachers have demonstrated inconsistencies in providing mentorship as part of the coteaching model. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to provide information on how to support cooperating elementary education teachers in effectively understanding and executing their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model. Two theories grounded this study: Portner's four mentoring functions and Stets and Burke's role identity formation. The research questions of the study focused on how cooperating teachers describe and operationalize their roles as mentors and how the teacher preparation program can support cooperating teachers. Through one-on-one interviews and reflection papers of five cooperating teacher participants, thematic data analysis suggested the opportunity for professional development to better train and support cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors. Based on these findings, a professional development program was developed as the project to provide cooperating teachers with explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates as related to mentoring. As WBC's teacher preparation program (i.e., the project) better reinforces and supports a collaborative mentoring model, positive social change will occur resulting in better-prepared teacher candidates that will consequently become better classroom teachers and strengthened partnerships with prekindergarten-12 schools.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to those who have consistently been there for me, both personally and professionally, throughout my life. Thank you to my son, Brandon, for always being my "why"; I love you with all my heart. Thank you to my friends, family, and colleagues for your ongoing support and unfaltering encouragement. And to my students, past, present, and future, thank you for being a constant source of inspiration and motivation. I would not be where I am today without all of you.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The School of Education at Walter Baxter College (WBC; a pseudonym), a private, 4-year, liberal arts college located in the Midwestern United States, has not integrated role conceptualization training for cooperating teachers who have partnered within a coteaching clinical practice model. The problem was that cooperating teachers have demonstrated inconsistencies in the quality of mentorship provided as part of the coteaching model. WBC has offered both virtual and in-house training annually; however, despite these professional development efforts, how cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors remains inconsistent and of varying quality. An improved understanding of cooperating teachers' role conceptualizations and execution could provide insights as to how the WBC teacher preparation program can best train and support cooperating elementary education teachers. Because teacher training influences student learning, there are strong positive social change implications for consistently and effectively providing high-quality mentorship to teacher candidates when partnering with a coteaching clinical practice model.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to provide information on how cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors to determine opportunities for training and support. Personal communications with cooperating teachers and university supervisors who partnered with the coteaching model during the 2018–2019 academic year indicated inconsistencies in cooperating teacher

conceptualization and execution of their roles as mentors. Since its inception at WBC in 2013, the coteaching clinical practice model has been an optional pathway for teacher candidates and cooperating teachers in the School of Education. The dean of the School of Education is leading an initiative that will require the coteaching model to become a mandatory component of clinical practice experiences for all teacher candidates. As part of this initiative, the dean has stated that feedback from participants of this program, including cooperating teachers, will be a valuable source of data to consider during the expansion of the program as the School of Education begins to develop additional prekindergarten (PK)–12 partnerships.

According to a 2019 WBC School of Education report, the school has worked with 26 different cooperating teachers as part of the coteaching model since 2013. Of the 26 participants, 10 cooperating teachers have participated for more than 1 year, and the remaining 16 have participated for only 1 academic year. These numbers show that a significant number of cooperating teachers do not continue participation after their first year of partnership, resulting in the need for new partnerships and the onboarding of additional first-year participants. Additionally, as the program continues to expand, so does the cooperating teacher pool, increasing from nine first-year participants in the 2017–2018 school year to 12 first-year participants during the 2018–2019 school year. Records kept by the School of Education indicated these 12 cooperating teachers composed the largest group of first-year participants since the WBC's inauguration of the coteaching model. As the number of first-year participants grows, so does the need for a better understanding of how current cooperating teachers conceptualize and

operationalize their roles as mentors. A better understanding may result in better training and support to both current and future cooperating teacher mentors.

Exploring the role conceptualization and execution of cooperating teachers after initial involvement in the coteaching clinical practice model may reveal how these participants approach the mentoring process. According to Reinhardt (2017), cooperating teachers already have a conceptualized idea of mentoring, but how that idea is translated to teacher preparation (frequently influenced by previous experiences) is often misaligned to teacher preparation outcomes. As cooperating teachers assume an increased role in providing mentorship, there is a gap in the extent and quality of the mentorship being provided (Gelfuso et al., 2015; O'Grady et al., 2018). The importance of mentorship is recognized as an essential component of teacher education; however, training is often poorly organized or is ill supported (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017). The mentoring experiences can have lasting effects on the careers of teacher candidates (O'Grady et al., 2018) and can be a vital component of their development.

As the WBC School of Education continues to expand the coteaching model, it is necessary to understand how cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors concerning the persistence and retention of cooperating teachers. Even with recent modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic, WBC will move forward with the expansion of the coteaching clinical practice model for the 2020–2021 school year. Partnerships for the 2020 school year have already been made and cooperating teacher and teacher candidate pairs have been in communication to begin planning for the upcoming academic year, whether teaching takes place remotely or face to face as

determined by various districts. In these uncertain times and beyond, continued partnership with cooperating teachers who consistently and effectively execute their roles as mentors ensures high-quality placements for teacher candidates required to participate in the model as part of their clinical practice experience.

Hudson and Hudson (2018) recommended that teacher preparation programs be intentional in the partnering of mentors and mentees to increase the quantity and quality of cooperating teachers. To this end, WBC's School of Education needs to be mindful of the cooperating teachers who are selected to mentor teacher candidates; mentorship should be a voluntary and a mutually beneficial experience for the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher (Hudson & Hudson, 2018; Monteblanco, 2021; Tschinda et al., 2015). As supported by current literature, better prepared and supported cooperating teachers equate to more beneficial field experiences for teacher candidates (Hudson & Hudson, 2018; Monteblanco, 2021; Tschinda et al., 2015).

Rationale

The problem at WBC was that cooperating teachers have demonstrated inconsistencies in the quality of mentorship provided as part of the coteaching model. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to provide information on how cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors to determine opportunities for training and support. A better understanding of cooperating teachers' conceptualizations of this role may bridge the gap in the quality and consistency of mentorship being provided to WBC teacher candidates through more effective and focused training and support. WBC provides an optimal setting to explore the

phenomenon of cooperating teacher role conceptualization because of a recent expansion of the coteaching field experience model within the School of Education.

At WBC, the coteaching model has been implemented with local partner schools at the elementary level since 2015, and in 2019, the School of Education expanded the coteaching clinical field experience to middle childhood and adolescent young adult teacher preparation programs. The increase of the coteaching model across programs resulted in an urgent need to understand how to best meet the needs of an increased cooperating teacher pool as related to mentorship role conceptualization and execution.

Current literature has focused on the relationship between cooperating teachers and teacher candidates within a traditional student teaching model; however, researchers have not examined the coteaching clinical practice context. Reinhardt (2017), Burns and Badiali (2016), Izadinia (2016), and Altan and Saglamel (2015) explored the role conceptualization of cooperating teachers related to traditional, gradual-release student teaching. O'Grady et al. (2018) and Schatz-Oppenheimer (2017) examined factors related to the quality of teacher candidate mentoring within the same traditional model. Despite this research addressing role conceptualization and mentorship in student teaching partnerships, there is an absence of research on role conceptualization and mentoring within the context of the coteaching model for elementary education. Therefore, in this study I explored how cooperating teachers partnering within a coteaching model conceptualize their roles and how role conceptualization influences the mentoring provided to teacher candidates. The findings of this study can then be used to inform opportunities for future training and support of WBC cooperating teachers.

Definition of Terms

Clinical practice: The opportunity for teacher candidates to demonstrate all previous experiences and pedagogy as a culmination of formal teacher preparation (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015)

Coteaching: An instructional strategy comprised of four criteria: (a) two or more educators are present, who are (b) actively involved in the instruction of (c) a diverse group of students, and (d) instruction takes place in a shared space (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Mentoring: Responsibilities of the cooperating teacher that include establishing and maintaining an environment that allows for dialogue and discussion, feedback and reflection, and open communication (Portner, 2008) for teacher candidates to gain firsthand experience with teaching pedagogy (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017; van Ginkel et al., 2016).

Significance of the Study

The results of this study may fill the gap in the existing literature on mentoring within a coteaching clinical practice model. Additionally, the study addressed a local problem by focusing on how WBC coteaching cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their mentorship role while providing implications for future training and support to increase consistency and quality of mentorship provided to teacher candidates. The results of this study may assist WBC's teacher preparation program in developing specific and comprehensive professional development opportunities to support cooperating teachers with understanding and executing their roles as mentors. Improved

preparation and support for cooperating teachers in role conceptualization may result in more consistent high-quality mentorship experiences for teacher candidates participating in the coteaching model. As WBC's teacher preparation program better reinforces and supports this collaborative mentoring model, positive social change may result in strengthened partnerships with PK–12 schools and better-prepared teacher candidates who will become better classroom teachers.

As cooperating teachers consistently conceptualize their roles as mentors, increased understanding and buy-in to the benefits of providing mentorship as part of WBC's coteaching model may be revealed. The goal of teacher candidate mentorship is not only to improve preservice learning but also to improve learning for PK–12 students (Burns & Badiali, 2016). Because the overarching goal within the classroom is increased learning for all students, the mentoring process goes beyond the growth of the teacher candidate and extends to the PK–12 students as well (Reinhardt, 2017). Benefits of the coteaching model have been shown for cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, and PK–12 students, creating a win-win situation for all involved (Guise et al., 2017; Washut et al., 2015).

The relationship between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate may be one aspect of the coteaching model that contributes to increased PK–12 student achievement (Pettit, 2017; Tschida et al., 2015). With increased educational standards and pressures, coteaching and quality mentorship allows teacher preparation programs to give back to PK–12 partners and to act as a catalyst for change within education (Tschinda et al., 2015). As the teacher preparation program at WBC assists cooperating

teachers in consistently understanding their role as mentors, cooperating teachers will also understand how their participation as mentors benefits their PK–12 student learning outcomes as well.

Research Questions

With increasing expectations of cooperating teachers, insights into how cooperating elementary education teachers conceptualize their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model could benefit academic administrators and leaders. The following research questions (RQs) guided this study:

RQ1: How do cooperating teachers describe their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?

RQ2: How do cooperating teachers operationalize their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?

RQ3: How can the WBC teacher preparation program best support cooperating teachers as mentors?

Review of the Literature

In the literature review, I provide an overview of the conceptual framework guiding this study and a review of relevant literature. The primary resource I used to find peer-reviewed articles and books for this literature review was the Walden University Library, with Google Scholar being used as a secondary resource. The terms used in my search included *clinical practice*, *coteaching*, *cooperating teacher*, *mentor teacher*, *teacher candidate*, *preservice teacher*, *student teaching*, and *student teacher*. I used the

Academic Search Complete database to retrieve qualitative or mixed methods articles that have been published since 2017. Four themes emerged through the review of retrieved sources: traditional student teaching, coteaching, mentoring, and opportunities for professional development. These themes are used to organize the literature review that follows the discussion of the conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework

Portner's Mentoring New Teachers

According to Portner (2008), effective mentors are made through ongoing training and support. Portner differentiated between mentoring and evaluating and aligned to the shift in paradigm from traditional student teaching to coteaching. Mentors cannot be evaluators (Portner, 2008). The process of mentoring, as described by Portner, is collegial and ongoing and is used to develop self-reliance and reflectivity within the mentee. In this conceptualization, the goal of the mentor is to assist the mentee in developing the capacity and confidence to make informed decisions and to enrich the mentee's knowledge and skills as related to teaching and learning (Portner, 2008). Portner's theory focuses on mentoring new teachers and teacher candidates through the lens of roles and functions of the mentor (a) relating, (b) assessing, (c) coaching, and (d) guiding. Each of the four functions relates to a key aspect of cooperating teacher mentorship and begins to define the role and expectations of high-quality teacher mentors.

According to Portner (2008), mentoring relationships begin with relating, or building and maintaining trusting and professionally productive relationships. Genuine relationships between the mentor and mentee are best established and maintained by four

key behavior sets: (a) establishing trust, (b) paying attention to thoughts and feelings, (c) honoring confidentiality, and (d) communicating nonverbally. Relationship building was a key aspect of the current study because WBC cooperating teacher and teacher candidate pairs are determined through a selection process that allows each party to have a say in who they will be working with for the upcoming year. WBC hosts a coteaching orientation and "Meet and Greet" to facilitate this process. For the 2020–2021 school year, the orientation and selection process took place virtually to accommodate the COVID-19 pandemic. All participants in the coteaching clinical practice model individually met one another in virtual rooms and were encouraged to have informal conversations related to both personal interests and teaching philosophies. Following the meet and greet, cooperating teachers and teacher candidates provided feedback on whom they would like to work with by ranking preferences. Pairs were made based on the feedback provided, and contact information was exchanged between pairs to encourage the relationship-building process before the start of the school year. In this study, I examined how these relationships were built and maintained as cooperating teachers executed their mentorship roles.

Once a relationship has been established, the mentor must assess how the mentee best receives and processes feedback and information, this insight will assist in later mentoring decisions (Portner, 2008). Data gathered from assessing the mentee's needs are then used in coaching with pre- and post-lesson conferences and by assisting the mentee to reflect and act on their teaching decisions. This includes the implementation of the coaching cycle. The pre-lesson conference allows the mentee to communicate the

learning objectives, teaching and assessment strategies, and possible opportunities to enrich the lesson while gaining confidence as a reflective practitioner. The cooperating teacher provides insight as well, resulting in coplanning.

During the lesson observation, Portner (2008) recommended that the mentee observe the extent to which quality student learning takes place by objectively noting evidence of student learning and the factors contributing to, or obstructing, the learning process. As part of the coteaching cycle, this observation would be done alongside coinstruction practices. Evidence from the observation is then discussed during the post-lesson conference. Additional feedback provided during the post-lesson conference should be descriptive, specific, focused on behavior, and clearly communicated, allowing for the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate to coassess the learning experience. The overarching goal of the coaching cycle is to provide the opportunity for the mentee to clarify what, when, and whom to teach, to reflect on decisions, and to carry out alternatives to improve upon past performances (Portner, 2008). The results of this study provide insight as to how coaching is approached and carried out from the perspective of the cooperating teacher participants.

The research questions of the study address how cooperating teachers assist teacher candidates in discovering their identities as future classroom teachers. To best understand this complex element, Portner (2008) noted that the mentor must "guide" the teacher candidate in developing and asserting their own teacher identity. The goal of guiding is for the mentee to reach the threshold of independence, the point at which the mentee becomes an autonomous teacher. In this study, I intended to determine how

cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors to determine opportunities for training and support. Discovering their identity as future classroom teachers is anchored in this guided process.

Portner's (2008) conceptualized mentoring functions describe what mentor teachers do and why using experiences and behaviors to guide mentor teachers through their roles and relationships with their mentees is important. The theory was appropriate to use in as part of the conceptual framework of this study because each of the four functions relate to cooperating teacher mentorship and begins to define the roles and expectations of teacher mentors. Furthermore, Portner's four mentoring functions drove the construction of the research questions of the study to gather data through interviews and reflections about how current WBC cooperating teachers operationalize their roles as mentors to teacher candidates within a coteaching model. Insights gained can then be used in the construction of future professional development opportunities to increase continuity among practices concerning the mentoring functions.

Stets and Burke's Role Identity Formation

This study was also underpinned by the theory of role identity formation as described by Stets and Burke (2000) who postulated that the self is reflexive and creates an identity based on social categories, classifications, or roles. Role identity formation takes into consideration both internal, cognitive processes and external constructs dictated by a structured society (Stets & Burke, 2000). As an individual identifies in a particular role, the self also associates meanings and expectations of that role, that then

guide behaviors (Stets & Burke, 2000); however, these behaviors are also influenced by individual perceptions and interpretations (Andreasen et al., 2019).

In the theory of role identity formation, Stets and Burke (2000) also postulated that individuals view themselves in terms of the expectations and behaviors associated with a named role, such as a classroom teacher or teacher mentor. Whereas there are various views of how identity is formulated, in this study I used the approach that self-identification is internally driven, and the internal dynamics of this identification affect one's social behaviors (see Stryker & Burke, 2000). I explored how cooperating teachers interpret and operationalize their roles as mentors while also serving as classroom teachers.

As a cooperating teacher takes on the additional role of teacher mentor, they must negotiate the meanings and behaviors of each role. If each role is to function there must be fluid reciprocity between roles (Stets & Burke, 2000). The negotiation between roles determines the effectiveness of role performance; roles are unique yet interrelated to one another. As roles are negotiated, there will be differences in the perceptions and actions from one cooperating teacher to the next; each will fulfill the role of a mentor teacher in their own way as determined by self-meanings, or identities, associated with the role. Further contributing to role identity formation, is the duality of role versus identity, which is external, socially influenced factors versus internalized meanings and expectations associated with the role (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Participants in the current study may have simultaneously experienced these factors during their involvement in the coteaching model.

This theory was appropriate for use in this study because as cooperating teachers assume dual roles as both classroom teacher and mentor teacher, they may have dissonance in developing their identity (see Andreasen et al., 2019). The common disconnect between the university and cooperating teachers' expectations surrounding the role of mentoring further complicates role identity formation, directly influencing the quality of mentorship provided to teacher candidates (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Andreasen et al., 2019; Turner & Blackburn, 2016). Data collection through semistructured interviews and cooperating teacher reflections provided insight into the participants' perceptions surrounding role identity as a mentor to teacher candidates.

Review of the Broader Problem

Traditional Student Teaching

Student teaching experiences provide the opportunity for teacher candidates to demonstrate all previous experiences and pedagogy as a culmination of formal teacher preparation and potentially have the greatest influence on shaping novice teachers (Chang, 2018; McGee, 2019; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Rabin, 2020). During the traditional approach to student teaching, the teacher candidate slowly begins to take over teaching responsibilities, until the final few weeks of the experience when the teacher candidate "solo" teaches without the involvement of the cooperating teacher (Kinne et al., 2016; McGee, 2019; Rabin, 2020). This goal of independence and solo teaching restricts the cooperating teacher's ability to provide comprehensive and constructive feedback that is vital to the learning process (Soslau et al., 2019). Çapan and Bedir (2019) challenged the traditional approach to student teaching where the teacher candidate spends the

beginning half of the clinical practice experience observing the cooperating teacher and the second half of the experience taking over instruction. Their study reinforced the need and value of hands-on teaching experiences throughout the duration of the clinical practice experience that is in opposition to traditional student teaching. Often referred to as "sink or swim" or gradual release, this approach offers limited opportunity for collaboration while directly influencing the development of power differentials (Guise et al., 2017; Soslau et al., 2019; Rabin, 2020), thus creating challenges for the potential of effective mentorship.

The disconnect between teacher preparation program expectations and practical, real-world applicability (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Turner & Blackburn, 2016), combined with increased accountability measures on the part of both the PK–12 sector and teacher preparation programs, has presented additional challenges to effective mentorship. Cooperating teachers have become reluctant to give up control of their classrooms to inexperienced teacher candidates out of fear that inadequate PK–12 student achievement would reflect poorly on the cooperating teacher (Chang, 2018; Kinne et al., 2016). Further complicating mentorship potential is that in most teacher preparation programs, clinical practices are not well planned or organized (Gelfuso et al., 2015) and the teacher candidate is often randomly placed with a cooperating teacher who is willing to have them in the classroom; oftentimes, these cooperating teachers are not trained in the mentoring process. One possible response to cooperating teacher reluctance has been training in and implementation of the coteaching model. I conducted this study to explore existing the participants' training and support experiences to aid in the development of

future opportunities to better meet the needs of cooperating teachers as they shift from a traditional student teaching paradigm to a coteaching model.

Coteaching

The term coteaching is used in reference to an alternative form of student teaching that challenges the traditional student teaching paradigm most characterized by a handoff approach. The premise of coteaching is that all human capital in the room is being utilized to maximize student learning; therefore, coteaching relies on a balance between and collaboration between the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher (Hawkman et al., 2019; Monteblanco, 2021; Soslau et al., 2019). Coteaching is an instructional strategy comprised of four criteria: (a) two or more educators are present, who are (b) actively involved in the instruction of (c) a diverse group of students, and (d) instruction takes place in a shared space (Cook & Friend, 1995). These four criteria allow the cooperating teacher to mentor the teacher candidate while also maintaining an instructional presence in the classroom and the ability to share in collaborative experiences that provide authentic learning opportunities through social interactions (Tschinda et al., 2015). As explored in the current study, this shared understanding of both pedagogy and mentoring will allow teacher preparation programs to strengthen partnerships with PK–12 schools (see Rong-Ji et al., 2017), potentially reducing cooperating teacher reluctance.

Power Differentials. The gradual release approach of traditional student teaching is susceptible to power struggles and tensions because the cooperating teacher is viewed as the knowledgeable other (Rabin, 2020; Soslau et al., 2019). The cooperating teacher

often assumes the role of evaluator that contributes to positioning the cooperating teacher as a superior and the teacher candidate as subordinate (Guise et al., 2017). As a result of this power differential, barriers are created that inhibit or severely limit the opportunity for collaborative inquiry to take place, straining the relationship per Portner's (2008) first mentoring function of relating and reducing the number of learning opportunities made available for teacher candidates (O'Grady et al., 2018; Reinhardt, 2017). In a 3-year study conducted by Rabin (2020), participants cited the need to navigate power differentials to prevent strained relationships between the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher. When asked *what makes coteaching work?,* participants responded with the need to for relationship-based activities and the time to develop relationships; however, examples of how to build and maintain relationships were not offered (Rabin, 2020). Similarly, Monteblanco (2021) explored power differentials through the examination of coteaching faculty pairs in higher education and cited the need to discuss potential power differentials to avoid tensions that could negatively influence student learning. Results from both studies further support the use of coteaching as a vehicle to attempt resolution of such power struggles.

The coteaching model is based on an egalitarian relationship and dismisses the concept of power differentials that are often evident in traditional student teaching practices (Izadinia, 2016; Ricci et al., 2019; Tschinda et al., 2015), thus creating joint enterprise. When cooperating teachers and teacher candidates are given the opportunity to participate in colearning experiences within a community of practice, there is increased opportunity for personal connections, enhancing relationship building, that directly and

positively influences the mentoring process (Turner & Blackburn, 2016). For effective

coteaching to take place, the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate must establish

and maintain clear communication, mutual respect, and acceptance of coresponsibility of

planning and instruction to best meet the needs of the students. When power differentials

go unacknowledged, ability to communicate and share feedback prohibits mutual

learning (Monteblanco, 2021; Rabin, 2020). Research questions of this study will provide

insight into how cooperating teachers build and maintain rapport and relationships with

teacher candidates within the coteaching model.

Collaboration. In traditional student teaching, because the cooperating teacher is

viewed as the expert, teacher candidates may make instructional decisions based on

observation as opposed to pedagogy and best practices (Rabin, 2020; Soslau et al., 2019).

Limited collaboration, including lack of coplanning and coevaluation, may result in

teacher candidates imitating cooperating teachers without having a comprehensive

understanding of the decision-making rationale (Soslau et al., 2019). Oftentimes, a goal

of traditional student teaching is for the teacher candidate to independently plan, instruct,

and assess. The goal of coteaching is to utilize opportunities for coplanning and

coevaluation, along with coinstruction. Montgomery and Akerson (2019), explored the

results of pairing two teacher candidates as coteachers with one cooperating teacher. A

key component to this study was the direct training teacher candidates received in

coteaching. As a result, 98% of participants reported an increase in collaboration as a

result of coplanning. Also exploring collaboration, Thompson and Schademan (2019)

investigated how coteachers developed proficiency in collaboration within a coteaching

model. Findings from this 4-year study resulted in five key elements as being determinates of successful collaboration amongst coteaching pairs: negotiating difference, sharing authority, comentoring, coaching in the moment, and immersing in real-world teaching experiences, suggesting the importance of collaboration across the coteaching model. The current study will also solicit feedback regarding opportunities and experiences with collaboration during the stages of coplanning, coinstruction, and coevaluation.

The Coteaching Cycle. In coteaching, cooperating teachers position themselves as mentors who are focused on the growth of the teacher candidate and the growth of their own practice (Guise et al., 2017). Mutual growth occurs through the implementation of the coteaching cycle, comprised of three key components: coplanning, coinstruction, coevaluation, that allows the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate to work collaboratively within a community of practice (Guise et al., 2017; Monteblanco, 2021). To effectively implement the coteaching model, this cycle must be consistently reviewed and repeated (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015). A study conducted by Chang (2018) revealed five overriding themes as related to coteaching, including coplanning, open two-way communication, trusting relationships, shared leadership, and knowledgeability of the key tenants of coteaching. Each of these findings can be directly related to the 3 steps of the coteaching cycle: coplanning, coinstructing, and coreflecting.

Through the first step in the coteaching cycle, coplanning, the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher assume shared responsibility for student learning and instruction. During this time, Ricci et al. (2019) recommended coteaching teams discuss individual

teaching modalities, strengths, and challenges in concurrence with planning for student engagement and instruction. Likewise, Chang (2018) suggested teaching pairs work together to discuss and assign tasks while sharing ideas and feedback as related to instruction. Coplanning also provides a time for the coteaching team to discuss and distribute roles for coinstruction and coassessment (Brendle et al., 2017). Through the collaborative process of coplanning, the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate takes into consideration the unique needs of both the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and students in relation to the direction of the classroom curriculum. During these considerations, the utilization of coplanning allows teacher candidates to gain deeper insight into cooperating teacher problem solving and decision making as related to classroom instruction and management (Soslau et al., 2019), thus making the cognitive process of teaching a shared experience (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015).

During the second step in the coteaching cycle, coinstruction and the shared experience of teaching students allow cooperating teachers to model effective teaching practices, share teaching responsibilities, and encourage teacher candidates to take instructional risks (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). Through coinstruction, coteaching pairs work together to deliver the most appropriate coteaching approach in consideration to curriculum goals and student learning needs (Brendle et al., 2017). Additionally, this "in the moment" style of mentoring allows cooperating teachers to more efficiently guide teacher candidates to make instantaneous changes or improvements to their teaching practices (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). By being in the here and now with teacher candidates, coinstructional strategies allow cooperating teachers to step in as necessary

through indirect prompting, visual cues, or other non-invasive techniques that do not distract from the teaching and learning process (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). Chang (2018) suggested each member of the teaching pair remain present during instruction, assisting one another in the moment, and utilizing post-lesson discussions as the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate coevaluate the shared experience.

Finally, during coevaluation, learning and growth are extended through collaborative inquiry and reflection, and it is important for the cooperating teacher to allow for these opportunities within the teaching process (Reinhardt, 2017). A collaborative inquiry approach encourages cooperating teachers to articulate and deconstruct the thought processes related to pedagogical practices and decisions (Reinhardt, 2017). Contrary to traditional student teaching that relies heavily on pre- and post-lesson conferences, coteaching utilizes in situ feedback with alignment to social learning theory (Soslau et al., 2019). Feedback and coaching provided in the moment and in the context of learning inhibit authentic learning to take place. These reflective discussions regarding pedagogy, instruction, and assessment, allow for teacher candidates and cooperating teachers to best meet the needs of their students (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015; Pettit, 2017). As suggested by Soslau et al. (2019), teacher candidates learn to practice self-advocacy during this coreflection process as they begin to articulate thought processes behind decision making. Additionally, collaborative reflection and cogenerative dialogue encourage growth and learning of both the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher; allowing both to further their practice as educators (Guise et al., 2017).

Benefits of Coteaching. Results of coteaching not only show positive results for the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate, but also PK-12 students (Duran et al., 2020; Mofield, 2020; Monteblanco, 2021) due to decreased student teacher ratios, increased behavior management, and differentiated instruction (Guise, et al., 2017; Rabin, 2020). Through the coteaching partnership, both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate accept coresponsibility for planning, instruction, student learning (Aldabas, 2018; Monteblanco, 2021), and for providing student feedback (King, 2018). As a part this coteaching model, teacher candidates are engaged with the teaching process from day one, and the coteaching model prepares cooperating teachers and teacher candidates to work collaboratively throughout the duration of the clinical practice experience and into their professional teaching careers (Montgomery & Akerson, 2019; Washut et al., 2015). During the coteaching process, cooperating teachers and teacher candidates can optimize and reflect on a variety of pedagogical instruction and assessment strategies enabling the individual needs of students to be met (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015; Pettit, 2017) and further perpetuating differentiation (Mofield, 2020). Through discussions regarding shared experiences with coplanning and co-instruction, authentic learning takes place for both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016). Additional opportunities for authentic learning experiences, as reported by cooperating teachers, include increased teacher agency, expanded teaching repertoire, and the opportunity for coteaching to be a catalyst to change (Duran et al., 2020; Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; Ricci, 2019).

In addition to recognizing that both participants are experts in their own right, coteaching also recognizes that both participants have the opportunity for continued growth and self-improvement (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; Hawkman et al., 2019; Soslau et al., 2019). Through shared planning, instruction, and evaluation, cooperating teachers and teacher candidates can identify their own learning needs as active members of a learning community (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015; Ricci et al., 2019), and through addressing those needs, create the opportunity to increase teacher agency (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016). Chang (2018) found that cooperating teachers and teacher candidates who partnered within a coteaching clinical practice model reported an increase in communication, rapport and partnership, and consistent use of coteaching approaches over the course of the academic year. These increases support benefits of mutual growth and efficacy amongst teaching pairs (Hawkman et al., 2019; Sebald et al., 2021). Additionally, cooperating teachers often express rejuvenation in their own teaching because of these increased interactions and shared experiences with teacher candidates, who bring new energy and strategies to the classroom (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016).

By interacting with, and trying out, new teaching strategies and methodologies presented by the teacher candidates, cooperating teachers can expand their own teaching repertoire. Coteaching allows for cooperating teachers and teacher candidates to try out and evaluate new ideas, experience different teaching styles, and allows for comprehensive reflection of teaching practices (Chang, 2018; Duran et al., 2020; Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; Monteblanco, 2021). Increased teaching repertoire of new skills and strategies is one aspect that may lead to change within education; change of

mindset, practices, and approaches to teaching and learning. As cooperating teachers and teacher candidates participate in ongoing collaboration, they are exposed to perspectives and thought processes that may differ from their own (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; Guise et al., 2017). Rooted in social learning theory, as reflection and dialogue take place, both participants can question, rethink, and reshape their teaching philosophies to incorporate new thoughts and beliefs.

Challenges of Coteaching. When done effectively, coteaching has many benefits to the cooperating teacher, teacher candidate, and students; however, this is not to say that coteaching does not come without challenges. Some commonly faced challenges include time, communication, misaligned visions of teaching (Aldabas, 2018; Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2015; Montgomery & Akerson, 2019), and lack of training and resources (Aldabas, 2018; Chitiyo, 2017). Individually, these challenges may also become intertwined and compounded, resulting in tensions and strains on the cooperating teacher/teacher candidate relationship, that is the foundation and driving force of the coteaching model (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016). Teacher candidate and cooperating teacher pairs should be supported by the teacher preparation program and encouraged to utilize strategies for coplanning, collaboration, and communication.

Coteachers must allocate enough time to implement the coteaching model, including each component of the cycle: coplanning, coinstructing, and coevaluating. If proper time is not allotted for coplanning, for example, this may result in misalignment and misunderstanding of instructional goals and student needs (Chitiyo, 2017; Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016). According to Montgomery and Akerson (2019), 19% of the

sample of 44 participants reported lack of time as a barrier to coteaching, particularly

with regards to coplanning. Likewise, according to Mofield (2020), 93% of participants

reported lack of time as a barrier to successful collaboration between coteachers. These

findings are further supported by Aldabas (2018), who cited lack of time for coplanning,

along with lack of administrative support and poor collaborative behaviors, as one of the

leading challenges to effective coteaching implementation. Although collaboration

between coteaching pairs is indicative to effective coteaching, partnership with the

teacher preparation program also dictates the success of the clinical practice experience.

Collaboration and communication between the teacher preparation program and

the coteaching pairs is vital for successful implementation of the coteaching model

(Hawkman et al., 2019). This includes ongoing training and support of both the teacher

candidate and cooperating teacher throughout the duration of the clinical practice

experience (Brendle et al., 2017; Chitiyo & Brinda, 2018; Rexroat-Frazier & Chamberlin,

2019). Guise et al. (2017), suggested that the teacher preparation program assist in

developing and maintaining communities of practice to ensure optimal and authentic

learning experiences take place through the coteaching model. Through ongoing

professional development opportunities, roles, expectations, and visions of the coteaching

model will be transparent, and support will be provided to ensure the coteaching model is

implemented to fidelity (Guise et al., 2017). In addition to providing a means for

collaboration and communication, the topic of effective mentorship can be explored with

coteaching teams through training efforts provided by the teacher preparation program.

Mentoring

Mentoring is an important component of the clinical practice experience and has a lasting effect on the development, satisfaction, and retention of novice teachers (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017; Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). The mentoring practices of the cooperating teacher greatly influence and affect the quality of the clinical practice experience and are often a direct reflection of personal beliefs and values (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). These attitudes, abilities, beliefs, and values also affect the quality of mentorship given to the teacher candidate by the cooperating teacher. Mentoring, and the quality of mentoring practice, directly affect the professional and pedagogical, and emotional and personal development of novice teachers (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017). Portner (2008) suggested cooperating teachers have mentoring responsibilities including establishing and maintaining an environment that allows for dialogue and discussion, feedback and reflection, and open communication.

As exemplified in recent literature, successful cooperating teachers mentor through a set of essential qualities: establishing trust, demonstrating empathy, maintaining confidentiality, and effective communication skills (Portner, 2008), and these essential qualities are refined through the mentoring process (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015), including practice and feedback (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). A study by Orland-Barak and Wang (2021) examined four approaches to teacher mentorship, including personal growth mentoring, situated learning mentoring, core practice mentoring, and critical transformative mentoring. Results of this examination showed that mentoring practices cannot be easily divided into one approach, but rather should come from a variety of

approaches to best meet the contextual needs of the coteaching pair. These results also emphasized that mentoring approaches were often used in conjunction with varied and unique perceptions of the student teaching experience. The current study provides further examination of first-year cooperating teacher experiences, including role conceptualization and lived experiences, will give insight to the teacher candidate mentoring process within a collaborative coteaching learning environment during clinical practice experience.

Mentoring Complexity. Agreeably, the relationship between the mentor and mentee is at the core of mentoring, further influenced by the roles, needs, and contexts surrounding the mentorship pair (Mackie, 2018; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). However, the concept of mentoring is complex and is often interpreted through a variety of understandings and mentorship models (Mackie, 2018; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Roegman & Kolman, 2020). Additionally, mentoring is often used interchangeably with other concepts, such as coaching and evaluating, however, it should be noted that each of these approaches is defined by characteristics that make them unique to one another. Though coaching is certainly an aspect of mentoring (Mackie, 2018; Portner, 2008), coaching should not be used as a replacement for the mentorship process. Compared to coaching, that typically involves a streamlined focus on the progression of skills, mentoring takes a more comprehensive approach that involves an experienced other who supports, challenges, and facilitates the learning process (Mackie, 2018). Furthermore, mentors cannot be evaluators (Portner, 2008). Evaluating is hierarchical, judges performance, and should be left to the supervisor; mentoring, by contrast, is collegial,

ongoing, and is used to scaffold learning and autonomy (Portner, 2008).
Misinterpretations of mentoring may conversely lead to misconceptions of the
mentorship role.

Further complicating the conceptualization and operationalization of the
mentorship role, are the varying responsibilities that cooperating teacher face within
multiple contexts. As illustrated by Roegman and Kolman (2020), cooperating teachers
are faced with operating in two contexts, as teacher of PK-12 students, and as teacher of
the teacher candidate. Also reiterated by this study was the idea that cooperating teachers
bring their own values and experiences to the mentorship role, further adding to the
complexities of mentorship. Alternately, Matsko et al. (2020) framed the roles of the
cooperating teacher as being both a model and a coach, where the cooperating teacher is
responsible for being an exemplar PK-12 teacher while also intentionally targeting the
growth and development of the teacher candidate. Results of the study indicated
operationalization of both roles positively contribute to teacher candidate feelings of
preparedness to teach. A better understanding of the complexities surrounding
mentorship, including the various roles assumed by cooperating teachers, may result in
more positive mentorship experiences.

Positive Mentorship. Mentorship is rooted in the clarification of roles and
expectations, and the relationship between the cooperating teacher and the teacher
candidate. Because there is not a consistent model of teacher candidate mentorship, and
this process is contextual, many cooperating teachers have difficulty with understanding
their role and expectations (Hoffman et al., 2015; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021;

Reinhardt, 2017). The better cooperating teachers understand their role and the expectations held for them, the more effectively they can build trusting relationships with teacher candidates (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018). In addition to mutual trust and respect, these relationships are also built upon open communication and feedback, and empathy and support (Gallo-Fox & Scantlebury, 2016; Hudson & Hudson, 2018; Izadinia, 2016).

Communication is a key factor in the mentor-mentee relationship in clinical practice experiences. Mentoring requires both social and emotional skills along with the ability to communicate effectively (Hudson & Hudson, 2018). Teacher candidates rely on the approachability of cooperating teachers to be able to freely communicate ideas and concerns and to solicit professional and practical feedback (Izadinia, 2016). Cooperating teachers need to possess the necessary skills that allow teacher candidates to communicate openly with them throughout the mentorship process (Hudson & Hudson, 2018). Through the elimination of power differentials, coteaching puts the cooperating teacher in a position to offer nonthreatening feedback and to facilitate collaborative reflection (Guise et al., 2017), increasing the opportunity for frequent positive communication (Hudson & Hudson, 2018).

Teacher candidates have expressed the desire and value of both academic and emotional support and cite these types of support as determining factors in promoting confidence to take risks and experiment in the classroom (Guise et al., 2017; Izadinia, 2016). Reassurance and encouragement throughout the clinical experience assist teacher candidates in developing their sense of agency as related to the field of education. The support offered through positive mentorship relationships also assists teacher candidates

in developing teaching efficacy and increases confidence in various teaching duties, including planning, instruction, and evaluation (Hawkman, 2019; Sebald et al., 2021; Tschinda et al., 2015), all critical components of the teaching cycle that are further enhanced through coteaching.

Cooperating Teacher Perceptions. A vital factor in determining the optimization of mentoring is the perceptions of the cooperating teacher. Both teacher candidates and cooperating teachers bring their perceptions of the mentoring process to the clinical practice experience (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Turner & Blackburn, 2016). Misunderstandings or misconceptions of the mentor role can lead to increased tensions and negative experiences for both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate (Izadinia, 2016). Role confusion can create frustration and harm various aspects of the clinical practice experience, including tensions between the mentor and mentee, and hindered learning of both the teacher candidate and the students (Reinhardt, 2017). A misunderstanding of mentorship expectations can also prohibit professional relationships between the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher (Hoffman et al., 2015; Portner, 2008), that is a cornerstone of the mentoring process. Cooperating teachers may become anxious and reluctant to provide constructive feedback to teacher candidates (Altan & Saglamel, 2015). It is vital to clearly define the expectations of mentorship before the clinical practice experience so that cooperating teachers have a clear understanding of what they will and will not do within the scope of their role (Weisling & Gardiner, 2018).

Opportunities for Professional Development

Although it is widely accepted that cooperating teachers are expected to possess mentorship skills and content knowledge, and are assumed to have the time to mentor teacher candidates, cooperating teachers are often not provided adequate professional development opportunities to prepare them for their role as a mentor (Burns & Badiali, 2016; Hawkman et al., 2019; Hoffman et al., 2015; Lafferty, 2018; Washut et al., 2015). The teacher preparation program is critical in providing sufficient training and support in both the coteaching model and in effective mentorship strategies. A study conducted by Chang (2018) examined the essential elements of coteaching through an end of the year survey that asked 30 teacher candidates and 29 cooperating teachers their perspectives related to frequency of use as related to each coteaching element. Findings suggested an opportunity for increased support and training from the teacher preparation program in areas such as planning, communication, relationship, classroom application, and coteaching knowledge base (Chang, 2018). Findings from Faraclas (2018), also supported the need for professional development training on coteaching within the context of general education and special education. When comparing the pretest results of twenty-four coteaching dyads, pairs that received professional development opportunities with coteaching had significantly higher posttest results than their counterparts who did not receive training opportunities (Faraclas, 2018). Similarly, a study conducted by Brendle et al. (2017), reflected a need for in-depth training and support of cooperating teachers for better preparation and understanding of the coteaching model and approaches.

Regardless of a veteran teacher's classroom expertise and good intentions; effectively meeting the challenge of being a high-quality mentor requires ongoing training and support (Burns & Badiali, 2016). In a study of 146 cooperating teachers, Lafferty (2018) found that cooperating teachers who received explicit training and preparation for their role as mentor were more likely to enact such practices. Additionally, Lafferty found that cooperating teachers are often not aware of the significance their role plays in the development of quality teacher candidates. These findings suggest teacher preparation programs are vital in providing ongoing training and support to assist cooperating teachers with embodying their roles as mentors. It is not enough for a cooperating teacher to merely want to mentor a teacher candidate (Portner, 2008); good teachers do not necessarily equate to good mentors (Hudson & Hudson, 2018), and it is the responsibility of the teacher preparation program to provide professional development opportunities to ensure successful clinical practice experiences.

Implications

Student teaching not only serves as a culmination of formal teacher preparation but is also shown to be one of the most influential experiences for shaping novice teachers. However, traditional student teaching has resulted in a disconnect between teacher preparation expectations and real-world transferability as largely influenced by increased accountability measures. One response to this disconnect is the implementation of the coteaching clinical practice model that is built upon the premise of both coteachers (cooperating teacher and teacher candidate) being equally utilized in the planning,

instruction, and evaluation stages of the teaching cycle. Therefore, the purpose of this case study is to explore how cooperating teachers interpret and operationalize their roles as mentors when partnered withing a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

This study also has potential for positive social change through the development of a professional development program to provide training and support to new and current cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors. Through concentrated and intentional professional development opportunities, coteaching pairs (cooperating teacher and teacher candidate) will have a better understanding and learned skillset to work in collaboration with one another throughout the teaching cycle. An increased preparedness and partnership in the classroom may also lead to both increased teacher and student satisfaction. Additionally, teacher candidates will be better prepared to enter a fulltime teaching position at the conclusion of their clinical practice experience due to the duration and intensity resulting from partnering with a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

Throughout the literature, there is a significant amount of support for the coteaching clinical practice model. Based upon the findings of Monteblanco (2021), Montgomery and Akerson (2019), Rabin (2020), Soslau et al. (2019), and Thompson and Schademan (2019), coteaching is an effective alternative to traditional student teaching because of its potential to disseminate power differentials through effective collaboration as established through building and maintaining relationships between coteaching pairs. Therefore, this study examines how cooperating teachers build and maintain relationships with their teacher candidates, with consideration to methods and techniques of both

formal and informal communication and feedback throughout the coplanning,

coinstructing, and coevaluation stages of the coteaching cycle. Additionally, as evidenced

by Brendle et al. (2017), Chitiyo and Brinda (2018), and Rexroat-Frazier and Chamberlin

(2019), collaboration and communication between the teacher preparation program and

the coteaching pairs is equally important for successful implementation of the coteaching

model. This study seeks to understand how the teacher preparation program at WBC can

best support cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors to alleviate potential gaps in

the quality of mentoring that is provided to teacher candidates. These combined insights

will then be used in consideration for opportunities for professional development of

cooperating teachers.

Summary

It is common practice for many teacher preparation programs to rely on

mentorship as a means for teacher candidates to gain first-hand experience with teaching

pedagogy and skill implementation. Additionally, many teacher preparation programs use

clinical practice experiences as a final means to guide and evaluate teacher candidate

teaching competencies. Cooperating teacher role conceptualizations influence

collaborative learning environments, which in turn, influence the professional

development of both cooperating teachers and teacher candidates, directly relating to PK-

12 learning. Moving beyond the traditional student teaching, the coteaching model allows

the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher to develop and maintain a relationship that

is conducive to effective mentoring practices while also leading to increased student learning outcomes.

The project of this study is grounded in Potner's (2008) theory of new teacher mentorship and Stets and Burke's (2000) theory of role identity formation. Portner's four mentoring functions, relating, assessing, coaching, and guiding, were used in conjunction with implications of role identity formation, to guide the construction of the research questions. The data gathered through participant interviews and reflections were used as a framework for the project. Insights gained from cooperating teachers who are partnered within a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model were used to determine possible next steps in the training and support of cooperating teachers as they navigate their roles as preservice teacher mentors while also considering potential avenues for increasing continuity among mentoring practices.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how cooperating elementary education teachers conceptualize their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model. A better understanding of cooperating teachers' conceptualizations of this role may bridge the gap in the quality of mentorship being provided to WBC teacher candidates through more effective and focused training and support. In this section, I describe the qualitative method used for this study, explain the purpose of selecting a case study design, and justify the rationale for this approach. I also provide an overview of gaining access to participants, including the criteria for selecting them and how relationships were formed between the participants of the study and myself. Finally, the plan for data collection and data analysis is provided as is a discussion of possible limitations.

I used a qualitative case study design to explore how WBC cooperating teachers conceptualize their role as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering with the coteaching clinical practice model. This method of research is appropriate when conducting an "in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (Merriam, 2016, p. 37). By better understanding how cooperating teachers conceptualize their mentorship roles, teacher preparation programs may gain insights into the preconditions necessary for successful clinical practice experiences (Guise et al., 2017) and partnerships for both teacher candidates and cooperating teachers (Hudson & Hudson, 2018). By determining the gap in cooperating teachers' role conceptions and teacher preparation outcomes,

training and support can be specifically and comprehensively designed to assist

cooperating teachers with the complexities associated with mentoring teacher candidates

(Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017) as aligned to teacher preparation outcomes.

According to Yin (2018), five components should be carefully considered when

selecting a case study research design: (a) the study's questions, (b) the study's

propositions, (c) the case of the study, (d) the logic linking the data to the propositions,

and (e) the criteria for interpreting the findings. I developed the research questions and

corresponding preposition of this study seeking to answer how cooperating teachers

define and operationalize their roles as mentors; "how" being an appropriate preposition

for an exploratory case study approach (Yin, 2018). A holistic, single case study design

was employed to examine elementary cooperating teachers who are hosting a clinical

practice teacher candidate during the candidate's final semester in the teacher preparation

program at WBC. I used two analytic strategies suggested by Yin in this study to meet

the last two components of a case study research design: (a) relying on theoretical

propositions, and (b) working data from the "ground up." These inductive strategies were

used to determine patterns and emerging concepts within the data.

After considering multiple qualitative research approaches, I opted for a case

study design to explore cooperating teacher role conceptualizations. Other designs I

considered before making a final decision included narrative research, phenomenological

research, and grounded theory. In contrast to a narrative study that focuses on one

individual, phenomenological research uses participant interviews to describe the

meaning of a phenomenon for several individuals based on lived experiences (Creswell,

2013). Grounded theory moves beyond finding a universal essence, as is the goal in phenomenological research, to instead generate a theory (Creswell, 2013).

The purpose of this study was to understand cooperating teacher role conceptualizations to influence future programming and practice within WBC's teacher preparation program; therefore, a case study was a more appropriate design. According to Merriam (1988b), case studies allow the researcher to examine and bring about an understanding of educational processes, problems, and programs to affect and potentially improve practice. Case study research focuses on "what" is to be studied, referred to as the bounded system, and collects data through multiple sources over time to present a description of the case (Merriam, 1988b). In the following subsection, I define the case of the study.

Participants

I used a purposive sample for this study. A purposive sample, also referred to as a criterion-based sample, is selected based on specific criteria determined by the researcher (Merriam, 1988a) and can "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem" (Creswell 2013, p. 125). The criteria are established and aligned to the bounded case to select a representative sample to allow the researcher to best understand the research problem (Merriam, 1988a). In this study, I used feedback from current cooperating teachers to comprehensively explore role conceptualization and operationalization of cooperating teachers as related to the coteaching clinical practice model.

When selecting participants, several criteria must be met. The inclusion criteria for the cooperating teacher participants in this study required the participant to be a cooperating teacher during the 2020-2021 academic year who: (a) taught at the elementary school level (i.e., Grades K–3), (b) was partnered with WBC's coteaching clinical practice model, and (c) was hosting a teacher candidate during the candidate's final field experience of the teacher preparation program. Additional criteria for cooperating teachers as required by WBC include a master's degree, 3 years of teaching experience, the recommendation of the building principal, and current certification that aligns to the certification area that the teacher candidate is pursuing.

To gain access to participants, I followed several steps. First, I completed and submitted my study proposal for approval and obtained appropriate approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (Approval Number: 01-15-21-066317). Following being granted this approval, email addresses of potential participants meeting the sample criteria were obtained from the WBC School of Education field and clinical coordinator. I emailed all eligible participants, based on the sample criteria, along with corresponding building principals (as applicable) to inform all stakeholders of the intent of the study and confidentiality measures. As suggested by Creswell (2013), this transparent communication and disclosure aided in building rapport and trustworthiness.

I included an explanation of the study and its purpose in the email invitation, along with a consent form for participation detailing confidentiality measures. Participants were also informed that their identities would be protected using pseudonyms, data would be stored digitally for 5 years and be password protected, and

that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they chose to participate. Consent

forms further detailed these measures and were completed and returned by participants

via email before participation in the study. Once a possible subject's interest to

participate in the study had been received by a predetermined and communicated due

date (i.e., 1 week after email invitations had been sent), I randomly selected five

participants based on their interest and availability to comprise the study's purposive

sample.

I assigned each interested and available participant a number, and random

numbers were selected until there were five participants confirmed for the study. By

selecting five participants, a deep level of inquiry was obtained from everyone through

individual interviews and reflections while still allowing for insights that may potentially

influence future research and practice. If a sample size is too large, it can limit the in-

depth investigation of the study (Brody, 2016). A sample size of five total participants

allowed me the time required to develop a professional relationship with each of the

selected individuals, which is important to gather rich data.

To develop an authentic study built upon communication, it was important for me

to build and maintain trust among the participants. I encouraged participants to

participate in this study because their involvement may help to bring clarity to a local

problem that directly affects current and future partners of WBC's coteaching clinical

practice model. As a researcher, I was also mindful of participants' schedules, time

constraints, and responsibilities. When gathering data, I was flexible in my scheduling

and worked within the convenience of the participants' schedules and preferences. By

keeping the needs of the participants at the forefront of the study, trustworthiness and authenticity that led to effective data communication were ensured.

Data Collection

For this study, I used semistructured, one-on-one interviews and participant reflections to gather rich narrative data from a purposive sample of WBC elementary cooperating teachers partnering within the coteaching clinical practice model. According to Creswell (2013) and Yin (2018), case study data collection includes an array of procedures so that the researcher can build an in-depth understanding of the case. The findings in the literature review drove all data collection strategies, and all prompts and questions used during the data collection process were aligned to the research questions. Interview questions for participants are included in Appendix B and reflection paper prompt for participant reflections are included in Appendix C.

Interviews

An interview, whether person-to-person or group format, is a conversation that seeks to elicit information. The conversation is one of purpose, attempting to obtain information that cannot be directly observed, including previous actions, thoughts, and intentions of the interviewee (Merriam, 1988a). Furthermore, the interviewer seeks to aggregate descriptions and interpretations across participants (Stake, 1995). The type of interview is determined by the desired amount of structure and can vary from highly structured, questionnaire driven to open-ended, conversational formats. Highly structured interviews, also referred to as survey interviews, are used when the quantification of information is important. These interviews consist of specific, predetermined questions

that are asked in order. More common in qualitative interviewing are less structured, open-ended interviews that assume participants have unique perspectives of the world (Merriam, 1988a). Semistructured interviews are guided by a list of questions or concepts and are used when the researcher is attempting to elicit certain information from participants. Unstructured interviews are generally used when the researcher does not know enough about the phenomenon to generate questions before talking with participants (Merriam, 1988a). Often, information obtained during unstructured interviews is used to guide question development for subsequent interviews and is rarely used in isolation of other data collection strategies (Merriam, 1988a).

Creswell (2007) recommended determining the type of interview that will be most practical and will elicit the best information. For this qualitative study, I used one-on-one interviews to obtain a spectrum of narrative data. In addition to considering the interview type, it is also important to consider the type of interview questions; different types of questions will elicit different information (Merriam, 1988b). I considered and structured questions to be carefully worded and constructed in a familiar language (see Merriam, 1988b). Additionally, all questions posed were driven by and aligned with the research questions of the study.

The interview structure for this study was semistructured, so it was important for me to follow a protocol that includes predetermined questions, consideration of the setting, and procedures for recording data (see Creswell, 2007). Before beginning the one-on-one interviews, I created a short list of questions and prompts that were derived from the research questions. The interview questions developed were also connected to

the conceptual framework of the study, including Portner's mentoring framework and Stets and Burke's role identity theory. Before conducting the interviews, I facilitated a pilot test to evaluate the interview questions and procedures. Creswell (2007), Merriam (1988b), and Stake (1995) all recommended the use of a pilot test to ensure participant interviews are effective and efficient and yield the best possible information. After necessary revisions were made, I again considered the setting and data recording procedures.

To account for the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted and recorded through Google Zoom. I ensured that each interview was conducted via a virtual meeting that was free from distractions (see Creswell, 2007). To protect confidentiality, each participant was emailed a unique link to access the virtual meeting room and all recordings were password protected. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. Before beginning the interview, I emailed a copy of the interview questions to each participant to serve as an agenda for the interview process (see Stake, 1995).

Interviews were audio recorded through the Google Zoom platform for accuracy and later transcribed before being reviewed by participants. As recommended by Stake (1995), upon the conclusion of each interview, I ensured that I had time and space to expand on my data. I then transcribed each audio recording verbatim and asked the respective participant to review for accuracy. Once transcriptions were approved by participants, they were coded using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. All information was managed through the NVivo software to maintain security and

confidentiality. I assigned pseudonyms to participants (e.g., P1, P2, etc.) and removed all identifying information from the data to further protect their confidentiality.

Participant Reflections

In addition to one-on-one interviews, I also analyzed and interpreted participant reflections. After each academic year, cooperating teachers are requested to complete a reflection paper describing their experiences with the WBC coteaching clinical practice model. Participant reflections were used as archival data in the current study and served as a substitute for activities that could not be observed firsthand, providing additional insight and data (see Stake, 1995). Review of documents or artifacts, such as participant reflections, follows a process similar to that of interviews; the researcher must be organized, open to new clues within the data, and must have a system to keep the process on track (Stake, 1995). Participants were given 2 weeks to submit reflections via Google Docs, email, or mail to ensure privacy, and their reflections were entered into NVivo software for coding and analysis.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, I maintained integrity and ethical standards throughout the duration of the study. I am currently employed by the School of Education at WBC; I teach for the Early Childhood Education program and have previously worked with the coordination of field experiences and partnerships. Through my employment, I have had the opportunity to build professional relationships with cooperating teachers and had previous correspondence with each of the potential participants. I did not supervise or evaluate the performance of participant groups; therefore, my role did not have any

influence on participant responses. Additionally, participation in the coteaching clinical practice model is voluntary and at will for cooperating teachers; their participation may be withdrawn at any time. I emphasized to participants that my role as researcher was strictly to collect data for the study.

Data Analysis

The goal of a qualitative case study is to obtain descriptions and interpretations of others (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of the study is to understand how cooperating elementary education teachers conceptualize their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model. To do this, I have considered how data will be collected, analyzed, and synthesized so that accuracy and credibility are maintained. There are several steps I have taken to ensure data are concisely and thoroughly presented so that an accurate depiction of participant conceptualizations is portrayed. Yin (2017) recommended four principles of data collection: 1. use multiple sources of evidence, 2. create a case study database, 3. maintain a chain of evidence, and 4. exercise care when using data from social media sources. Although the final principle does not apply to this study (social media will not be utilized as a source of data), I have followed the first three principles to increase the construct validity of the study.

Data for this study was collected using both one-on-one interviews and participant reflection papers. The use of multiple sources of data collection, referred to as data triangulation, will increase the strength and quality of the study (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2017). A benefit of the case study approach is the inherent use of multiple sources to

provide an in-depth, contextual study of the phenomenon, making the study more convincing and accurate (Yin, 2017). As I collected data from both the interviews and participant reflections, I uploaded it to the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software that allows the researcher to organize, store, and retrieve data. Data can be imported and transcribed from various sources, including text, audio, and spreadsheets, and allows the researcher to add notes and tags so that data can be organized into themes and categories. This software allowed for expedited and detailed exploration of data while providing secure storage.

As comprehensive data were collected, I created and maintained a case study database in google sheets to ensure consistent and accessible storage of information. As participants were given copies of interview transcripts to review for accuracy any changes were noted. As recommended by Yin (2017), a case study database must be organized, categorized, complete, and available for later access. Through the NVivo database, I was able to store and secure all evidence and reports generated by the study and have also maintained a chain of evidence that shows alignment among research questions and study findings.

As data were uploaded into the NVivo software, it was coded to determine overarching categories and themes used in making conclusions and establishing the findings of the study. Coding is a process that is dependent upon the interpretation and discretion of the researcher; however, codes should accurately capture the content and essence of the data (Saldana, 2016). The ongoing process of coding reflects the researcher's interaction with the data to refine, categorize, or analyze language-based or

visual data (Saldana, 2016). I used Braun and Clarke's (2013) process for thematic data analysis to maintain a chain of evidence. This process provides a "method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across data sets" (p. 57), and involves a six-phase approach: 1. familiarizing yourself with the data, 2. generating initial codes, 3. searching for themes, 4. reviewing potential themes, 5. defining and naming themes, and 6. producing the report.

Data Analysis Results

After interview transcriptions and participant reflections were completed and approved through member checking, I uploaded them into NVivo software and began the coding process. Data from the transcriptions and participant reflections were read and reread to establish codes related to the research questions. In vivo coding was used as the first cycle coding method to gain insight into participant perspectives and actions, and to honor the voice of each participant (Saldana, 2016). Once all data were coded, individual codes were sorted into three deductive themes as driven by the conceptual framework of the study and the corresponding research questions: description, operationalization, and support. Through code mapping, these deductive themes were further organized into themes related to coteaching and mentoring and included: mentoring, relating, assessing, coaching, and guiding. The process of code mapping allowed for an organized transition to second-round coding by organizing data as it pertained to the conceptual framework of the study (Saldana, 2016).

Through this process, additional themes emerged and included: successes, challenges, benefits, and suggestions, resulting in a total of nine themes being derived

from participant data that could be directly aligned to the research questions. During the second round of coding, the use of focused coding confirmed and reinforced the previous nine themes, and three additional themes emerged: employment, online instruction, and special education. These emergent themes were then aligned to the deductive theme of operationalization. The salience of the emergent themes among participants reinforced relevance to the participants' perspectives and experiences (Saldana, 2016) with the coteaching clinical practice model. Overall, 12 themes resulted from the participant data (Table 1).

Table 1

Alignment of Codes and Thematic Categories

Codes	Theme	Deductive Theme	RQs
Partnership Open communication Leadership	Mentorship	Description	RQ1: How do cooperating teachers describe their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?
Building positive relationships	Relating		
Comfortable releasing class to the teacher candidate Adaptability	Successes		
Assessments Feelings of inadequacy	Challenges		
Consistent feedback Timely feedback Informal communication	Assessing	Operationalization	RQ2: How do cooperating teachers operationalize their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?
Coplanning Coreflection Encouraging self-reflection	Coaching		
Confidence Risk-taking Initiative In-person experience Developing own assessments Higher-level thinking and questioning	Guiding		
Finding openings Preparing for interviews	Employment		
Minimal in-person instruction Watered down Learning curve	Online instruction		
Inclusion	Special education		
The teacher candidate comes in well-prepared Matching process Coteaching model Support of cooperating teacher Time	Benefits	Support	RQ3: How can the WBC teacher preparation program best support cooperating teachers as mentors?
Teacher candidate does not see the end of year	Suggestions		

Cooperating Teachers' Descriptions of Their Roles as Mentors

When asked to describe quality mentorship, participants mentioned concepts of partnership, open communication, and leadership. All participants cited the importance of working alongside the teacher candidate and being open to reciprocal learning while viewing the cooperating teacher/teacher candidate relationship as a partnership. This mindset aligns with the shift in paradigm from traditional student teaching to coteaching. P4 stated, "this isn't just about what you can give them, it's about what they can give you too" which was also echoed by other participants, particularly while referring to best practices and technology. To develop and maintain a successful partnership, participants also discussed the importance of two-way communication including the idea of being open, honest, and approachable. P3 shared, "open communication would be number one. Both sides have to feel like they can share what they think, their ideas, their plans, their whatever…"

The third salient concept of quality mentorship was leadership in terms of modeling adaptability (referring to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic) and guiding teacher candidates to find their teaching styles. "Your job is to help guide them on the path to 'what is their teaching style?' not necessarily mimicking your teaching style, but rather, helping them find their own" (P2). Several participants illustrated the unique teaching parameters during the pandemic and the importance to be able to lead and model navigating the online instruction format. Participants went on to say that once a routine and comfort level with remote teaching was established, the focus shifted to helping lead teacher candidates to find ways to make the online instruction their own. A

prominent precursor to later successes was the cooperating teachers' abilities to build and maintain positive relationships with their teacher candidates.

Relating

Similar to viewing mentorship as a partnership, participants reinforced this concept when describing the relationship they have with their teacher candidates.

We're partners, colleagues, and friends. We don't just talk about school. We stay online after our class every single period, and sometimes we talk about our families, or sometimes we talk about what's going on in the world, or at the school district, and so I've gotten to know her (teacher candidate) on a personal basis. I think that makes it easier too, so you know what's going on in their lives, so if something happens, you understand, you know they are people. (P3)

Collectively, participants described a positive relationship as being able to see the teacher candidate as a person and getting to know the candidate on a personal level, aligning to Porter's (2008) recommendation of paying attention to teacher candidate thoughts and feelings.

Candidates also included thoughts of mutual trust, empathy, and understanding as part of building and maintaining relationships, Portner's (2008) cornerstones for establishing relationships.

I think I come in trying to be their friend in some ways, but I also need them to look at me as I am not just some authority figure, but somebody who is going to help and guide them. (P4)

According to Portner (2008), additional attention could be given to honoring confidentiality and communicating nonverbally. Although there are a few areas to maximize the relationship between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate, the mindset and approaches taken by the participants to establish positive relationships, have led to several successes throughout their respective clinical practice experiences.

Successes

Two prominent successes presented by participants, that can be attributed to the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model, included being comfortable releasing the class to the teacher candidate and maximizing the relationship with the teacher candidate to be adaptable during the uncertain time of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. P2 referred to herself as a controlling person, however cited the relationship she had with her teacher candidate as the reason she was able to feel comfortable taking a more passive role in the classroom at some times, allowing the teacher candidate to be in control. "I've come to the point where I can release my classroom, which is so hard for teachers to do, to kind of give up that control, we're very controlling people" (P2). Along with being comfortable with the teacher candidate, participants also discussed adaptability as a strength prevalent among the coteaching teams. Having positive, mentoring relationships allowed the teaching teams to work together to adapt to online and hybrid teaching, alternative schedules, and fluctuating student attendance throughout the pandemic.

I think our success has come in our ability to adapt. I mean when this year started, it was a little scary in the sense that I was like, 'I'm not the most technologically savvy person, and I don't know how I'm going to get through this, so how am I going to mentor

somebody else to do it?' But you know what, it was baby steps, and then it was leaps and bounds, and then it came together. (P3)

Along with the successes experienced by cooperating teachers, there were also a few challenges common among the participants.

Challenges

Several participants cited adaptability in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as a success, however, several participants also cited a few challenges relating to the COVID-19 pandemic adaptations. The two challenges cited across multiple participants were feelings of inadequacy as a mentor, and the inability to accurately model and facilitate the assessment of K-3 students. Many of the challenges discussed throughout participant interviews could be traced back to the altered learning format and structure in response to COVID-19, however, the most prevalent was cooperating teachers' feelings of inadequacy as mentors to the teacher candidates and questioning whether they were "doing right" by their teacher candidates as they ventured into unfamiliar, and sometimes uncomfortable teaching situations. Specifically, cooperating teachers were concerned with the inability to model and guide teacher candidates through K-3 student assessment due to the online teaching format. Altered teaching conditions presented an opportunity for both successes and challenges for participants and influenced how the cooperating teachers operationalized their role as a mentor.

Cooperating Teachers' Operationalizations of Their Roles as Mentors

Assessing

Participants were asked to discuss the conditions and strategies they use to provide feedback to their teacher candidates. Common themes included: timely, consistent, frequent, and informal techniques. Participants shared that they often took advantage of whatever free time was available to have informal conversations with their teacher candidate to share ideas about recently taught or upcoming lessons, implying a challenge of time constraints. All participants cited the importance of sharing feedback as soon as possible, whether it be through face-to-face interactions, utilizing the chat function during zoom calls, or through text messages. Although timely and consistent feedback is vital to the mentoring process, Portner (2008) recommended assessing how the teacher candidate best receives and processes feedback and information, that presents a potential area of focus for training and support of future cooperating teachers. The feedback and communication techniques offered by participants often overlapped with methods described for coaching and guiding teacher candidates throughout the clinical practice experience.

Coaching

Participants were asked about how they coach their teacher candidates, specifically concerning coplanning and coreflecting. Coplanning was described as an intentional, team effort. P3 described the coplanning process as a scaffolded approach. It was important to this participant that her teacher candidate took on only what she was comfortable with, gradually increasing responsibility. Another participant described

coplanning "in bigger chunks and then breaking it down" (P4). Two additional

participants described similar strategies by working with the teacher candidate to plan big

picture (for the week or unit) and then breaking down the plans to specific lessons (P2,

P4, P5). Similarly, participants described taking a team-based approach to reflection with

an emphasis on encouraging teacher candidate self-reflection. P3 shared that it is her

priority to approach refection as "we," "how are we going to fix this?," as opposed to

putting all the responsibility on the teacher candidate.

Through analysis of participant data in comparison to the theoretical framework

of the study, coaching is the most prominent area of potential professional development.

Portner (2008) outlined a process involving the integration of pre-lesson conferences,

lesson observations, and post-lesson conferences, none of which were specifically

mentioned by participants. Portner described a systematic approach to coplanning and

coreflecting, whereas participants described informal strategies and techniques, implying

a less structured approach. More explicit training and support in coaching may elicit more

positive results from the mentorship experience for both cooperating teachers and teacher

candidates.

Guiding

When sharing experiences with guiding teacher candidates, participants discussed

both strengths and goals for the teacher candidates. Some common strengths included

initiative, confidence, and risk-taking from the teacher candidate, that align to Portner's

(2008) goal of guiding; to assist the teacher candidate in developing and asserting their

own teacher identity through independence and autonomy. Each participant discussed the

confidence and initiative taken by teacher candidates early in the school year and attributed this to the teacher preparation program and the amount of time that teacher candidates had spent in the field before beginning their clinical practice experience. Initiative was also mentioned in relation to researching techniques and strategies to implement in the online teaching format. Similarly, participants recognized the presence and evolution of the teacher candidates' willingness to take risks, particularly with the use of various strategies and techniques while teaching virtually. Participants expressed interest in building upon these teacher candidate strengths in the areas of assessment development and implementation and in continued growth in prompting higher-level thinking from K-3 students. Both Participants 2 and 3 took accountability for wanting to "push" their teacher candidates in developing and implementing assessments and cited this as a goal to work on during the remainder of the semester. Additionally, P2 included a goal of working with her teacher candidate to focus on promoting higher-level thinking and questioning as part of the informal assessment process. Additionally, all participants shared the goal of helping their teacher candidates acclimate to in-person teaching once students returned to a face-to-face format.

Employment

An emergent theme resulting from the data collection and analysis process was the desire and focus of cooperating teachers to help teacher candidates with preparing for employment after the clinical practice experience. Four of the five participants discussed the accountability they felt to prepare their teacher candidates for the job search and

interview process, along with making sure they had the needed experiences and documentation to successfully secure employment.

I always tell them you do for me and I will take care of you in the end, you take care of my classroom like it's your own at the end of the year I will not rest until we get you something. (P1)

This shared goal of cooperating teachers reiterates the value placed on the mentor/mentee relationship.

Online Instruction

A second theme that emerged from the data was that of online instruction and the inherent challenges this learning platform brings. All the participants cited online instruction as being an obstacle or challenge to both teaching and mentoring. P1 shared the concern of presenting a "watered down" curriculum to students based on some of the limitations of online teaching and learning and shared that this limited how she was able to model and guide her teacher candidate. However, participants also cited the opportunity of being able to learn from their teacher candidates in terms of technology. This again supports the idea that participants value the concept of mentorship being a partnership; that mentor and mentee are learning from one another.

Special Education

A third, and final, emergent theme was that of special education and how the coteaching model encourages both the teacher and teacher candidate to work together to meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom. In addition to meeting

the needs of all students and reducing the student/teacher ratio, the concept of

collaboration was also presenting alongside the idea of special education and coteaching.

> I think that this (coteaching model) really gives a candidate a good idea of what it
> looks like to truly coteach in an inclusive environment, to know what it means to bring a
> second teacher in, and to have that second teacher alongside you. (P3)

Evidence from the data shows participants value the opportunity to expose teacher

candidates to collaboration among professionals, like that of coteaching with a special

education professional, and offered insight to their perceptions of additional benefits of

the coteaching clinical practice model.

Support of Cooperating Teachers

Benefits

Participants cited several benefits of the coteaching clinical practice model, including the

matching process of the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher, the preparation of the

teacher candidate upon entrance of the clinical practice experience, the support provided

to the cooperating teacher by the teacher preparation program, the amount of time the

teacher candidate spends in the field during the clinical practice experience, and the

integration of the coteaching model and strategies. Participants claimed that they

appreciate the matching process used by the teacher preparation program that allows

cooperating teachers to provide input towards whom they would like to mentor for the

upcoming year. The teacher preparation program uses a "meet and greet" event to

introduce all cooperating teachers and administrators to all teacher candidates and allows

opportunities for icebreakers and "getting to know you" activities to assist both

cooperating teachers and teacher candidates in selecting the best fit for the mentorship. Matches are determined and relationships can begin to be established before the start of the upcoming school year.

> The matching process itself, in general, is great. Getting a chance to have that time with each teacher candidate. I think it was really valuable. I feel like if you know you're going to be able to build that rapport and have the experience with someone that's honestly half the battle because when it's not a good match it's not easy. (P1)

In addition to the matching process, participants also cited the level of preparation that teacher candidates enter the coteaching clinical practice model as being a benefit to the overall mentoring experience.

> By the time they come into student teach, they've been in the room and they're comfortable around kids, so it's more like, 'OK let's look at our data, let's look at our standards', you're so much further down the line, and that's a credit to you guys (the teacher preparation program), I think getting them in the classrooms as early as possible has helped so much. (P3)

As opposed to having to focus on the teacher candidate being comfortable and able to build rapport with the students, or other basics of teaching, cooperating teachers can scaffold the mentoring process to align more to the daily responsibilities and expectations of a full-time teacher.

The opportunity for deeper mentoring is complemented by the extended amount of time that the teacher candidates spend in the field during their final year. Teacher candidates can see the beginning of a school year and are viewed by the students as a

second teacher in the classroom from the first day of school. Teacher candidates then spend the entire year with the same group of students, as opposed to the 16 weeks of traditional student teaching, allowing relationships and learning opportunities to be maximized for all.

Suggestions

Participants shared several benefits of the coteaching clinical practice model, however, there was one suggestion that emerged from the data: teacher candidates do not see the end of the school year because the university commences classes before the end of the K-3 school year. Though this suggestion is not exclusive to the coteaching clinical practice model, it was cited by multiple participants as being a drawback to the experience. The teacher preparation program does encourage teacher candidates to remain involved in their clinical practice placements throughout the conclusion of the K-3 school year, however, this cannot be made a requirement. Participants did note that previous teacher candidates have continued to attend their clinical practice placement throughout the end of the school year, however, most did so in a more limited capacity, for example, only a few days a week.

Interpretations of Findings

As the coteaching clinical practice model continues to grow and expand at WBC, it is important to consider how current cooperating teachers describe and operationalize their experiences with this model. The participants of this study appear to have favored the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model for the increased mentorship opportunities that it provides. Participants all shared the belief that the role of a mentor is

to approach the mentorship process as a partnership, and the mentor needs to be willing to learn from the mentee and vice versa, thus supporting the need for collaborative relationships as suggested by Monteblanco (2021), Montgomery and Akerson (2019), Portner (2008), Rabin (2020), Soslau et al. (2019), and Thompson and Schademan (2019). This concept also aligns with Stets and Burke's (2000) postulation that the self is reflexive, and individuals view themselves in terms of the expectations and behaviors associated with a named role (mentor). Participants also unanimously agreed that positive relationships are a key determinant of a successful mentorship experience; getting to know the teacher candidate and allowing them to get to know you, while also helping them figure out their teaching style. Positive relationships led to higher levels of comfort when releasing control of the classroom to the teacher candidate to allow for solo teaching experiences. Although the unique teaching parameters of the COVID-19 pandemic, having to teach and mentor in an online format, presented challenges for all participants, the coteaching clinical practice model still provided many benefits to all involved.

When focusing on how cooperating teachers operationalize their role, participants shared several strategies used to assess, coach, and guide their teacher candidates. All participants shared examples of how they provided feedback, coplanned, and coreflected with their teacher candidates through informal methods such as conversations, emails, and text messages. When guiding their teacher candidates, participants took into consideration the confidence, risk-taking, and initiative demonstrated by the teacher candidates and used this as a baseline for scaffolding the mentoring experience. Two

common areas of focus included the development and administration of assessments for K-3 learners and building opportunities for K-3 learners to demonstrate higher level thinking. This may be a potential area to expand on during the coplanning step of the coteaching cycle as implied by Brendle et al. (2017) and Soslau et al. (2019). Participants also described steps they took for assisting teacher candidates in preparing for and securing employment, growing within the online teaching format, and inclusion of all learners due to a reduced student/teacher ratio.

All participants shared positive comments and experiences relating to their own experiences with the coteaching clinical practice model and shared a common concern of teacher candidates not seeing the end of the K-3 school year. The culmination of data from participants reinforces some of the current training and preparation practices of the teacher preparation program while also providing insight for additional areas of focus when training and supporting new cooperating teachers as mentors, reinforcing recommendations of Brendle (2017), Chang (2018), Faraclas (2018), Hawkman et al. (2019), and Lafferty (2018). The following section will outline a 3-day training opportunity for new cooperating teachers based on the findings of this study and will be driven by the alignment and discrepancies between the findings and both the study's theoretical framework and insights gained from the review of current literature.

Section 3: The Project

This study project is a 3-day professional development program for use in training and supporting cooperating teachers to become high-quality mentors in a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. The topics included in this professional development program are derived from the findings of participant interviews and reflections and are driven by the theories of Portner (2008) and Stets and Burke (2000). These topics include relating, coaching, and guiding teacher candidates as well as strategies and techniques for implementation. Concepts relating to mentorship and the university's expectations of this role as it relates to cooperating teachers are also addressed.

In this section, I provide the rationale for the project, a review of literature, and project implications. The section also includes the purpose, goals, learning outcomes, and target audience of the study project. Additionally, I present a detailed outline of subtopics and activities provided in the professional development training sessions comprising a 3-day training program. The professional development program will be offered at WBC before the beginning of the new school year. All cooperating teachers partnered with the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model will be encouraged to attend. The first day of training will be offered asynchronously to be respectful of participant time and must be completed before the synchronous learning of Days 2 and 3.

Based on the study findings, cooperating teachers demonstrate mentorship through establishing and maintaining relationships with their teacher candidates and valuing this relationship as a partnership. Cooperating teachers are open and willing to learn from their teacher candidates as they strive to help their mentees find their own

teacher identities. Oftentimes, strategies of mentorship were influenced by previous experiences as both a mentor and mentee. The professional development program project will allow cooperating teachers to share these thoughts and experiences. Additionally, cooperating teachers will be able to share thoughts relating to relationship building and how they have, or plan to, coach and guide their teacher candidates through their final clinical practice experience. The professional development program will also provide an outlet for cooperating teachers to share how the teacher preparation program can support these mentorship efforts through the duration of the school year.

Prior training provided to cooperating teachers by the teacher preparation program included an overview of the six coteaching strategies. This training has proven to be successful and will also be included as part of the 3-day professional development program. Components of this training topic will include an explanation and examples of how each of the strategies can be implemented, including the expected roles of both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate. Additionally, the teacher preparation program had also provided training in this area to accommodate for COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and teaching in an online format. Components of this training were also retained for the study project.

Outcomes of the project suggest that cooperating teachers need training and support in one key area of teacher candidate mentorship: coaching. The professional development program will offer specific strategies related to coaching through subtopics of pre-lesson conferencing, lesson observation, and post-lesson conferencing. Participant data implied time constraints as a possible reason for a more informal approach to

coaching and guiding; therefore, strategies for time management, as related to mentoring, are also addressed.

The professional development program will help prepare both experienced and novice cooperating teachers to be high-quality mentors within the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. Over the 3-day training program, asynchronous and synchronous learning will focus on the theory, research, and implementation of both mentorship and coteaching. Participants will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences related to being a mentor, successes as mentors, and anticipated challenges to mentorship. Participants will also be given the opportunity to practice with the various coteaching models and components of mentorship, with a focus on coaching teacher candidates through pre- and post-lesson conferences. The professional development program will also integrate and expand upon the "meet and greet" event previously used by the teacher preparation program.

The project's primary goals are to (a) understand the role conceptualization of cooperating teachers based on the interview and reflection responses from the participants of the study and (b) to provide strategies and techniques to cooperating teachers to assist in the successful operationalization of mentorship as related to coteaching. The study findings suggest cooperating teachers have a firm understanding of the influence that both positive relationships and timely and consistent feedback have on the mentoring process; however, there is also a need for training and support in coaching. The professional development program will help solidify expressed strengths of

cooperating teachers while providing explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates.

Rationale

According to Tyagi and Misra (2021), teacher educators, such as cooperating teachers, have a direct influence on the quality of training provided to student teachers and should therefore be involved in continuous professional development. I selected the professional development program as the project for this study after reviewing the findings. Outcomes of the project suggest that cooperating teachers need training and support in one key area of teacher candidate mentorship: coaching. The professional development program will support cooperating teachers in this area by providing education and opportunities for the practice of effective mentoring strategies. Professional development is a structured learning process that extends beyond a transfer of knowledge and results in change and improvement in teacher practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Healy et al., 2020). According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), effective professional development implementation requires responsiveness to both the needs of educators and learners and the context in which teaching and learning will take place.

The research-based professional development program will provide cooperating teachers with a platform to share ideas and experiences while actively participating in activities designed to further the emphasize the key components of mentorship within a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. Though recognition for teacher educator professional development is growing, so is the acknowledgment that several barriers

consistently impede teacher educator participation in such programs (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). Hybrid or online learning formats may assist in combating some of these barriers to participation while respecting the unique learning characteristics of adult learners.

Review of the Literature

I selected professional development as the project to provide cooperating teachers with instructional support in conceptualizing and operationalizing their roles as mentors within the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. The findings of the study reinforced some of the current training and preparation practices of the teacher preparation program while also providing insight for additional areas of focus when training and supporting new cooperating teachers as mentors. One area of focus, based upon the study results, is the need for more explicit training and practice in coaching as related to pre- and post-lesson conferencing. Therefore, I have developed a 3-day professional training program that will help solidify expressed strengths of cooperating teachers while providing explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates.

The primary resource I used to find peer-reviewed articles and books for this literature review was the Walden University Library, with Google Scholar being used as a secondary resource. The terms used in my search included *teacher professional development, mentor teacher professional development, teacher educator mentoring strategies,* and *teacher mentors*. I used the Academic Search Complete database to retrieve qualitative or mixed methods articles on the topic that have been published since 2016. Two overarching themes emerged through the review of retrieved sources: professional development and education of teacher mentors.

Professional Development

Professional development is often utilized for the delivery of targeted training and development opportunities; however, not all professional development is effective. Specific learner needs must be considered and accounted for when developing such opportunities (Darling-Hammond et. al., 2017; Powell & Bodur, 2018). Once needs are accounted for, content and implementation of the professional development must be carefully fashioned. For knowledge and skills to be transferred to the classroom environment, professional development for teachers needs to go beyond one-time workshops that offer little or no opportunity for follow-up, collaboration, or reflection (Darling-Hammond et. al., 2017; Powell & Bodur, 2018). Through ongoing efforts, professional development should elicit the specific expertise of teachers and should encourage the use of this expertise in the mentorship of teacher candidates (Melton et. al., 2019). Consequently, those creating and implementing professional development opportunities for teachers need to consider how to navigate the needs of learners while simultaneously integrating features of effective professional development. Not only does the content of the professional development matter, but so does its form (Darling-Hammond et. al., 2017). The first consideration in developing professional development for teachers is an awareness and understanding of the unique needs of these potential participants.

Needs of Learners

There is a wealth of information available about how teachers develop professionally; however, there is little extant research about how teacher educators, such

as cooperating teachers, are trained and supported as mentors (Tyagi & Misra, 2021; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Although the professional development of teacher educators has often been neglected in research, there is growing recognition for the importance and value of providing ongoing professional development opportunities for cooperating teachers assuming a mentorship role (Taylor et al., 2017; Van der Klink et al., 2017). Specifically, the need for training and support that emphasizes providing effective mentoring strategies and implementation has been the focus of recent research (Melton et al., 2019; Wexler, 2019; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Because teacher educators have a direct influence on the quality of student teacher training, there is an increased focus on the quality of teacher educators who are responsible for molding the next generation of teachers (Tyagi & Misra, 2021; Van der Klink et al., 2017; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Through concentrated and consistent training and support, teacher educators, such as cooperating teachers, will be more effective in their roles as mentors to teacher candidates.

Though teacher educators are aware of the importance of being lifelong learners through continued professional development (Tyagi & Misra, 2021; Vangrieken et al., 2017), there are several consistent barriers to participation in such activities. Researchers have cited the following as factors hindering teacher educator participation in continued professional development: time and conflicting commitments, accessibility and cost, and availability and relevancy of programs (Healy et al., 2020; Melton et al., 2019; Powell & Bodur, 2019; Tyagi & Misra, 2021). For effective implementation of teacher educator professional development, initiatives must be aligned to the professional and personal

needs of teacher educators (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2019). One potential pathway for teacher professional development that allows for consideration to these needs is the integration of online learning opportunities.

Online and Hybrid Models

The goal of teacher professional development, including online and hybrid professional development models, is to go beyond the transfer of knowledge and to improve practice in the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Healy et al., 2020). Additionally, online professional development models have been an effective solution to support teacher needs while mediating some of the challenges and barriers to participation, such as time and distance (du Plessis, 2018; Melton et al., 2019). These programs are being increasingly implemented due to their convenience and accessibility to resources that may not otherwise be available (Healy et al., 2020). However, if not effectively executed with consideration to design and implementation, online professional development is no more than the use of technology as a delivery tool (Powell & Bodur, 2019) and can present its own set of challenges, including gaps in learning and limitations in participant engagement and motivation (Melton et al., 2019). Whether online or in-person, teacher professional development should incorporate a set of shared features to ensure effectiveness and quality.

Features of Effective Professional Development

In a review of 35 studies related to positive outcomes of teacher professional development, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found seven consistently shared features of effective professional development. Their findings emphasized the importance of a well-

designed professional development program and included the following criteria: is content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers feedback and reflection, and is of sustained duration. Effective professional development models incorporate all, or most, of these seven criteria to lead to the desired changes in teacher practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) and offer cohesion and alignment between professional development and the needs of learners (Martin et al., 2019).

Professional development opportunities for teachers should allow for transformational learning to take place. A content-focused approach supports teachers by taking into consideration ways to support teachers within their classroom contexts (Arroyo et al., 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Jacob et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2017). Professional development that considers the unique school contexts is more successful (Martin et al., 2019) by allowing teachers to have a choice in how they approach problem-solving, instruction, and integration of new skills in their classrooms while promoting ownership through relevancy (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Active learning allows teachers to engage with one another, and the learning opportunities that they have designed for their learners through authentic tasks and activities (Arroyo et al., 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Jacob et al., 2017; Lofthouse, 2018; Powell & Bodur, 2019; Taylor et al., 2017). By taking into consideration the unique classroom environments of teachers, learning opportunities can be tailored to meet the specific needs of individual teachers.

Although it is important to integrate contextual learning into professional development for teachers, it is equally important to incorporate opportunities for teachers to interact with one another to share thoughts, experiences, and challenges, thus creating a learning community. Active engagement in learning communities promotes the collaborative and social aspects of learning through multiple forms of interaction (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; du Plessis, 2018; Martin et al., 2019; Melton et al., 2019; Powell & Bodur, 2019; Vangrieken et al., 2017) and promotes transferability of knowledge and skills to classroom environments (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Professional development that involves learning communities provides teachers the ability to solicit feedback and problem solve with colleagues who share similar experiences. Through this collaboration with experience peers, teachers are able to share ideas and beliefs to construct new knowledge that can then be translated to the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Lofthouse, 2018; Melton et al., 2019; Powell & Bodur, 2019; Tyagi & Misra, 2021). The experience of sharing thoughts and expertise allows teachers to form camaraderie within the profession.

Learning communities provide professional development instructors the opportunity to integrate active and collaborative learning activities among participants. This includes the ability for professional development instructors to model effective best practices while also providing coaching and support that is aligned to teacher needs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Once modeling of specific strategies and techniques takes place, teachers are provided adequate time to learn, practice, and systematically reflect. Participants then have the opportunity to solicit feedback from instructors and

peers to evaluate how new information and skills relate and facilitate change to their practices and beliefs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; du Plessis, 2018; Powell & Bodur, 2019). Through these effective professional development features, high-quality education of teacher mentors can take place.

Education of Teacher Mentors

Mentoring is a vital component of teacher education and has been shown to increase confidence, pedagogy, and problem-solving (Dorner & Kumar, 2017). To be an effective mentor, effective training and support must also be available. Without effective professional development, cooperating teachers are often unprepared to provide high quality mentorship to teacher candidates (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wexler, 2020). Not only does professional development need to be carefully planned and delivered, but it also needs to be ongoing; continuous professional development has a substantial influence on the quality of the mentoring process (Yılmaz & Bıkmaz, 2020). The focus of professional development used to prepare and support cooperating teachers as mentors should go beyond viewing mentoring as a set of skills that can be trained, but rather viewed as a relationship (Lammert et al., 2020). A relationship must be developed and maintained between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate. Cooperating teachers are more than placements for teacher candidates to complete their clinical practice but are a vital component in helping teacher candidates learn and grow through analysis of experience (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wexler, 2020). As such, cooperating teachers must be prepared to see themselves and be seen by others, not only as teacher educators (Stanulis et al., 2019), but as partners in the learning process.

The relationship between the teacher preparation program and the cooperating teacher is another key component of effective mentoring. The continuity and collaboration between the teacher preparation program, including university supervisors, and the cooperating teacher is vital in understanding the roles and expectations of teacher mentorship (Curcio & Adams, 2019; Lammert et al., 2020; Niklasson, 2018; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Each member of the mentorship team should be aware of the expectations of all roles involved and should be supported to become competent in embracing their own unique role. Acquisition of mentoring competencies takes time and requires ongoing practice that can be enhanced by a skill-based process (Stanulis et al., 2019; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Effective professional development that provides opportunities for both learning, practice, and reflection can aid in the mastery competencies associated with mentoring. When developing and implementing professional development opportunities, it is important to be cognizant that mentorship should not be viewed as needing a set of prerequisite skills before beginning, but rather supported as an open-ended process as mentors develop both personal and social skills needed for high-quality mentorship (Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). Therefore, high-quality mentorship training and development should embed clarification of roles and expectations and should be provided ongoing support of competency development.

Effective teachers do not necessarily equate to effective mentors (Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020), and mentorship skills and expectations must be formally taught to adequately prepare cooperating teachers for their roles as mentors (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wexler, 2020). Often, cooperating teachers will mentor based upon their own experiences

with mentorship. Lammert et al. (2020) suggested asking cooperating teachers to reflect on experiences they have had with supervision and teacher learning that might challenge current practices or models of mentorship. Through this solicitation of feedback, professional development instructors can integrate opportunities to clarify misconceptions and misalignments, while providing practice and reflection with best practices. With consideration to participant feedback, professional development instructors can also prompt thinking and discussion among participants as related to current practices and models of mentorship. As recommended by Niklasson (2018), incorporating practical training with the mutual exchange of experiences heightens the professional development experiences and transferability to the classroom. Through reflective collaboration and dialogue, cooperating teachers construct new understandings of their roles as mentors (Lammert, 2020) as they begin to assign new meaning and internalize the implications of their mentorship role (Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). This role internalization thus leads to more effective and efficient mentoring practices.

Educative Mentoring Practices

Educative mentoring seeks to meet the immediate needs of teacher candidates while also focusing on long-term growth and development. Educative mentoring further postulates that learning is situated, collaborative and scaffolded (Gardiner, 2017; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017), and focuses on growth, continuity, and inquiry (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wilcoxen et al., 2019) through the mentor/mentee partnership (Curcio & Adams, 2019). This approach to mentorship utilizes the mentor/mentee relationship to integrate on-the-spot learning with consideration of both short and long-term goals for the

teacher candidate, while remaining cognizant of student learning needs. To this end, educative mentoring views mentoring on a continuum of ongoing professional development aimed at new teacher learning, ultimately resulting in increased student learning outcomes (Gardiner, 2017). This is done through both "inside" and "outside" mentoring strategies.

Gardiner (2017) examined the mentoring practices that take place "inside" (while working with students) and "outside" (before or after instruction) as part of a range of educative mentoring practices. Some "inside" mentoring strategies based upon the concept of learning through "in the moment teaching" include stepping in, collaborative teaching, and demonstrative teaching. "Outside" strategies including brief interactions, debriefing, and coplanning were found to occur more frequently than "inside" strategies, however, does not suggest one type of strategy to be more preferred or beneficial than the other. Rather, the use of both "inside" and "outside" approaches provide mentors with a range of strategies to employ when engaged in educative teacher mentorship (Gardiner, 2017) and facilitates mutually beneficial learning experiences (Curcio & Adams, 2019; Monteblanco, 2021; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). Through implementation of both "inside" and "outside" mentoring strategies, increased learning results for not only the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher, but for their students as well. Learning opportunity is maximized when the cooperating teacher can maintain an equitable balance between meeting the learning needs of both the teacher candidate and students.

Educative mentoring requires the mentor to balance the learning needs of both the teacher candidate and students through the gathering and analysis of evidence of learning

for each (Stanulis et al., 2019). Mentors then utilize this data to assist teacher candidates in examining and learning from their teaching to improve instruction and student learning outcomes (Manning et al., 2020; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017) creating an individualized and intentional learning experience (Wilcoxen et al., 2019). Essentially, the cooperating teacher works with the teacher candidate to identify strengths and weaknesses within the educational instruction, allowing the team to work together to optimize and scaffold student learning opportunities. Two separate studies (Wexler, 2019; 2020) showed the value of utilizing student data in both reflection and the coplanning process, and how this approach facilitated open and productive conversations between mentor and mentee pairs allowing for constructive feedback. Additionally, through the coplanning process, pairs were able to navigate any tensions through an explicit discussion regarding instructional decisions and the reasoning behind them (Wexler, 2019) further aiding in the educative mentoring process. Through implementation of educative mentoring strategies, the relationship between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate is strengthened, resulting in an educationally conducive teaching and learning environment.

Reflective Mentoring Versus Transmission Mentoring

In contrast to educative mentoring, transmission mentoring is as the name implies, a transmission of teaching skills from the mentor to the mentee. In this approach, the mentor is accepted as more knowledgeable and experienced; therefore, the methods of the mentor are recognized as superior when compared to those of the mentee. Transmission mentoring is thus evaluative in nature, as the success of the mentee is dependent upon the ability to fall in line with the mentor. Due to teacher accountability of

student performance and test scores, evaluative coaching or mentoring models tend to be the dominant method for training new teachers (Lammert et al., 2020). In this approach to mentoring, the expectation is that the mentee will emulate the same strategies and methods as the mentee to maintain consistent results in student learning. The evaluative approach aligns with an education system that relies heavily upon accountability and efficiency when considering student learning outcomes (Lammert et al., 2020). Because of heightened accountability of teachers, the transmission model of mentoring is often employed in such that the mentor views their role as providing an example that the mentee is expected to follow; a "teach as I teach" approach (Lammert et al., 2020). This approach is more attractive to cooperating teachers who are apprehensive in giving up control of the classroom, as some may equate it to giving up control of student performance.

The transmission approach to modeling is fueled by the passing down of mentor experiences and skillsets to meet the immediate needs of the mentee. Teacher mentors tend to draw from their own experiences and expertise to provide advice and suggestions to teacher candidates (Melton et al., 2019) that focus on short-term problem-solving, as opposed to addressing long-term developmental goals (Wexler, 2020). Though meeting the immediate needs of teacher candidates is valuable to the learning process, attention should also be given to long-term goals so that scaffolding may take place. Instead of isolated monitoring and providing advice based upon mentor successes, the mentor should actively observe and provide feedback to the teacher candidate throughout the duration of the clinical practice experience (Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). This attention to

long-term achievement requires prompting from the mentor to encourage reflection from the mentee. Reflective dialogue and practice optimize mentoring opportunities and solidifies the working relationship between the teaching pair.

Reflective mentoring allows flexibility for how and when the needs of the teaching pair are met and acknowledges that no two mentor/mentee pairs are the same. Reflective mentoring combines aspects of coaching (sustained, classroom-based support based upon research-based practices to explore the *how* of teaching) and adds a layer of ongoing emotional support to foster professional growth (Lammert et al., 2020; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). Using this approach to mentoring, there is no clear "right" or "wrong" way to teach, rather, the focus extends beyond the *what* of teaching, to the *how* and the *why* of teaching by challenging and extending thinking through dialogic coconstruction (Lammert et al., 2020; Melton et al., 2019; Stanulis et al., 2019). Dialogic construction of ideas further eliminates the power differential between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate, thus strengthening the relationship and perpetuating meaningful interactions for continued growth and learning to take place. Through reflective mentoring, the mentor articulates the reasoning behind instructional decisions and talks through the complexities of teaching to further exemplify the *how* and *why* of teaching (Manning et al., 2020; Stanulis et al., 2019; Wexler, 2020). This type of approach encourages mentees to use evidence and connections to partake in self-reflective practices after teaching experiences like that of a veteran teacher (Melton et al., 2019). Self-reflection is a vital teaching skill used for continuous instructional

improvement. Once such means of self-reflection, and additional opportunity for mentorship, is the collection and analysis of student data.

Student data provides insight to the learning, or lack thereof, that takes place during, and as a result of instruction. Student data collection and analysis provides an opportunity for the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate to collectively reflect on the effectiveness of instruction. Both Melton et al. (2019) and Stanulis et al. (2019) suggest the use of student learning data as a focus for discussion as opposed to the choices or actions of the teacher candidate. By shifting the focus of collaborative discussions to the strengths and problematic aspects of student learning, the mentee creates a "safe space" for meaningful and productive conversations and reflections to take place (Melton et al., 2019). Additionally, a study by Wexler (2020) examined how two novice teachers approached understanding student thinking to plan and reflect upon instruction. When provided with continuous and constructive feedback, teacher candidates can make more advisable and appropriate instructional decisions (Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020) thus exemplifying the goal of reflective mentoring and further promoting the teaching partnership.

Reflective mentoring views the mentor/mentee as a partnership, where both professionals work alongside one another and coreflect on the teaching process to construct new knowledge (Lammert et al., 2020; Manning et al., 2020; Yilmaz & Bikmaz, 2020). This approach promotes the relationship between the mentor and mentee through the development of positive rapport, thus allowing the pair to openly discuss all aspects of the teaching and learning process (Curcio & Adams, 2019; Yilmaz, & Bikmaz,

2020). When mentor teachers abandon the expert-novice mindset of transmission mentoring, and shift to a reflective mentoring mindset with the belief the mentoring, mutual learning is capitalized for the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and students. As cooperating teachers begin to view mentorship as being social and collaborative, they are better able to take advantage of the professional learning experiences presented with the process of mentoring (Dorner & Kumar, 2017; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017; Wexler, 2020), allowing the pair to recognize and address successes and areas of opportunity (Wilcoxen et al., 2019). One such avenue to promote the reflective mentoring approach, and to pave way to long-term goal attainment, is through intentional and purposeful professional development opportunities.

Project Description

The project that is the focus for this capstone is a 3-day-long professional development program that will help solidify expressed strengths of cooperating teachers while providing explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates. The professional development program will support cooperating teachers by providing explicit training and practice in coaching as related to pre- and post-lesson conferencing. Concepts relating to mentorship and the university's expectations of this role as it relates to cooperating teachers will also be addressed. The 3-day session will combine online learning with in-person training and practice to sufficiently address mentoring concepts concerning cooperating teachers' time and availability.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

The professional development program will be offered in two formats; a portion of the program will be offered online and will be complemented with an in-person component. The in-person portion of the training will be offered at the university of the teacher preparation program used for the study. All cooperating teachers for the upcoming year, along with their administrators, will be invited to participate. For the final in-person day of the training, university supervisors and teacher candidates will also be invited to participate in the meet and greet event and to begin the relationship-building process with their corresponding teaching teams. I will serve as the primary facilitator of the professional development program, which is planned to be active and collaborative, allowing participants to participate in a variety of individual and group activities to reinforce the presented topics.

The professional development will occur both online and in-person; Day 1 will be completed asynchronously online, Days 2 and 3 will occur on campus at the university of the teacher preparation program used for the study. Each participant will need internet access to complete the online learning modules before meeting for the in-person training sessions. Internet access and technology will also be utilized and available on campus for in-person training. The presenter will use the Google platform and interactive technology to deliver various components of the training.

Before the professional development training sessions, participants will be emailed all handouts and resources that will be used for the training. Training folders with hard copies of the emailed resources will also be provided to each participant during

the first in-person session. Although participants are expected to provide their own note-taking materials (laptop, iPad, paper, pencil/pen), extra paper and writing utensils will also be on-hand during each session for those who need them. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided for break times; however, participants are expected to provide their own lunch each day.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

The training room will be labeled, and signs will be posted directing participants to the room location. Office staff will be made aware of the training location so that they can assist in directing participants to the training room. The room designated for the training is anticipated to be free of interruptions and distractions, however, signs will also be posted on the entryways to the building and room to indicate that training is in progress. Some cooperating teachers may not want to spend 2 full days in training following the asynchronous online training; offering professional development hours may entice full participation in the professional development program.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The professional development plan will be reviewed with the university's director of field and clinical experiences and the chair of the department of education. The PowerPoint slides and agendas for each day of training, along with a brief outline of the study's findings, facilitator notes, handouts, and implementation outline will be shared via email and discussed during an in-person meeting. Revisions to the program plan will be made based on recommendations from the director of field and clinical experiences and the chair of the department of education. Once finalized and approved, the online

component of the professional development program will be made available 2 weeks before the in-person training sessions. Participants will have 2 weeks to complete the online learning modules before attending the 2-day consecutive in-person training. Each in-person training will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will end at 3:00 p.m., and will include two 15-minute breaks and a 1-hour lunch from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The projected timeline for the professional development plan includes 1 day of online learning followed by 2 days of in-person training designed to help solidify expressed strengths of cooperating teachers while providing explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates. Day 1, "Setting the Stage for Effective Mentoring," will provide participants with an overview of the goals and exceptions of the teacher preparation program as related to the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice experience, including an introduction to the coteaching strategies, critical elements, and Portner's four characteristics for mentoring new teachers. Day 2, "Coaching and Conferencing: Tips and Tricks for Success," will provide participants information about educative mentoring and will assist them in differentiating between reflective and transmission mentoring models. Additionally, participants will be provided with information and opportunities to practice with pre- and post-lesson conferencing.

During Day 3, "University Supervisor and Teacher Candidate Meet and Greet," the triad teaching teams of cooperating teacher, teacher candidate, and university supervisor will be established, and opportunities for relationship building will be provided. Additionally, participants will gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each team member, will be provided with information on how to

implement the coteaching model, and will have time to practice with coplanning a lesson. Table 2 offers an outlined overview of the professional development timetable daily agenda for in-person learning.

Table 2

In-Person Daily Professional Development Timetable Overview of Daily Agenda

Time	Activity	Location
8:30 – 8:45	Arrival and registration	Training room
8:45 – 9:00	Ice breaker/team building activity	Training room
9:00 – 9:15	Review and overview	Training room
9:15 – 10:00	Google slides presentation	Training room
10:00 – 10:30	Activity	Training room
10:30 – 10:45	Break *(parking lot questions)*	Training room
10:45 – 11:30	Google slides presentation	Training room
11:30 – 12:00	Activity	Training room
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	Off-campus
1:00 – 1:45	Google slides presentation	Training room
1:45 – 2:00	Break *(parking lot questions)*	Training room
2:00 – 2:45	Small group activity	Training room
2:45 – 3:00	Wrap up *(daily evaluation)*	Training room

Roles and Responsibilities of Facilitator and Others

My role as the professional development facilitator is to plan and coordinate the 3-day training program. I will present my study's findings to the director of field and clinical experiences and the chair of the department of education, and the participants of the professional development program. I will also discuss the goals and purpose of the professional development along with the roles and responsibilities of the facilitator. The director of field and clinical experiences will assist with each of the in-person training sessions, including instruction of content, small group activities, and meet and greets.

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Project Evaluation Plan

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As outlined by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) there are three main reasons to evaluate training programs: 1. to improve the program, 2. to maximize the transfer of learning to behavior, and 3. to demonstrate the value of the training. For a training to be considered effective, evaluation of the program must show that the program was well-received and provided relevant knowledge and skills that are transferrable by participants and lead to improved job performance (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). The goal of this study's professional development program is to provide cooperating teachers explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates as related to mentoring. Additionally, after the training, the intent is for cooperating teachers to transfer newly gained knowledge and skills to their roles as mentors, thus optimizing the mentoring experience and improving teacher candidate performance.

To determine the effectiveness of this study's professional development program, and to determine if the training has made a difference in the performance of the

participants, the Kirkpatrick evaluation model will be used. The Kirkpatrick model utilizes four levels of evaluation: reaction, learning, behavior, and results, and is appropriate for determining the effectiveness of a goal-based program. At the reaction level, the evaluation gauges participant satisfaction and engagement with the training, including program relevance as related to the participants' jobs.

The second level, learning, takes evaluation one step further to quantitively determine how much participants learned, as well as their confidence and commitment to implement the newly acquired knowledge and skills. Level 3, behavior, requires follow-up with participants to evaluate the on-the-job application of critical behaviors acquired from the training program. The final level, results, examines the collective result of training and support. Table 3 presents the four levels of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

Table 3

The Kirkpatrick Four Levels Evaluation Model

Level	Description
Level 1: Reaction	The degree to which participants find the training favorable, engaging, and relevant to their jobs.
Level 2: Learning	The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence, and commitment based on their participation in the training,
Level 3: Behavior	The degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job.
Level 4: Results	The degree to which targeted outcomes occur because of the training and the support and accountability package.

Adapted from *Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation* (1st ed., p. 10), by J. D. Kirkpatrick and W. K. Kirkpatrick, 2016, Association for Talent Development.

Through the application of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model, stakeholders will be informed of the degree to which the program goals were met. This includes the teacher preparation program (faculty and administration), cooperating teachers, and partnering elementary school administrators. The degree to which cooperating teachers have learned and applied program knowledge and skills will provide insight into the effectiveness of the professional development program and will allow for any necessary adjustments to the training before future implementation. The four levels of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model will inform the program facilitator, and other stakeholders, the value of the training program through the feedback and performance of cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors to teacher candidates.

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Project Implications

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Implications for Social Change

Teacher training influences student learning, therefore, there are strong positive social change implications for consistently and effectively providing high-quality mentorship to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model. As the paradigm of traditional student teaching shifts to a yearlong, coteaching model, it is increasingly important that cooperating teachers are explicitly trained and supported in their roles as mentors. Effective mentorship through relationship building, coaching, and guiding, will result in better-prepared teacher candidates (that will consequently become better classroom teachers) and strengthened partnerships between teacher preparation programs and PK-12 schools.

The proposed professional development program focuses on building and maintaining relationships between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate, beginning with a meet and greet and followed by relationship building activities aligned to the mentoring process. Cooperating teachers and teacher candidates are both given a voice in who they would like to partner with for the upcoming academic year which increases potential for goodness of fit. It is vital for the partnerships to be well "matched" to set the stage for a professional relationship. The relationship between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate is imperative for effective and efficient mentorship. The team building activities provided during the professional development program will allow teaching teams to perpetuate the relationships through sharing of philosophies, experiences, strengths, and challenges. The goal is for the relationship built during the professional development program to be carried into and built upon during the academic year.

Positive mentoring relationships have a direct effect on the success of the mentoring process and the learning that takes place in the PK-12 classroom. Not only do positive relationships encourage mutual learning between the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate, but student learning outcomes also increase (Gardiner, 2017; Manning et al., 2020; Monteblanco, 2021; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). Additionally, student-teacher ratios are reduced, and a team-based approach can be used to target the specific needs of learners. This team-based approach, in conjunction with concentrated and consistent support of cooperating teachers, can lead to both increased learner satisfaction and increased teacher satisfaction within the role of teaching (Chitiyo & Brinda, 2018).

The coteaching approach requires teaching teams to work together and support one another with coplanning, coinstruction, and coassessment. The inherent benefit of coteaching is better-supported teacher candidates. High rates of teacher turnover can be attributed to lack of support as a preservice teacher; the transition to lead classroom teacher can be too demanding of novice teachers if they are not well-supported during their preservice teacher experiences (Rosenberg, 2020). Increased job satisfaction as a result of sufficient preservice support, can then result in decreased teacher burnout and reduce teacher turnover rates, providing consistency to the PK-12 learning sector.

Through the targeted efforts to support cooperating teachers, the teacher preparation program is also paving the way to secure long term, meaningful relationships with PK-12 schools and districts. These mutually beneficial relationships may also garner valuable insight into PK-12 learning that can be utilized to maximize learning within the teacher preparation program. Through these relationships and partnerships, the teacher preparation program will be more aligned to the initiatives, practices, and needs of PK-12 stakeholders, and will be able to use this information when providing authentic learning experiences to teacher candidates, resulting in better-prepared and equipped classroom teachers.

Implications for Local Stakeholders

Through the proposed professional development program, cooperating teachers will be better informed and prepared to effectively mentor teacher candidates in the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. Through this program, cooperating teachers will be better supported in conceptualizing and operationalizing their roles as mentors,

maximizing the learning experience for both cooperating teachers and teacher candidates alike. Additionally, the relationships established between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate pairs may result in lifelong professional relationships that may act as a catalyst for expanding professional teaching networks. Better-connected teachers will be better-supported in their teaching careers, potentially reducing burnout rates and providing consistency of educators across the PK-12 sector. Furthermore, the joint learning through the mentor/mentee relationship constitutes as ongoing professional development for novice and veteran teachers, thus resulting in increased student learning outcomes (Gardiner, 2017; Manning et al., 2020; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). As student learning increases, young learners will be better prepared for future educational or vocational experiences, potentially resulting in more knowledgeable and skilled citizens who are well-equipped to be contributing members of society.

The administrators of the partnering schools whose cooperating teachers are hosting teacher candidates also need to review the results of this study. Administrators are a vital component in supporting cooperating teachers as they operationalize their roles as mentors. By understanding the perceptions and experiences of cooperating teachers, administrators may be able to better-support current and future cooperating teachers by assisting cooperating teachers with the flexibility and time to commit to such an obligation. Additionally, administrators will have a better understanding of the comprehensive roles and responsibilities that cooperating teachers take on when offering to host a teacher candidate for the duration of the school year. With an increased understanding of the scope of expectations and responsibilities associated with hosting a

teacher candidate, as well as the potential benefits for PK-12 learners, administrators may have an increased commitment to offer and assist with ongoing professional development opportunities. Administrator buy-in of professional development for cooperating teachers may then contribute to a more positive school climate that inclusively supports ongoing teacher development.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how cooperating elementary education teachers conceptualize their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering within a coteaching clinical practice model. A better understanding of cooperating teachers' conceptualizations of this role may bridge the gap in the quality of mentorship being provided to WBC teacher candidates through more effective and focused training and support. Five cooperating teachers who are partnered with a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model provided insight into the conceptualization and operationalization of their roles as mentors to teacher candidates. The findings of this study reinforced some of the current training and preparation practices of the teacher preparation program while also providing insight for additional areas of focus when training and supporting new cooperating teachers as mentors. As the project for this study, I developed a 3-day professional development training to help solidify expressed strengths of cooperating teachers while providing explicit instruction and practice in coaching teacher candidates.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Outcomes of the study suggest that cooperating teachers need training and support in one key area of teacher candidate mentorship: coaching. To bridge this gap, I developed a 3-day professional development program to provide training and support to assist cooperating teachers with the complexities associated with mentoring teacher candidates as aligned to teacher preparation outcomes. The program was designed based on Darling-Hammonds et al.'s (2017) seven elements for successful professional

development: is content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers feedback and reflection, and is of sustained duration. Additional strengths associated with the project include the integration of current research and educational pedagogy, a hybrid platform for learning, and resources and support for ongoing professional development of cooperating teachers.

In the 3-day professional development program, I combined current research about the effectiveness of coteaching with strategies for implementation. Participants are provided with authentic and engaging learning experiences that enable them to interact with the content being provided. Additionally, collaboration and opportunities to share ideas and experiences are embedded in the training to facilitate a learning community among participants. The professional development content and activities are offered via a hybrid learning approach, allowing participants to access initial training content asynchronously, followed by in-person training to reinforce and scaffold the learning process. Additionally, the in-person training days provide opportunities for relationship building between and among cooperating teachers and teacher candidates. A variety of resources are provided throughout the 3-day professional development program, including access to university supervisors who will serve as continued support to the coteaching teams of cooperating teachers and teacher candidates throughout the duration of the academic school year.

Despite the strengths of the project, limitations must also be acknowledged. Cooperating teacher motivation and availability to complete all, or portions, of the

professional development program must be taken into consideration. Due to the daily demands of cooperating teachers, both professionally and personally, it may be difficult or undesirable to some cooperating teachers to complete 3 full days of training. Although the hybrid approach is intended to provide flexibility and accessibility, cooperating teachers my elect not to participate in the asynchronous training without having accountability. To similar ends, it may be difficult to coordinate availability of cooperating teachers for 2 full in-person days of training. These trainings would have to take place when cooperating teachers are not responsible for being in the classroom, implying utilization of weekends, holidays, or break days that may not be a sacrifice cooperating teachers are willing to make. To curb these limitations, alternative approaches should also be considered.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The problem that was the focus of this project was that cooperating teachers have demonstrated inconsistencies in providing mentorship as part of the coteaching model. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to provide information on how to support cooperating elementary education teachers in effectively understanding and executing their roles as mentors to teacher candidates when partnering with a coteaching clinical practice model. The project I developed from this study was a 3-day professional development program with a hybrid format implementation. Instead of a 3-day concentrated training program that may be difficult for cooperating teachers to attend due to time constraints, an ongoing professional development support program that is implemented throughout the duration of the school year may be more advantageous.

Because time restraints are one of the leading barriers for the completion of professional development programs, training sessions could be offered through an online format to allow for flexibility with completion (du Plessis, 2018; Melton et al., 2019). Online learning sessions could be supplemented with on-site visits from members of the teacher preparation program to provide additional support and training tailored to the needs of each cooperating teacher.

In lieu of professional development program, additional learning opportunities could also be considered. A summary of this study's findings could be provided to the director of field and clinical experiences, who could in turn develop training materials such as a Google website, to provide a central location for housing resources and support materials for cooperating teachers and teacher candidates. The same information could also be integrated into teacher candidate and university supervisor orientations and support sessions. University supervisors could serve as the training liaison between the university and the cooperating teachers by providing in-person and virtual check-ins with the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate coteaching teams. These indirect training approaches may be more appealing to cooperating teachers, particularly those who have participated in the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model in previous years.

To further distribute the findings, I could write them in manuscript form and submit it to an educational journal for publication. Additionally, results could be presented at local, state, and national conferences to inform teacher preparation programs and the PK–12 sector of the perceptions and experiences of cooperating teachers as related to mentoring teacher candidates.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Through the completion of the project study, I have gained valuable skillsets that will prove beneficial throughout the duration of my career as a university faculty member and teacher educator. I was able to examine information known about the university site and the coteaching clinical practice model and use that information to deduce a local problem. Through the stages of analyzing and synthesizing current research, I was then able to develop an effective and efficient qualitative case study that would solicit the firsthand perspectives and experiences of local stakeholders, mainly cooperating teachers partnered with the yearlong, clinical practice model.

Each interview I conducted became more streamlined and cohesive than the interview prior, which indicated growth in my skills as an interviewer. I also learned how to code and analyze data for the first time at a high level of intricacy, and these skills continued to develop as I interpreted data and used findings as a catalyst for the project development. By the time I had conducted and written my second literature review, I noticed that my ability to synthesize and write about data had also improved.

Ultimately, I developed a 3-day professional development program that scaffolded and refined my skills as an educator through the research and implementation of a variety of best practices, including collaboration, reflection, authentic and engaging activities, and opportunities for participants to share their own experiences. Though I am pleased with the proposed 3-day professional development program, I also had to view the program through an unbiased lens to be able to anticipate and problem solve potential limitations by offering alternative suggestions for addressing the problem.

Through the completion of this study, I have been able to recognize and embrace the potential I have as a leader for social change. My project has the potential to assist cooperating teachers in improving and refining their skills as mentor teachers through the relationships, coaching, and guiding strategies they employ with their teacher candidates. It is now my responsibility to act on the findings to ensure that high-quality mentorship takes place within coteaching pairs of cooperating teachers and teacher candidates. Improved mentorship will lead to mutual learning opportunities for both the cooperating teachers and teacher candidates that will have a trickle-down effect to the PK–12 student learner, ultimately resulting in increased student learning outcomes (see Rabin, 2020).

Analysis of Self as a Scholar, Practitioner, and Project Developer

Through the doctorate journey and project study process, I have grown exponentially as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. The investigation and exploration of the topic provided me with an opportunity to refine my skills in research and project development as well as to become more familiar with problems faced by my sector of education, particularly teacher preparation. While progressing through the stages of the project study, I relied on my skills of collaboration and learned how to ask others for help. I worked closely with my dissertation committee for suggestions and feedback as well as utilizing the expertise of my peers and colleagues to navigate the areas of growth within my study. I learned to consolidate the suggestions and feedback and prioritize necessary changes and edits. Through this process I also tested my time management skills and ability to balance the many facets and responsibilities of my life. As a result of my increased capacity to persevere, I also feel more well versed and

confident in how to effect social change. Through the challenges and successes of completing this project study, I have discovered my own potential to be a leader to spark and create change within a teacher preparation program.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

Cooperating teachers provide the authentic practitioner insights essential to the appropriate training and instructional skill development of teacher candidates. The cooperating teachers help to model best practices; provide hands-on knowledge and grade-appropriate, in-classroom expertise; and share experiences from academic and personal perspectives that supplement and enrich the curriculum of the teacher preparation program. As classrooms become more diverse and inclusive, cooperating teachers and teacher candidates need to partake in coteaching strategies to lower the student–teacher ratio and to best meet the needs of learners. This partnership requires explicit training and ongoing support. This study is important because it identifies the perceptions and experiences of cooperating teachers as they partner with a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model while offering recommendations for professional development opportunities to better support cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors. The study findings indicate an opportunity to provide more explicit training in role conceptualization and for support in the coaching of teacher candidates to optimize the mentorship process.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The findings support the need for a more concentrated effort to train and support cooperating teachers as they become mentors within a yearlong, coteaching clinical

practice model. Professional development opportunities that include explicit training around the roles and expectations of cooperating teachers as well as strategies to operationalize mentorship responsibilities effectively and efficiently could benefit cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, and PK–12 learners. As teacher preparation programs better reinforce and support a collaborative mentoring model, positive social change will occur resulting in better-prepared teacher candidates (that will consequently become better classroom teachers) and strengthened partnerships with PK–12 schools.

The proposed professional development program focuses on building and maintaining relationships between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate, which is imperative for effective and efficient mentorship. While positive mentoring relationships encourage mutual learning between the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate, student learning outcomes also increase (Gardiner, 2017; Manning et al., 2020; Monteblanco, 2021; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). The team-based approach to a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model, paired with intentional and ongoing support of cooperating teachers, can lead to both increased learner satisfaction and increased teacher satisfaction within the role of teaching (Chitiyo & Brinda, 2018). Lack of support and demanding transitions from preservice teacher to classroom teacher contribute to high rates of teacher turnover (Rosenberg, 2020), however, sufficient preservice support (as demonstrated by the yearlong, coteaching model) may lead to increased job satisfaction. In-turn, increased job satisfaction may lead to a decrease in teacher burnout and reduction of teacher turnover rates, providing consistency to the PK-12 learning sector.

The positive relationships created and maintained between the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate pairs may also result in lifelong professional relationships. These relationships may then perpetuate the expansion of professional teaching networks resulting in better-connected and better-supported teachers. Additionally, the ongoing learning that is facilitated by the mentor/mentee relationship constitutes as ongoing professional development for both teacher candidates and cooperating teachers, having a direct effect on the increase of student learning outcomes (Gardiner, 2017; Manning et al., 2020; Trevethan & Sandretto, 2017). As student learning increases, PK-12 students will be better equipped for advanced educational or vocational experiences potentially resulting in more knowledgeable and skilled members of society.

Targeted efforts to support cooperating teachers may also pave the way to long term, meaningful relationships between the teacher preparation program and PK-12 schools and districts. These mutually beneficial relationships may also garner valuable insight into PK-12 learning that can be translating by the teacher preparation program into authentic learning experiences for teacher candidates, thus resulting in more direct alignment to the initiatives, practices, and needs of PK-12 stakeholders. Through the intentional partnerships between the teacher preparation program and the PK-12 schools, teacher candidates will be better-prepared and equipped to enter the workforce as fulltime classroom teachers, positively influencing the learning outcomes of PK-12 students.

Based on the study outcomes, additional research about how cooperating teachers conceptualize and operationalize their roles as mentors when partnered within a yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model could increase the efficacy of professional

development opportunities. In this study, I examined the perceptions and experiences of elementary school teachers; however, additional research could be expanded to additional grade bands to gain a more comprehensive understanding of cooperating teachers in different settings. Additionally, teacher candidates' perceptions could also be explored to gain an additional perspective of the mentor/mentee partnership. Duplication of the study with cooperating teachers at additional school districts would determine the consistency of the findings.

Another recommendation is to implement aspects of the professional development program with teachers who are considering becoming cooperating teachers as part of the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model. Completion of training components may assist teachers in determining if the role and expectations of being a cooperating teacher is a commitment that they are comfortable and confident with. The coteaching partnership should be a welcomed experience by both the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate to ensure a mutually beneficial experience.

Conclusion

Mentoring experiences are a vital component in the development of teacher candidates, and these experiences can have a lasting effect on their future careers (Chang, 2018; McGee, 2019; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Rabin, 2020). While the importance of mentorship is widely recognized, training and support of cooperating teachers as mentors is often poorly organized or is neglected altogether (Taylor et al., 2017; Van der Klink et al., 2017). Better prepared and supported cooperating teachers equate to more beneficial field experiences for teacher candidates. Teacher preparation programs can

train and support cooperating teachers in their roles as mentors through explicit and

ongoing professional development that integrates opportunities for role conceptualization

and practice with the operationalization of the coteaching model. These professional

development efforts will result in better prepared and supported cooperating teachers able

to execute their roles effectively and efficiently as mentors. With increased educational

standards and pressures, quality mentorship through the coteaching model will act as a

catalyst for change within education, resulting in mutual growth and development for

both cooperating teachers and teacher candidates and ultimately influencing an increase

in student learning outcomes.

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Appendix A: The Project

Purpose

The professional development program for this project was selected after reviewing the findings of the study. Outcomes of the project suggest that cooperating teachers need training and support in one key area of teacher candidate mentorship: coaching. The professional development program will support cooperating teachers in this area by providing education and opportunities for practice of effective mentoring strategies.

Professional Development Goals

The proposed professional development program is a 3-day-long training and support program that will help solidify expressed strengths of cooperating teachers while providing instruction and practice in coteaching and mentoring concepts to assist with coaching teacher candidates. The professional development program will support cooperating teachers by providing explicit training and practice in coaching as related to pre- and post-lesson conferencing. Concepts relating to mentorship and the university's expectations of this role as it relates to cooperating teachers will also be addressed. An overview of coteaching and the six coteaching models will also be explored. The 3-day session will combine online learning with in-person training and practice to sufficiently address mentoring concepts with respect to cooperating teachers' time and availability. By participating in the 3-day professional development program, participants will have a greater understanding of role conceptualization and operationalization as mentors who are partnered with the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

<u>Learning Outcomes</u>

By the conclusion of the 3-day professional development program, participants will:

- Understand the logistics of the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

- Be aware of the teacher preparation program's goals and expectations as related to the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

- Define coteaching as it applies to the yearlong, clinical practice model

- Cite benefits of the coteaching clinical practice model

- Differentiate between the traditional student teaching model and the coteaching clinical practice model

- Describe and provide examples of each of the six coteaching models.

- Define and describe examples of each of the critical elements of the coteaching model.

- Discuss the relationship between the cooperating teacher, teacher candidate, and university supervisor in relation to the coteaching model.

- Define and describe examples of Portner's four characteristics of mentoring new teachers.

- Describe characteristics of educative mentoring.

- Compare and contrast reflective mentoring and transmission mentoring.

- Practice facilitation of effective pre- and post-lesson conferences.

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of coteaching

- Action plan for potential challenges of coteaching

- Understand considerations for selecting coteaching approaches

Target Audience

- Cooperating teachers who are partnered with the teacher preparation program's yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

- Building administrators of local schools who are, or who are considering, partnering with the teacher preparation program's yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

- Potential cooperating teachers who are considering partnering with the teacher preparation program's yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.

Introduction to the Project

My study took place at a private, 4-year, liberal arts college located in the Midwestern United States. The study indicated that cooperating teachers who are partnered with the university's teacher preparation program as part of the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model have some shared conceptualizations and operationalizations as their roles as mentors, however, findings of the study also suggested opportunities for professional development. To address these areas of opportunity, a 3-day professional development program has been designed to provide training and support related to mentoring teacher candidates, particularly in coaching.

Professional Development Agenda
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 1 – Online Training for Cooperating Teachers
Setting the Stage for Effective Mentoring

Module 1
Yearlong, Coteaching Clinical Practice Model Overview
- Overview of the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model, including description of the roles and responsibilities of cooperating teachers as related to collaborative learning environments, problem solving and communication, and feedback and assessment.
- Overview of coteaching goals and expectations, and definition of c-teaching. Video of coteaching in action: "Coteaching is a Marriage". "Reflect and Respond" activity considering rationale for hosting or declining student teachers in the past, and rationale for choosing to participate in the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model.
- Background and rationale for using the coteaching model. Presentation of data from St. Cloud University showing the benefits of coteaching for cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, and PK-12 students. "Reflect and Respond" activity exploring the differences between traditional student teaching and the coteaching model. Fill-in chart activity identifying the elements of traditional student teaching vs. the coteaching model.

Module 2
Coteaching Models
- Video, "Coteaching Examples", and presentation of the six coteaching instructional approaches
  - One Teach, One Observe
  - One Teach, One Assist
  - Station Teaching
  - Parallel Teaching
  - Alternative Teaching
  - Team Teaching
- "It's Your Turn" coteaching scenarios.
- "Reflect and Respond" activity considering what coteaching and each of the six coteaching instructional approaches would look like in action.

Module 3
Coteaching Critical Elements
- Overview of each of the four critical elements of coteaching: coplanning, co-instructing, co-assessing, coreflecting.
- Overview of the coteaching relationship between the cooperating teacher, teacher candidate and university supervisor.

- "Reflect and Respond" activity considering how each of the critical elements of coteaching will be implemented, and how to foster communication with the university supervisor.

Module 4
Portner's Mentoring New Teachers: Relating, Assessing, Coaching, and Guiding
- Presentation of each of the four characteristics of mentoring new teachers as described by Portner (2008): relating, assessing, coaching, and guiding. Brainstorm and discussion activity about relating and trust. Treasure hunt activity considering resources to meet each of the eight common needs of teacher candidates. "It's Your Turn" scenarios to practice guiding strategies based on teacher candidate needs.

Making Mentoring Magical
Day 1 – Online Training for Cooperating Teachers
Setting the Stage for Effective Mentoring
Professional Development Slides
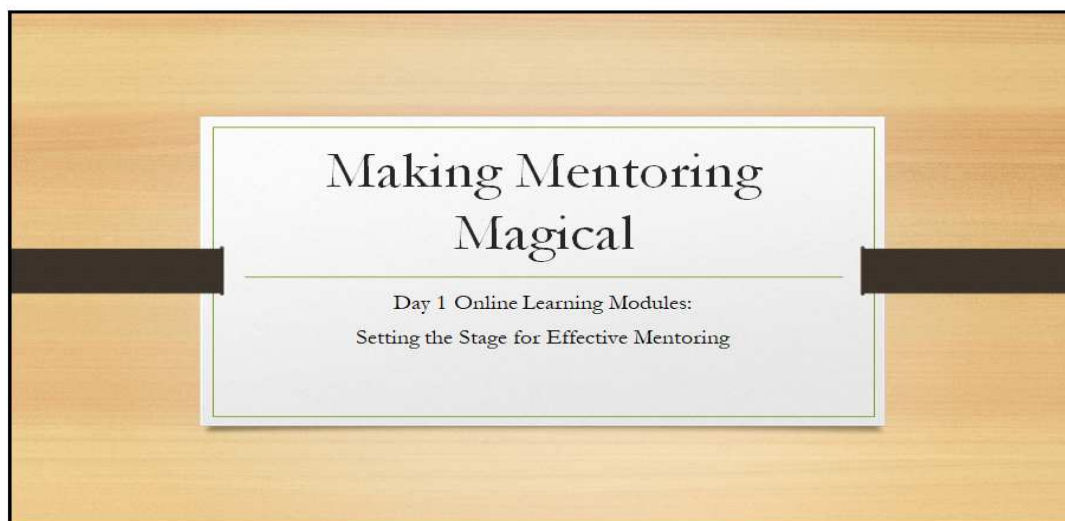
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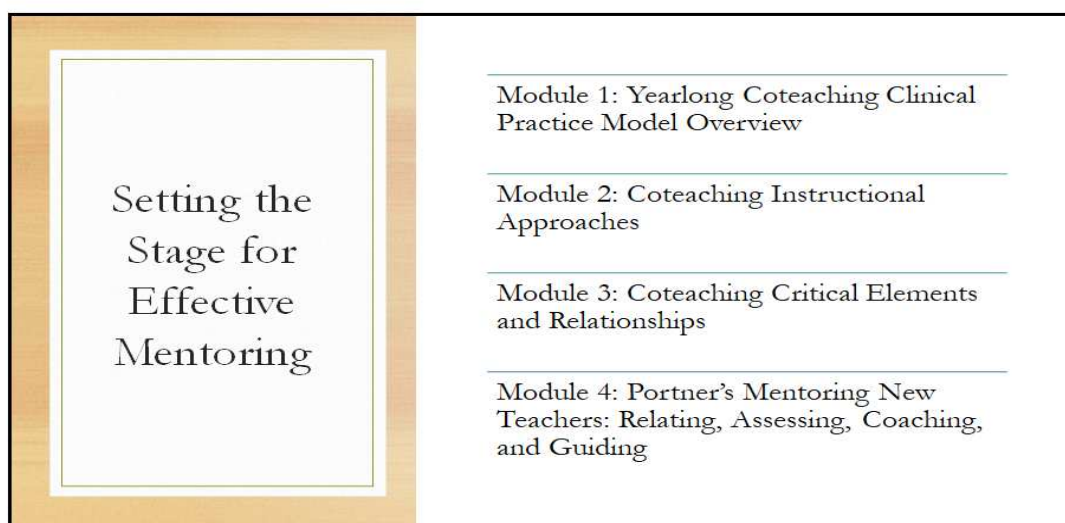
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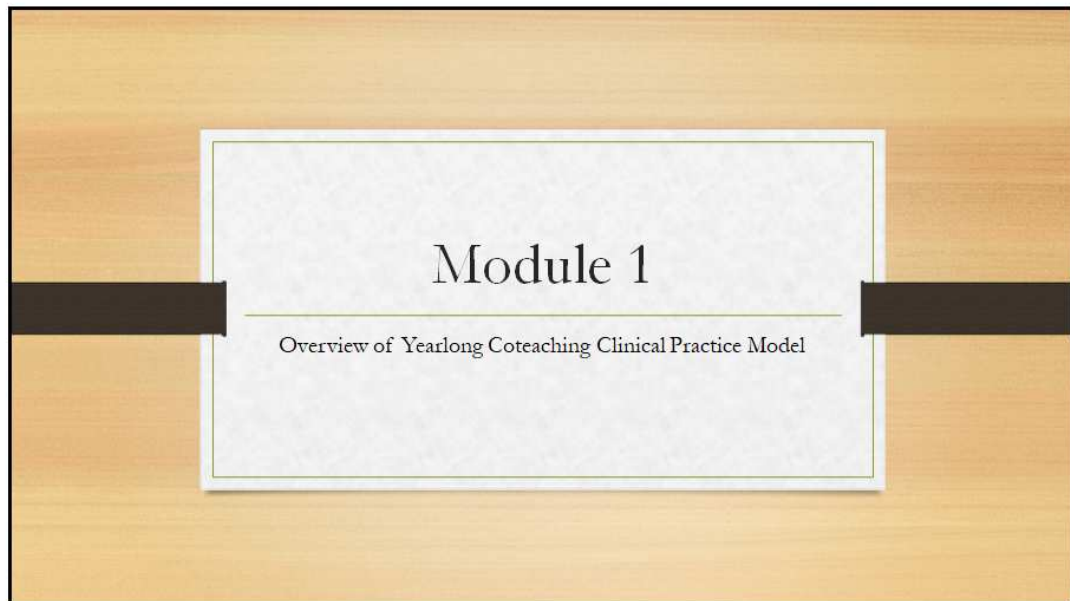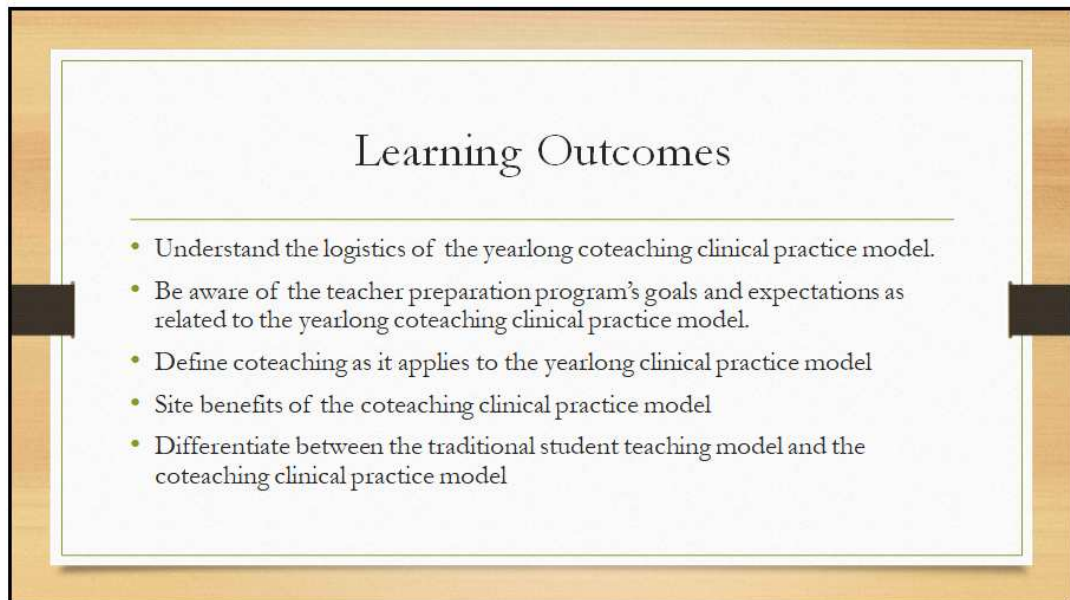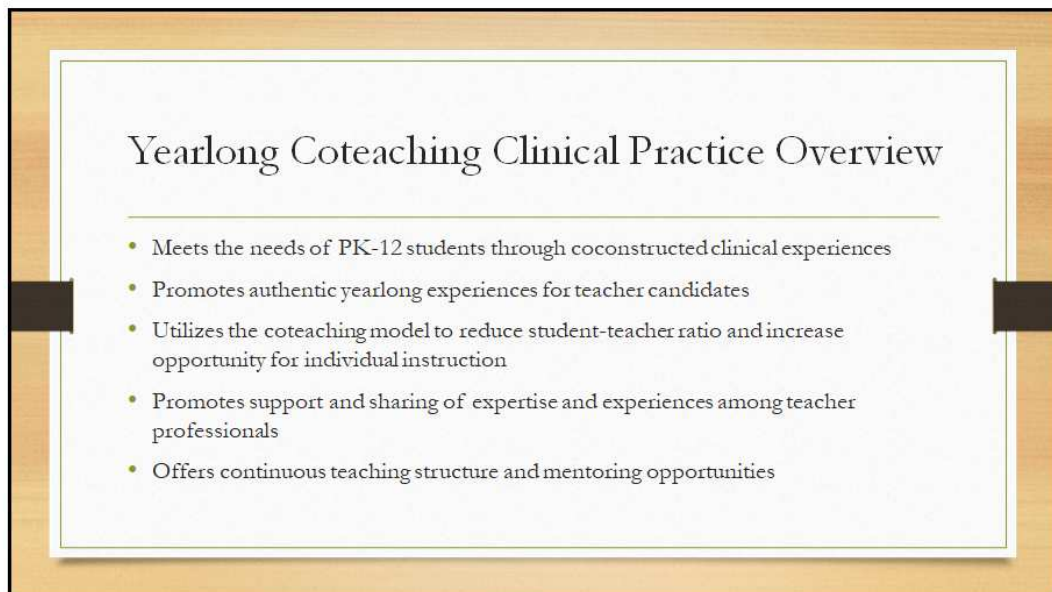
Module 1

Overview of Yearlong Coteaching Clinical Practice Model

3

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the logistics of the yearlong coteaching clinical practice model.
- Be aware of the teacher preparation program's goals and expectations as related to the yearlong coteaching clinical practice model.
- Define coteaching as it applies to the yearlong clinical practice model
- Site benefits of the coteaching clinical practice model
- Differentiate between the traditional student teaching model and the coteaching clinical practice model

4

Agenda

- Overview
- Defining Coteaching
- Rationale
- Elements of Student Teaching

5

Yearlong Coteaching Clinical Practice Overview

- Meets the needs of PK-12 students through coconstructed clinical experiences
- Promotes authentic yearlong experiences for teacher candidates
- Utilizes the coteaching model to reduce student-teacher ratio and increase opportunity for individual instruction
- Promotes support and sharing of expertise and experiences among teacher professionals
- Offers continuous teaching structure and mentoring opportunities

6

Roles and Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers

- **Collaborative Learning Environment and Coteaching, such as:**
- Utilizing the various coteaching models as appropriate and participating in the coteaching cycle
- Facilitating mentoring conversations through shared reflections and dialogue
- Encouraging critical thinking through indirect suggestions and questioning
- Allowing the teacher candidate to articulate his/her own beliefs, assumptions, and practices, while he/she examines the ideas and opinions of others.

7

Roles and Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers

- **Problem Solving and Communication, such as:**
- Accepting a differing teaching style or technique than your own
- Assisting with classroom situations which may arise and working with the teacher candidate to resolve the problem
- Informing the university supervisor of any problems that arise in a timely manner and working collaboratively to find a resolution

8

Roles and Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers

- **Feedback and Assessment, such as**:
- Engaging in daily feedback and coaching conferences with frequent positive reinforcement on an essential element or technique
- Helping the teacher candidate establish goals, develop strategies for implementation, and determine assessment
- Requiring and examining lesson plans prior to the day of teaching, and providing feedback and suggestions to the teacher candidate

9

Coteaching

10

Goals and Expectations

- Involves **shared** instructional responsibilities and collaboration between the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher
- A **yearlong** experience in which a teacher candidate remains in the same placement for their internship and clinical practice field assignments
- A supported **team approach** in which the teacher preparation program course instructor, the teacher candidate, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor coconstruct instructional responsibilities that support the PK-12 students and all team members

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Defining Coteaching

- Coteaching is a conceptual framework that has been used in classrooms since the 1970s.
- It has most often involved a coteaching format consisting of a general education teacher and a special education teacher.
- Coteaching was defined as, an arrangement in which two or more teachers plan, instruct, and evaluate in one or more subject areas.

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Coteaching is a Marriage

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=_pnxst7dkLk

13

Redefining Coteaching

- Coteaching has been recently used as an alternative to the traditional student teaching approach between two general education teachers.

- Coteaching has been redefined as, two candidates (a cooperating teacher and a teacher candidate) working together with groups of students, sharing the planning, organization, delivery, and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space.

- It requires the coteachers to *coplan, co-instruct, co-assess,* and *coreflect.*

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15

16

Why Coteach?

- Coteaching significantly improves outcomes for…

Cooperating Teacher

Teacher Candidate

K-12 Students

Coteaching

- Coteaching…
  - Increases the number of strategies that can be used to bring challenging curriculum to every student.
  - Provides intensive, personalized, relevant learning to individual and small group instruction.
  - Creates dynamic and engaging learning environments that encourage higher-order learning.

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Rationale

- The traditional model of student teaching has been relatively unchanged since the 1920s.

- The purpose of student teaching was to provide a situation in which student teachers could learn and practice various techniques of teaching with real students under the direction of a licensed teacher.

- Student teaching was an opportunity to link theory to practice.

- Student teachers moved along a continuum in their experiences. Silent observers → full teaching responsibility.

- Throughout most of their experience, student teachers were often left alone, or unassisted, which led to feelings of isolation.

18

Rationale

- In recent years, many universities have had difficulty securing student teaching placements because cooperating teachers are hesitant to give up their classrooms due to standardized testing and accountability. Coteaching can be an effective way to remedy this issue.

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St. Cloud State University

St. Cloud Quality Enhancement Initiative

- 4-year study (2004-2008)~K-6 reading and math
- Quantitative Measures
  - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)
  - Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJIII-RE)
- Qualitative Measures
  - Surveys
  - Focus Groups

20

St. Cloud State University

Quantitative Results:

- MCA indicated a statistically significant increase in academic performance in reading and math proficiency for students in cotaught classrooms compared to students in non-cotaught classrooms.

- WJIII-RE indicated a statistically significant gain in all four years of reading and in two of the four years in math.

- Based upon the MCA data, students taught in a classroom that utilized the coteaching model of student teaching outperformed their peers in classrooms that were taught by either a single teacher or a cooperating teacher and teacher candidate using a traditional model of student teaching in both reading and math.

21

St. Cloud State University

Benefits of Coteaching to Teacher Candidates

- Teacher Candidates indicated that Coteaching led to:
  - Improved classroom management skills — 92.4%
  - Increased collaboration skills — 92.0%
  - More teaching time — 90.0%
  - Deeper understanding of curriculum — 89.2%
  - More opportunities to question/reflect — 88.6%
  - Increased confidence — 88.4%

22

St. Cloud State University

Benefits of Coteaching to Cooperating Teachers

- Cooperating Teachers indicated that Coteaching led to:
  - More help for students with high needs — 94.5%
  - Better relationships with teacher candidates — 92.3%
  - Professional growth through co-planning — 90.5%
  - Enhanced energy for teaching — 89.0%
  - Ability to host candidates without giving up classroom — 87.1%

23

St. Cloud State University

Benefits of Coteaching to Students

- Students indicated that Coteaching led to:
  - Increased opportunities to work in small groups
  - More individual attention
  - Questions answered faster
  - Papers and grades returned more quickly
  - Fewer classroom disruptions

24

Reflect and Respond

- How is the traditional model of student teaching different than a cotaught model?

- Complete the activity: Elements of Student Teaching

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Elements of Student Teaching

Element	Traditional	Cotaught
Preparation	-TC has limited preparation in expectations, guidelines, and transitioning -CT is expected to monitor and guide TC with little university support	-All members of the triad (TC, CT, and US) are provided information about the role of each member including expectations, coteaching, coplanning, and strategies for building relationships
Introduction	-TC is referred to as "student teacher" -TC begins experience as an observer -TC is rather passive until later in experience	-TC is referred to as a "teacher candidate" or "coteacher" -TC is incorporated into routines and instruction from the first day
Involvement	-One teacher is active while the other is passive. -One teacher is "on" while the other is "off"	-Both the CT and the TC are "on"

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Elements of Student Teaching

Element	Traditional	Cotaught
Relationship Building	-Little opportunities for the TC and CT to build a relationship before experience	-TC and CT are brought together earlier in the experience -More opportunities to build rapport -Looping
Collaboration & Communication	-TC is expected to inherently possess the communication and collaboration skills for success	-TC receives more explicit guidance on the importance of strong communication and collaboration skills
Planning	-Planning is often done in isolation -TC presents completed plans to CT for approval	-TC and CT identify a specific planning time -The TC and CT focus on the details of how, when, and which coteaching strategies to use in upcoming lessons

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Elements of Student Teaching

Element	Traditional	Cotaught
Solo vs. Lead Teaching	-TC observes and then assumes responsibility for "solo teaching" -The TC becomes fully in charge and is responsible for meeting students' needs -*All TCs must have some opportunity to solo teach to ensure they can meet challenges	-TC receives more mentoring and support -CT remains actively engaged throughout experience -Paradigm shifts from "solo" teacher to "lead" teacher -TC can also direct the activities of the CT and other adults in the room
Modeling & Coaching	-CT assumes the TC has skills in lesson planning, instructional strategies, and classroom management	-CT provides ongoing modeling -CT "makes the invisible visible"
Power Differential	-CT and TC rarely address this issue	-CT and TC address issues of parity and how to work as a team -TC is encouraged to find his/her voice and contribute to partnership

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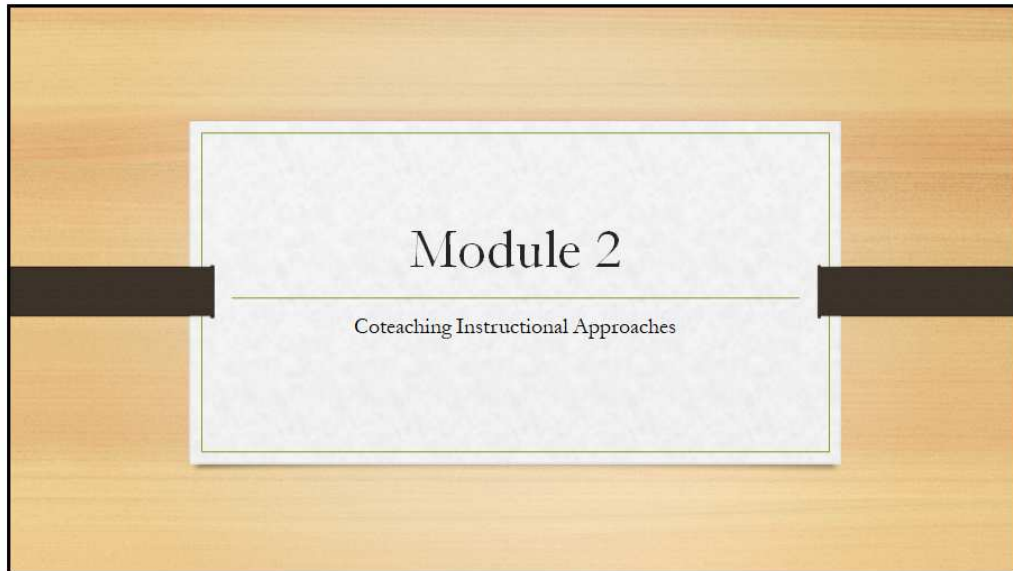
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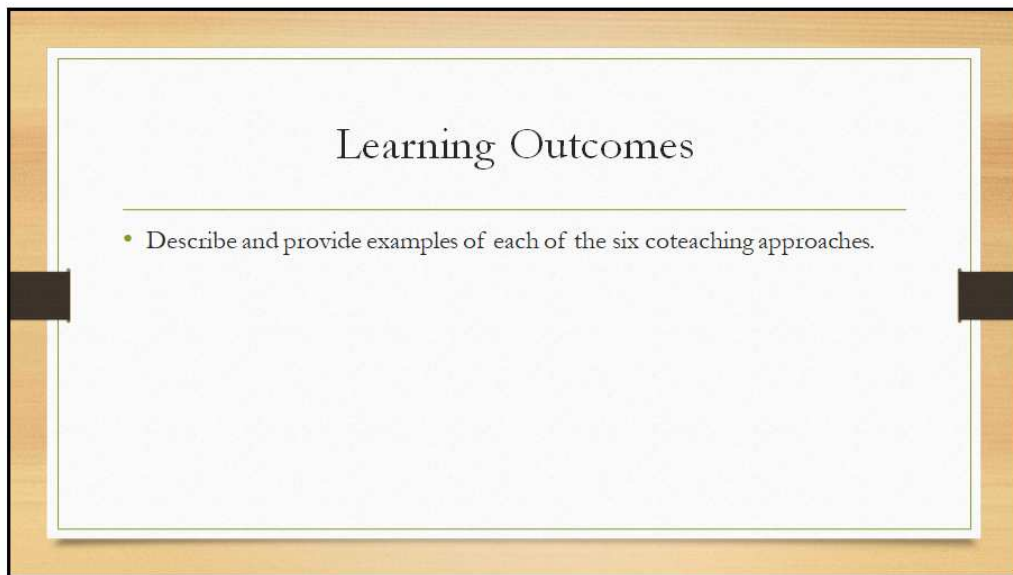
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Agenda

- Instructional Approaches
  - One Teach, One Observe
  - One Teach, One Assist
  - Station Teaching
  - Parallel Teaching
  - Alternative Teaching
  - Team Teaching

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Coteaching Models

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=6llQCG8QhBE

32

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One Teach, One Observe

- One teacher manages the instruction of the entire class while the other teacher systematically gathers specific data.

- Data collection may focus on one student, a small group of students, or the entire class.

- **Opportunity:** Provides specific time for the teacher to gather data that can inform future instruction.

- **Challenge:** Teachers need to be cautious about evaluating each other.

- **Recommended Use:** Frequent, but usually for brief periods of time.

One Teach, One Observe

One teacher leads the lesson and one teacher observes for a specific reason.
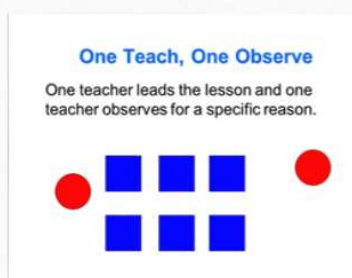
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One Teach, One Assist

- One teacher leads the instruction while the other teacher monitors student work, addresses behavior issues, answers students' questions, and facilitates instruction by distributing papers or other materials.

- **Opportunity:** Students may be more comfortable asking the assisting teacher for clarification of information.

- **Challenges:** Students may become too dependent on the assisting teacher; the assisting teacher is in a passive role.

- **Recommended Use:** Seldom

ONE TEACH, ONE ASSIST

One teacher teaches the lesson and the other teacher assists. This allows for minimal planning, but the "assist teacher" becomes a "glorified assistant" and the kids may not have the same respect for this teacher.

34

Station Teaching

- Teachers divide the content to be addressed into three segments, and then they group the students.

- Each teacher works with a group, while the third group works independently.

- The student groups rotate through the stations so by the end of the lesson, both teachers have worked with all the students.

- **Opportunities:** Reduced student/teacher ratio; students can be grouped in a variety of ways.

- **Challenges:** Activities must function independent of each other; noise, timing, management.

- **Recommended Use:** Frequent

Station Teaching sample setup
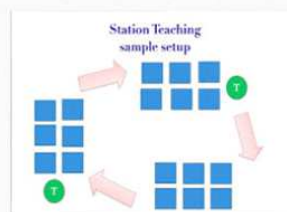
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Parallel Teaching

- Teachers divide students into two groups and usually teach the same content the same way.

- Alternatives include teaching the same content in a different way or teaching different content.

- Students receive instruction from one of the two teachers. The students do not rotate.

- **Opportunities:** Reduced student/teacher ratio; students can be grouped in a variety of ways.

- **Challenges:** Both teachers must be knowledgeable in content area; noise, timing.

- **Recommended Use:** Frequent

Parallel Teaching

36

Alternative Teaching

- One teacher manages the large group while the other takes a small group for a specific instructional purpose.

- **Opportunities:** Teachers can conduct intense, small group sessions within the context of the classroom; can be used to provide enrichment, remediation, assessment, or to manage behavior.

- **Challenge:** The small group can be seen as always needing remediation.

- **Recommended Use:** Occasional

Alternative Teaching

37

Team Teaching

- Both teachers are in the front of the classroom leading instruction. The teachers may have different but equally active roles.

- Both teachers are fully engaged in the delivery of the content.

- **Opportunities:** Teachers can be energized to teach with a partner; Students may be more attentive due to the entertainment/engagement factor of the teaching.

- **Challenges:** Teachers need to be comfortable with each other and be mindful of their contributions; students are instructed as a whole class.

- **Recommended Use:** Occasional

Team Teaching
sample setup
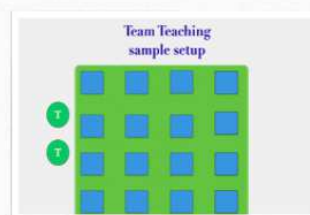
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It's Your Turn…

- In a middle school classroom, students are being assessed on academic vocabulary considered to be a prerequisite for entry into high school. Across a three-day period, students move to a small group for assessment. The teacher uses the data to determine which students will need extensive assistance related to academic vocabulary, and which students will need enrichment opportunities.
- Alternative Teaching

39

It's Your Turn…

- In an elementary classroom, the students are reviewing subtraction. One teacher writes a problem on the board, and the students all solve it using individual whiteboards and markers. At the other teacher's signal, the students hold up their whiteboards. The assisting teacher scans to be sure the students have solved the problem correctly.
- One Teach, One Assist

40

It's Your Turn…

- In an elementary classroom, the teachers would like to know which students attempt to answer questions during large group instruction. Using a seating chart, one teacher tallies which students raise their hands as questions are asked.
- One Teach, One Observe

41

It's Your Turn…

- In an elementary classroom, the standard being addressed is main idea and supporting details. The teacher divides the class in half so that as the students read several short passages, each student has twice as many opportunities to participate in the discussion of identifying these key components.
- Parallel Teaching

42

It's Your Turn…

- In a middle school English class, teachers have designed instruction based on the Common Core State Standards. In one group, students are led by a teacher to work on close reading. A second group is working with the other teacher on the academic vocabulary related to this unit of instruction. In the third group, students are addressing stamina, and have been assigned an extended reading assignment that they are completing independently.

- Station Teaching

43

It's Your Turn…

- In a high school science class, the teachers are debating whether global warming is something created by people or a natural phenomenon. Each teacher makes several points to the entire class. The students are then asked to conduct further research of each point-of-view, and later will continue the debate themselves.

- Team Teaching

44

Reflect and Respond

- What would each of the co-teaching approaches look like in your classroom?

- Describe an example of each in action.

45

Module 3

Coteaching Critical Elements and Relationships

46

Learning Outcomes

- Define and describe examples of each of the critical elements of the coteaching model.
- Discuss the relationship between the cooperating teacher, teacher candidate, and university supervisor in relation to the coteaching model.

47

Agenda

- Critical Elements
  - Coplanning
  - Coteaching
  - Co-Assessing
  - Coreflecting
- The Coteaching Relationship
- Support

48

The Elements of Coteaching

How is what we are doing together substantively better for students than what one of us would do alone?

49

Coplanning

1	2	3	4	5
Establish a regular time to coplan.	Find a meeting place that is free from distractions.	Create an agenda or checklist to focus the planning.	Divide and conquer roles and responsibilities.	Use the "What-How-Who" Approach

50

Coplanning

- Divide and conquer planning responsibilities.
- Keep a list of individual student concerns.
- Frequently discuss co-teaching progress.
- Document your planning and save for the future.
- Use the What-How-Who approach.

51

What-How-Who Approach

- **What** (Curriculum)
  - Standards
  - Objectives
  - Timeframe
  - Materials
- **How** (Pedagogy)
  - Comfort level with content
  - Coteaching strategies to use beginning, middle, end of lessons
  - Teachers' responsibilities

- **Who** (Students and Supports)
  - Behavioral, social, academic accommodations needed
  - Differentiated instruction
  - Other professionals included or needed for the lesson (i.e., speech teacher, occupational therapist, parent volunteer)

52

Coteaching

Teach	Maintain	Meet
Teach according to the plan that has been designed for each lesson.	Maintain your defined roles for each coteaching model.	Meet students' needs and objectives through whole-class or small-group instruction, as well as assisting and observing.

53

Co-Assessing

- Assessment refers to the process of gathering data on student performance to inform instructional decision-making

- Planning for purposeful co-assessment occurs at four key points in time:
  - Formation of coteaching teams
  - Before lessons or units of study
  - During instruction
  - After instruction

54

Co-Assessing

Purposeful assessment before teams begin…

- Coteachers should discuss and agree on how they will share responsibility for:
  - Grading
  - Developing rubrics, checklists, and scoring sheets
  - Maintaining the gradebook
  - Communicating student progress to parents and students
  - Gathering data for RTI and other instructional decision-making
  - Preparing for test accommodations

55

Co-Assessing

Purposeful assessment before instruction…

- Coteachers should review class profiles of standardized test scores and classroom-based assessments to identify strengths and needs and differentiate skill instruction for individuals and small groups.
- Other activities include:
  - KWL Charts
  - Pretests
  - Anticipation Guides
  - Admit Slips

56

Co-Assessing

Purposeful assessment during instruction…

- Coteachers can use numerous activities to determine whether their instruction is effective and whether students are acquiring critical skills or content, such as:
  - Dry Erase Boards
  - Response Cards
    - Red="Stop, I'm lost"; Yellow="I need clarification"; Green="I understand"
    - True=Green; False=Red
  - Clickers

57

Co-Assessing

Purposeful assessment after instruction…

- Coteachers can use formative and summative assessments after instruction including…
  - Exit Slips
  - Revised Admit Slips ("First I thought…Now, I know…")
  - Portfolios
  - Checklists
  - Rubrics
  - Projects
  - Quizzes
  - Tests

58

Coreflection

- Plan time to engage in conversations about the Coteaching process.

  - What is going well for you?

  - What Coteaching Models are most comfortable/effective for you?

  - What areas are challenging for you?

  - How can you overcome these challenges?

- Consider using a journal or blog to record thoughts, initiate conversation, or share your reflections.

- Celebrate your successes, as well as your students' successes.

59

The Coteaching Relationship

60

What is the Role of Each Teacher?

- Coteachers have different, but complementary knowledge and skills.

- Goals of the Coteaching relationships are to…

  - Use the strengths that each brings to coteaching.

  - Respect differences and draw upon them accordingly.

  - Create teaching and learning experiences that are richer than either teacher could provide alone.
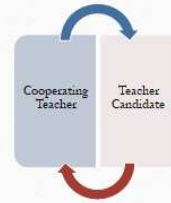
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The Coteacher Relationship

Teacher Candidate and Cooperating Teacher
- Communication before project begins
- Communication during class time
  - Signal
  - Timing (timer, bell, chimes)
  - "Brain Breaks"
  - Notes to Self
- Classroom Management
  - Clear procedures in place for overall class and individual lessons
- Feedback to the candidate
- Other professionals in the room

62

What Makes a Strong Teacher Partnership?

Parity
- Value contributions
- Share power

Collaboration
- Make decisions
- Divide responsibilities

Accountability
- Lead teaching and classroom responsibilities
- Communicate clearly with students and parents

63

The Coteaching Triad

- The University Supervisor serves as an important member of the Coteaching triad.
- The supervisor can provide feedback on the instructional models observed and offer specific advice.
- The supervisor can offer a new perspective on lessons, and help remedy any issues with coplanning, coteaching, co-assessing, and coreflecting.

Cooperating Teacher
Teacher Candidate
University Supervisor

64

Reflect and Respond

- What steps will you take to execute each of the following with your teacher candidate: coplanning, co-instruction, co-assessment, coreflection.

- How can you foster communication between the university supervisor and yourself?

65

Support

- School Administration
- Team Leaders at individual schools
- Project Director
- Support Sessions
- Resources
- Teacher Preparation Program Website

66
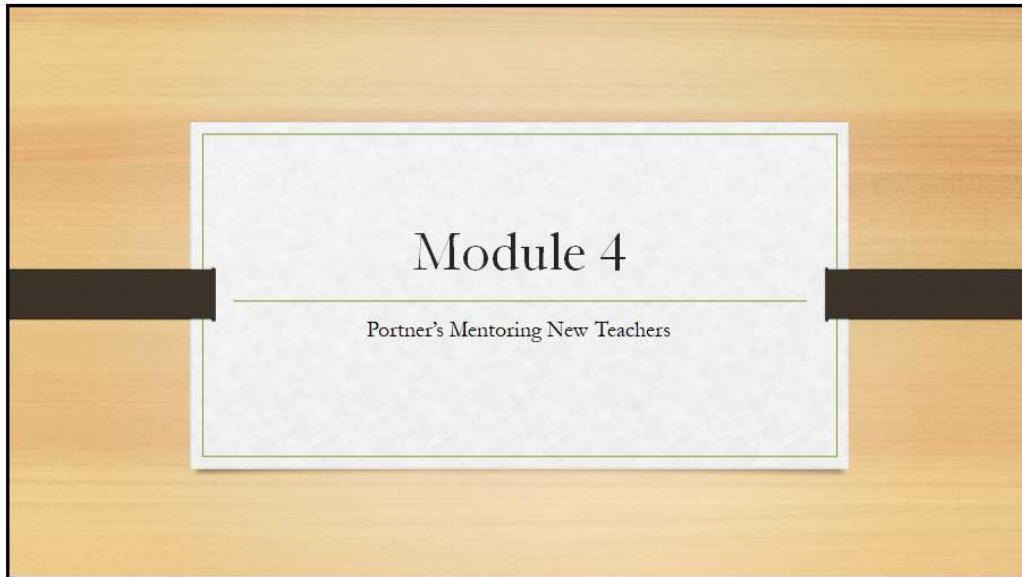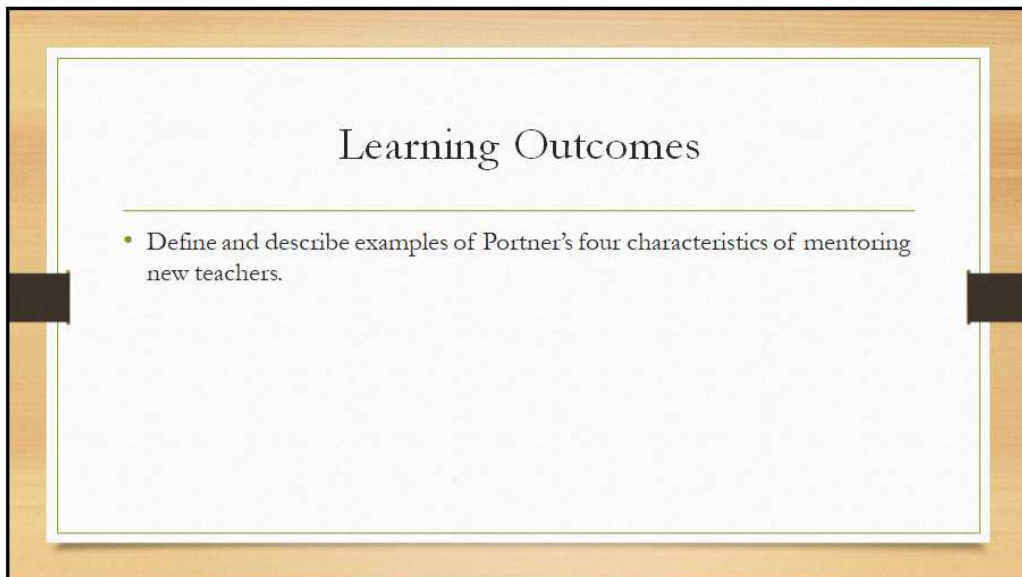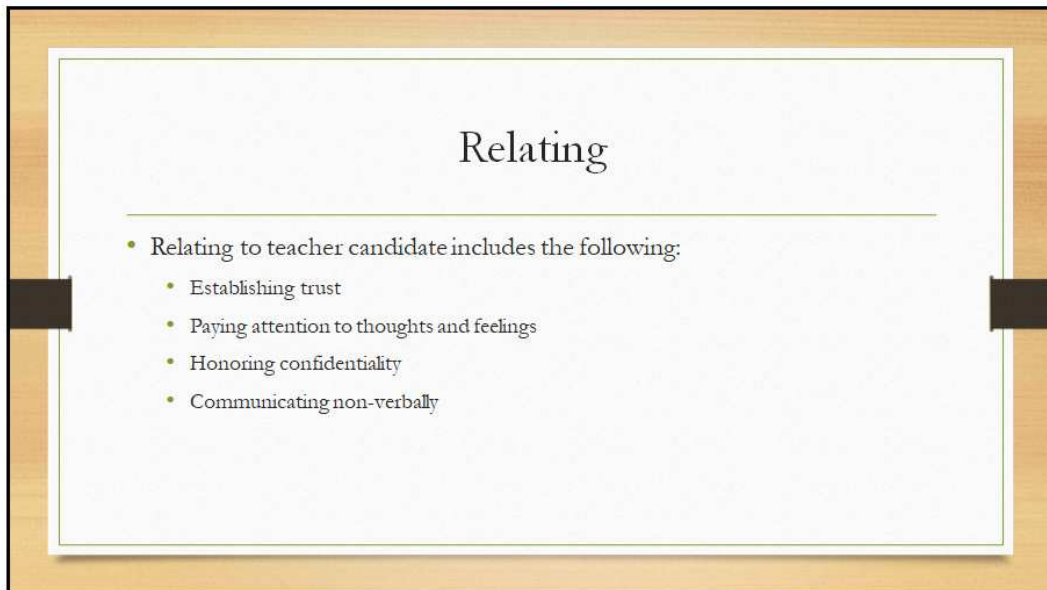
Module 4

Portner's Mentoring New Teachers

67

Learning Outcomes

- Define and describe examples of Portner's four characteristics of mentoring new teachers.

68

Agenda

- Relating
- Assessing
- Coaching
- Guiding

69

Relating

- Relating to teacher candidate includes the following:
  - Establishing trust
  - Paying attention to thoughts and feelings
  - Honoring confidentiality
  - Communicating non-verbally

70

Relating - Trust

- Brainstorm:
  - What does trust mean to you?
  - What is it like to be in a relationship where there is trust?
  - How do you relate differently to someone that you do not trust?
- Discussion:
  - Consider someone specific that you trust. What thoughts, behaviors, feelings, etc., come to mind?
  - Complete the following sentence: *When I want someone to trust me, I…*
  - How will you get your teacher candidate to trust you?
  - How do you want your teacher candidate to perceive you?

71

Assessing

- Important to assess how your teacher candidate best receives and processes feedback and information.
- Determine appropriate resources and strategies to support assessed needs of your teacher candidate.

72

Assessing

- General needs of new teachers:
  - Curriculum
  - Instruction
  - Lesson Planning
  - Student Assessment
  - Classroom Management
  - School Policy
  - Families and Community
  - Emotions

Treasure Hunt – Gathering Resources

What resources might you gather in each of the categories of needs to support your teacher candidate?

73

Coaching

- Pre-lesson conference → coplanning
- Lesson observation → co-instruction, co-assessment
- Post-lesson conference → coreflection

- This topic will be coved more extensively during in-person training ☺

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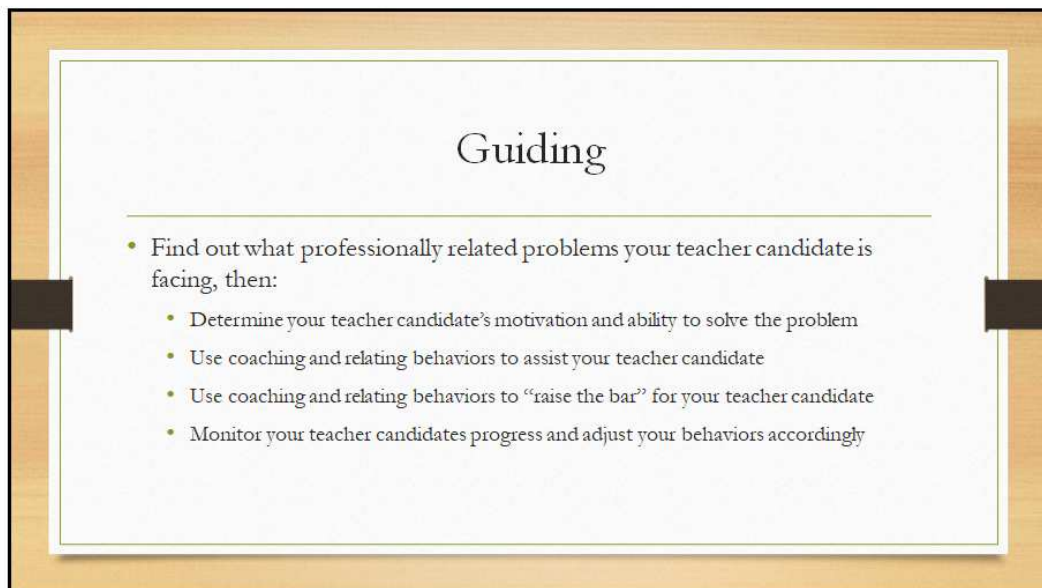
Guiding

- Goals:
    - To guide teacher candidate in developing and asserting their own teacher identity
    - To assist teacher candidate in gaining independence and autonomy

75

Guiding

- Find out what professionally related problems your teacher candidate is facing, then:
    - Determine your teacher candidate's motivation and ability to solve the problem
    - Use coaching and relating behaviors to assist your teacher candidate
    - Use coaching and relating behaviors to "raise the bar" for your teacher candidate
    - Monitor your teacher candidates progress and adjust your behaviors accordingly

76

It's Your Turn…

- During an observation you notice a student throw a paperclip during Nick's lesson. The other students giggle and begin acting off-task. During the post-lesson conference, Nick states that "he wishes the other students wouldn't have made such a big deal about it" as he gazes down towards the floor.

- Your assessment of Nick's behavior management is that he needs assistance in two areas: the skills of classroom management and the confidence to implements them.

- What do you do to guide Nick?

77

It's Your Turn…

- During a coplanning session with Jess, she says "I've been thinking about changing the way I have been teaching the Science unit, but I'm a little stuck on some of the details. Could I run my ideas by you for some feedback?" Jess is ready and willing to approach this situation by offering to share her thoughts and ideas with you.

- Your assessment of the situation is that Jess has feelings of confidence and competence and would like to collaborate through a discussion with you.

- What do you do to guide Jess?

78

It's Your Turn…

- Sam has continued to show improvement in both her skills and confidence when dealing with behavior management. She started the year as shy and passive, but now demonstrates a sensitivity to student attention, is able to regain focus and increase student participation, and had the flexibility to recognize and take advantage of teachable moments.

- As a mentor, what do you do to continue to guide Sam?

79

Next up…

In-person training sessions:

Coaching and Conferencing: Tips and Tricks for Success

University Supervisor and Teacher Candidate Meet and Greet

80

Exit
Ticket
3, 2, 1

What are **3** key takeaways you have from the online learning modules?

What are **2** things you would like to know more about?

What is **1** question you have after completing the online learning modules?

Professional Development Handouts
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 1 – Online Training for Cooperating Teachers
Setting the Stage for Effective Mentoring

Module 1
Reflect and Respond
- What has been your rationale for hosting or declining to host a student teacher in past semesters?

- Why are you interested in participating in this coteaching model?

- How is the traditional model of student teaching different than a cotaught model?

Elements of Student Teaching

Element	Traditional Student Teaching	Coteaching Model
Preparation		
Introduction		
Involvement		
Relationship Building		
Collaboration and Communication		
Planning		
Solo vs. Lead Teaching		
Modeling and Coaching		
Power Differential		
Other		

Module 2
Reflect and Respond
- What would each of the coteaching approaches look like in your classroom?

- Describe an example of each in action.

Module 3
Reflect and Respond
- What steps will you take to execute each of the following with your teacher candidate: coplanning, co-instruction, co-assessment, coreflection.

- How can you foster communication between the university supervisor and yourself?

Module 4
Discussion
- Consider someone specific that you trust. What thoughts, behaviors, feelings, etc., come to mind?
- Complete the following sentence: *When I want someone to trust me, I...*
- How will you get your teacher candidate to trust you?
- How do you want your teacher candidate to perceive you?

Treasure Hunt – Gathering Resources
What resources might you gather in each of the categories of needs to support your teacher candidate?

Need	Potential Resources
Curriculum	
Instruction	
Lesson Planning	
Student Assessment	
Classroom Management	
School Policy	
Families and Community	
Emotions	

It's Your Turn – Guiding Scenarios

	Possible Guiding Strategies

Nick	
Jess	
Sam	

Exit Ticket 3, 2, 1

- What are 3 key takeaways you have from the online learning modules?

- What are 2 things you would like to know more about?

- What is 1 question you have after completing the online learning modules?

Professional Development Agenda
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 2 – In-Person Training for Cooperating Teachers
Coaching and Conferencing: Tips and Tricks for Success

8:30 – 8:45
Arrival and Registration
- Participants will sign-in and pick up professional development folder with handouts.
- Welcome from facilitator.
- Facilitator will discuss the purpose of the professional development/training.

8:45 – 9:00
Ice Breaker Activity
- "This is Us" activity. Cooperating teachers will work with the other cooperating teachers from their building to complete the activity. During this activity, teams will complete the provided prompts to write a short description of the school and community that they represent. This description will be used during day three of the training during the teacher candidate meet and greet.
- Upon completion, each teaching team will share some of the characteristics and qualities that make their school and community unique. Facilitator will guide a discussion about the similarities and differences among the schools and communities and the implications for teacher candidates. Cooperating teachers will be given an opportunity to brainstorm strategies for introducing teacher candidates to their schools and communities based upon the characteristics and qualities shared. Additionally, cooperating teachers will have the opportunity to share any concerns or presumed challenges associated with introducing the teacher candidate to their future placements.

9:00 – 9:15
Review of Day 1 Online Learning Outcomes and Overview of Daily Learning Outcomes
- Facilitator will lead a discussion reviewing participant exit tickets and will complete the chart with provided responses to include: "key takeaways", "what to know more about", and "questions". Participant feedback will help frame future discussions during the professional development training sessions. Feedback should align to learning outcomes of the day one learning modules. Facilitator will review any learning outcomes not mentioned as related to the overview of the yearlong, coteaching clinical practice model, coteaching instructional approaches, coteaching critical elements and relationships, and Portner's four characteristics of mentoring new teachers.
- Facilitator will present the learning outcomes for day two.

9:15 – 10:00
Educative Mentoring: Embracing a Reflective Mentoring Model
- "Think – Pair – Share" Participants will reflect on experiences they have had as a mentor and/or mentee based on the following prompts:
  - Describe a mentor you have had in the past.
  - Describe your experiences as a mentor.
  - What strategies and approaches have you experienced as a mentor/mentee?
  - What challenges and successes have you experienced as a mentor/mentee?
- As participants report out on the "Think – Pair – Share" activity, the facilitator will record any characteristics, qualities, or key thoughts shared by participants on large chart paper. This ongoing list will be used later in the training session.
- Facilitator will share slides related to mentoring teacher candidates, including what it means to be a teacher mentor, educative mentoring, and reflective versus transmission mentoring.
- Revisiting previous experiences as a mentor/mentee – participants will be asked to review the brainstormed list of characteristics, qualities, and key thoughts shared and recorded during the "Think – Pair – Share" activity. As each item on the list is revisited, participants will assist in marking each with a "R" for reflective mentoring, or a "T" for transmission mentoring. Facilitator will lead a discussion based upon results regarding implications for future mentoring experiences.

10:00 – 10:30
Activity – Magical Mentor
- Participants will be put into new table teams for this activity so that they can work with and share ideas with individuals they have not yet worked with. Each table team will be given a large piece of chart paper and will be asked to create a visual representation of what a "Magical Mentor" looks like. This can include visuals, words, phrases, etc. and should creatively express some of the key aspects of an educative mentor. Teams will then be asked to share their work with the group.

10:30 – 10:45
15-Minute Break

10:45 – 11:30
Coaching: Pre-Conferencing
- "Think – Pair – Share" Participants will reflect on the concept of pre-lesson conferencing by thinking about and sharing their thoughts about the following prompts:
  - What comes to mind?
  - What does the conference "look" like?

      o   What is the purpose?

      o   What, if any, experience do you have?

      Participants will be asked to share their thoughts with the group.

- Facilitator will share slides related to pre-lesson conferencing and will discuss the goals and how-to's for facilitating a pre-lesson conference.
- Facilitators will model a pre-lesson conference and participants will be asked to identify some of the strategies used. Facilitator will lead a discussion based on participant feedback.

11:30 – 12:00
Activity - It's Your Turn

- Participants will be paired with a cooperating teacher that is not from their teaching team to review a completed teacher candidate lesson plan. Pairs will work together to compose probing questions that could be used during a pre-lesson conference with the teacher candidate. Pairs will share some of their thoughts and rationale with the whole group; facilitator will guide discussions.

12:00 – 1:00
Break for Lunch

1:00 – 1:45
Coaching: Post-Lesson Conferencing

- Facilitator will review reminders for lesson observations.
- "Think – Pair – Share" Participants will reflect on the concept of post-lesson conferencing by thinking about and sharing their thoughts about the following prompts:
  - o   What comes to mind?
  - o   What does the conference "look" like?
  - o   What is the purpose?
  - o   What, if any, experience do you have?

  Participants will be asked to share their thoughts with the group.
- Facilitator will share slides related to post-lesson conferencing and will discuss the goals and how-to's for facilitating a post-lesson conference.
- "What would you do?" Participants will work in table teams to create responses to the provided scenarios. Facilitator will lead the discussion based on responses.
- Facilitator will show a pre-recorded lesson facilitated by a former teacher candidate (permission will be obtained and student faces or identifying characteristics will not be included in the video). Participants will be asked to complete a lesson observation as they would in the classroom by recording what they determine to be notable. Afterwards, participants will be asked to report out on some of their observations.

1:45 – 2:00

15-Minute Break

2:00 – 2:45
Activity – Practicing the Post-Lesson Conference
- Participants will pair up with a cooperating teacher that is not from their teaching team, and who they have not yet worked with. Each participant will take turns roll playing a post-lesson conference based on their lesson observation notes. Participants will alternate playing the role of cooperating teacher and teacher candidate. Participants will practice using the post-lesson conference how-to's during their roll plays. At the conclusion of the activity, the facilitator will lead a debriefing discussion about the experience.

2:45 – 3:00
Wrap Up and Evaluation
Participants will complete an exit ticket for Day 2 of the professional development training.
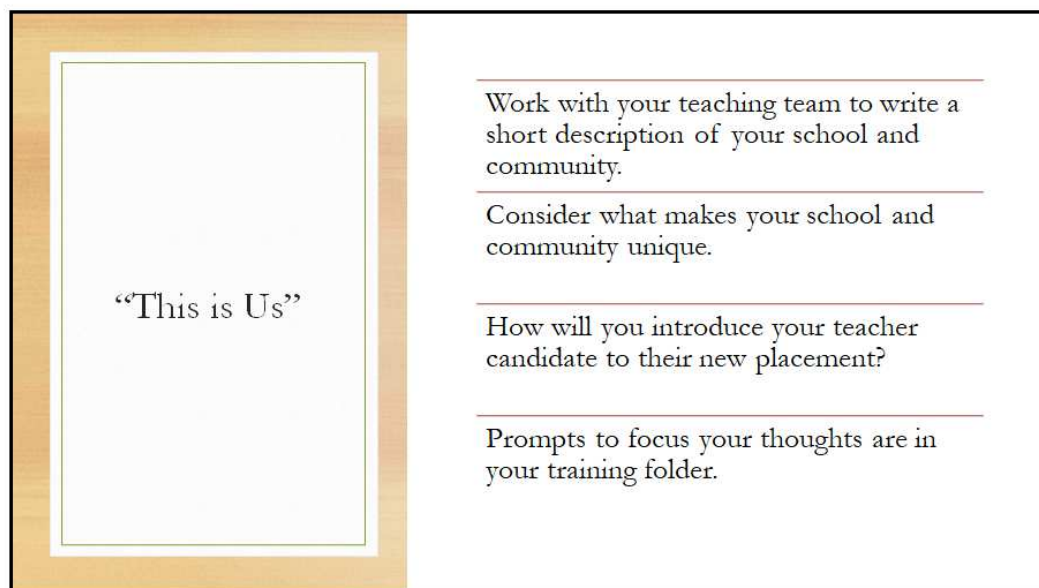
Professional Development Slides
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 2 – In-Person Training for Cooperating Teachers
Coaching and Conferencing: Tips and Tricks for Success
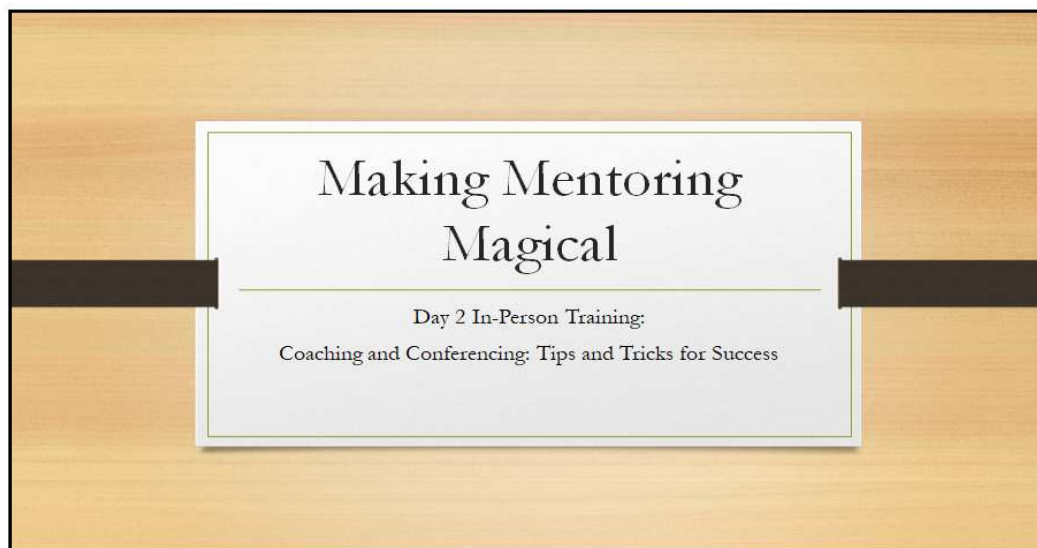
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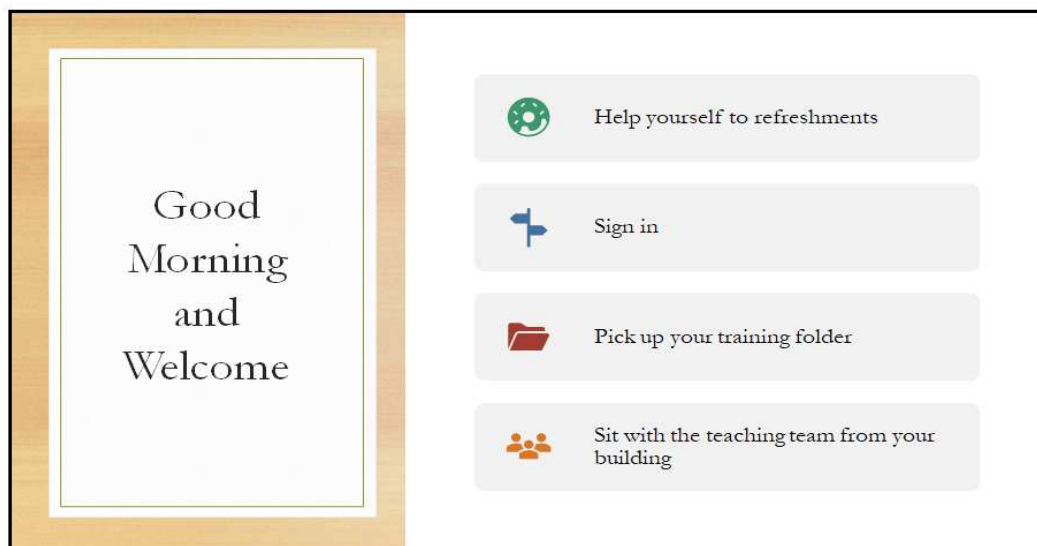
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"This is Us"
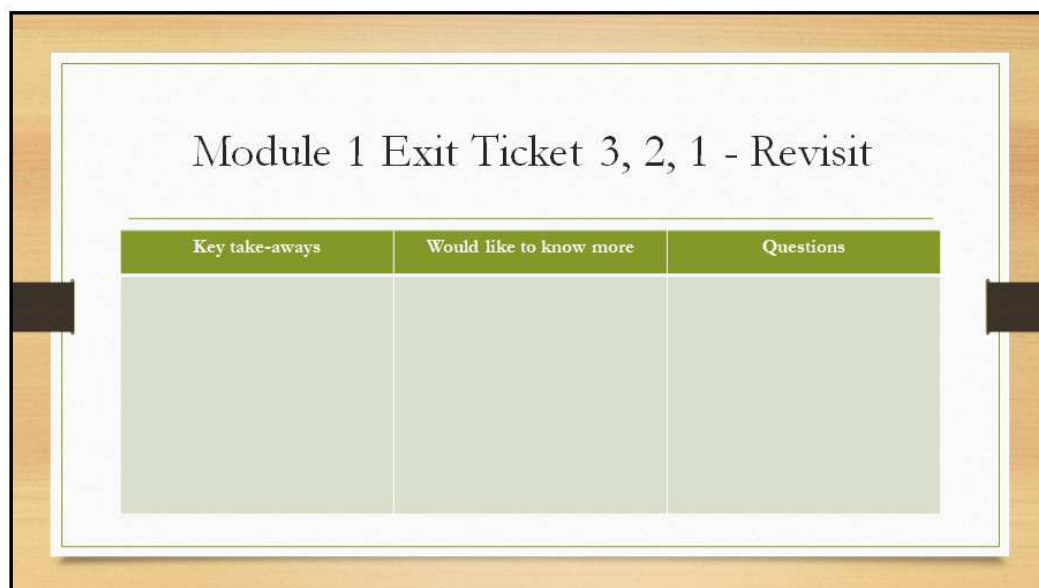
Work with your teaching team to write a short description of your school and community.

Consider what makes your school and community unique.

How will you introduce your teacher candidate to their new placement?

Prompts to focus your thoughts are in your training folder.
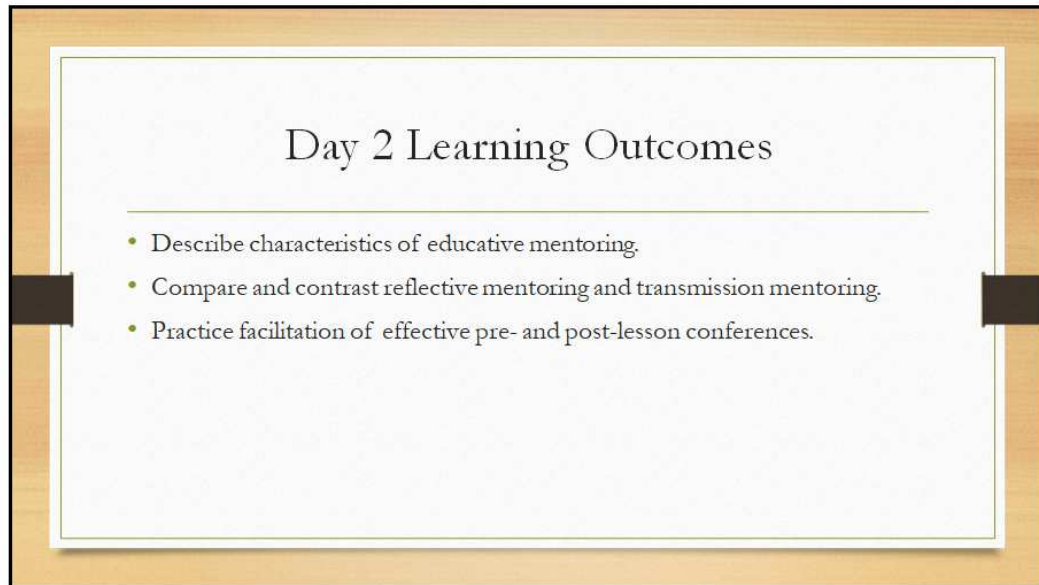
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Module 1 Exit Ticket 3, 2, 1 - Revisit

Key take-aways	Would like to know more	Questions
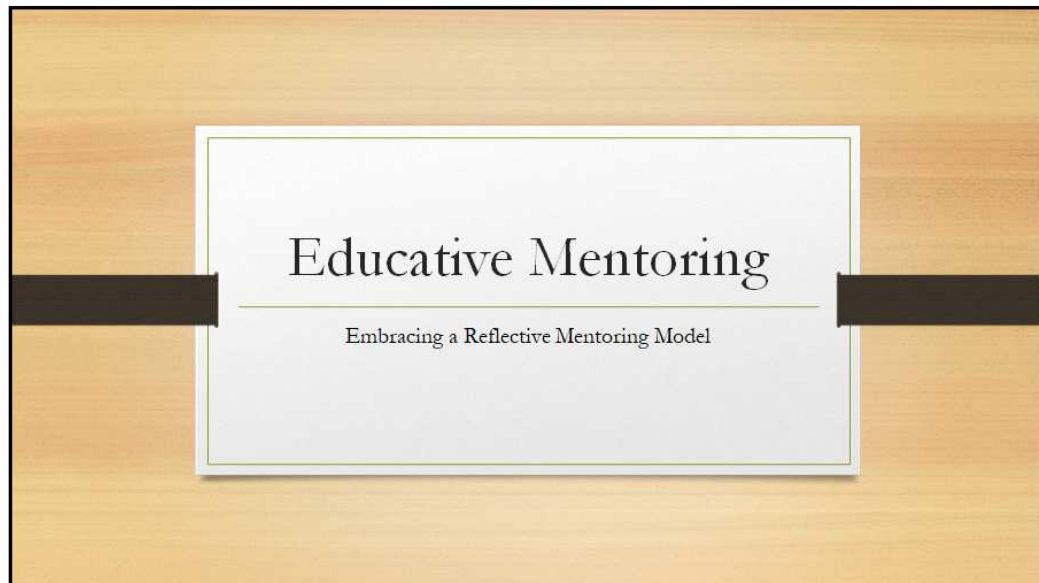
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Day 2 Learning Outcomes

- Describe characteristics of educative mentoring.
- Compare and contrast reflective mentoring and transmission mentoring.
- Practice facilitation of effective pre- and post-lesson conferences.

5

Educative Mentoring

Embracing a Reflective Mentoring Model

6

Think – Pair – Share

Previous Experiences with Mentoring

- Describe a mentor you have had in the past.
- Describe your experiences as a mentor.
- What strategies and approaches have you experienced as a mentor/mentee?
- What challenges and successes have you experienced as a mentor/mentee?

7

Being a Teacher Mentor is…

- More than a skill set, it is a relationship
- Helping teacher candidates learn and grow through analysis of experience
- Collaborative and open-ended
- The use of both personal and social skills

8

9

10

Educative Mentoring How-To's

- Balance learning needs of teacher candidate and students
- Use student data for coplanning and coreflection
  - Gather and analyze evidence of learning for both the teacher candidate and the students
  - Assist teacher candidate in examining and learning from their own teaching to improve instruction and student learning outcomes
- Make learning experiences individualized and intentional
- Provide frequent constructive feedback

11

Reflective vs. Transmission Mentoring

12

Transmission Mentoring

- "Teach as I teach" model
- Driven by accountability of student performance and test scores
- Relies on advice and suggestions
  - Focuses on short-term problem-solving
  - Isolated mentoring
- The "what and how" of teaching

13

Reflective Mentoring

- There is no "right" or "wrong" way to teach
- Is a partnership – adds emotional support to foster professional growth
- Relies on ongoing feedback
  - Focuses on long-term developmental goals
  - Ongoing mentoring throughout the experience
- Extends to the "why" of teaching

14

Dialogic Co-Construction

Challenges and extends mentee's thinking

Mentor articulates reasons behind instructional decisions

Mentor encourages self-reflective practices through use of evidence and connections

Builds the mentor/mentee relationship through positive rapport

Allows mentor and mentee to openly discuss all aspects of teaching and learning

15

Use of Student Learning Data

- Used for the focus of discussion
- Allows for collaborative discussions about strengths and problematic aspects of student learning
- Creates a "safe space" for open dialogue
- Allows for continuous and constructive feedback

16

Revisiting Previous Experiences with Mentoring

- Do your previous experiences as a mentor/mentee follow a reflective or transmission mentoring model?

17

Magical Mentor

Activity

18

19

20

Pre-Lesson Conference = Coplanning

- Goal: Teacher candidate clarifies what, when, how, and who to teach
- This includes clarifying:
  - Learning objectives
  - Teaching and assessment strategies
  - Possible opportunities to enrich the lesson
- Teacher candidate provides insight based on experience and expertise

21

Pre-Lesson Conference How-To's

- Ask probing questions that encourage the teacher candidate to think through the potential outcomes of his/her plans and to come up with modifications
- Create questions based on the following lesson components
  - Instructional activities
  - Materials and how they will be used
  - Expected student behaviors
  - Assessment strategies
  - Opportunities for differentiated instruction

22

Pre-Lesson Conference How-To's

- Ask clarifying questions to get teacher candidate to share additional information
- Encourage specificity
- Be patient
- Acknowledge and validate teacher candidate responses by rewording and repeating—works with feelings too ☺
- Avoid using judgmental phrases
- Resist the temptation to offer advice (*with exception)
- End with a summary of ideas, feelings, and decisions

23

Pre-Lesson Conference Role Play

- As you watch, try to identify some of the pre-lesson conference how-to's

24

It's Your Turn

Work with a partner to review the provided lesson plan

Review the lesson plan components and come up with probing questions to be used during a pre-lesson conference

Share your thoughts and rationale with the group

25

Coaching

Post-Lesson Conferencing

26

But First…

Some Lesson Observation Reminders

27

Lesson Observation = Co-instruction and Co-assessment

- Focus on one agreed upon area for observation – determined during pre-lesson conference
- Goal: cooperating teacher observes and documents student learning and any obstructions to learning
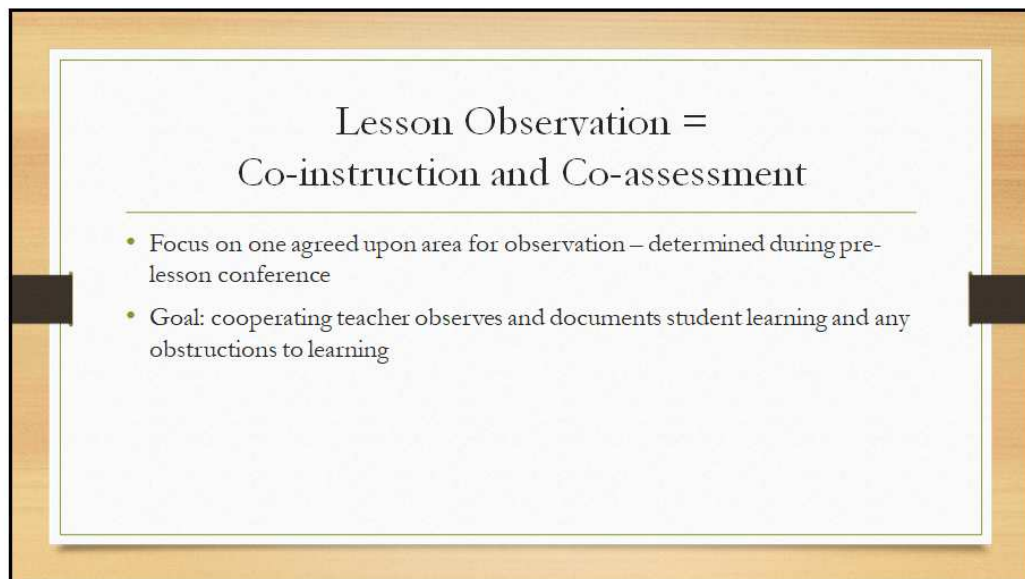
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Data Collection

- Be specific with data collection
- Consider data collection tools and use of descriptive narratives
- Focus on the extent and quality of student learning → determine what is inhibiting or prohibiting learning

29

Example of specific data collection for student engagement.

(Portner, 2008, pg. 52)

30

Post-Lesson Conferencing

31

Think – Pair – Share

Post-Lesson Conference

- What comes to mind?
- What does the conference "look" like?
- What is the purpose?
- What, if any, experience do you have?

32

Post-Lesson Conference = Coreflection

- Goal: Coreflect on instructional decisions and improve on past performance
- This includes:
  - Discussing observations
  - Sharing data collection
  - Providing additional feedback that is: descriptive, specific, behavior focused, and is clearly communicated
- Meet as soon as possible after the observed lesson to debrief

33

Ask Probing Questions

- How do you think the lesson went? Why do you think that?
- When you…, the students reacted by…, why do you think that happened?
- Were there any surprises?
- What did you take into account when planning the activity you chose?
- I noticed you deviated from your written lesson plan when…, what made you choose to do that?
- If you were to teach this lesson again, what would you do differently? Why?

34

Avoid Embedded Negatives

Rephrase the following questions to encourage reflective thinking.

- Don't you think you could have planned that better?
- I don't think that's going to work. What could you do instead?
- You aren't thinking that through. Can't you come up with a better way?

35

Show and Tell

- Use this strategy when giving direct advice → sharing your expertise
- *Show* your teacher candidate as you model
  - Best practices learned through experience
- *Tell* your teacher candidate during pre- and post-lesson conferences
  - Your rationale for choosing your shown behaviors

36

It's Your Turn

- Work with your table team to compose a response to the provided scenarios.
- Scenarios can be found in your handout folder.

37

Useful feedback is...

✓	Descriptive and specific
	Takes into account the needs of the teacher candidate
	Focused on behaviors of the teacher candidate
⧗	Solicited and well-timed
	Clearly communicated

38

Help your teacher candidate do the following when receiving feedback

🔍 Focus on what is said, not how it's said

💬 View feedback as information, not criticism

🧠 Focus on receiving new information, not defending old information

❓ Ask for specifics, do not make generalizations

✓ Clarify what has been said by summarizing the main points

39

Time to Practice

Lesson observation – recording of former teacher candidate lesson

Post-lesson conference – roll play based upon your observation

40

Exit
Ticket
3, 2, 1

What are 3 key takeaways you have from the day 2 learning session?

What are 2 things you would like to know more about?

What is 1 question you have after completing the day 2 learning session?

41

Professional Development Handouts
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 2 – In-Person Training for Cooperating Teachers
Coaching and Conferencing: Tips and Tricks for Success

This is Us
1. The students in this school…

2. Their families…

3. The teachers in this school…

4. The administrators…

5. The school is best known for…

6. The most inspiration thing about the school is…

7. Teaching in this school is like…

8. The surrounding community is…

9. Some interesting places nearby are…

10. Community support for education is…

It's Your Turn – Post-Lesson Conference

1. When giving directions to students, you observe your teacher candidate being vague and using ambiguous statements. As a result, many students are left confused on what to do.

2. During a lesson activity you observe several students off-task and disrupting the learning of others. Your teacher candidate is passive in dealing with these students.

3. When confronting two similar off-task behaviors, your teacher candidate handles them in different ways. This leaves students uncertain of consequences.

4. A significant amount of time is spent passing out and collecting materials, leaving the lesson feeling rushed and ineffective.

5. Although the students are engaged and seem to be enjoying the lesson's activity, formative assessment results show that many are not mastering the content.

Exit Ticket 3, 2, 1
- What are 3 key takeaways you have from the day 2 learning session?

- What are 2 things you would like to know more about?

- What is 1 question you have after completing the day 2 learning session?

Professional Development Agenda
Making Mentoring Magical
Day 3 – In-Person for Cooperating Teachers
University Supervisor and Teacher Candidate Meet and Greet

8:30 – 8:45
Arrival and Registration
- Participants will sign-in and pick up professional development day 3 handouts.
- Welcome from facilitator.
- Facilitator will discuss the purpose of the meet and greet.

8:45 – 9:00
Introduction of Building Principals, Cooperating Teachers, and University Supervisors
- Facilitator will introduce the first partner building principal and ask him/her to come to the front of the room. The principal will then introduce each of the cooperating teachers from their school. When introduced each cooperating teacher will share the grade they teach, how long they have been teaching, and a fun fact about themselves. The process will continue until all principals and cooperating teachers have been introduced.
- Facilitator will introduce each supervisor. Once introduced, each supervisor will give a summary of their background as related to teaching and supervising teacher candidates.

9:00 – 9:15
Review of Day 2 Learning Outcomes and Overview of Daily Learning Outcomes
- Facilitator will lead a discussion reviewing participant exit tickets and will complete the chart with provided responses to include: "key takeaways", "what to know more about", and "questions". Participant feedback will help frame future discussions during the professional development training session. Feedback should align to learning outcomes of the day two learning modules. Facilitator will review any learning outcomes not mentioned as related to educative mentoring, reflective and transmission mentoring, and pre- and post-lesson conferencing.
- Facilitator will present the learning outcomes for day three.

9:15 – 10:00
Coteaching – Roles and Responsibilities
- Facilitator will share the slides about coteaching as related to roles and responsibilities, including coteaching prerequisites, collaboration, setting the tone for coteaching, and strengthening coteaching in the classroom.

- "I Do This, You Do That" activity. This activity will assist participants in brainstorming potential roles and responsibilities during common classroom activities.

10:00 – 10:30
Meet and Greet – Cooperating Teachers, Teacher Candidates, and University Supervisors
- Each represented partner school will be assigned their own room for meet and greet interviews with teacher candidates. The university supervisor assigned to the building will help facilitate the interview rotations and icebreaker activity in their corresponding room.
- The teacher preparation program will have previously grouped and assigned student groups to the buildings they will be placed at. Each student group will move to the assigned room to meet with the cooperating teachers from that building.
- Once all cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, and university supervisors have relocated to their assigned room, the meet and greet activities will begin. The university supervisor will lead their group of cooperating teachers and teacher candidates in an icebreaker of their choice. After the icebreaker activity, each cooperating teacher will have a chance to meet with each teacher candidate, like speed dating. Pairs will have four minutes to interview one another for compatibility. The university supervisor will keep time. Cooperating teachers and teacher candidates will be encouraged to take notes during each interview. Once all cooperating teachers have had a chance to meet each teacher candidate, each participant will rank who they would like to work with on a provided ranking sheet. University supervisors will collect the sheets and determine matches during the break time. Teaching teams and partnerships will be given to the training facilitator.

10:30 – 10:45
15-Minute Break

10:45 – 11:30
Introduction of Coteaching Teams and A Road Map for Coteaching
- Facilitator will announce teaching teams and partnerships. Once all teams are introduced, participants will be asked to sit with their teaching team, including university supervisors.
- "This is Us" day 2 activity. Cooperating teachers of each teaching team will be asked to share their "This is Us" responses from day 2 training. University supervisors will help facilitate discussions to orient teacher candidates to their new placements.

- Facilitator will share slides "A Road Map for Coteaching" which includes suggestions for coplanning, having conversations about common coteaching challenges, and how to resolve conflicts.

11:30 – 12:00
Activity – Getting to Know You
- Participants will be asked to complete the "my response" sections of the activity. Once complete, participants will pair with their cooperating teacher to share their responses and to record the responses of their co-teacher. Participants will then discuss their responses and determine an appropriate action plan for each item. Facilitator will lead a debriefing discussion upon completion.

12:00 – 1:00
Break for Lunch

1:00 – 1:45
Coteaching in Action
- Facilitator will share slides about coteaching in action, including a review of the six coteaching approaches and considerations in selecting coteaching approaches. Facilitator will lead a discussion based on perceived preferences and challenges with the various coteaching approaches.

1:45 – 2:00
15-Minute Break

2:00 – 2:45
Putting Coplanning into Action
- Coteaching pairs will be provided with the teacher preparation program's coteaching lesson plan. Each pair will pick two cards from the facilitator. One card will have the content area, the other card will have one of the coteaching instructional approaches. Pairs will then work together to plan a lesson for the selected content area that utilizes the selected coteaching instructional approach. Upon completion, pairs will be asked to give a summary of their plan to the group. Facilitator will guide discussions as each pair reports out.

2:45 – 3:00
Wrap Up and Evaluation
Facilitator will provide a recap of highlights from the day three training. Participants will then be asked to complete a survey to provide feedback for the entire professional development training.
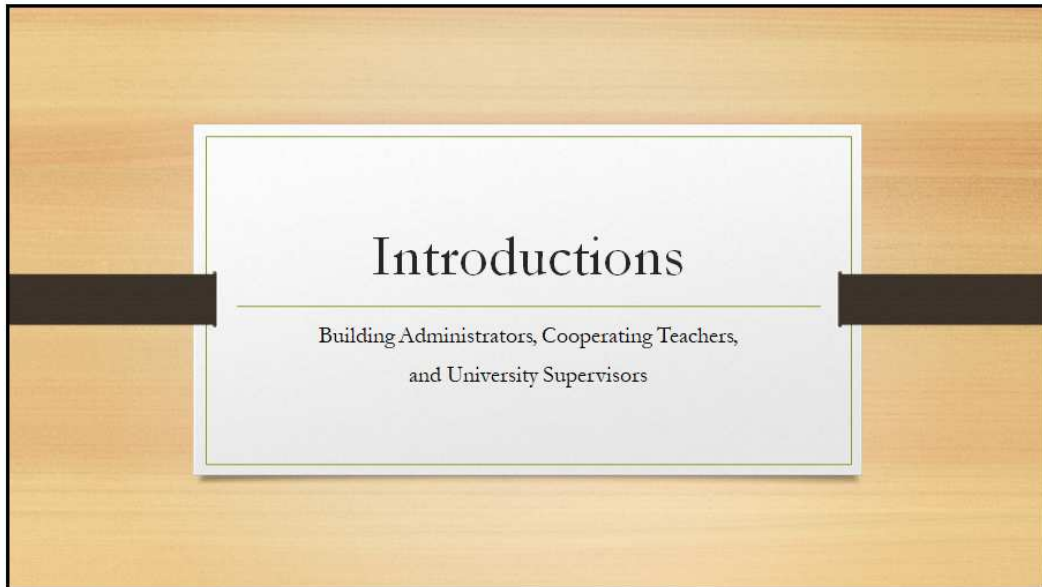
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Making Mentoring Magical
Day 3 – In-Person for Cooperating Teachers
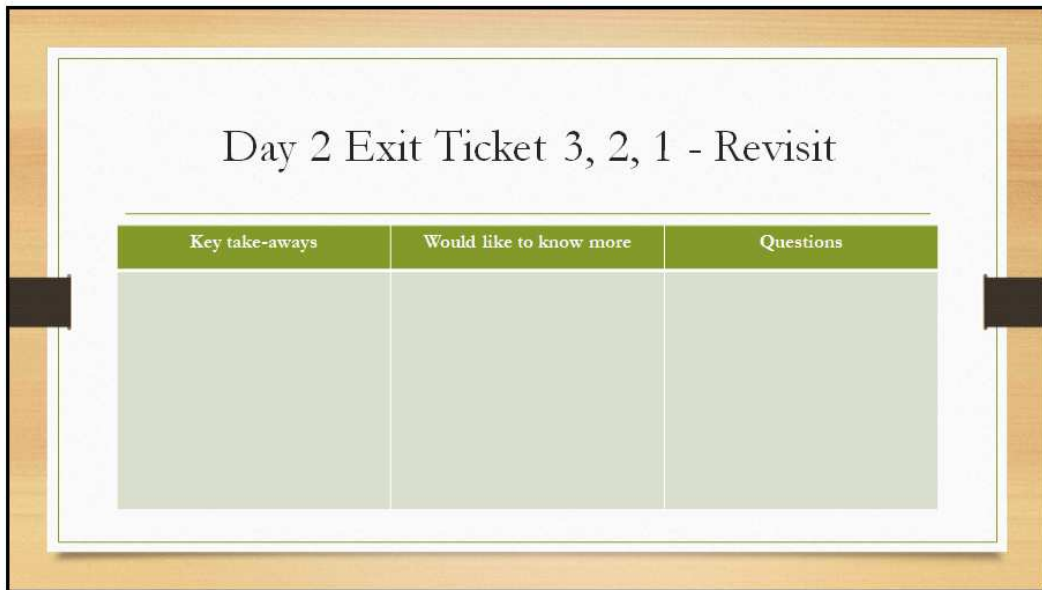University Supervisor and Teacher Candidate Meet and Greet

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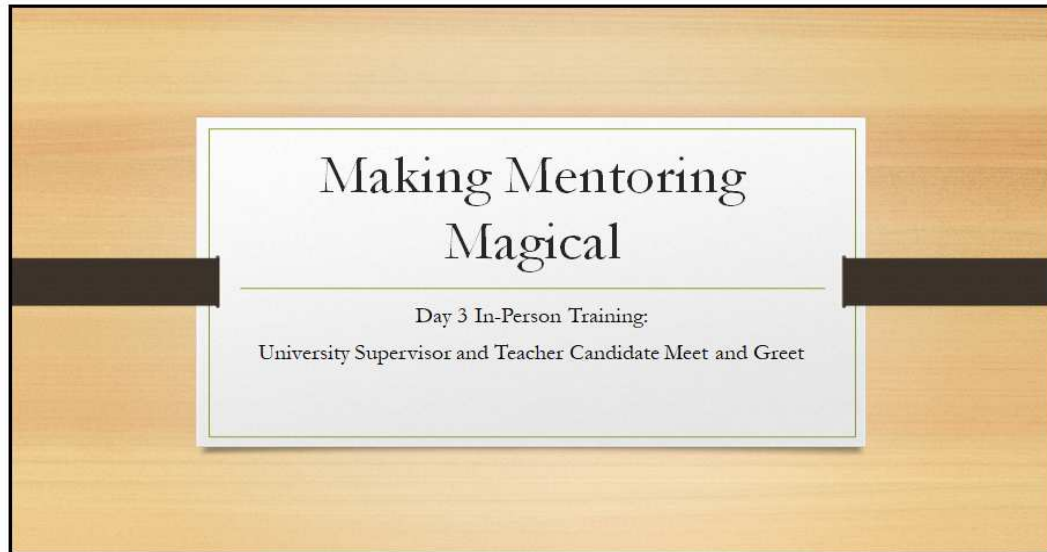
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Day 3 Learning Objectives

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of coteaching
- Action plan for potential challenges of coteaching
- Understand considerations for selecting coteaching approaches

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Coteaching

Roles and Responsibilities

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Coteaching Prerequisites

- Personal prerequisites
  - Qualities that are supportive of working with colleagues
  - Sense of humor, willingness to set aside differences, ability to give up control
- Professional prerequisites
  - Understanding of school, teaching, and students
- Discipline-specific prerequisites
  - Curriculum and instruction, classroom management, knowledge of typical students, pacing

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Collaboration

- Trust, respect, and a sense of community
- Mutual goals
- Parity
- Voluntariness
- Shared responsibility for key decisions
- Shared accountability for outcomes
- Shared resources

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Setting the Tone for Coteaching

- Both teachers' names are on the board/posted in the classroom
- Both teachers' handwriting is on student assignments
- Both teachers have space for personal belongings
- Both teachers sometimes take the lead role in the classroom
- Teacher talk during instruction is approximately equal
- Both teachers give directions or permission without checking with the other teacher
- Both teachers work with all students
- Both teacher are considered teachers by students

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Strengthening Coteaching in the Classroom

- Parity in the classroom – how will you communicate this to each other, students, and families?
- Division of labor – how will you share responsibilities?
- Strategies for responding to mistakes during teaching – stepping in, a signal?
- Preferences for receiving feedback – what is the best way to exchange feedback?

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Strengthening Coteaching in the Classroom

- Maintenance of confidentiality – for the students and each other
- Acknowledgement of pet peeves – talk about the things that bother you as related to teaching
- Classroom and behavior management – use of space, noise levels, routines, safety procedures, classroom rules and discipline
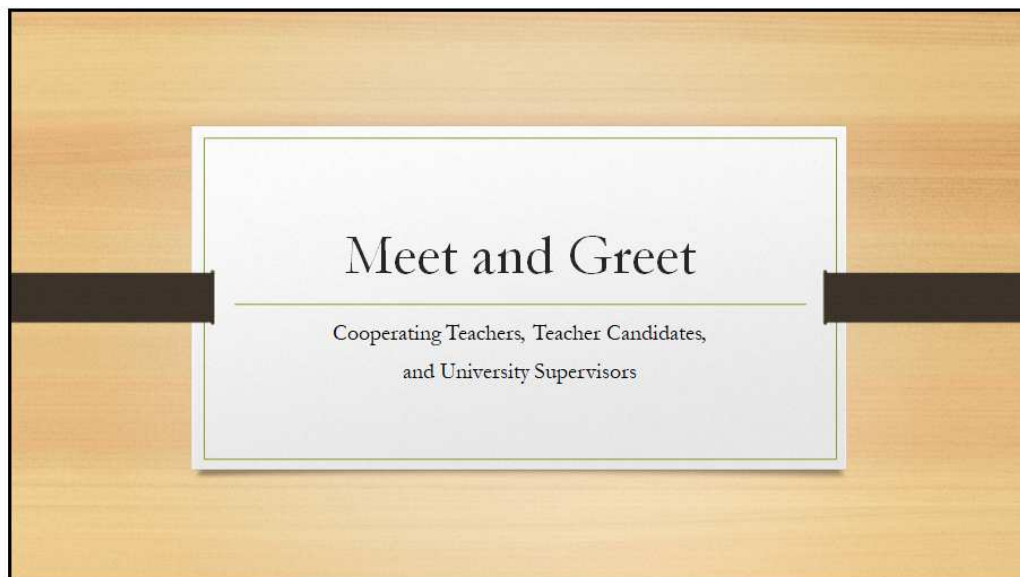
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Discussion

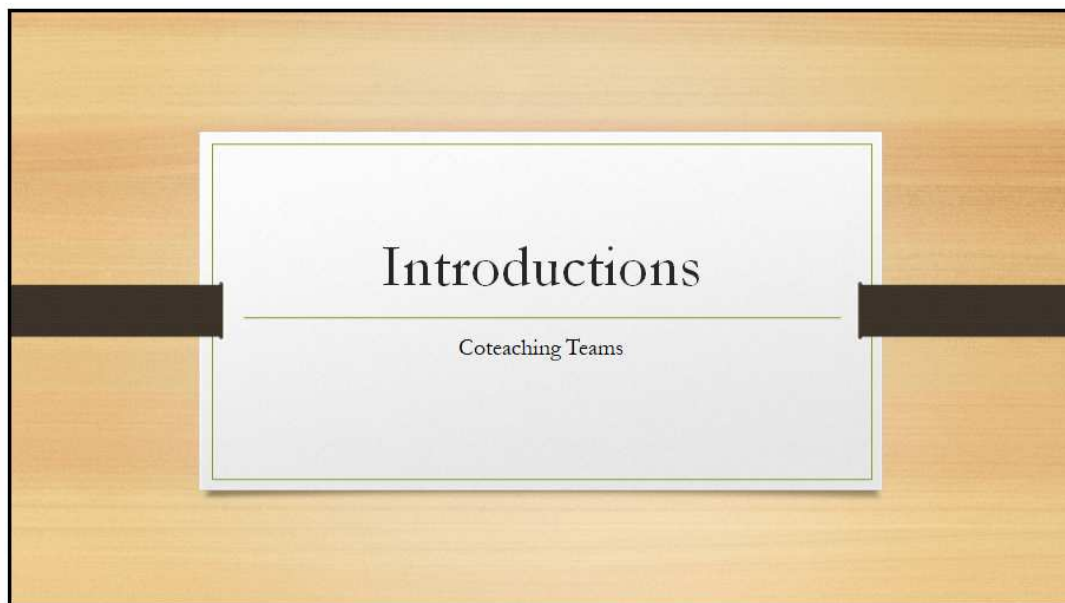- What topics would you add to the list of classroom and teaching items that should be discussed by co-teachers?
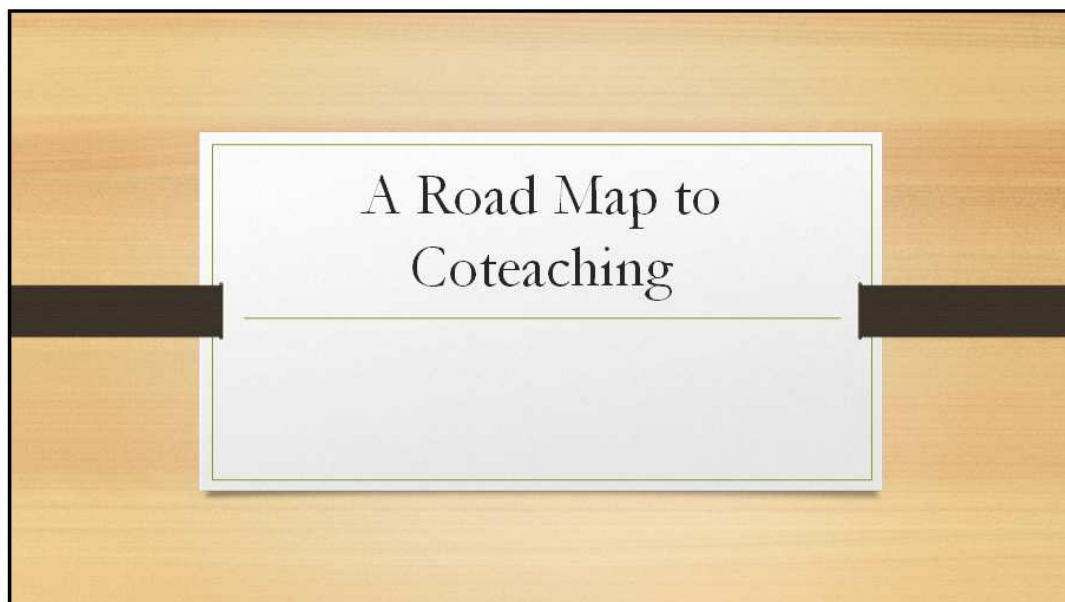
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I Do This, You Do That

Activity

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Meet and Greet

Cooperating Teachers, Teacher Candidates,
and University Supervisors

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Introductions

Coteaching Teams

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A Road Map to Coteaching

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Coplanning for Success

- Utilize team based teaching meetings to discuss common coteaching concerns
- Set up a regularly scheduled time to plan together
- Set up a special snack time once a week either before or after school – take turns bringing the snack
- Try to plan for one week (or more) at a time
- Come prepared to plan with ideas, resources, and materials you might need
- Set a structure for you co-teaching time
- Agree on a lesson planning approach

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Coteaching Conversations

- Collaborative communication
- Classroom arrangement
- Curriculum competence
- Setting goals and adjusting curriculum
- Planning instruction
- Presenting content
- Assessment and evaluation
- Classroom management

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Potential Coteaching Challenges

Teaching methods and beliefs

Personality style and differences

Misperceptions of what should be

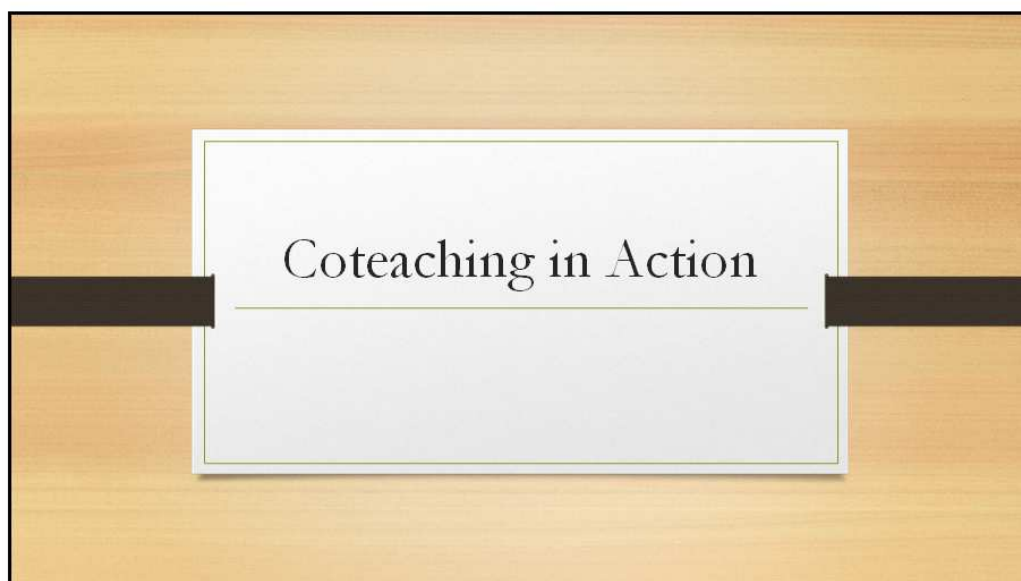Content area knowledge

Lack of time

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Dealing with Conflict

- Stop and think – remain positive, focus on a solution
- Define the problem or issue
- Brainstorm and evaluate possible solutions
- Develop a plan to implement the best possible solution
- Evaluate the plan and outcomes

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Getting To Know You

Activity

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Coteaching in Action

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The Six Approaches

- One teach, one observe
- Station teaching
- Parallel teaching
- Alternative teaching
- Team teaching
- One teach, one assist

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Considerations When Selecting Coteaching Approaches

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Student Characteristics and Needs

- Instructional needs of individual students
- Student need for structure and predictability
- Student attention skills
- Diversity of student learning levels
- Physical or sensory needs of students
- Need for assistive technology

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Teacher Characteristics and Preferences

- Determine your comfort level – do you prefer one teacher or two?
- Choose an approach that helps you start small based on your comfort level
- Gradually explore other approaches as you build your partnership
- There is no right or wrong – do what works best for both teachers

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Features of the Curriculum

- Do certain content areas work best with specific approaches?
  - Team teaching during reading, parallel teaching during math
- Match the approach with the curriculum to maximize instructional intensity

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What Not To Do…

Divide

Take turns

Alternate

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Goal of Coteaching

- Embrace collaboration to fully utilize the strengths each teacher brings to the situation and to maximize student learning.
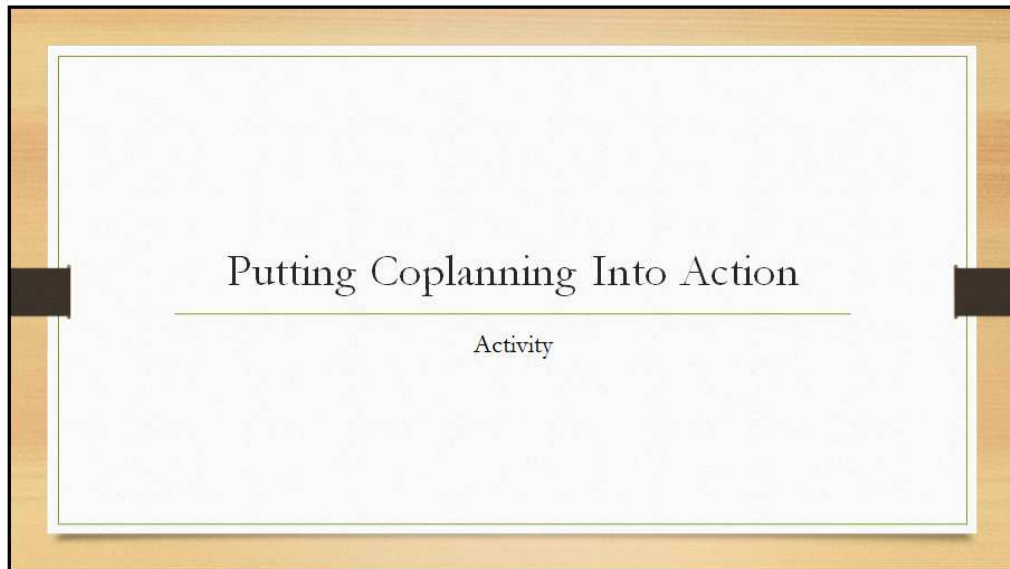
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Discussion

- As you think about the coteaching approaches, which are the most appealing to you based upon personal, professional, and curriculum considerations?

- Which approaches do you think will present a challenge based upon personal, professional, and curriculum considerations?

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Putting Coplanning Into Action

Activity

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Thank You ☺

Please complete the training survey and reach out with any
questions as you begin your coteaching journey.

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Professional Development Agenda
Making Mentoring Magical
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I Do This, You Do That

If I am doing this…	My coteacher can be doing this…
Presenting new content during a large group lesson	
Providing oral instructions to students	
Checking for understanding during a large group lesson	
Rotating the room providing one-on-one support during independent work time	
Reteaching a lesson with a small group of students	
Facilitating small group stations	
Passing out materials for an activity	
Grading student work	

Getting to Know You

The things I am most looking forward to about co-teaching are…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

The things that have me feeling the most apprehensive about co-teaching are…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

The three things I am most passionate about when it comes to education are…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

One goal I have for myself this year is…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

My philosophy of classroom management is…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

My philosophy of classroom activities is…	
My response:	My coteacher's response:
Action Plan	

Appendix B: Interview Questions

RQ1: How do cooperating teachers describe their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?

- What comes to mind when you think about quality mentorship?

- Tell me about a quality mentor you have had.

- How have your previous experiences, as either a mentor or mentee, influenced your identity as a mentor this year?

- What successes have you had as a mentor this year?

- What struggles have you faced as a mentor this year?

- How has your identity as a mentor evolved since the beginning of the year?

- Relating:

    o How would you describe your relationship with your teacher candidate?

    o What are the strengths of your relationship?

    o Are there any areas of your relationship that you would like to be different; tell me about them?

RQ2: How do cooperating teachers operationalize their roles as mentors within the coteaching clinical practice model?

- Assessing:

    o Describe how you provide feedback to your teacher candidate.

    o Tell me about the formal and informal strategies you use to communicate with one another.

- Coaching:

- o Tell me about the process you use to coplan with your teacher candidate.

- o Tell me about how you and your teacher candidate coreflect on

  implemented lessons.

- Guiding:

  - o Describe the growth you have seen in your teacher candidate since the

    beginning of the clinical practice experience.

  - o What strengths have emerged from your teacher candidate?

  - o What goals do you have for your teacher candidate prior to the conclusion

    of the field experience?

RQ3: How can the WBC teacher preparation program best support cooperating teachers

as mentors?

- What training and support strategies offered by WBC have you found most

  helpful to you in your role as a cooperating teacher?

- What suggestions do you have for future training and support initiatives offered

  by WBC?

Appendix C: Reflection Paper Prompts

1. Describe how your instruction as a classroom teacher changed as a result of the

    coteaching experience?

2. How has your professional identity as a cooperating teacher evolved from the

    coteaching experience?

3. What specific practices will you put into action in the future due to participating

    as a cooperating teacher in the coteaching experience?