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# The Impact of Teacher Collaboration in a Professional Learning Community on Teacher Job Satisfaction

Donna V. Ackerman  
*Walden University*

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Dr. James Jackson, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Celeste Stansberry, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

David Clinefelter, Ph.D.

Walden University

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Abstract

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Donna V Ackerman

M.A., University of Alaska 2000

B.S., University of Oklahoma 1990

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

Walden University

November 2011

## Abstract

A dilemma in some local educational institutions is the lack of a supportive teacher community which could lead to decreased teacher job satisfaction. The purpose of this study was to describe to what extent teacher collaboration in a professional learning community (PLC) impacts teacher job satisfaction. Theoretical foundations by DuFour, Eaker and DuFour supported the relationships between PLC and teacher collaboration. Herzberg's theory of motivation and Maslow's hierarchy also served as frameworks in this study. An interpretive, qualitative research design was used to explore potential connections between collaboration and job satisfaction. Research questions addressed how scheduled school day collaborative time impacts teacher job satisfaction, job satisfaction changes due to a PLC environment, and the impact of teacher isolate on job satisfaction. Data included observations of collegial interactions, face-to-face interviews, recorded field notes and audio tapings captured during these data collecting events. Cross-referencing was applied between collection tools. Data were coded, categorized and analyzed following the process designed by Hatch. Ideal collaborative time and job satisfaction characteristics emerged as core themes. Specifically, scheduled collaboration provided a structure for developing strategies for meeting students' needs, and principal support for collaboration was shown to enhance teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. Teachers also cited improved practices and enhanced collegial relationships as additional sources of increased job satisfaction. Implications for positive social change include improving teacher job satisfaction, which could assist in creating a positive, productive environment for teachers. This can result in more well planned learning environments and greater academic achievement for students.



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## Section 1: Introduction

Many public school teachers are frustrated by overcrowded classrooms, the stress of meeting demanding standardized testing, and the political and economic pressure of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Hargreaves, 2003). Add to this load the following pedagogical concepts like multiple intelligences, differentiated instruction, and inclusion then place teachers behind closed doors to deal with all this by themselves could result in a serious lack of job satisfaction (Hargreaves, 2003). One of the problems in today's educational institutions is the lack of a supportive community for teachers to rediscover their reason for being in education (DuFour, Guidice, Magee, Martin, & Zivkovic, 2002). Educators want to serve; they want to influence. However, the autonomy that comes from having an individual teaching style in the secondary classroom is overshadowed by the suppression of growth for that educator, which is derived through collaboration (Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002). The possible comradeship and professional growth that collegial interaction may provide could get lost behind those walls of isolation. Brown (2003) stated that the lack of collaborative interactions by teachers limits their ability to access new ideas and solutions which could lead to dissatisfaction with their profession. Teacher job satisfaction lies beyond autonomy and monetary rewards (Hargreaves, 2003). The reward of job satisfaction could be found through the collegial interactions in a professional learning community (PLC).

Delany and Arredondo (1998) brought to light how collegial coaching relates to the reward of job satisfaction desired by educators. Following observations of three coaching teams and their school principal, Delany and Arredondo revealed that "one way

to re-culture and restructure a school is to release teachers from the isolation of their classrooms and to build a collaborative culture through the use of collegial coaching, reflection and dialogue” (p. 14). Collaborative culture is something that PLCs could provide. Collaboration supports the idea of bringing together teachers to focus on assisting their students and improving teaching practices. Teachers in learning communities show an increase in discussion and exchanges in methodology as well as more frequent and open interactions between new and veteran teachers (Lieberman & Miller, 2002, p. 79). Moore and Shaw (2000) discovered that teachers wanted collaborative dialog that relies on teacher experiences and expertise which would create deeper teacher and student learning (p.34).

Although research has been conducted concerning the benefits of PLCs, a gap exists between the increased achievements of students due to a PLC environment and the positive influence of a PLC toward the job satisfaction of teachers. Hargreaves (2003) stated that “it is vital that teachers engage in action, inquiry, and problem-solving together in collegial teams or professional learning communities” (p. 25). The establishment of these learning communities creates camaraderie between professionals and therefore the possibility of greater teacher job satisfaction. Eaker, DuFour, & DuFore (2002) indicated “Psychologists tell us that among the most basic of human needs is the need to feel a sense of personal accomplishment” (Eaker, et al., 2002, p. 53). For educators, personal accomplishment is found through student achievement and the professional collaboration that leads to this increased achievement.

In a Harvard Business Review (1987) on Herzberg’s theory of motivation and hygiene data showed that employees are motivated by personal achievement, recognition,

the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth (p.8). These are motivators that exist in the teaching profession. My study has associated these motivators with the collaboration found in a PLC.

Professional learning is not only directed to the students' needs but may also be directed to the teachers' needs. In professional collaborative settings teachers can discuss theories and practices that could benefit their students' learning abilities (DuFour, Eaker, DuFour 2003, p. 36). Teachers may also address assessment strategies and class-management skills, and share successful instructional methods (DuFour, et al. 2003). School-day scheduled collaboration provides opportunities for teachers to interact beyond the classroom and address these strategies, skills, and methods (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 21). Scheduled collaboration is a time of professional growth that may not be found in an isolated setting.

Working alone behind closed doors creates a vacuum in which teachers cannot determine if what they are doing is effective (Eaker, et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 1998; Hughes, 2006; Lieberman & Miller, 2002; Senge et al., 2000). Based on this concept my research has indicated that this lack of collegial interaction creates a void that may in time lead to teacher job dissatisfaction and thereby a loss of highly qualified educators. An interaction among other curricular disciplines and pedagogical departments increases communication that meets the total needs of the student (Valli & Hawley, 2002).

Scheduled school-day collaboration can be used by more than the core subject teachers. Having the opportunity to collaborate with guidance or special-education personnel in a regular scheduled setting allows for understanding by the educator

concerning the needs and abilities of particular students (Hargreaves, 2003). Today's teachers are equipped with a variety of resources to gain a better understanding of their students (Little, 2002). Individual test scores are one of those resources that follow students throughout their academic career. Teachers review these test scores and make note of areas of need and areas of progress for their students. Collaboration with the professionals who have a complete understanding of these test scores may assist the classroom teacher in better understanding the needs of her/his students.

The essence of a PLC incorporates scheduled meeting times for collaboration among the different departments, which provides the opportunity for teachers to view and discuss student academic standings (Eaker, et al., 2002). This collaboration creates insight by the teacher towards the needs of their students and reduces the burden of being the sole entity responsible for the academic growth of those students (Hargreaves, 2003). Reducing responsibility for teachers could possibly reduce the stress that goes with those responsibilities. Reduction in stress could also bring about an increase in satisfaction with daily work.

Another resource available for today's teacher in a PLC is the ability to gain insight from colleagues into the behavior of students (Oxley & Tagaris, 2005, 2007). Scheduled collaborative time among educators at the secondary level who share the same students provides the opportunity for better teacher understanding of their students' academic and social behavior (Eaker, et al., 2002). Shared information in a scheduled collaborative setting about a student's family problems at home could possibly lead to a clearer understanding of the behavioral activities of that student. Understanding the reason for the students' classroom behavior provides the teacher with the ability to adjust

to the students' needs and create a better learning environment for the class as a whole (Tagaris, 2007). This insight into the needs of a student does not occur during passing period between classes. Gaining this kind of insight takes scheduled collaborative time among educators where discretion is applied (p. 99). This collaboration can be found in a PLC. The sharing of student information may result in reduced stress for the teacher and could result in positive job satisfaction.

The connection between the satisfaction of educators with their role in the teaching field and a PLC structure has not been made in previous studies. I have provided insight into the relationship between teacher collaboration and job satisfaction within a PLC as demonstrated through the data of 2 teams of teachers. A more detailed discussion on teacher job satisfaction as it is connected to professional collaboration within a PLC will be available in section 2.

### **Problem Statement**

American public education began during the agrarian society of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and evolved through the industrial society of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Eaker, et al., 2003; Hargreaves, 2003; Senge et al., 2000). "Schools are still ruled by clocks and bells, periods and classes; children are grouped by age and taught memorizable knowledge via a standardized curriculum that was conventionally tested" (Hargreaves, 2003, p.21). Today, many secondary educators still teach, as did their predecessors, without adequate professional collaboration that may lead to greater teacher job satisfaction (Brown, 2003; DuFour et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003). These same secondary teachers apply their craft behind closed doors in realms of isolation (Delany & Arredondo, 1998; Eaker et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 1998; Saphier, 2005; Senge et al., 2000). The dilemma in

today's educational institutions is the lack of a supportive community for teachers to rediscover their reason for being educators (DuFour et al., 2002) and how that lack of support may lead to low teacher job satisfaction (Brown, 2003). A review of the literature showed that PLCs can provide support groups for teachers to exercise their skills, expand their knowledge, and reestablish the professionalism that teachers deserve (Delany & Arredondo; Eaker et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 1998; Saphier, 2005; Senge et al., 2000).

Low teacher job satisfaction need not exist if schools would provide time during the school day for educators to engage in meaningful professional collaboration that would result in quality student learning (Little, 2002). This productive environment allows for the rise of teacher leaders in the collaborative setting, guiding and facilitating the interaction between professionals. A study conducted by Moore and Fink (as cited in Hargreaves 2003) in Ontario, Canada saw that motivation and morale of teachers deteriorated when their creativity and collaborative practices were suppressed. The teachers, "referred to loss of purpose or personal investment in the work of teaching" (p.117). Moore and Fink also found that 10 teachers announced their intention of early retirement due to this loss (p.118). Hargreaves credited the success of the technical corporations found in Silicon Valley to the communication opportunities derived from the learning environments where the workers engaged in the "capacity to share, create, and apply new knowledge continuously over time" (p. 17). Employees in this professional environment were satisfied with the creativity, meaning, and production from their day's work (Lieberman & Miller, 2002). This same result could be available in many school districts if teacher collaboration in a PLC was applied (Delany &

Arredondo, 1998; Eaker, DuFour, & DuFour, 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 1998; Saphier, 2005; Senge et al., 2000). My study has provided an increased understanding as well as additional data that support the need for teacher collaboration in public schools rendering improved teacher job satisfaction. In the school setting where I presently teach a freshman academy was attempted. The one flaw in the implementation of this PLC was the lack of a common prep time so that teachers could collaborate concerning the needs of shared students. When surveyed by the school district administrators, the 16 teachers that made up the academy unanimously agreed that not having a common time for collaboration was the demise of the PLC. The problem my study addresses is that even though research has been conducted concerning the effects of PLCs on student achievement, little research has been conducted on how these PLCs and specifically collaboration has impacted teacher job satisfaction. My research addresses this focus on teacher job satisfaction in relation to PLCs and their collaborative settings.

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of this qualitative study was to describe the phenomenon of teacher job satisfaction as this satisfaction is derived from teacher collaboration in the PLC environment. The research questions for this study were:

1. How does scheduled school day collaborative time impact teacher job satisfaction?
2. How does job satisfaction change due to a PLC environment?
3. How does teacher isolation impact job satisfaction?

The population used in this research consisted of 10 core subject teachers interacting in two collaborative groups located in one northern New England high school

where a PLC was in practice. This New England school has been operating as a PLC for over 15 years. To accommodate this instructional model this school was remodeled into physically divided building wings made up of academies and houses.

This high school was a public school serving Grades 9 through 12 in a rural setting of a community population of just over 12,000 people. The school curriculum offered basic required high school academics as well as a specialty program that provides classes run by professionals in the fields of art, writing, theater, dance, and music. The student enrolment at the time of data gathering was 1,093 students with a faculty of 104 (Nobel High School, 2004). From this high school, I selected individuals who made up two collaborative teams. The number of participants for Team 1, this title was established by the school district, consisted of six and the number for the White Team, also titled by the school district, was smaller with four participants, thereby providing a small population of no more than 10 participants.

Collaboration on these teams was based on grade level. Team 1, a sophomore level, was made up of five core teachers covering the following subjects; math (2 teachers), English, social studies and science. An intern was assigned to work with the social studies teacher. The White Team, a freshman level, was made up of four core teachers covering the following subjects; science, math, reading and English. The level of experience of these participants ranged from as much as 16 years to first year teachers. Face-to-face interactions between myself and the participants was the foundation for this qualitative research based on the constructivist paradigm, using the interpretive method of study. Rich, thick description (Creswell, 1998, p. 203) was applied throughout this research to describe the participants' responses toward job satisfaction in a PLC.

Data collection occurred through observations of teachers engaging in collegial interactions as well as one-on-one interviews concerning the job satisfaction of the participants. Responses were analyzed to identify essential themes by coding and categorizing the prevailing meanings of the individual responses. Other materials included field notes, and audio tapings. These tapings recorded actual collaborative interactions between the teachers and provided accuracy for interpretations of the interviews. Details concerning qualitative research, the constructivist paradigm and the interpretive method will be discussed in the methodology section found in section 3.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to describe the degree to which teacher collaboration in a PLC impacts teacher job satisfaction. My goal was to investigate using a qualitative design the impact of professional collaboration as it relates to the fragile nature of teacher job satisfaction. Shaughnessy (1998) stated that when individuals interact with a variety of people and have the opportunity to engage productively with one another, they are more likely to have deeper learning (p. 4). This practice is applied in the classroom with students but is not often found among teachers.

Many school districts require continuous education through professional-educational institutions, in-house professional development (PD), and teacher workshop days, but do not provide daily pedagogical interactions among staff members. Collaborative learning is listed as a value to be taught to our students, but teachers do not seem to be engaged in deep and profound learning (Shaughnessy, 1998). Leo and Cowan (2000) conducted research through Southwest Educational Development Laboratories about the Beginning Actions of Launching a PLC. Using Hord's (2004) five

Characteristics, they concluded, “Research indicates that teacher interaction within a formalized structure for collegial coaching is a powerful contributor to Professional Learning Communities. Unfortunately, shared personal practice is the last dimension to be developed.” (p.13)

The essence of a PLC is shifting the focus from the teacher teaching to the student learning. The traditional method of “sage-on-the stage” or teacher-centered classroom needs to be adjusted. This concept perpetuates isolation for the teacher and dysfunction for the student (Hargreaves, 2003). When the focus becomes what one wants the student to learn and not what one is going to teach, then the collaboration found in a PLC provides the opportunity for teachers to communicate and brainstorm ideas that will benefit student learning (Eaker, et al., 2002). This could lead to improving teacher job satisfaction and increasing student pedagogical confidence. This research provides a connection between these entities.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study was drawn from three theories; DuFour, Eaker and DuFour’s (2005) theories concerning PLCs, Herzberg’s (1987) theory on motivation, and Maslow’s (Kroth, 2007) hierarchy of needs. DuFour et al. have researched collaborative models within the various forms of a PLC, whether it is a school-within-a-school, the established academy model, or the middle school teaming component of a PLC. The New England high school where my data were gathered was an established PLC. The focus of this study was to investigate the impact of collaboration within a PLC on teacher job satisfaction. Much research has been conducted on PLCs (Biddle, 2002; Bunker, 2008; DuFour et al. 2005; Hipp et al. 2003; Oxley, 2004;

Schmoker, 2005; Targaris, 2007). Most of this research is directed to the impact of PLCs and student achievement (Bunker, 2008; DuFour et al. 2005). Little to no research has been conducted connecting the PLC concept with teacher job satisfaction.

Teaching is either a positive emotional practice by design that motivates teachers to perform at their best with those around them, or it is a negative emotional practice by neglect where teachers disengage from their teaching and lose quality in the classroom as the result. (Moore & Fink, 2003, p.117)

DuFour et al. (2005) reduced the model of a PLC down to 3 “Big Ideas”. The first is; *ensuring that students learn*. This could be said is the basis for any educational institution. This research was not focused on the student needs within a PLC, but on the teachers’ needs. In DuFour’s second Big Idea, a *culture of collaboration*, I found the framework with which I built my research. DuFour (2005) stated, “Despite compelling evidence indicating that working collaboratively represents best practice, teachers in many schools continue to work in isolation” (p. 36). Based on this idea of connecting teacher collaboration within a PLC, I was able to investigate and determine if these factors had any impact on teacher job satisfaction. Collaboration is more than camaraderie, and it is more than overseeing school operations of discipline, scheduling, and parent communications. DuFour et al., (2005) indicated that collaboration is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice (p. 36). The third Big Idea that DuFour and his colleagues propose is; *a focus on results*. If the goal of an educational institution is to ensure students learn, and achieving that goal is through the practices of collaborative settings, then through these ideas a focus on results would occur. Within a PLC to ensure students are learning,

teachers need to work collaboratively and through this collaboration assessment tools could be constructed, teaching practices could be refined and student achievement could improve.

Herzberg's theory of Motivation and Hygiene, as cited in Harvard Business Review (1987) is a study associated with the theory of motivation in the work place. Herzberg established a two factor theory; one involves intrinsic motivators such as; achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement (1987). The other factor Herzberg calls hygiene. These are identified as; company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security (p.9). Herzberg indicated that it is the motivators that primarily cause job satisfaction and the hygiene factors that lead to reduced job satisfaction. I allowed this two factor theory to guide my study. The themes created by Herzberg were considered throughout the various interview questions and applied to the codes and themes found within the data.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is the third framework this study was founded upon. Maslow established a pyramid structure in which he categorized needs into five areas; "physiological or survival needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualizing" (Kroth, 2007, p. 8) The higher three categories of Maslow's pyramid; belonging, esteem, and self-actualizing allowed me to create interview questions and provide a background in which to compare responses from the participants. This pyramid of needs was considered as I gathered data from my participants, established codes and themes, and analyzed the data. In addition my own association with PLCs and collaborative settings

was included in the analysis. Further explanation of this framework will be provided in section 3.

### **Operational Definitions**

*Community*: Group of professionals and other stakeholders in pursuit of a shared learning enterprise, commonly focused on a particular topic (Buisse, Sparkman, & Wesley, 2003).

*Professional Learning Community (PLC)*: Movement from traditional “teacher-centered” values to “student-centered” pedagogy (Lieberman & Miller, 2002, p. 79).

*Qualitative Interpretive Study*: Giving meaning to data, making sense of situations, generating explanations, making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understanding, drawing conclusions and extrapolating lessons (Hatch, 2002, p. 180).

*Teacher job satisfaction*: to fill the needs or desires of contentment. As applied to teachers, satisfaction is connected to empowerment, motivation, collaboration, and student achievement (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2005).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations**

I assumed that teacher satisfaction changes due to the collegial interactions found in PLCs. The interpretive design allowed for the “lived experiences” of the participants to establish the essence of the research itself, but also created limits due to my skills in observation interpretations, as well as the view by the participants toward me as being intrusive. Another limitation with this research was the articulation of the interviewees as they responded to the submitted questions. The scope of this study used 10 secondary teachers in two collaborative groups from one New England high school where they were

practicing within a PLC. A delimitation found in this study was confining the interviews and observations to a select number of teachers from this New England high school.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge needed to address the problem of teacher job satisfaction by examining and describing the phenomenon of teacher collaboration in a PLC, and its impact on teacher job satisfaction. Sergiovanni (2000) stated, “The life-worlds of teachers are fragile. When motivation is down and discretion is low, a teacher’s sense of self-esteem becomes blurred” (p. 130). I sought to describe how teacher collaboration in the PLC concept can help in reversing this teacher job dissatisfaction. Moore and Fink as cited in Hargreaves (2003) stated that “sharing ideas and expertise, providing moral support, and discussing complex student cases is the essence of strong collegiality found in professional communities” (p.109). This research on collaboration and teacher job satisfaction has provided society with additional data in which school districts can implement structures where teachers may exchange ideas, teaching strategies and other professional insights that may improve their job satisfaction simply through collegial interactions found in a PLC. In addition it has added to the scholarly literature concerning PLCs and teacher job satisfaction. The mission at Walden University is to provide an opportunity for professional scholars to create a positive impact on society. Making the connections between teacher job satisfaction and collaboration in a PLC has assisted with that impact on society.

The information derived from this research has described the relationship between teacher collaboration in PLCs and teacher job satisfaction. School districts and administrators can use the data to determine if moving toward a PLC, or at least

establishing regular school-day teacher collaboration would be conducive to their sites. The school district in which this study was conducted can use the data and analysis from this study to confirm the existing practice of teacher collaboration within their school site and how it has assisted in maintaining teacher job satisfaction. Social change through improving teacher job satisfaction will assist in maintaining a positive, productive environment for today's teachers. Application of this study should result in social change and improved educational environments.

### **Summary**

PLCs have been researched, analyzed, and implemented throughout the United States (Eaker, et al.,2002). There has been very little research that is directed toward the impact of teacher collaboration in PLCs on teacher job satisfaction. Schmoker (2005) stated that teachers do not learn best from outside experts or by attending conferences or implementing 'programs' installed by outsiders. Teachers learn best from other teachers, in settings where they literally teach each other the art of teaching (p.141). Tegano and Moran (2005) indicated teachers in collaborative communities become students themselves in the art of teaching (p.288). This research was looking to see if teachers do indeed become students themselves due to collaborative settings. As teachers continue to engage in the pressures of implementing new learning and teaching strategies, various curricula, and addressing government-mandated testing, they find themselves overwhelmed and lost behind a door of isolation without opportunities to engage in collegial activities that could reduce such pressures. Sergiovanni (2005) suggested that teacher collaboration in a community of practice is a powerful way to improve teaching and learning (p.123). I investigated the idea that PLCs or at least school-day scheduled

teacher collaboration may be the answer to teacher job dissatisfaction. This will be demonstrated in the sections that follow. In section 2 I provide connections towards existing research of PLCs, teacher collaboration and teacher job satisfaction. Section 3 includes a detailed explanation of the qualitative method and its interpretive approach. The findings are detailed in section 4. Interpretations of the findings and recommendations are in section 5.

## Section 2: Literature Review

The various publications, scholarly texts, and a variety of studies concerning PLCs, collaboration, and teacher job satisfaction are presented in this section. Variations of the PLC concept are small learning communities, schools within schools, and the academy structures. All these variations of a PLC bring an assortment of connections between these structures and the determination of teacher job satisfaction.

The strategy involved in searching the literature began with key-word searches through various academic libraries. With the use of Walden University Library, I was able to access databases like Educational Resources Information Center, ProQuest, or A-to-Z EBSCO for full text resources. Current dissertations and theses were also available for review. I developed a color-coded index-card catalog. This coding consisted of whether the literature was a text, article, or research study. Literature was cross referenced by topic or thematic headings like; *PLCs, collegial interactions, job satisfaction*, and other themes. Short summaries were written on the back of the index cards that allowed quick referencing. Conclusions of these summaries provided me with the ability to see connections to the study or even the need via an academic gap for the study to be conducted. Like Biddle,2002; Garcia, 2008; Hipp, 2001; Howe, 2007; Schlichte et al,2005; and Thompson et al, 2004, I used interviews, artifacts and observations as my main data gathering tools.

### **Professional Learning Communities**

Efforts to improve education are not new. Dewey (1916) searched as far back as Aristotle when looking at educational reform. Aristotle distinguished between “two types of education: the base or mechanical and the liberal or intellectual” (p. 253). Aristotle

saw that learning was more than repetition and habitual but reached to the awakening of thought, which is higher order thinking. This idea can be applied to teacher learning as well; part of improving student learning stems from improving teacher learning. As Rooney (2007) noted, “just as student learning depends on the expertise of teachers, the expertise of teachers depends on the quality of their professional development” (p. 7). Title IX, Part A, Section 9101 (34) of the No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Government, 2009) defines, in part, PD as activities that (a) improve and increase teachers’ knowledge of the academic subjects they teach and enable teachers to become highly qualified, (b) are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans, and (c) give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students the opportunity to meet challenging state academic-content standards and student academic-achievement standards. PD is one tool in assisting teachers toward growth in their educational field. PD itself has evolved over time.

PD has had a long history of various reforms. Hirsh (Laureate Education Inc., 2005a) discussed a paradigm shift in PD, changing from a concept focused on adult needs to one of student needs. Professional development has moved from being dependent on outside experts to recognizing inside experts. Hirsh (Laureate Education Inc., 2005) also indicated that PD once was viewed as an educational frill but today is seen as essential for student success. This is because PD is more than teacher-workshop days. Professional development may entail study teams, collegial coaching, and mentoring that occur during the scheduled school day. Any of these teacher-supporting programs can be discovered in the PLC. This study looked at how teacher collaboration impacted teacher job satisfaction as it is applied in a PLC setting.

PLC literature revolves around three researchers: Hord's *five characteristics* (2004), the study by Eaker et al. on *mission, vision, values, and goals* (2002), and the *fifth discipline* by Senge et al. (2000). Thompson, Gregg, and Niska (2004) researched PLCs, leadership, and student learning. These researchers studied against the backdrop of the five disciplines of Senge et al. Their framework was based on the concept that a school must understand and practice the five disciplines of a learning organization to be a true PLC that enhances student learning (Thompson et al., 2004). Their data were collected and analyzed using a survey with quantitative results and through a qualitative method by using observations and interviews derived from principal and teacher study groups. This provided the researchers with lived experiences that brought a personal and humanistic input.

Thompson et al. constructed five focus questions for their research. Two of those questions related to perceptions concerning the PLC concept and its association with student learning and teacher relationships (p. 1). They showed that teachers believed that their schools were learning communities that provided PD, which is job-embedded and determined by the staff. This resulted in open communication between staff members which created more effective teaching practices resulting in greater student understanding. These kinds of results could lead to greater teacher job satisfaction.

Through a federally funded study by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory and a national project entitled Creating Continuous Communities of Inquiry and Improvement, Hipp (2001) conducted a case study in five Midwest middle schools. Hipp based the research on Hord's *five characteristics* of PLCs (2004). Hipp indicated that the attributes of a PLC, as defined by Hord, displayed continuous growth from year

to year in five case studies. Hipp used telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews and on-sight interviews over a period of 3 years. To establish credibility Hipp used a six-person team to analyze the data by way of inter-rater reliability techniques. Results of this study indicated that by the end of year 2 the schools were moving closer to the attributes of a PLC as defined by Hord's *five characteristics* of "shared leadership, collective learning, shared practices, shared vision, and supportive conditions" (Hipp, p.5). A third review of literature was conducted applying the Eaker, et al., (2002) definition of a PLC.

Biddle (2002) conducted a mixed-method study over a 3-year period involving 20 Midwestern schools that were part of the Accelerated Schools Project. This is a program where, "all students achieve at high levels and their schools engage in shared vision" (p.3). Biddle based the research on Eaker, et al., (2002) model of a PLC. Using their criteria, Biddle found that the Accelerated Schools Project schools had become PLCs by establishing a mission, vision, and set of core values. They engaged in collective inquiry and organized collaborative teams (p. 5). Through this open communication among the staff and administration, they focused on continuous improvement that resulted in greater student achievement (p. 8). Since the ultimate goal of education is greater student achievement, this should lead to increased job satisfaction and, like Biddle, will include the PLC model in the research of Eaker, et al.

Biddle (2002) used a mixed-method design collecting data through interviews, artifacts, and surveys. Nine of the 20 schools participated in a PD activity that focused on building culture using a data-collecting tool developed by Lambert (2002). Biddle's conclusions led her to reveal that time was an essential element in maintaining a productive PLC, that is "time for collaboration, conversation, and reflection" (Biddle,

2002, p. 20). Time is a recurring theme in PLC literature. This theme will be viewed in more depth in future chapters of this study.

Thompson et al., (2004) used DuFour, et al.'s (2002) breakdown of the concept of a PLC, term-by-term; "A professional is someone with expertise in a specialized field, learning is ongoing action and perpetual curiosity, and community is a collaborative culture with a focus on learning for all" (p. 2). Mason (2003) provided common PLC attributes, that are shared by multiple researchers (Brand, 2003; Eaker, et al., 2002; Fullan, 1993; Glickman, 2002; King & Newmann, 2000; Murphy & Lick, 2001):

1. Inquiry-based
2. Focused on student learning
3. Goal and results oriented
4. Collaborative
5. Reflective
6. Based on shared values and beliefs
7. Committed to continuous improvement

Each of these attributes are admirable research topics in their own right where as the relationship between teacher collaboration in PLCs and teacher job satisfaction was the focus of this study.

### **Various Forms of Professional Learning Communities**

PLCs consist of a variety of attributes, and the form that a PLC can take is just as broad. Attributes of a PLC, like focusing on student learning being goal and results oriented being collaborative in nature and being based on shared values and beliefs, can be discovered in small learning communities, schools-within-schools, and academies

(DuFour et al., 2005). A small learning community is “any separately defined, individualized learning unit within a larger school setting where students and teachers are scheduled together and frequently have a common area of the school” (Cotton, 2001, p. 8). An alternate form of PLC is the school within a school. This format operates within a larger host school. “A school within a school has its own personnel and program where the students and teachers are self-selected” (p. 9).

The school where I conducted my study was made up of a number of small learning communities. This site contained both houses and academies. The house plan, as Cotton (2001) described, consisted of teachers and students grouped within a larger school setting. Each house may share core courses and teachers, curriculum, and instructional approaches, but each house may have their own discipline policies and student government. A house plan could be “based on grade level or organized into a vertical house and contain two or more grades” (p. 10). Academies are similar to house plans. The site that I studied contained what are called career academies. This is a school within a school that is driven by a broad occupational focus. The school within a school concept is normally associated with a work-based learning curriculum that can be connected to the experiences provided by local businesses. There are many benefits academically and socially for students who attend a small learning community. Teachers in this setting find that they have “closer relationships with students and other staff, fewer discipline problems, and are better able to adapt instruction to students’ individual needs” (Cotton, 2001, p.17). These features should lead to positive teacher job satisfaction.

A more recent study on teacher collaboration and the school-within-school structure was conducted by Howe (2007). This study involved a large urban high school

of 3,800 students. The school's goal was to down size the structure into academies in order to maintain control over such a large student population. Howe used a phenomenological approach investigating five participants' attitudes toward collaboration within the academy structure. Howe indicated an overall satisfaction with the levels of collaboration and the academy structure itself. The participants said their "ability to bounce ideas off each other combined with the knowledge of students allows teachers to be more sensitive to and accommodating of specific learning styles and issues" (p.78). Another benefit of the collaboration was the teacher's strong working relationship. "Their ability to share professionally increased their satisfaction within their working environment and therefore increased their relationship with their students" (p.79).

### **Job Satisfaction and Collaboration**

The connections between PLCs and teacher job satisfaction can be seen in a variety of works. Moore and Fink, as cited in Hargreaves (2003) stated, "Sharing ideas and expertise, providing moral support when dealing with new and difficult challenges, discussing complex individual cases together – this is the essence of strong collegiality and the basis of effective professional communities" (p. 109). Moore and Fink reported the emotional impact for teachers of moving from a collegial PLC structure to a standard government-mandated intervention. The changes resulted in "departmental competitiveness, making it difficult to get departments together to try to attain the same goals, and leaving teachers feeling isolated by departments" (p. 111). In this study, 43 teachers confessed

That the quality of their teaching had diminished, that there was less time to mark students' work properly, that their role had narrowed and their world had shrunk

to deal only with the immediate pressures of the classroom, that they were losing confidence and competence, and that the creativity of their job had gone (Hargreaves, 2003, p.114).

Open-response survey questions used in this study also saw 10 teachers announce their, “intent to retire early under conditions of considerable disillusionment and disappointment about a mission that had vanished and a job that was losing its meaning” (Hargreaves, 2003, p.119). This study gives relevance to the idea that professional and personal growth can be achieved through teacher collaboration in a PLC format, and that when isolation is removed from the school structure, teacher satisfaction occurs.

McLaughlin conducted a study, as cited in Sergiovanni (1994) and explained how a professional community can directly affect teachers’ commitment and sense of professional worth which in turn influences teachers’ learning and commitment to their students (p. 77). This idea relates to the impact of teacher collaboration in PLCs on teacher job satisfaction.

Zembylas and Papanastasiou, (2005) referenced Marks and Louis (1997) and Rice and Schneider (1994) as indicating that if we enhance positive teacher self-esteem, this would “create increased job satisfaction, which might lead to greater productivity, stronger staff collegiality, increased teacher knowledge of subject matter, improved instruction and in some cases, higher student achievement” (p. 434).

In 2008 Garcia conducted a qualitative study involving team meetings in a collaborative setting and their effect on teacher behavior. Garcia gathered data through observations and interviews from a team of teachers from a public California elementary

school. Following six months of data collection Garcia's finding indicated that "teacher learning created through participation in grade level meetings can influence teachers' behaviors which will ultimately influence the students' learning" (Garcia, 2008, p. viii). Like the Zembylas and Papanastasiou, (2005) study collaboration equals increased satisfaction and ultimately results in increased student learning.

Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) conducted a case study viewing first year special-education teachers and their positive or negative experiences in relationship to isolation and burnout. Their findings showed, "strongly forged relationships and the accompanying feelings of emotional well-being are protective factors critical to teacher retention" (p. 39). In this study the researchers sent out letters of invitation to three special-education directors in a Midwestern state. They passed these letters on to five first-year special-education teachers. These teachers were individually interviewed using open-ended questions that included:

"How would you characterize your experience as a first-year special-education teacher?

Describe some positive experiences.

To what do you attribute noted problems or difficulties in this beginning experience?"

(p. 36)

Mentors, collegial support, and relationships became the dominate concepts. These authors indicated that, "without these first-year teachers meeting the need for belonging, there was very little to encourage them to stay in their present teaching positions" (p. 39).

Trying to keep a burgeoning supply of incoming teachers can be a struggle for today's school districts. Meeting that ideal sense of belonging may be found in a PLC. Other researchers also looked at the concept of belonging in the education profession.

Sergiovanni (2000) looked to what he called a community of practice to answer the need for belonging. Sergiovanni indicated that as teachers practice a sense of sharing in their professional interactions, collegial well-being increases. In addition Sergiovanni stated that, "when motivation is down, a teacher's sense of self-esteem becomes blurred (p. 130). For teachers to have job satisfaction they need to maintain high self-esteem and motivation. I believe my research has connected these concepts of emotional wellness with the PLC structure or its equivalent and the collaborative component found in a PLC.

### **Time**

One of the components connecting PLCs to teacher job satisfaction is the idea of scheduled school-day time in which teachers share their practices. Much of the literature links the success of PLCs to job satisfaction in the ability of schools sites to provide time for collaboration (Biddle, 2002; Eaker, et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 2004; Leo & Cowan, 2000; Senge et al., 2000; Sergiovanni, 1994). Many researchers believe that without allotting time for teachers to interact during the scheduled school day the desired PD is not going to be successful. "School systems simply must build teacher learning time into the school day" (Valli & Hawley, 2002, p.89). Asking teachers to meet three or four times a year during early-release days does not provide the time required to develop quality learning for teachers, nor see collaborative interaction between teachers that might result in improved job satisfaction.

Fleming and Thompson (2004) referred to time as the key factor in creating a productive learning community. They indicated that, “it must be designated on a daily, weekly, or at least monthly basis” (p. 36). As stated by McCaw, Watkins, and Borgia (2004), “Twenty-five percent of an educator’s time should be devoted to professional learning” (p. 2). These researchers went on to say, “Asian and European teachers spend 600 to 800 hours of teaching per year compared to Americans who teach over 1,000 hours per year” (p. 3). McCaw et al. indicated that the remainder of the scheduled school day for the non-American educators is devoted to teacher collaboration.

One of the components revealed by Allen, Almeida, and Steinberg (2001) in their research of five Boston, Massachusetts high schools indicated that for these schools to restructure themselves into small learning communities the schools needed to focus on developing and sustaining collaborative professional cultures. This could be achieved by providing opportunities for their teachers to engage in professional collaboration during the school day.

Another piece of research involving school-day teacher-time allotment was conducted by Leo and Cowan (2000). This report was associated with the workings of the Creating Communities of Continuous Inquiry and Improvement project in conjunction with Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Co-developers worked with 22 schools in the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The report indicated that, “a main component of a PLC is the ability to make time available within the school schedule for teachers to reflect on student work and issues” (p. 12). This scheduled school time resulted in less stress for teachers to meet the needs of their

students. Scheduled collaborative interaction may be a tool that not only assists in the building of teacher job satisfaction but also in the ongoing achievement of students.

In her effort to connect PLCs to teacher collaboration and student achievement, Bunker (2008) reported that all participants indicated that scheduled school-day collaboration was essential for productive teaching resulting in increased student achievement. This research found one team of participants stating that after school collaboration made it hard to focus on the intended activity.

Hord (1997) indicated that “structured time provided for teachers to work together in planning instruction, observing each other’s classrooms, and sharing feedback,” resulting in successful schools (p. 13). This author’s work documented how in one case a school scheduled a regular weekly faculty study that consisted of a 2-hour scheduled block of time. This time provided for staff nurturing and the development of a shared school vision (Hord, 1997, p.40).

Brown’s (2003) research on teacher job satisfaction and teacher’s perceived characteristics of teams was conducted in elementary, middle and high school settings. He used two data collecting instruments in trying to connect teacher job satisfaction to the characteristics of teams. These tools were the; “Team Excellence Feedback for Development” and the “Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale”. This statistical analysis revealed a relationship between perceived characteristics of teams and job satisfaction (p. 115). Brown indicated that extrinsic factors such as principal leadership was connected to job satisfaction within the elementary and middle schools settings, but that intrinsic factors such as results driven structures was the job satisfaction motivator for high school teachers (p. 101). As seen in previous literature Brown’s

findings indicated that the connection between collaboration and teacher growth leads to student achievement. “Without effective collaboration, teaming, or whatever terminology is used to empower teachers working together, teachers may be deprived of professional and personal growth, and students can be deprived of better instruction” (p. 118). He went on to say, that dissatisfied or dysfunctional teachers stifle this growth and results in an increase of teachers leaving the profession (p. 118). Even though there are many accolades given to the idea of a PLC and teacher collaboration, some do not see this as a reason for low teacher job satisfaction.

### **Negative Aspects**

Some negative findings between PLC’s and teacher job satisfaction take the form of forced teaming where teachers share not only the same students, but the same physical setting or classroom. Pomson (2005) conducted a study of the complexities of teacher cooperation and collaboration in six Canadian Jewish elementary schools. The teachers were asked to keep a reflective diary in which they recorded at least once every 2 weeks. On a 6-week cycle, the teachers met with the research team to discuss their reflections. These were based on the teachers’ professional lives and their relationships with cross-curriculum partners. In these settings teachers stated that, “their classroom interactions are open to the scrutiny and support of a professional alter ego whose presence lurks over many of their pedagogical decisions” (p. 788). These professionals found it difficult to maneuver the actual space within a classroom when it was being shared by 2 different teachers. The close physical proximity of teachers in this study seemed to be the drawback to a PLC structure. Closeness almost indicates that collaboration can be too much when individual autonomy is being jeopardized. I considered this idea while

conducting my data collection which in turn led to additional questions concerning shared physical settings of PLC schools.

Another study that resulted in a negative association between PLCs and job satisfaction was that of Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2007) on teacher self-efficacy. These researchers discovered that in the Norwegian schools' long history of teacher autonomy over teaching and learning methods, working together in teams and shared responsibilities for a larger group of students may, "result in a feeling that they are forced to use teaching and learning methods that they do not believe are the best, or that they do not feel comfortable with" (p. 622). The quantitative method used by these researchers consisted of an inventory scale; Norwegian Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale.

Fullan's (2006) paper questioning the validity of PD and PLCs gives rise about the depth of these beliefs. Fullan claimed that, "reform efforts that had millions of dollars and political will behind them, along with focusing on many of the right strategies have failed to make much of an impact in the classroom" (p. 11). Fullan alluded to a multi-city study on PLCs that resulted in districts that did not change practices on a large scale. Fullan did not say that PLCs are negative in nature but that, to implement a PLC there needs to be district support and buy-in from the school culture for a PLC to be successful (p.12).

In a study conducted by Brown (2003) two data collecting tools were applied. The Team Excellence Feedback for Development survey provided information concerning characteristics of highly effective teams and the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales measured teacher job satisfaction. This research resulted in quantitative data concerning these two concepts, revealing that there "was a significant

relationship between teachers' perceived characteristics of their teams and their expressed job satisfaction" (p 115). A qualitative research applying humanistic methods and flexible questions should complement Brown's findings. Where quantitative research such as Brown's provides reliable statistical data, qualitative data as this study intends to provide should expand beyond the statistics and reveal an interpretive format based on sound observations and interviews complemented by rich descriptive text. The qualitative approach enlightens the reader's understanding of a phenomenon that could be limited by only using statistical data. Qualitative research provides flexibility in data collection that humanizes the participants.

### **Qualitative Research**

The characteristics of a qualitative research as described by Creswell (2003) are

1. Takes place in a natural setting
2. Uses methods that are interactive and humanistic
3. Looks for involvement of the participants
4. Is based on open-ended observations, interviews, and documents
5. Is emergent rather than tightly prefigured
6. Has flexible questions and data-collection process that can change or be refined
7. Is fundamentally interpretive
8. Views phenomena holistically
9. Finds the researcher self inseparable from the personal self
10. Uses complex reasoning
11. Adopts or uses one or more strategies of inquiry (pp. 181-183)

Qualitative research allows for the researcher to create a partnership with the participants in the study. The face-to-face perspective is a distinctive feature that goes beyond the numbers and statistics found in the more traditional quantitative study. Qualitative studies tend to be ambiguous. The results may not always be what the researcher had in mind at the beginning (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Much thought has been given as to why individuals conduct qualitative research. I agree with the Corbin and Strauss (2008) response to this question: the researcher is drawn to the “fluid, evolving and dynamic approach in contrast to the more rigid and structured format of quantitative methods” (p. 13). The flexibility of qualitative research is found in the open-response structure of the questions given to the participants. Qualitative research is not limited to one way of conducting a study.

### **Qualitative Interpretive Study**

There are five major traditions associated with qualitative research: ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies, narrative, and phenomenological research (Creswell, 1998, p. 47). Denzin and Lincoln, as cited in Creswell (1998) stated that “qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter ... attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 15). It is this interpretive component of a qualitative study that I focused my work. Wolcott, as cited in Hatch (2002) stated that “individual qualitative researchers transform data in different ways, emphasizing description, analysis, or interpretation” (p.180).

Hatch (2002) establishes eight steps of interpretive analysis. He compares the interpretive model to the inductive model in which they both involve putting pieces

together in meaningful relation in order to construct explanations that help the reader make sense of the phenomenon being studied (p. 181). I applied this logic as I recorded impressions during my data collection. I made memos, connections, and posted hunches in my memos to aid in putting together the interpretations of the data. Interpretivists build their theory on the ability to provide thick, rich descriptions that probes the meanings of a situation (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992, p. 19).

As stated in the Conceptual Framework section of this study, I based my study on the theories found in the writings of DuFour et al., Frederick Herzberg, and Abraham Maslow. The research and practices conducted by the professionals, Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, and Robert Eaker, concerning PLC's and collaboration is the foundation in which this interpretive inquiry was directed. It is the second "Big Idea" established by these researchers, which is the collaboration of teachers that this study was focused. The perceived connection between teacher collaboration and job satisfaction within a PLC was the guiding thought in performing this research. Herzberg's motivation and hygiene theory provided a strong basis for this interpretive study as I applied the qualities of achievement, growth and the other factors to the data collected from my observations and interviews. Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid was an additional background in which interpretations were administered in this study.

A key component for the researcher is to "bracket" or set aside personal experiences associated with the phenomenon in order to reveal the participants reactions to the phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). This study investigated the reasons behind teacher job satisfaction as it relates to PLCs. New questions arose as I composed various chapters of this study. That in itself is the motivation behind a qualitative research model. An

appropriate quote by John Dewey reads (as cited in Corbin & Strauss, 2008), “If the artist does not perfect a new vision in his process of doing, he acts mechanically and repeats some old model fixed like a blueprint in his mind” (p. xvi). This is precisely why I chose a qualitative study over the other research methods. Qualitative research allows the researcher to discover rather than test variables. This does not mean that qualitative studies are not valid but that the findings are complex and not found in a predesigned set of statistics. Again I agree with Corbin and Strauss when they said,

Choosing to do qualitative research is the desire to step beyond the known and enter into the world of the participants, to see the world from their perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge (p. 16)

Qualitative studies are founded on the premise that the researcher collects data that does not come in a criteria-packaged format. The inquiry is evolutionary and emergent as the final product comes together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. As Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated, the “qualitative researcher immerses themselves in the setting or lives of others and uses multiple means to gather data” (p. 7). This qualitative study involved me using interviews, audio tapings, observation and artifacts to address the idea of teacher job satisfaction in a PLC. Data collection occurred through observations of teachers engaging in collegial interactions as well as one-on-one interviews concerning the job satisfaction of the participants. Audio tapes were used during the observations then reviewed and cross checked with the field notes acquired during the observations. Audio tapes and field notes were used during the interviews as well. Responses to

interview questions were analyzed to identify essential themes by coding and categorizing the prevailing meanings of the individual responses. Other materials included field notes, and audio tapings. These tapings recorded actual collaborative interactions between teachers and provided accuracy for interpretations of the interviews. Furthermore, the information acquired from these tapings was included in the coding and categorizing of themes and meanings. The exact methodology will be discussed in section 3 of this study.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to describe to what extent teacher collaboration in PLCs impact teacher job satisfaction. Over the years educational institutions have experimented with a plethora of teaching and learning strategies. There have been specialized scheduling, classrooms without walls, differentiated instruction, multiple intelligences and many more. Research and literature have been written surrounding the functions and dysfunctions of PLCs. On the whole, more benefits have been revealed concerning PLCs than drawbacks. The application of a PLC, as stated by DuFour, Eaker, and DuFour (2005)

has yet to become the norm in most schools, despite the fact that there are almost no dissenting entities on this issue, despite the contribution such joint work makes to teacher efficacy and professionalism, and despite the fact that it is neither costly nor time-consuming (p. xiv)

As sited, authors such as Biddle, 2002; Flemming & Thompson, 2004 Garcia, 2008; Howe, 2007; and Schlichte et al., 2005; all have used observations, interviews and

artifacts as data collecting tools. I, in my quest to discover the connections between the PLC format, or at least the teacher collaboration component, and the impact on teacher job satisfaction, implemented these tools as well. Findings derived from these tools can be found in section 4 with recommendations from data results in section 5.

### Section 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to describe to what extent teacher collaboration in a PLC impacts teacher job satisfaction. This study was conducted using a qualitative design in which the interpretive study approach was applied. This method was chosen because the face-to-face aspects of the qualitative design would better suit the inquiry associated with teacher job satisfaction. Corbin and Strauss (2008) supported this idea when they wrote that one of the most important reasons to choose a qualitative research method is the close association with the participants that “leads one to see the world or situation through the participants’ eyes and be able to make connections that may result in new understanding concerning the phenomenon” (p.16). This approach makes qualitative designs distinctive from other research designs.

Additional research designs, such as quantitative and mixed method, did not fit the desired result for this study. For example, a quantitative research design would be too restrictive and numeric. The quantitative approach involves surveys and experiments that result in a statistical set of data. This removes the personal and humanistic aspects of the research (Creswell, 2003). Quantitative methods of research are based on theories that the researcher seeks to test. This type of research begins with a hypothesis that must be proven or not. According to Creswell (2003), “a theory involves variables that present a systematic view of a phenomenon that is explained by specific factors” (p. 120).

In a qualitative design, there is not a distinctive theory that needs to be proven; there is a relationship or idea that may result in a connection to something else. The rigidity of a quantitative design did not appear appropriate to me to address the needs of

this interpretive study. Qualitative design examines the meaning of the experiences for individuals in a study that can not be compressed into a statistical set of data.

I looked forward to the opportunity to immerse myself in the lives and setting of my participants. This complete involvement beyond standards and regimented numbers is why qualitative inquiry appealed to me.

The mixed-method design, though more flowing than the quantitative method is still restricted to specific numerical statistics in data collection. Mixed-method results emerge similarly to those in qualitative designs but are also “predetermined by an established prescribed theory in which a specific result is desired” (Creswell, 2003, p.18). However, this method was not the best fit as this research was not determined by any predestined hypothesis but looked to examine a possible relationship between teacher job satisfaction and teacher collaboration in the PLC model.

### **Research Design**

The qualitative research that was used in this study took place in the natural setting; it is “humanistic and interactive and it is emergent rather than tightly prefigured” (Creswell, 2003, p. 181). This is important as the face-to-face interviews and observations provided insight into the world of the participants as they engaged in their everyday duties as educators. Merriam and Associates (2002) indicated that learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, as well as understanding what the meaning for this interaction has for them, is considered an interpretive qualitative approach. This research was a qualitative interpretive study.

The strategy that I applied was inductive in that I gathered data to build concepts rather than deductively conclude hypotheses. Hatch (2002) stated that “the interpretive

model parallels that of the inductive model in that pieces are put together in meaningful relation in order to construct explanations that help readers make sense of what's being examined" (p. 181). An interpretive study is also associated with the constructivist paradigm. Constructivist research is interested in understanding the meaning of a phenomenon. Crotty, as cited in Merriam and Associates (2002) stated that meaning is not discovered but constructed... it is constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Data collecting tools like; observations, interviews, artifacts, and field notes, with which I applied, can be found throughout most qualitative designs.

The interactions between participants in their professional setting provided me the required data to determine if the collaborative environment found in a PLC led to teacher job satisfaction. Moustakas (1994) described the interview as an, "informal, interactive process using open-ended comments and questions" (p. 114). The relaxed environment during interviews between me and the participants led to a clearer understanding of these particular individuals' idea of job satisfaction.

There are many different approaches in a qualitative study. Hatch (2002) explained the case study as "a special kind of qualitative work that investigates a contextualized contemporary phenomenon within specified boundaries" (p. 30). Creswell (2003) further defined a case study as "one where the researcher views an event, activity, process, or people in greater detail" (p. 15). I perceived a case study as something specific in nature. The investigation would require a more individualized and specific approach using the case-study method, as well as an extensive period of time in which to conduct the data analysis. Merriam and Associates (2002) indicated that "case studies,

while interpretive, endeavor to present a holistic, in-depth description of the total system or case” (p. 38).

A case-study approach might be more appropriate to a study that required a closer investigation of a single individual in the collaborative team or a single team of teachers that this researcher would be observing. Merriam and Associates (2002) sees a case study as a “bounded system, giving the case a finite quality in terms of time, space and/or other components” (p.178). The solitary results may not provide a sound argument for a school district to consider establishing a PLC or collaborative settings within their schools. The case-study approach does not work in this situation due to the nature of the concept itself, teacher job satisfaction. The ambiguity of the phenomenon, what makes people satisfied with their profession, is what makes this study so challenging. The interpretive study approach, observing a number of participants as opposed to a single group or individual, revealed a more complete understanding of teacher job satisfaction and related this concept to working in a PLC or at least a collaborative setting, and also provided a stronger argument for supporting these arrangements. Applying the theoretical frameworks of Maslow’s (2007) hierarchy of needs pyramid and Herzberg’s (1987) motivation and hygiene factors this interpretive study attempted to identify and make sense as to what teacher job satisfaction is. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated that interpretive studies using rich descriptions go beyond the mere act of reporting an act, but provide understanding of the lived experience instead of abstract generalizations (p. 19).

Another qualitative approach is grounded theory. This involves a comparison component that fits this researcher’s focus. Creswell (2003) described this theory as a “comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different

groups to maximize the similarities and differences of information” (p. 14). Yet even though the data that I collected involved comparisons between individuals and teams of teachers, it falls back to that concept of explaining the meanings that makes this study more of an interpretive study. Grounded-theory, similar to the case-study approach, involves more specific data collection. Hatch (2002) stated that the key factor in the grounded-theory approach is the constant comparison that requires “incessant immersion and microscopic familiarity with the data” (p. 26). The categories and codes that developed during the data collection and analysis phases of this interpretive study were constantly evolving and therefore did not require the intensive comparison needed to conduct a grounded-theory approach. Glasser and Strauss (2008), in their book on grounded theory, devote an entire chapter to the constant comparative method of grounded theory. Because of this constant-comparison component found in the grounded-theory approach I found it to be undesirable and therefore chose the interpretive study approach and its need to understand the phenomenon. Grounded theory seeks not to just understand, but to build a substantive theory about the phenomenon (Merriam and Associates, 2002, p. 38).

The interpretive constructionist expects people to see somewhat different things and come to somewhat different conclusions that may result in conflicting versions of the same event at the same time (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 27). The key is to build an understanding using interpretive approach.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions for this study were few and open-ended. They correlated to the interpretive approach in that they were constantly evolving. Hatch (2002) stated

that, “guided questions provide an opportunity for the participants to begin talking about the phenomenon being studied” (p. 101). He indicated that these questions are based on “the researcher’s purposes, knowledge of their informants, and hunches about the phenomenon” (p. 102). One hunch that I had concerning the phenomenon of teacher job satisfaction followed that time is the primary factor that connects teacher collaboration with teacher job satisfaction. The guided questions for this study were;

How does scheduled school day collaborative time impact teacher job satisfaction?

How does job satisfaction change due to a PLC environment?

How does teacher isolation impact job satisfaction?

I was aware of the probability of more specific and newly directed questions that might arise while conducting this study. The esoteric nature of what constitutes job satisfaction allowed for future questions to evolve. Personalities of the participants came into play as I interacted with the selected team members. These factors will be discussed in section 5.

What appeared to be the essence of human experiences in relation to job satisfaction for one participant may not have been the same for another, even in the same collaborative group. Determining this factor was a challenge brought out by this interpretive study. These humanistic experiences were derived from a variety of participants, selected through a simplistic strategy.

### **Context of the Study**

The strategy behind participant selection is simple under the qualitative interpretive study; “the participants must meet a criterion” (Creswell, 1998, p. 118). The criterion in this study was that the participant must regularly engage in professional collaboration as an active member of a PLC. The population involved in this study was derive from a Northern New England high school where they were actively engaged in the PLC structure. I was aware of the climate in this school concerning the PLC concept.

### **Sampling Strategy and Participation Selection**

This school was physically and academically rebuilt in the year 2000 to accommodate their PLC format. In addition this school had been used in the Breaking Ranks II (2004) study on school reform as an example of constructing a PLC. Its structure was divided into houses where grade level teams have interdisciplinary classrooms surrounding a central study station containing computers and resource materials.

This was a public school serving Grades 9 through 12 in a rural setting of a community population of just over 12,000 people. The socioeconomic environment of this community was mostly manufacturing businesses. The school curriculum offered basic required high school academics as well as a specialty program that provided classes run by professionals in the fields of art, writing, theater, dance, and music. Early college classes were available through nearby universities and community colleges as well as the ability to earn credit or community-service hours working as a teaching assistant in practicum. Students earned half a credit per course per semester by attending 80-minute

block classes every other day. The classes were heterogeneously configured with honors classes available in all academic courses. Graduation requirements included four credits in English, mathematics and science, three credits in social studies, and 1 credit each for fine arts, physical education, and health. A demonstration of computer proficiency and 50 hours of community service was also required to graduate. In addition students were required to build a portfolio that they defended during their senior year. The student enrolment was presently at 1,093 students with a faculty of 104 (Nobel High School, 2004).

From this high school, I selected individuals who made up a collaborative team. The number of people on each team did not exceed six on Team 1 and four on the White Team; thereby providing a small population of no more than 10 participants resulting in two teams of participants. This small number works well with the face-to-face approach of a interpretive study. The small number provided for the rich descriptive interactions that I occurred between me and the participants. Merriam and Associates (2002) stated that “how long one needs to observe or how many people need to be interviewed is always difficult” (p. 26). They continue by stating that saturation is the determining factor. When phrases are repeated or behavior with no new information comes into play, data saturation has been reached.

Collaboration by these teams was based on grade level; Team 1 teachers taught sophomores and the White Team taught freshmen. The level of experience of these teachers working in a PLC ranged between 16 years and first year teachers. The criterion in this study is that the participant must have been regularly engaged in professional collaboration as an active member of a PLC. Access to these randomly sampled

participants occurred by initial contact established through the school principal. Legal release of participant involvement was obtained as required by the Institutional Review Board. This consent form (see Appendix A) provided the participant information concerning the purpose and nature of the study. In addition it explained any risks or benefits of being involved in the study. Reassurance of confidentiality was established in this acceptable agreement or consent form between me and participants. Because this study was constructive in nature, protection and comfort of participants was guaranteed through the use of member checking wherein participants reviewed all data and interpretations. Additionally when viewing the various data collected from these participants my role was seen as interpreter.

### **The Researcher's Role**

Interpretation by the researcher can vary based on the paradigm the researcher uses. The relationship between the participants and the researcher can become close depending on the paradigm being used. Under the constructivist paradigm, in which “multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage point” (Hatch, 2002, p. 15), I collected data in the form of interviews, observations and field notes to describe the lived experiences of the participants. Throughout the data gathering process I periodically engaged the participants to review the interpretations that I concluded. As Hatch indicated, we ask participants to reveal what goes on behind the scenes in their everyday lives.

Sharing such personal experiences adds to the collaboration on the part of the participant. Intimacy of this type is the reason I had chosen the constructivist paradigm.

Being that there is not an existing relationship between the researcher and the participants, professionally or personally, I worked to continuously maintain a professional and respectful atmosphere. Any past or present experiences I might have had in my active involvement with a PLC are minimal in comparison with the number of years I have been an educator. Furthermore I applied the principles associated with bracketing in which all prejudgments and personal experiences with PLCs are set aside so as not to allow for personal bias to influence the interpretations. Because of this I became the main data-collecting tool and various data-collection methods found in a qualitative study only added assistance in connecting job satisfaction to collaboration in PLCs.

### **Data Collection**

My initial contact with Noble High School, via e-mail, was conducted with the Dean, Claudia, of this sophomore team. Based on my research topic, she suggested that I work with Team 1.

The physical setting of the Noble High School Academies involved a central team area, called a pod where students could work individually or in groups. In this area there were tables and chairs, and lockers. Surrounding this central area were the classrooms, where core subjects like English, math, science, and social studies were taught.

I sent e-mails to each team teacher relaying the reason for my research and setting up observation and interview times. As a collaborative team, these teachers met every other day for 80 minutes. Meetings started at 7:40 a.m., or Block 1, and lasted until 9:00 a.m. The location of these meetings was held in Josh's room where 8 rectangular tables were arranged in a large circular fashion. This way each member had the ability to face each other during their discussions. The room setting provided a relaxed atmosphere

that facilitated open communication between participants. On three different occasions I sat in on these collaborative meetings. During that time I audio-taped the interactions between the teachers and compiled field notes. Following each observation, I transcribed the audio recordings into a written text format. This allowed me to relive the observation and expand on my field notes with more descriptive details.

As with Team 1, my data gathering with the White Team included initial introductions via the Dean. I sent emails to the team informing them of my research topic and arranged days and times to do observations and interviews. The White Team's collaborative time began with Block 1 at 7:40 am and lasted until 9:00 am. They also were in the pod setting of a central common area for the kids, consisting of tables and chairs, and lockers. Here the students could work in groups or independently with their lap-top computers. Surrounding the central pod area were the core subject classrooms. I conducted 3 separate observations of the White Team during their collaborative team time. During these sessions I used audio taped recordings and composed field notes. Following the gathering of these data I transcribed the recordings into a text format. In addition I conducted face-to-face interviews with each team member in which I also used audio tapings and field notes. As with the observations I followed the interviews with a transcription of the tapings into a written text format.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Rich text to describe the participants' responses toward job satisfaction in a PLC was applied throughout this research. According to Creswell (2003), a qualitative researcher must (a) use multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, (b) conduct research in the natural setting, (c) build a rapport and credibility with the individuals in

the study, and (d) filter data through a personal lens (p. 181). Data collection occurred through observations of teachers engaging in collegial interactions as well as one-on-one interviews concerning the job satisfaction of the participants. Merriam and Associates (2002) stated, “Observational data represents a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than a secondhand account obtained in an interview” (p.13). I observed the participants as they interacted within the collaborative setting. The number of team meeting observations did not exceed four for each group of participants. During the observations I remained as an outsider looking in. I did not participate in the conversations or interactions during the observations except to ask clarifying questions. I observed facial expressions, word usages, and behaviors such as smiles and laughter, or exchange in complements or criticisms. Interpretation conducted during the analysis phase of the research assisted in connecting these facial expressions and behaviors to the idea of job satisfaction. “The goal of observation is to understand the culture, setting, or social phenomenon being studied from the perspective of the participants” (Hatch, 2002, p.72). The observation tool that I used was not a standard protocol as described by Creswell (1998, p. 129) a two column design. One column is titled Descriptive Notes and the other Refelctive Notes. My tool was more horizontal in where I recorded events as they occurred and then added my comments or thoughts below the occurrence. These tools may be seen in Appendices B1 – B6. Audio tapes were used during the observations then reviewed and cross checked with the field notes which were acquired during the observations. Audio tapes and field notes were used during the interviews as well. Corbin and Strauss (2008) stated, “Field notes are data that may contain some conceptualization and analytic remarks.” (p.124). During the observations and interviews I recorded

interpretations concerning feelings/impressions received from, or perceived of the participants. This in turn led to additional questions.

Moustakas (1994) stated, “The interview begins with a social conversation or a brief meditative activity aimed at creating a relaxed and trusting atmosphere” (p. 114). The initial meetings with the participants were general in nature. Here I asked foundational questions as to the participants’ age, years of experience, and family history. In doing this, I was able to share my own biographical information as well in hopes to establish a trusting rapport with my participants. More in-depth questioning occurred during additional interviews. Interview questions for this study were;

1. What characteristics would you use to describe teacher job satisfaction?
2. Describe how collegial study groups (teacher collaboration) impact social and pedagogical interactions between staff members.
3. How does the involvement in a PLC change teacher-to-teacher communications?
4. How do personalities impact professional collaboration?
5. Explain to what extent is administration a factor in job satisfaction.
6. What would contribute to improved job satisfaction but does not involve a PLC?
7. Describe what the ideal collaborative time needed to meet the demands of your job?
8. Compare the quality of personal prep time with collaborative time during the school day.
9. Which provides you with more resources to meet the needs of your students, personal prep time or collaborative time? Explain why.

These questions were closely associated to the theoretical frameworks in which I had chosen. These frameworks are: DuFour et al. (2005) and their theories involving collaboration within PLCs, Maslow (2007) and his hierarchy of needs theory, and Herzberg (1987) and his motivation – hygiene theory.

Responses were analyzed to identify essential themes by coding and categorizing the prevailing meanings of the individual responses. Other materials included field notes, and audio tapings. These tapings recorded actual collaborative interactions between the teachers and provided accuracy for interpretations of the interviews. Furthermore, the information acquired from these tapings was included in the coding and categorizing of themes and meanings. Direct quotations from the teaching staff enhanced the credibility of the findings and conclusions as applied to the quality-control technique through member checking.

The collecting of data through observations, field notes, and audio tapings, was conducted during the scheduled meeting times of the two teams. This allowed me to gather data from the participants in their collaborative settings. Also face-to-face interviews were conducted other than team meeting times so as not to disturb the team setting. I observed each team on three different occasions with each observation lasting between 45 minutes to an hour a piece. The face-to-face interviews of the 10 participants also lasted 45 minutes to an hour for each interview.

The observation tool that I used was not a standard protocol as described by Creswell (1998, p. 129) where in figure 7.6 he establishes a two column design. One column is titled Descriptive Notes and the other Refelctive Notes. My tool was more horizontal in where I recorded events as they occurred and then added my comments or

thoughts below the occurrence. These tools may be seen in Appendices B1 – B6. The analysis of data was conducted using inductive and interpretive methods.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

In inductive analysis the researcher “begins with the specific and leads to the general” (Hatch, 2002, p. 161). The researcher conducts a search for patterns that make connections that can be viewed generally about the phenomenon. Afterward certain terms or themes are then narrowed down to codes that are related semantically. Words that have relationships or similarities with other words or phrases are considered semantic. As cited in Hatch (2002), Spradley identified nine different relationships (a) strict inclusion, (b) spatial, (c) cause effect, (d) rationale, (e) location for action, (f) function, (g) means-end, (h) sequence, and (i) attribution (p. 165). These semantic cues provided me the opportunity to see patterns and shifts between themes throughout the analysis process.

Using transcripts from interviews and observations in conjunction with audio tapes took me from a general theme of, does collaboration within a PLC lead to job satisfaction and provided a more specific set of themes addressing the why and how these factors contribute, if any, to job satisfaction. Once these themes were identified using the NVIVO8 software program, codes were assigned to each. I was then able to see relationships between participant word usages. Words like student motivation (Appendix C), self worth (Appendix D) and social (Appendix E) provided me with insight. Connections were established and a general picture was revealed. This picture was then interpreted for clarification.

Interpretation is about giving meaning to data. This is the creative portion and essence of the research. During the interpretation component of analysis the researcher

“draws conclusions, develops lessons and insight, and attaches significance and understanding to the data” (Hatch, 2002, p. 180). Using various data-collection tools like interviews and observation I was able to apply inductive and interpretive methods to glean the understanding behind teacher job satisfaction and its relationship, if any, to collaboration found in PLCs. Corbin and Strauss (2008) indicated that, asking questions is an analytical tool used to interpret data. They went on to say that thinking about the range of possible answers helps us to take the role of the other so that we can better understand the problem from the participant’s perspective. These questions are not necessarily addressed to the participants, but are asked by the researcher, following an interview or observation, after reviewing the transcripts. Questions allow the researcher to begin thinking about what themes need to be looked at in the data. They also may lead to additional interview questions that provide insight to more details within the data. Comparison is another analytical tool that can be applied (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Using this interpretive comparison method I was able to conclude that gender attitudes within the White Team may have been a factor within the dynamics of collaborative meetings. This idea is clarified in section 5.

Any discrepancy between participants and or groups of participants only added to the interpretations. I found contradicting data not as a problem, but as a benefit. In a qualitative study the researcher tries to maintain objectivity about the question, even to the point of naivete (Moustakas, 1994). Discrepancies or contradictions can be addressed the same as data and given its own themes, domains and codes. These themes, codes and domains were categorized into labels for visual identification and provide guidance towards interpretation.

A computerized data-organizing and analysis program, NVIVO 8, assisted me in creating codes and categories in which interpretations were established. This program provided the opportunity to change and rearrange themes among the data. The NVIVO8 software allowed for me to sort and analyze my audio files and Word documents. Once this data was collected, establishing the quality of the data could then be determined through a variety of methods.

### **Evidence of Quality**

Research must be supported with accuracy, reliability, validity, or quality of the collected data. Other terms related to quality are, “trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility” (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). Corbin and Strauss (2008) in their definition of quality used the word credibility. These authors said that “credibility indicates that findings are trustworthy and believable in that they reflect the participants’, researchers’, and readers’ experiences with a phenomenon but at the same time the explanation is only one of many plausible interpretations possible from data” (p. 302). To ensure this credibility Creswell (2003) used 8 strategies: (a) triangulation, (b) member checking, (c) rich, thick description, (d) clarifying bias, (e) discrepant information, (f) prolonged time, (g) peer debriefing, and (h) an external auditor (p. 196). I used a number of these strategies. For instance, cross referencing between data-collection tools like observation, field notes, and audio-taped interviews, supported the data in the form of triangulation. I used 3 different methods of quality control: first, member-checking where the participants checked, in an ongoing process their agreement with the accuracy of the interpretation by the researcher; second, rich thick description, in which I vividly described the interactions of the participants; and third, clarifying bias, where identified

with the participants and provided a reflective narrative. A participant informational data sheet (Appendix A) aided me in establishing a general rapport with the participants. The constructivist paradigm that I used provided for the participant review of the data through member checking which was established by providing copies of the transcripts, tables or other data collected. An agreement by the participants as to the authenticity of the interview and observation data was established through emails between me and the participants. The analysis of the data was interpretive using rich, thick descriptions of the phenomenon. I attempted to eliminate any bias concerning the PLC format and teacher job satisfaction by including my own involvement with PLCs and teacher collaboration. During my interview time with the participants I shared with them events from my professional experiences concerning PLCs and teacher collaboration. The quality of this research was, “creative in its conceptualizations but grounded in data, it should stimulate discussion and further research on the topic” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 302). I collected data over a 2-week period for each team of participants, providing for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The determining factor as to the credibility of this research was if the results were consistent with the data collected. The low maintenance and cost of conducting this research added to its feasibility.

### **Feasibility and Appropriateness**

There were small operational costs involved with conducting this research. They were; gas expenses for travel to and from the site, as well as the purchase of a digital audiotape recorder. The major expense in conducting this research was the purchase of the Microsoft analysis program, NVIVO 8, approximately \$150. This program allows for the sorting and analyzing of audio files, Word, PDF, rich text, and plain-text documents.

The software can graphically display project information as well as make connections and establish findings using models and charts. I also used the academic and technical support found in the Walden University Doctoral program. These resources assisted in providing confidentiality.

### **Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations**

Researchers ask much of their participants, and it is a moral and professional obligation to maintain the respect of participants' privacy. The use of member checking assisted me in keeping the study ethically focused. The accuracy of each piece of text was available for the participants to review and verify its accuracy. Hatch (2002) stated that, "we ask participants to reveal what goes on behind the scenes of their everyday lives" (p. 65). With that in mind, I assured the participants of the importance of their involvement within the research. In conjunction with this assurance is an emphasis on honesty by the participants. The integrity by the participants to reveal information that is truthful is the essence of the data being collected. This study may lead to further research and benefit school districts in their decision to consider the implementation of a PLC, or at least its collaborative component.

Creating this cooperative relationship and product for school districts provided the participants with some return for their contribution. The participants were issued an informed consent form (see Appendix A) to sign. In addition, Institutional Review Board (IRB) #07-08-10-0333144 approval was established. An invitational letter was issued that explained the estimated time needed to conduct the research as well as the types of data-collection tools that were to be used. In addition, the role of the participant, the role of the researcher, and the potential outcome of the research was included in the invitational

letter. Continuous verification of accuracy of data by the participants assisted in their assurance of ethical usage. Any bias towards the participants based on gender, race, sexual orientation, age, or disability was not implemented (Creswell, 2003). To ensure anonymity the names of participants could have been changed if any so desire, but all participants gave me permission to use their names in the study. Because the participants were all adults, the considerations normally applied to vulnerable (child) participants were not deemed necessary. Challenges encountered between balancing the need to conduct the research and the protection of the participants was always considered during the data-collection period.

### **Summary**

This qualitative interpretive study looked at the relationship between teacher collaboration in a PLC and teacher job satisfaction. Analysis methods used in conducting this study was inductive and interpretive in nature. The use of face-to-face interviews and observations provided data that was categorized and coded using the Microsoft NVIVO 8 program in conjunction with participant approval. Rich thick descriptions added to the readability and accuracy of the data. In addition triangulation occurred between the data-collection methods of interviews, observation, and field notes, giving strong reliability to the study. The flexible interpretive nature of the qualitative study provided connections for the readers to the information discovered. Participants were selected based on availability and cooperation to undergo involvement in this research. Connections of participants to an existing PLC and their active engagement in teacher collaboration were the main criterion. The findings from this research could provide other school districts to consider the implementation of a PLC within their school sites, or at least to consider

establishing collaborative opportunities for their teachers. The findings may also lead to better understanding of what constitutes teacher job satisfaction and how districts can use these findings to improve their own teacher job satisfaction and thereby maintain teacher efficacy. Greater detail of data analysis and its conclusions will be provided in sections 4 and 5.

## Section 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe to what extent teacher collaboration in a PLC impacts teacher job satisfaction. This study was conducted using a qualitative design in which the interpretive study approach was applied. The data were collected through six observations of collaborative teacher meetings, and 10 face-to-face interviews involving two teams of high school teachers within a professional learning community. All observations and interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. The data were coded and analyzed using a qualitative software program, NVIVO8. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the individuals who participated in this research, to explain the manner in which data was gathered, and to reveal the responses derived from the nine interview questions. Each of these questions is addressed by the 10 participants and I provide insight into the patterns derived from their responses. Summaries of team observations are presented.

### **Data Gathering Process**

Rich text to describe the participants' responses toward job satisfaction in a PLC was applied throughout this research. Data collection occurred through observations of teachers engaging in collegial interactions as well as one-on-one interviews concerning the job satisfaction of the participants. I observed the participants as they interacted within the collaborative setting. The number of team meeting observations did not exceed four for each group of participants. During the observations I remained as an outsider looking in. I did not participate in the conversations or interactions during the observations except to ask clarifying questions. I observed facial expressions, word

usages, and behaviors such as smiles and laughter, or exchange in compliments or criticisms. Interpretation conducted during the analysis phase of the research assisted in connecting these facial expressions and behaviors to the idea of job satisfaction.

The observation tool that I used was not a standard protocol as described by Creswell (1998, p.) My tool was more horizontal where I recorded events as they occurred and then added my comments or thoughts below the occurrence. Hatch (2002) did not have a table for me to replicate as Creswell did, but Hatch stated “Don’t worry about all that you are not getting, focus on what you are getting” (p.78). During my observations I took notes as to what I heard and observed. Hatch said that sense it is impossible to record everything, it is important to make sure your data are detailed , word for word accounts of events and conversations. I recorded these events and conversations into on-sight written field notes. I then added my thoughts and comments following the opportunity to listen to my tape recordings and review my notes. These tools may be seen in Appendices B1 – B6. Audio tapes were used during the observations and interviews then reviewed and cross checked with the field notes which were acquired while conducting the observations and interviews. In addition I recorded interpretations concerning feelings/impressions received from, or perceived of the participants.

The initial meetings with the participants were general in nature. Here I asked foundational questions as to the participants’ age, year of experience, and family history. In doing this, I was able to share my own biographical information as well in hopes to establish a trusting report with my participants. More in-depth questioning occurred during additional interviews.

### **Tracking Data**

Responses to the interview questions were analyzed to identify essential themes by coding and categorizing the prevailing meanings of the individual responses. Other materials included field notes, and audio tapings. These tapings recorded actual collaborative interactions between the teachers and provided accuracy for interpretations of the interviews. The information acquired from these tapings was included in the coding and categorizing of themes and meanings.

The collecting of data through observations, field notes, and audio tapings, was conducted during the scheduled meeting times of the two teams. This allowed me to gather data from the participants in their collaborative settings. Also face-to-face interviews were conducted other than team meeting times so as not to disturb the team setting. I observed each team on three different occasions with each observation lasting between 45 minutes to an hour. The face-to-face interviews of the 10 participants also lasted 45 minutes to an hour for each interview.

A computerized data-organizing and analysis program, NVIVO 8, assisted me in creating codes and categories in which interpretations were established. This program provided the opportunity to change and rearrange themes among the data. The NVIVO8 software allowed for me to sort and analyze my audio files and Word documents.

### **Team 1 Participants**

I looked at 10 teachers working in two teams. One team of teachers consisted of six members working with 80 sophomore students. Team 1, the given school site title, included Jesse and Julie the two math teachers, Josh an English teacher, Andy who taught science, Janice the social studies teacher and Jeff an intern working with Janice. With the

exception of Jeff, this was a seasoned team of teachers. Josh whose degrees include a Bachelor's of Arts in English and a Master's of Science in teaching and learning had been teaching the longest at 16 years. Jesse, with a Bachelor's of Science in English and a Master's of Science in math, had been with this team for all of his nine years of teaching. Janice had been on this team for eight of her 10 years experience and held a Bachelor's of Arts in political science and a Master's of Arts in Education. Andy had been teaching for only 4 years, all of them on this team, but held the most credentials with a Bachelor's of Science majoring in biology; a Master's of Arts in biology; and a Master's of Science in biochemistry. Currently he is a PhD student. Even though Julie had been teaching longer, 11 years, she had only been with this team for 1 year and held a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Secondary Education.

### **First Observation**

The first observation of a Team 1 meeting began with what seemed to be chaos. Josh was working with a student who was discussing an assignment. Jesse was in the corner filling up his coffee cup from the pot that Josh kept continuously in operation throughout the day. Janice was serving pumpkin bread and discussing her trials involving her 2-year-old daughter and the temper tantrum she threw that morning. While all of this is going on all of the Team 1 teachers had their laptops open and were busily checking their e-mails and various other electronic updates. They moved about the room, alternating between these personal preparation activities and settling in for the day's team meeting for about 10 minutes. Finally, Janice brought everyone back to the agenda for the day which was written on the chalk board. This scene reminded me of a family as they gather to sit together for dinner, each fussing with the preparation of the event until all

are served and are facing each other. Like a family they share in the meal and the activities that make up their lives.

The teachers talked about interdisciplinary units (IDU) that they have established with each other and the curriculum that is applied to their students. One of those units involved a mentoring program of graduated Noble students who work one-on-one with present sophomores on this team of students. Julie seemed to be the leader with this idea and reveals that there will be four new mentors. Janice and Jesse do not hesitate in taking on two of these mentors for their students. There appears to be a buy-in as observed through their eager consensus of agreement and cooperation by all of the teachers as to the value of having these mentors available to connect with their students' needs. As each teacher verbally communicated with each other at the same time they were interacting through their laptops viewing emails from students concerning assignments or other matters, or logistic activities like looking at student records to determine their standings in the classrooms.

My first impression of this behavior was frustration. Were they going to have a meeting and address the agenda, or were they going to do electronic work via their computers? I had to realize that, like my twenty-first century students, these educators had developed a rhythmic dance of moving between the laptops and their present conversations. The comfortable acceptance of this multitasking activity flowed like a well-oiled machine. Andy was not at this meeting and the others used e-mail to ascertain if he was online and could communicate ideas about another IDU that they needed to discuss. It was assumed that he was somewhere in the building conducting an assigned school duty, or working with a student, as his manner would indicate.

One of the special education teachers stopped in to discuss the needs of a particular student. It was decided that the special education teacher could direct the student to access the required English assignment by opening an online link. Each teacher on Team 1 had a web page where students could check assignments, grades and other curriculum needs. The function of electronic communication was a major component of this school. A pause in the verbal communication occurred while the sound of fingers tapping on the keyboards reverberated through the room. Quite often it was Josh who brought the group back to the agenda. He, in an almost paternal manner, guided the team without dominating it. Each member was allowed to give input and opinions, concerning their schedules, students, or whatever arose during their collaborative time.

### **Second Observation**

The second day's observation of the teachers' professional collaborative time occurred in the same setting, Josh's room. The meeting involved a more detailed critique of a particular student's needs concerning her math deficiencies. During the discussion, Julie suggested that the student be referred back to special education and openly asked "Are we all in agreement with that?" The free declaration of thought and consensus provided additional evidence of the continuity within this group of professionals. One of their agenda items concerned the upcoming half-day where students attended school for the first part of the day leaving the second part open for teacher professional development directed by the school administration. Unlike a traditional school setting, where a modified schedule would find all of the student population attending each individual class the first part of the day, the PLC model finds the students interacting in predetermined activities created by the teachers themselves. Without scheduled collaborative time

between the teachers this objective would not have occurred. Throughout their common planning time the teachers constructed a schedule for each Team 1 student for that half day event. In addition they collaborated on the needs of the student with the math deficiency. Through discussion each member of the team received a better understanding of this student.

### **Third Observation**

Day 3's observation held again in Josh's room began with education humor. Julie was reciting math questions from a test she composed. Each question involved one of the team teachers in a scenario where algebraic formulas were applied. One of those problems included Josh going to a steakhouse to buy chicken wings for a tailgate party. Another involved Janice buying coffee for herself and Julie on the way to school. It seemed that team math problems were a regular affair for the students, making learning math more personal and entertaining. The comradery and familiarity between the teachers allowed Julie to build test questions using their names in the scenarios. In addition the shared student roster by these teachers provided the students with connections to their teachers. This is a fundamental component within this kind of PLC structure.

Following the sharing of humor, Josh redirected the team to the up coming half-day activities. Discussions involved a particular assignment that had not been graded by all of the teachers and how students were looking online and finding a blank space where a grade should be. Julie indicated that giving a grade was difficult because the students did not seem to have applied themselves. Discussion followed concerning how to grade the work. This was a collaborative effort in determining how each teacher would assign a grade based on which criteria. I was able to observe this collaboration as each teacher

shared their view about how to assign the grade. Janice thought that the best way to handle the grading was to give each student an “A” based on either the work contributed in building the Power Point or their contribution in the verbal presentation. Following a short pause in the discussion Janice said, “What do you guys think? That’s just me.” Julie replied, “The only thing that bothers me is rewarding crap with an “A.” What’s more important, that they did the work or that they were here?” Janice said, “Weren’t most of the kids working? Is it that some of the kids can’t do that level of work in only 20 minutes?” Josh added, “I do agree that as I moved around that I was impressed with most of the work the groups were doing.” Julie said, “I agree that they divided and conquered and they each had their part.” Again, Josh finds a happy medium stating, “The best argument for me is that we are rewarding the process rather than the product.” Julie concurred, which resulted in her and Jeff giving a grade to the students’ work. The verbal sharing of viewpoints enabled the teachers to arrive at an agreement. The scheduled collaborative time provided the opportunity for these teachers to consult with each other and arrive at a conclusion that benefited their students.

### **Team 1 Interviews**

The interviews were conducted during each teacher’s personal prep time. This, like the teachers’ common prep time, was also an 80 minute block and occurred every other day. The setting for the interviews was held in what appeared to be a small conference room. This consisted of a long rectangular table with chairs on either side. The room itself was long and narrow and had a small window on the door. During these interviews I asked 9 questions directed toward 3 main concepts which were: How does scheduled school day collaborative time impact teacher job satisfaction? How does job

satisfaction change due to a PLC environment? How does teacher isolation impact job satisfaction?

### **Question 1**

Question 1 asked: What characteristics would you use to describe teacher job satisfaction? Four of the six teachers, Jesse, Andy, Jeff, and Julie, indicated that teacher satisfaction comes from student satisfaction. Jesse asks himself, “Did I do a good thing and help a student today?” Andy said he’s satisfied when he can see the, “proverbial light bulb go on in a kid”. Jeff indicated that he is satisfied when the, “students perform and behave well”. Julie is satisfied when she sees that the, “students are excited and seem eager to know what I am teaching”. Janice is just plain satisfied. She has only worked at Noble and she likes working on a team. Her satisfaction stems from these factors. Josh sees job satisfaction as a, “constant state of learning”. He said that “teachers who are satisfied are always trying to improve their practice”. Like many educators these teachers glean satisfaction when the needs of their students or self are met. Enjoyment found in doing a job well is derived through the ability of their students and their selves’ ability to achieve.

### **Question 2**

Interview question number 2 asked the teachers to: Describe how collegial study groups (teacher collaboration) impact social and pedagogical interactions between staff members. Julie was quick to respond that it definitely makes us closer. At one point the team did not meet for four days and she felt disconnected even though the physical make up of the “pod” setting was one where teachers were within visual proximity of each other. Not having this collaborative time made her feel out of touch with what was

happening in the other classrooms as well as not meeting her personal need to share concerns or joys that occurred in her classroom. Julie went on to say that having collaborative time, “allows for discovery of specific needs of the students”. She said, “One teacher might pick up on something that another teacher might have missed”. Time to discuss individual students assured that that student’s needs were met, personally and academically. Andy indicated that when he was applying for employment with various schools, that he could have;

Gone to a school that would have paid me significantly better than it does here, but I knew the people I would be working with, and how they interact with each other, and what their beliefs were, and I felt I would fit in. Being the new and younger kid on the team collaboration has enabled me to shape my own practices. This occurs simply by listening to what they do in their classroom and how they deal with different content or issues and then how I can apply that to what I do.

Jesse had a more personal twist to the question since he and Josh have been together the longest. He indicated that the team knows each other’s personal lives. “Josh and I go to Red Sox games, we know each other’s kids, and we talk about this in class”. Jesse believes that collaboration, “gives the impression to the students that the team has a focus or goal, a sense of unity that the kids pick up on”. Pedagogically Jesse provides this example;

Janice is teaching Reconstruction and President James Garfield, and I tell the students that Garfield use to start his day doing math problems. I then teach them a proof on the Pythagorean Theorem that was created by Garfield. It’s hard to link

math with social studies, but having a team time allows for making those connections.

As the observing intern, Jeff sees collaboration from a different perspective. He said, “They (meaning the teachers) feed off each other... they take the words out of each other’s mouths, so its like they’re on the same page.” To Janice, collaboration is;

The best thing. It never feels that I’m alone with anything. Because I have access to them I don’t have to wait for my prep time, or the end of the day. I can go to them and say, “What do you guys think about this?” and it’s done. Janice clarifies by saying, “It’s not, what am I going to do, but what are we going to do?”

Josh looks at the dynamics of teaming. He said, “It has got to start with putting people together where there is some element of common vision, similarity, past history, trust and respect.” He goes on to tell how Janice came to the team. She actually had interned with the team her first year. So when an opening came up the administration could have chosen another teacher, but Josh knew Janice was the right fit. The social interactions derived from teacher collaboration seemed to enhance these teachers’ ability to do their job.

### **Question 3**

Question 3: How does the involvement in a PLC change teacher-to-teacher communications resulted in positive responses. Josh talked about common team meeting time, common lunch time, and common teaching blocks providing communication opportunities. Janice corroborated with statements such as “If you didn’t have common team time built into the schedule how would you do interdisciplinary work, or meet about

kids, or how would we do all the things that are good for the kids?” Jeff said, “We all have the same students, we all know what each other is teaching, we keep each other updated and make sure we see how students are doing in each class.” Jesse concurs with, “We know when a student is struggling almost immediately, because we meet every other day. We know quicker if something is going bad or good.” Andy seemed to sum the communication question with, “The bottom line is it helps kids learn, it helps kids develop, and having that openness between different content areas, between different belief systems just gets you to think. And it’s always good to think.” These teachers seemed to see the PLC structure with its built-in common prep time as a natural solution to miscommunication between and among teachers.

#### **Question 4**

The 4<sup>th</sup> question: How do personalities impact professional collaboration? resulted in an almost universal response. Each commented on the fact they there are occasional disagreements, but when all is said and done compromise occurs. Josh, Julie, Janice, Jesse and Andy all said that hard work and competence by each teacher is important. These personality qualities are needed to make a successful team. “Like a family”, Janice said, “We just learned how to work together.” Andy said,

Everyone has good days and bad days and being able to recognize that is important. We are fiercely protective of each other, but at the same time the first one who is going to critique me or make fun of me is going to be one of these guys. This kind of joking rubs off on the kids. They see us joking with each other and include that free flow of ideas, unafraid to leave doors open and it is a good thing.

Josh sums up the team personality traits as; “With Andy, well he’s the young one we live vicariously through. With Janice it’s all about the baby pictures. With Julie it’s an intended statement that came out the wrong way and with Jesse it’s the sarcastic wit.” According to these teachers personality is a major factor in determining the positive outcome of teacher collaboration. It appeared that the “family” connotation associated with these teachers is the appropriate description.

### **Question 5**

Question 5: Explain to what extent is administration a factor in job satisfaction, resulted in a resounding unanimous support for the building principal. The key concept that led to this decision was based on the principal’s ability to let the team do their job without micro-managing things. Josh indicated that, “a principal who tries to build comradery which is necessary for people to want to do their job, is absolutely huge.” There was also an agreement that the team could handle discipline problems better than the Deans could. The support and communication between teachers led to the understanding of student needs whether academic or personal. It was this teacher collaboration that developed a more self-sufficient attitude about dealing with the needs of their students. I will elaborate more about the administration factor in chapter 5.

### **Question 6**

I approached question number 6 as the “dream or cookie” to be added to improve job satisfaction. The question reads as: What could contribute to improved job satisfaction but does not involve a PLC? Janice, Andy, Jeff and Jesse all mentioned an increase in salary. In addition Josh, Jeff and Jesse wanted more time for collaboration or

professional development. Josh wanted individual time to reflect. Time not tied to students or team agendas. Jeff wanted to meet with other teams. And Jesse wanted professional development days right before Christmas. There would not be any kids and they could sign up for work shops. Julie's dream was to not have duties, and to have a "side-kick" to do menial work and to assist with one group while she is working with another group. Janice wants more time to do field trips with the kids. It normally involves writing a grant or fund raising for the team to do activities outside the school setting. She would also like to have the team schedule to be more sacred. Over the years they have altered some student schedules to where they are not truly "on-team". To do an interdisciplinary project the teachers have to create separate schedules for students who are not 100% with the core team teachers. A professional salary for a professional day's work seemed to be the consensus. In addition more time to collaborate, work with students, or just become enlightened came to mind for these teachers.

### **Question 7**

Describe what the ideal collaborative time needed to meet the demands of your job, was question number 7. This resulted in a fairly even division. Jeff, Jesse and Janice seemed to be happy with the eighty minute team time every other day. Jeff is glad it's in the morning, that's when he feels more productive. Jesse said, "As long as we have the time available I don't really think it's an issue." Julie comes to the team as a veteran teacher, but this is only her second year at Noble. She is deliriously happy with the amount of time, 80 minutes team and 80 minutes prep time. So she said, "Are you kidding!" She adds that, "Maybe 5 years down the road she might start to think it's not enough time." She later admitted that a true dream time would include a "pull-out" once

in a while. This would be where subs would come in for half a day giving teams an uninterrupted time to collaborate. Something like an on-site retreat. Josh said “If you really want people to engage in a serious project give them an extensive window of time. Something like a retreat day, an entire day at someone’s house away from school.” He went on to say “Maybe that’s in the summer.” Andy said, “I would love a delayed start day. One time I came to school in a snow storm and found out there was a 2 hour delay. I chose not to go home and I got more work done in those 2 hours as far as planning and instruction. I actually did a little research on stuff.” He went on to say “We are very open about kids interrupting us in meetings, at lunch, and during personal prep times. We are literally “on” from 7:05 until 3:05 when it comes to kids. No time is sacred in terms of student-free.” His last statement included, “We are professionals, treat me as a professional, give me time to do professional work.” Even though these teachers all received 80 minutes a day of either personal or collaborative time, they seemed to want more time to improve their craft.

### **Question 8**

This concept of time segues into question 8: Compare the quality of personal prep time with collaborative time during the school day. All participants indicated that personal time and team time are separate as to their functions. Prep time is seen as time to do logistical things like; grading and planning, where team time is set aside for discussing student needs and IDU’s. Janice mentioned that “teachers now have a duty during their prep time. Some do a tutorial which is a study hall. She does a writing section. This might cause teachers to be bitter about loss of personal prep time.” Andy indicated that “he finds his prep time consumed with meeting face-to-face with colleagues other than the

team.” He added that “I don’t do a lot of actual prep time during the day because I will not shut my door if a student wants help.” Whether personal or collaborative, prep time seemed to be sacred for these teachers. The function of these assigned times was divided between logistical housekeeping duties and student oriented duties.

### **Question 9**

Question 9, my final interview question involved: Which provides you with more resources to meet the needs of your students, personal prep time or collaborative time, and explain why? Four out of the 6 teachers said with resounding confidence “collaborative time”. Janice and Julie both mentioned how experts like guidance, special education and administration are utilized during the collaborative time. Janice stated “It’s all about how we can make this better for the kids, and how we can work better for the kids, and sometimes how can we make kids work better with us.” Julie likes the ability to bounce ideas off other professionals. Josh said “If you gave me a choice between one over the other, I would choose to have more time with my team. Teachers by nature are always planning for their own classroom. That time you give me to work with adults is much more priceless.” Andy indicated that “As the new kid, professional needs are met through collaborative time.” Jeff, the intern, said “If it involves emotions then collaborative time is needed, but if its educational needs my personal prep time is better.” The analytical math minded person that Jesse is stated that “This is apples and oranges; I can’t answer without knowing what are the needs of the students.” Just as these teachers designated special functions to the two different scheduled times (logistics for personal and student oriented for collaborative) they also saw how each segment of time provides different resources to meet their students’ needs.

I selected three main themes connected to my research question and incorporated Team 1's responses into a clearer table. The focus on; what are satisfaction characteristics, comparing personal prep time to collaborative time, and how can teaching be improved resulted in an interesting set of data (see figure below).

**Team 1  
Theme Chart**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Satisfaction Characteristics</b>	<b>Collaboration vs. Personal Meeting Student Needs</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
<b>Josh</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve practice</li> <li>• State of learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more collaborative time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retreat day</li> </ul>
<b>Jesse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return every day</li> <li>• Help students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality is same with different focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least keeping what we've got</li> </ul>
<b>Julie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are eager to learn</li> <li>• Student respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definitely collaborative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once a month half days without students</li> </ul>
<b>Janice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very satisfied keep doing what I'm doing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like what I have</li> </ul>
<b>Andy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impart knowledge</li> <li>• Make a difference</li> <li>• Have meaning and use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands down collaborative</li> <li>• Personal prep is catch-up time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed start day</li> <li>• More time without student interruptions</li> </ul>
<b>Jeff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student satisfaction</li> <li>• Interact with each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative meets student emotional needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morning collaborative time</li> </ul>

What these teachers need to be satisfied in their professions is respect, to make a difference or impact on their students' educational needs and to maintain or increase

collaborative time. Overall they see collaborative time as important to the extent of wanting more.

### **White Team Participants**

The second group of teachers involved in this study consisted of only 4 members teaching a freshmen team of 75 students. Jennifer (Jen) had a Masters in Teaching and conducted reading classes and a writing workshop. Sarah had a Bachelors degree in Education with a focus on English, but was teaching math. Jeremy, who had a Bachelor's in English with a minor in German, taught English and writing. Andrea's credentials included a Master's in Education, Secondary Science, and her instruction was in science. Jen had been teaching for 16 years, twelve of those years at Noble High, but with only 4 years on this team. Her previous teaming experiences at Noble occurred at a different grading level, mostly seniors, with 3 years on two teams and 2 years on one other team. Sarah had 12 years teaching experience which ranged from second and third grades, to middle school grades of seventh and eighth, and now freshmen. She spent 6 years on two different team settings. This was her first year on the White Team and her first year at Noble High. Like Sarah, Jeremy had 12 years of teaching experience, 6 of those at Noble. He had 1 year at the senior level with "House #2" and 3 years at the senior / junior level with "House #3". He had been on the White Team for 2 years. Andrea had 3 years of teaching experience with 2 of those years at Noble and on this team. Her previous year of experience with teaming was at the middle school level.

### **First Observation**

The first day of observations began with only 3 team members; Jen was sick and out for the day. A suggestion was brought up that they might be able to include her in the

meeting via email. As with Team1, these teachers flowed between face-to-face interactions and their lap tops. Emails were checked, schedules were made and even Facebook was opened to see what a student was saying. Sarah suggested the printing of a student list so they could see which students they would be addressing and what their needs might be. This list was related to missing assignments and low grades within team subjects. They planned for upcoming parent-teacher conferences and should they bring up the IDU called “Life’s Roadmaps.” Andrea mentioned that the parent meetings would not be until the next week and Sarah added that it would happen Friday. Jeremy said “So Friday, during our classes? Would it be during Block 3 and 4?” Sarah responded with “Yea, it would have to be; otherwise it would be during electives.” Andrea shares as she said “Totally unrelated news”, the progress she is having in buying a house. As she relayed this information Jeremy continued to search his lap-top and occasionally interjected with a comment or two. Sarah maintained the receptive end of this conversation, but also would glance at her computer. Following the conclusion of the story a short silence occurred as each teacher worked their computer. At this time Jeremy proceeded to email Jen about a particular student. With more light talk comes a chime from Jeremy’s computer and he announced, “Someone wants’ to chat with me.” The others laughed, but Andrea suggested that maybe it was Jen from home.

At this point Claudia entered the room. She wanted the team to review the list of students they had compiled. Claudia was looking for a particular student and there seemed to be confusion as to whether that student was on the list. Andrea stepped up and reported that it was her fault for the confusion; she had collected the student’s work via flash drive and had not submitted the assignment. Claudia was concerned with parent

communications. Claudia, in a diplomatic yet authoritative manner, reassured the team and Andrea that it was OK, but wanted to make sure corrections were made. Sarah added to the discussion about another student where he had handed in his work but had not followed through with the verbal component, so Sarah had not entered a grade for that particular assignment. The original assignment for this boy had been sent via email on Monday evening after 7:00 pm. Sarah said, “Mom actually called and we scheduled a meeting.” Claudia said, “He’s on the list twice, no wonder the list is so long.” Sarah continued with the discussion about the mother and how she is a sweet person, but it sounded like there was some medical stuff going on with her and maybe that could be stressing the student out. Claudia added, “That’s the biggest reason that I need an accurate account, because as soon as it is inaccurate, there’s a loop hole ...” This confusion with missing grades for students falls into Claudia realm of responsibilities and she wanted to make sure that the team and school looked precise. Again gentle reprimands were given. Andrea added a ‘thank you’ to Claudia for checking on her student because both the team and the administration were aware that this student’s view of a poor grade could potentially send her into a negative mood. Andrea reassured them all that she had personally talked with the student and commended her on her work which included receiving an “A” for the assignment. Jovial banter continued as they discussed the behavior of this particular student. As Claudia started to leave she asked about an email she read that morning from Jen, apologizing about being out today and missing a meeting. Claudia wondered if this was with a parent and the team reassured her that it was the meeting with me. As Dean of the team, Claudia is aware of all electronic communications between team members, students, and parents as well as outside

specialists like guidance and special education. Claudia addressed another housekeeping clarification concerning having students staying after school in the pod area without staff members present. She mentioned that yesterday she had seen students in the area and did not see any staff members. Sarah responded, “That’s odd”. Claudia added that the students told her that Ms. England was in the building. She suggested that as staff members leave for the day they clear the area by escorting the students to the library. At this point Claudia was called via walky-talky by another administrator. She concluded her visit with the White Team by asking, “How are we doing?” Jeremy reaffirmed the directive concerning sending students to the library after school hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Sarah brought up to Claudia that the team had moved science and reading after school sessions to Wednesday because students were not showing up on Mondays. This was a communication system by which students were to stay after school for help on which days and for what subjects. Claudia requested a list of these students the day before they were to stay after.

Following Claudia’s exit the team discussed how they were going to handle working with students after school and decided to make an announcement that on Monday’s no one was going to be in the team area after 3:00 and that the pod would be locked down. I asked for clarification of the list, in which they responded that it involved students who were failing a certain subject, or needed to make up an assignment and were put on the list to stay after school. If the student does not show, they get an administrative detention. The team discussed how this process seemed to be working, that they were not seeing as many failures. Sarah shared how the students were not doing as well on the tests. She alluded to the problem of having to do a lesson a day and that there was so

much within one lesson. Andrea noted that last year's kids were not any better, that they were more apathetic. Jeremy agreed. The team vented about the lack of work ethic the students had and how frustrating that was for them as teachers. Andrea noted that there was "a lot of talk with this group and not a lot of action." She said, "It's so funny the dynamics of each group as they come up from middle school."

The team then began to discuss individual students and where they stood academically in their classes. Sarah and Andrea saw improvement with a particular boy, but Jeremy stated that he was "doing terribly. I've had him after at least three times and he just doesn't get the work in." As Jeremy recalled where he was with the class in regards of writing skills, Sarah wanted to know when he was going to do research because they could collaborate on an interdisciplinary assignment. Jeremy indicated that they needed to meet with Jen. He alluded to the fact that he and Jen were trying to collaborate but what they were really doing was their own thing that kind of meshes up. Andrea reminded them that Jen thought they could make their Wednesday meetings devoted to nothing but curriculum. This would occur every other week. They all spoke in agreement toward this idea. Sarah shared how research shows that interdisciplinary units would help the kids make better connections to what they are learning. Discussion led to the idea that they definitely need a plan, because they get into team meetings and then other factors, like Claudia or guidance showing up, takes time away from their agenda.

Redirection toward individual students continued. Disclosure concerning the behavior of one boy when a certain other boy is in the classroom creates a lack of productivity from either student. This information is elaborated upon and confirmed by each team member. Andrea noted that she moved these boys apart by changing their

classroom schedules, but now the problem student has another boy misbehaving in the new class setting. Sarah said, "It's a good thing we are talking about this, because I'll let him know that I know that he is doing this in your class and that there is going to be some serious action taken if he does not stop." The team continued to go one-by-one down the list of students talking about how the students were doing and where they might need help or what was happening at home that might be causing certain behaviors in some students.

### **Second Observation**

Day two's observation saw all team members present including Lori one of the special education teachers. They began the time discussing the team building unit called "Life Road Travels." This is a project where each student shares their personal history with the team and presents a power point or other formats depicting various aspects of their lives. This is seen as a group building unit because these students will be together for the 4 years of their high school career at Noble. Jen is astounded by the number of emotional boys that the team has. They discussed how a number of boys were weeping during their presentations. Some of the histories of these students were extremely deep and moving. Jen made suggestions as to how this activity can be improved upon for next year in the manner of time limits and depth of details. Jen relates her take on the presentations by stating "My overall feelings so far are that these kids have seen some serious trauma." Jeremy noted that he saw how a number of students alluded to the fact that they were not getting along with one or both of their parents, and that they need to be reassured that they are not a freak because of that, that it is normal for adolescent kids to not get along with their mom or dad. Jen saw that many of the kids who have experienced

divorce due to cheating and how that has affected the students' level of trust. Jen brought up the point that "now as a team we need to be able to present to the students another value system, and do it in a way so that we are not being overly critical of where they are coming from, but so we can say here is another way to live, another way to choose to be." I asked for clarification as to the title of this project, and was able to comment on how they really got to know their kids. Sarah said "Sometimes you get more than what you bargained for. I have never done this before". Andrea stated that, "it's almost like they needed an outlet." They continued to share how some kids expressed themselves and how the teachers had to almost put a time limit on them. This brought laughter among the teachers and an opportunity comfortably to segue to a new topic. Jen brings the team back by saying "Alright do we need to focus?" A resounding "Yes" comes from the others.

They began to move down the agenda as to what was happening today and for the week. Jen asked "Do we need to review? I'm supposed to talk about engagement. Who has "bell-to-bell?" Sarah responded with "I am." Jen continued down the list, "and homework completion?" These are topics they will be maintaining or discussing with the students. Sarah mentioned that they need to inform the students how they have moved certain after school assistance to new days. As they continued to move down the agenda, Claudia entered the room and quietly sat to the side, observing. Andrea asked about parent emails and when they were meeting with them. Jen noted that she put various schedules on her I-Account for other s to view. Back to the agenda; discussion of who wants to say something about the honor students during team time. Next on the agenda was, "team-leaders can drive." All the time as the teachers moved through the agenda,

they were viewing their lap-tops. Jen was the guiding presence directing through the agenda. Discussion of presenting homework passes as rewards. Lori recommended that it be done more frequently. Jen said it could be, “Person of the week instead of person of the month.” Jeremy suggested taking their picture and posting it on the team board. Jen made a comment, in a joking manner, “these kids could use some homework passes.” Others laugh at the implication that brought overlapping borage of comments.

Claudia shared with the team how one of their female students was involved in a drug deal over the weekend and how the student had recounted the event to Claudia almost verbatim. This enlightened the teachers as to how this student came to be a part of their team. The discussion turned to the student’s attendance problem on the team. Jen suggested taking it seriously and calling the student in to have a discussion. Jen felt like the transition of this student from the alternative school to their team was not done well and she wanted to let the student know that they were aware of her behavior and that were going to be on it. The team agreed that transition for the alt to the main-stream should be a big deal.

A new topic brought to the table involved a student who emailed Jen sharing concern for her brother and recommended Jen to look at his Facebook page. Jen noted that the page was all about drug use and related to other students on the team. The ability to electronically connect with the students on their personal web pages enlightens the team to needs other than academic.

Claudia brought up another student whose parent had been hospitalized with cancer. The student was to serve a Saturday detention and the mom emailed that there was no way to get him there. Sarah asked about how the kid was doing in his classes.

Claudia stated that she got involved because he was not showing up to his afternoons for homework time. Andrea asked about if there was a dad. Claudia indicated yes, but communication is between the mother while she is in the hospital and the school. Jen brought up the point that this boy's friend was one of their students whose mother died of cancer. These personal interweaving of family and friend dynamics gave understanding to why the boy is not doing well academically. They began discussing the details of this student's possibilities of passing which classes and how they could accommodate his needs to bring him to success.

### **Third Observation**

The third day observing this team during their collaborative time was a little different. The first 15 minutes involved a parent meeting. The student was considered an exceptional boy, academically and personally. He was admired by his peers in that the students nominated him as a student of the week. He also had a positive influence on others on the team. Each teacher shared glorious accolades upon the student for the parents. Claudia and the other guidance councilor, Shelly, were in attendance for this meeting. After the parents left, the teachers shared various aspects of the student's behavior with laughter and comradery.

Discussion revolved around the number of students on the team who have some connection to mental illness within their families. Claudia brought up a documentary she saw that seemed to glorify suicide. Shelly added insight to the topic and how students do not understand the finality of death and suicide. At some point the conversation evolved to birthdays and age and turning 40. This brought again laughter and an ease from the topic of suicide.

Shelly leaves and Claudia began to lead the team into the activity that was scheduled for today's meeting. She had emailed the team commending them for their courage to engage in the activity which is called Response to Intervention (RTI). Claudia had to eliminate the game that was originally established to open the activity. Other factors prohibited her from using it. She introduced the activity by indicating that the other freshman teams will also be conducting these protocols derived from the RTI. Before hand the team had written down their barriers or obstacles to learning. They were directed to use their lap-tops to conduct the activity. I decided to use this activity as an inquiry during the interviews in determining the teachers' feeling about whether the RTI could be considered an intrusion upon their collaborative time.

### **White Team Interviews**

As with Team 1, I conducted face-to-face interviews with the members of the White Team during their 80 minute personal prep time. These interviews were held in Sarah's classroom where we sat comfortably around a large rectangular table. During these interviews I asked 9 questions directed toward 3 main concepts which were: How does scheduled school day collaborative time impact teacher job satisfaction? How does job satisfaction change due to a PLC environment? How does teacher isolation impact job satisfaction? I audio taped each participant and composed field notes. These taped interviews were then transcribed into a written text format and cross referenced with the notes.

### **Question 1**

The first interview question involved: What characteristics would you use to describe teacher job satisfaction? Sarah responded with, "successful collaboration." She

went on to say “when teachers easily share and take constructive criticism and use it to benefit them instead of thinking of it as an insult.” Because Sarah has taught for 12 years, but only 1 year at Noble I asked her about her time at her previous school in which she summed up “I am more happy where I am now with more opportunity for growth.”

Andrea saw characteristics of job satisfaction associated with working with the kids. She added that “getting to work with other teachers is amazing because we are all in this for a common reason generally and they are all really fun people.” Jeremy provided a list of characteristics that contained topics such as comradery and treatment by administration. But he ultimately concluded that job satisfaction stems from “the kids you work with.” Satisfaction for Jen revolved around respect and feelings that you matter. She added that “the work environment should energize you and that it is esthetically pleasing.” I commented on the physical make up of the building itself at Noble High and she responded that that is so important to the staff and the kids “to think that they are deserving of this says a lot, its really powerful.”

## **Question 2**

Question 2: Describe how collegial study groups (teacher collaboration) impact social and pedagogical interactions between staff members saw Andrea exclaiming “it’s actually pretty necessary.” She described the collaborative time as the only time she really stops to look at what she is doing as a teacher. She said that collaboration is “Pretty integral. I feel like I get caught up in the everyday student interactions, so when we meet and we sit down and talk sometimes it’s the only time when I think about my core beliefs as a teacher. Now that I have common planning time, I can’t imagine teaching without it.” Jeremy saw collaboration as “You definitely feel like you have to ... feel accountable

to them, for teaching and doing a good job, in just coming to work. You feel a sense of comradery, you feel tighter as a group so you definitely bond.” Because Jen had been with that team for 4 years she has had the opportunity to see the students she had 4 years ago grow from freshman to seniors. She said collaboration “Builds community among teachers and students.” Sarah liked how through collaboration it “opens up a line of communication and I feel that professionally and socially that really helps, to allow us to sit back and look at each other’s work without judgment. It is more of a feedback thing.”

### **Question 3**

Interview question 3 was: How does the involvement in a PLC change teacher-to-teacher communications? Jen compared what she has with a PLC at Noble with what she has had in the past. She said “In other schools I worked at, it was very much your classroom was your world, you really only stepped out for a faculty meeting, or when there was a problem or a duty. I think it pushes you to grow as a professional and a human being in ways the other schools just don’t.” Sarah admitted that she has not had enough experience with a PLC. I asked her if she was in a PLC at her last school. She responded with “No, I had one team mate, but it was more like a gab and complain kind of session. Here it feels like a more professional community, they have goals and they know how they want to reach them.” Jeremy saw communication in a PLC as more than day-to-day. He said, “It’s hour-to-hour, so that’s a good thing. Sometimes I think it could be easier to be in my classroom and do my own thing, but overall the PLC format ... that’s kind of why I came here.” Andrea saw involvement in a PLC as making the communication “more meaningful. Without it it’s almost like common day-to-day passing in the hallway, which is more superficial.”

**Question 4**

Question number 4 was: How do personalities impact professional collaboration?

Jeremy shared that he had been moved twice in the last 3 years and thought that the personality question would be good to ask administrators. One of his past teams he served with at Noble involved a half team of only 3 men. He believed that a certain individual needed to work just with males. Andrea exclaimed that personalities “definitely do” impact collaboration. Her experience with other teams had seen individuals who were not committed to the collaborative environment. She said “Sometimes you can tell when people don’t really want to get down to the hard work because they want to talk about other things. I feel like these teachers (this team) have this comradery that you don’t see in other work places.” She admitted that “someone is the task master and without that person it can be pretty tough sometimes.” Sarah had praise for her team as she said, “We click so well that our personalities gel and we are able to collaborate very easily. I can see the dynamics on other teams might make that very difficult. I can see how personality clashes would be an issue, but we seem to collaborate very well.” As the more experienced teacher within a team setting, Jen admitted that, “I’ve worked on a lot of teams and I know there were people who didn’t enjoy me and people I had to work hard to enjoy. We ask the kids to work in groups constantly and I think we have to model this, and it is hard, and it is not always pleasurable.”

**Question 5**

It was interesting to see that question 5: Explain to what extent is administration a factor in job satisfaction, seemed to generate the largest response. Jen noted that

“Someone pointed out recently that we don’t have a contract and in most schools teachers would be freaking out and we’re just not. Maybe that is the telling of the trust we have in the administration and the respect we have for them. I think the overall perspective of the administration is very supportive.” Sarah also saw the administration as “very supportive. When I had my evaluation it was very comfortable, they weren’t scrutinizing what I was doing, and they were helping me to use the evaluation as a tool.” Andrea stated that “You can tell in a school there is a good administration because the teachers are happy and they feel that their opinion matters.” She went on to say “In other schools there is a trickle down if the administrator is not effective or is kind of a jerk. The school climate is different, the way the teachers interact, and that trickles down to the kids. I think good administration needs to have sort of an omniscient presence, this sort of good entity that just let’s teachers do their thing with guidance.” Jeremy thought that administration factors into job satisfaction “quite a bit.” He added “How they run the school, how they respond to crisis or adversity, how they communicate, its huge, it’s huge.”

During my third observation, Claudia the Dean had an activity that the team was to engage in. It was called Response to Intervention (RTI). I asked the team “What did you think about today’s RTI? Was that productive use of your team time?” Andrea’s first response was hesitation followed by it was good. She went on to say “You know it depends upon your administrator, sometimes your administrator can way-lay us a little bit in our conversations. Your administrator is not there all the time, they don’t see all the interactions and so your team is almost like you’re the core.” Andrea included that sometimes others drop in and try to give feed back, and she wants to say “Go away, you weren’t here, you don’t know what’s going on.” She did admit that the RTI activity

provided her an opportunity to go beyond the routine talking about the kids and looking at the big picture. Jeremy also saw value in the RTI activity. He supported Andrea in saying that “Sometimes we get talking so much about the kids and their life, we’ve got to start talking about the bigger picture like; classroom instruction, and connecting units and themes.” Sarah on the other hand did not see the activity as valuable. She thought “The way it was presented wasn’t as useful as it could have been.” As far as constructive use of time, Sarah saw it as “Drawn out and could have gotten to the point quicker.” She did agree with the value of talking about deficiencies in the classroom. Jen had a different perspective being that she was on the RTI committee and she knew what the purpose of the activity as it was applied to the freshmen teams. She went on to say “We were kind of the guinea pigs to see how that protocol would work and we got something out of the experience and that experience will help other teams.” Jen did agree with Sarah in that the activity could have been shorter. She followed this with a deeper understanding of how “People have different strengths and weaknesses, so just because you might be super comfortable with something doesn’t mean everybody in the room is.”

### **Question 6**

With interview question 6: What would contribute to improved job satisfaction but does not involve a PLC? Andrea and Jen brought up the idea of increased pay. Andrea wanted a teacher’s aide to do the mundane tasks of coping and organization. She also wanted to see a stronger bond with the community. Jen mentioned that she knew a lot of exceptional skilled people who would make great teachers but the salary chases them away. Sarah wanted to have more planning time with her department. She pointed out that the math assessments are supposed to be global. “If I’m doing this in Algebra I

then everyone else who is teaching Algebra I should be giving the same assessments and we don't have a lot of time to create those assessments." She added that there is no time or money to do this during the summer. She said "I have a whole block to get to plan every day, but that common planning time would be more important." Jeremy's take on improved satisfaction without a PLC was also based on time. He wanted flexibility between the extra time he might put in before or after the contractual school day, providing him with the opportunity to leave early if he came in early.

### **Question 7**

Question 7: Describe what the ideal collaborative time needed to meet the demands of your job? Found that the ladies all agreed they needed to spend time on curriculum and interdisciplinary work. Again, Sarah pointed out that maybe summer might be the ideal time and setting to do this collaborative work. Andrea agreed with Sarah concerning the summer meetings, but noted that not being paid to meet in the summer would make this difficult. Jen thought that devoting at least 1 of their team time meetings to curriculum or interdisciplinary work would be beneficial. All 3 ladies thought that the set scheduled 80 minute team time was sufficient as a time-slot goes. Jeremy agreed with the ladies in that time spent on curriculum would be best. Even though 80 minutes seemed to be sufficient, he also wanted more time to work on interdisciplinary units (IDU). He noted that most of their team time is spent on the lives and special needs of the students and not on the curriculum. In addition Jeremy said that "Best Practices and now RTI interrupts the team time that could be used to actually do the work that these programs demand."

**Question 8**

Compare the quality of personal prep time with collaborative time during the school day, was question number 8. Sarah and Jeremy see their personal prep time as greatly needed. Jeremy does not want to deal with grading and planning outside of school. He had chosen to do a tutorial (study hall) because he can have additional time to do grades and plan. Sarah is thrilled with the amount of time between personal and collaborative blocks, but believes that having the day-to-day work of planning and grading allows for the collaborative time to not be as frantic. Andrea's prep time occurs when three other study halls happen, so she sees kids interrupting the time needed to plan, make copies, and grade. She admitted that "Sometimes I literally have to leave my room to get things done." Jen said that "My prep time is working with kids. I don't use it for myself." She takes all grading and planning home. She indicated that some individuals need socializing time which can cut into the demands of team time. Jen also mentioned that her last team was rather "male" oriented and that they did not enjoy spending time talking about kids, "They felt that was a waste of time."

**Question 9**

The last interview question, number 9: Which provides you with more resources to meet the needs of your students, personal prep time or collaborative time and explain why? found Sarah and Jeremy in agreement that personal prep time met their students' needs more. Sarah seemed to indicate that she was methodical in her manner of using her time to get things done. She said "My personal prep time meets my objectives math-wise, but I meet the needs of the students emotionally and socially through collaborative time with the team." Jeremy admitted that "I can focus more when I'm working

independently.” He believes that “Quality team time is when we are working on lessons or units.” Andrea noted that both personal and collaborative times have equal impact but in different ways. Her prep time deals with grades, lessons, copying and such while collaborative time is where “We can actually sit down and talk about the students and how we are meeting their needs.” She went on to explain that without personal prep time she would be overwhelmed with the basic house-keeping of teaching. She said she “Does not see how people can teach and have a family.” Andrea also explained that collaborative time creates a better work environment, allowing her to “Bounce questions and ideas off each other.” Jen admitted that “Because I donate my prep time to working with students that’s huge, but it’s really not necessarily sane or smart, but I don’t know where else I could do it.” This oddity within the teaching field of not using personal prep time for one’s self created a dilemma for Jen as to the value between the 2 blocks of time allotted for this teacher.

As I did with Team1, I selected three main themes connected to my research question and incorporated the White Team’s responses into a clearer table. The focus on; what are satisfaction characteristics, comparing personal prep time to collaborative time, and how can teaching be improved again resulted in an interesting set of data (see figure below).

**White Team  
Theme Chart**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Satisfaction Characteristics</b>	<b>Collaboration vs. Personal Meeting Student Needs</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
<b>Sarah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful collaboration</li> <li>• Support from administration</li> <li>• Constructive criticism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal is working on math subjects</li> <li>• Collaborative works on student emotional and social needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer collaborative time</li> <li>• More team time within the day to build collaborative units</li> <li>• Less housekeeping</li> </ul>
<b>Jennifer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling respected, that you matter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have dedicated my personal time to working with kids, not grading or other logistical things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time to work on curriculum and interdisciplinary work</li> </ul>
<b>Andrea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having direct interactions with the kids</li> <li>• Getting to work with other teachers</li> <li>• Having that comradery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep time is logistics</li> <li>• Collaborative time is meeting student needs</li> <li>• Interdisciplinary units</li> <li>• Collaborative creates better working environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid summer collaborative time</li> <li>• Additional time for interdisciplinary units</li> </ul>
<b>Jeremy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comradery</li> <li>• Having voice</li> <li>• Working with kids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal time allows me to work independently</li> <li>• Collaborative is quality time when working on units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less kid stuff and more professional, curriculum stuff</li> <li>• More Best Practices time</li> </ul>

To be satisfied in their professions this group of teachers not only wanted respect, they saw collaboration as a satisfaction characteristic in itself. Collaborative time over rode personal prep time as a pedagogical favorite and as with Team1 this group of teachers see collaborative time as important to the extent of wanting more.

### **Discrepant Cases**

Some negative findings between PLC's and teacher job satisfaction take the form of forced teaming where teachers share not only the same students, but the same physical setting or classroom. Pomson (2005) conducted a study of the complexities of teacher cooperation and collaboration in six Canadian Jewish elementary schools. The teachers were asked to keep a reflective diary in which they recorded at least once every 2 weeks. On a 6-week cycle, the teachers met with the research team to discuss their reflections. These were based on the teachers' professional lives and their relationships with cross-curriculum partners. In these settings teachers stated that, "their classroom interactions are open to the scrutiny and support of a professional alter ego whose presence lurks over many of their pedagogical decisions" (p. 788). Further, "classroom space must be negotiated between individuals who have very different ideas of what classrooms should look like or how they should operate" (p. 788). Pomson concluded that teachers value personal and professional benefits, yet do not discuss the "rewards of cross-curricular partnerships as necessary to the work of education" (p. 796). The close physical proximity of teachers in this study seemed to be the drawback to a PLC structure. Closeness almost indicates that collaboration can be too much when individual autonomy is being jeopardized. I considered this idea while conducting my data collection which in turn led to additional questions concerning shared physical settings of PLC schools.

There was little evidence concerning the "forced" teaming concept with my research. Team 1 actually made a blatant effort to be placed together. Josh and Jesse's comradery extended beyond the school setting. When Janice and Andy had completed their internships there were requests from all parties toward assigning them to the team.

As for the White Team, there was not necessarily bitterness about being on the team, but Jeremy disclosed that he had been purposely placed on this and previous teams to establish a personality role.

Another study that resulted in a negative association between PLCs and job satisfaction was that of Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2007) on teacher self-efficacy. These researchers discovered that in the Norwegian schools' long history of teacher autonomy over teaching and learning methods, working together in teams and shared responsibilities for a larger group of students may, "result in a feeling that they are forced to use teaching and learning methods that they do not believe are the best, or that they do not feel comfortable with" (p. 622). I reflected on this study as I determined if the participants in my research were working independently in a PLC, or in a more structured "team" composition. I considered whether this was a factor that resulted in teacher stress rather than satisfaction. My observations indicated that autonomy was maintained for all 10 of my participants. Their independent work within their classrooms provided them the freedom to be creative and still blend with cross-disciplinary curriculum.

### **Patterns**

Following the completion of transcribing the audio tapings of the individual interviews, I uploaded my transcriptions to the NVIVO8 software program. The patterns I thought I heard while audio taping the participants came to light as I transcribed and then placed them in nodes using the electronic technology. According to Hatch (2002) patterns are "regularities that come in many forms. These forms are; similarities, differences, frequency, sequence, correspondence and causation" (p.155). In analyzing my data I discovered similarities among all of the participants. These similarities are; collaboration

is a positive and much needed resource, and each participant wanted more uninterrupted collaborative time. Distinctive similarities can be seen as I addressed each of the nine interview questions and broke down the responses into various tables showing the revealed patterns.

I combined the two teams of participants into a single pool of responses. In doing so I was able to see two recurring themes that appeared from Question 1 concerning characteristics that would describe teacher satisfaction. They were; student motivation, and teacher self worth (see Appendices C and D). There were eight references from six of the 10 participants related to teacher self worth, and six references from six of the participants where student motivation was significant to teacher job satisfaction.

Question 2 involving social and pedagogical impact on staff interactions found in teacher collaboration resulted in over 30 statements. These teachers expanded upon their praises concerning the value both socially and pedagogically of being in a collaborative setting (see Appendices E and F). All of the participants found that collaboration provided a sense of comradery. This comradery had limits.

When it came to Question 3 concerning teacher-to-teacher communication nine out of 10 of the participants could relate in a positive manner toward the application of teacher-to-teacher communication within their individual teams, but also saw a lack of communication within departments or grade levels (see Appendix G). They only interacted with other department members once a month (see Appendix H).

Question 4 on personalities seemed to be a topic of emphasis for these participants. For the most part they saw this as a deciding factor in the success of a team setting. Janice indicated that she “Spends more time with these teachers than I do with

my family.” They used words like; “compromise, quirkiness, and comradeship.” In addition, as seen in Appendix I, there is a belief that how well one is doing their job means more than liking each other.

An overall agreement concerning Question 5 seemed to evolve concerning the appreciation of the existing principal at Noble High School (see Appendix J). The main factor that led to this consensus was the administration’s ability to let the teachers do their jobs without a whole lot of interference. The role of the Dean received at least two negative comments from the participants which can also be found in Appendix J.

Again two recurring themes surfaced when viewing “improved teacher job satisfaction not in a PLC” as asked through Question 6. One theme was the proverbial teacher salary situation (see Appendix K) and the other involved time. The majority, eight out of 10, of these participants wanted more collaborative time, if not with their team-mates at least within their department (see Appendix H).

This theme spilled over to Question 7 involving the ideal collaborative time needed to meet the demands of the job. A couple of statements by Andy and Jeff were made about the actual time of day when team time occurred as well as the length of scheduled collaborative time. But here again, as seen in Appendix L, these participants wanted more time to hone their professional practices. Josh wanted a retreat day, Sarah wanted more paid summer retreats, and Julie wanted a half school day exclusively for collaboration. The idea, due to student accessibility to the staff during their meetings which created interruptions, that with a more restricted time and, or setting this might provide a better use of their collaborative achievements.

The distinction between collaborative time and personal prep time as asked with Question 8 can be found in Appendix M. The collaborative time was seen as student oriented, where discussions focused on how best to help individual students with academic or personal needs. It also was a time to work on interdisciplinary units. The term “logistical” came up when describing personal prep time. The participants saw this time as focused on grading, lesson planning, and physical preparations for instruction of their classes.

The final question, number 9, involving these two time usages, personal prep and collaborative, and how they best meet the needs of students resulted in remarks that seemed to be divided by teams. Team 1 consisting of veteran and long standing teammates saw collaborative time as more valuable (see Appendix M), where the White Team who have been together the shortest number of years saw personal prep time as more valuable to meeting their students’ needs (see Appendix M). Further evaluation of this phenomenon will be discussed in Chapter 5.

### **Evidence of Quality**

In conducting the research for this study I have gathered data by following all protocols as dictated by the Walden University Doctoral Procedural Guidebooks. Approval of the IRB was sought and obtained before contacting the participants used in this study. Letters of cooperation, introductions, and consent were administered and properly obtained. Following introductions with the administration within Noble High School, I was then assigned 2 teams of teachers to observe and interview. Team 1 consisted of 6 teachers within an interdisciplinary setting working with roughly 80 sophomore students. I observed this team of teachers on 3 separate occasions. During this

time I audio taped their team meetings. Afterwards I transcribed the tapings into a bulleted texted format. These transcriptions are found in Appendix B1 through B3. I then conducted individual interviews with each member of Team 1. As with the observations, these interviews were also audio taped and transcribed into a bulleted texted format. These transcriptions are found in Appendix N1 through N6. Noble High School administration then assigned me to the White Team in which to gather data. The procedures with this team of teachers were like that of Team 1. I observed them on 3 separate occasions; audio taped their meetings, and transcribed the tapings into a bulleted texted format which can be found in Appendix B4 through B6. This was followed by individual interviews which were also audio taped and transcribed and can be found in Appendix O1 through O4.

Copies of these transcriptions were emailed to each participant for their critique. This would entail the member checking component of my research which should enhance the validity of the data that was gathered. Each participant responded with approval of the information with only one minor correction concerning the job description of one of the participants. That was corrected and approved as a follow up email. These data were only the transcripts of how each participant responded to my interview questions. My interpretations of the data had not been viewed by the participants yet. The use of the computer program NVIVO8 provided me the opportunity to categorize my data into findings, and to create nodes and themes in which to established patterns. Interpretations of these findings are discussed in section 5.

## Section 5: Interpretations

A dilemma in public school educational institutions is the lack of a supportive teacher community which results in a void that could lead to decreased teacher job satisfaction. The purpose of this study was to describe to what extent teacher collaboration in a PLC impacts their job satisfaction. Theoretical foundations by DuFour, et al., (2005) have established the positive results of the PLC and teacher collaboration. Herzberg's (1987) theory of motivation and Maslow's (2007) hierarchy of needs provided additional frameworks that support teacher collaboration and job satisfaction. Using an interpretive design, I gathered sufficient data to support the existence of a link between collaboration and job satisfaction.

The nine interview questions that were asked during this research resulted from these overall research questions:

How does scheduled school day collaborative time impact teacher job satisfaction?

How does job satisfaction change due to a PLC environment?

How does teacher isolation impact job satisfaction?

I conducted face-to-face interviews with 10 high school teachers on two different teams in which nine interview questions were asked and responses were recorded. Observations of team meetings were recorded as well, and transcriptions were written concerning these observations. Through the use of email I submitted to each participant a copy of their transcripts covering the interviews and observations to which each participant responded with approval of the findings. I submitted the interview question results in order to have the participants' assurance that this was indeed what they had said in response to the

questions. My reasoning for sharing the observation notes was two-fold; I wanted them to see how a third party perceived them, and by doing this they were able to see that I was viewing them with an open and unbiased mind. This satisfied the member checking component of my analysis. The NVIVO8 computer program assisted me in categorizing and placing into nodes and themes various patterns that evolved from the data. The findings indicated that these teams of teachers were satisfied with their collaborative settings and therefore satisfied with their jobs as teachers.

Interview Question (IQ) 1 on descriptions of teacher job satisfaction resulted in five out of 10 of the participants indicating that for a teacher to be satisfied in their job they needed to feel that they were doing something worthwhile (see Appendix D). The results show that of the five participants who indicated that self worth was an important factor for job satisfaction only two came from Team 1 and the other three were from the White Team. To coincide with this feeling of personal value they needed to receive from their students the indication of receptiveness toward what they were teaching (see Appendix C). Eaker et al., (2002) indicated “Psychologists tell us that among the most basic of human needs is the need to feel a sense of personal accomplishment” (p. 53). As educators, personal accomplishment is found through student achievement and the professional collaboration that leads to this increased achievement.

The frustration that comes from creating what the teacher believes to be an outstanding lesson and then to have the students respond with apathy could lead to dissatisfaction for the educator. Julie encountered this phenomenon when she said,

As far as the students go, like today it's a frustrating day because I feel like I am working harder for them to learn than they are working at it. I had an activity today and thought it would be fun, just show some enthusiasm.

In a traditional secondary setting Julie may only have been able to share her frustration when she had lunch that is if she shared her lunch time with other colleagues. In this situation I had the opportunity to observe the rise of Julie's frustration while she was still in the classroom with her students. Josh, a team member who did not have a class at that time, came to Julie's classroom and defused the frustration that was building between Julie and her students. In a traditional setting, with doors closed, the teacher would have been left to deal with the conflict on her own. This could have escalated to unwarranted student discipline or worse teacher unprofessionalism. Having a colleague who had the comradery of team membership established through a collaborative setting provided the opportunity for Josh to feel comfortable to intercede, as well as the opportunity for Julie to feel comfortable to receive assistance. This may not have been available in a traditional teaching environment where closed doors indicate "my classroom, my problems".

One of the conceptual frameworks that my research was based on was Herzberg's (1987) theory of motivation and hygiene. This research established a two factor theory; one involves intrinsic motivators such as: "achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement" (p. 9). The other factor Herzberg called *hygiene*. These are: "company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security" (p. 9).

Herzberg indicated that it is the motivators that primarily cause job satisfaction and the hygiene factors that lead to reduced job satisfaction. My research corroborates Herzberg's motivation theory as my participants indicated with personal self worth and student motivation as the main factors connected with teacher job satisfaction (see Appendices C and D).

One of the main factors that would contribute to improved job satisfaction but not involve a PLC as asked in IQ 6 resulted in my participants indicating an increase in salary (see Appendix K). This also coincides with Herzberg's (1987) hygiene theory that inadequate salary is a reduction in job satisfaction. Jen shared that she knew of a number of highly qualified individuals who would make excellent teachers but who would never consider it because of the salary. "I know a lot of fascinating and amazing people who would make dynamic teachers, but just don't think they could live on the salaries so they won't even explore it as an option."

The IQ 2 on the impact of teacher collaboration on social and pedagogical interactions resulted in the support toward the need for teacher collaboration. All 10 of the participants found that without teacher collaboration there would be little if any social or pedagogical interactions (see Appendix I). Sarah's experience with another school prior to Noble High involved a team of only two teachers. She summed this up as,

I had one team mate, but it was more like a "gab and complain" kind of session.

Here it feels like more of a professional learning community, they have goals and they know how they want to reach them.

“Teachers in learning communities show an increase in discussion and exchanges in methodology as well as more frequent and open interactions between new and veteran teachers” (Lieberman & Miller, 2002, p. 79). Working alone behind closed doors creates a vacuum in which teachers cannot determine if what they are doing is effective (Eaker, et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 1998; Hughes, 2006; Lieberman & Miller, 2002; Senge et al., 2000). The lack of collegial interaction creates a void that may in time lead to teacher job dissatisfaction and thereby a loss of highly qualified educators.

Teacher-to-teacher communication as asked in IQ 3 again resulted in a strong support toward the benefits of communication derived from collaboration (see Appendix E). Eight out of 10 participants shared how communication is better under a collaborative setting. Jen shared “In other schools I worked at it was very much your classroom was your world, you really only stepped out for a faculty meeting, or when there was a problem, or a duty.” She went on to say that collaboration and the communication between teachers, “Keeps you in check as a professional.”

The second conceptual framework that my research was based on was DuFour, et al., (2005) who stated that, “the powerful collaboration that characterizes professional learning communities is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice” (p. 36). The participants in this study used words like: “we are a family (Jesse); it (collaboration) allows for a common focus (Andy); it makes it (teaching) more meaningful” (Andy). Janice went as far as to admit that she spends more time with the team than she does her own family. Moore and Fink, as cited in Hargreaves (2003) stated, “Sharing ideas and expertise, providing moral support when dealing with new and difficult challenges, discussing complex individual cases together,

this is the essence of strong collegiality and the basis of effective professional communities” (p. 109). The only drawback in communication (see Appendix G) was not having more department collaboration time.

This concept time expanded when I asked in IQ 7 what the ideal collaborative time was needed to meet the demands of their job. All were in agreement with the amount of collaborative time they had, 80 minutes every other day, as being a advantage to doing their job. But two factors they wanted most were uninterrupted time with each other as a team and collaborative time with other professionals in their departments. This would be time where administration, guidance, and especially students were not allowed to infringe upon. Sarah suggested paid summer retreat time. Andy wanted a 2-hour delay without students to catch up on collaborative work. Josh could see having paid retreat days where the team could meet at someone’s house and work on interdisciplinary units. Julie thought that half day retreats would work, where the team would be secluded away from other staff members and students and substitutes would cover their classes. These teachers not only saw the value of collaborative professional time, they wanted increased amounts of it. DuFour, et al., (2005) stated that

“Schools must stop pretending that merely presenting teachers with state standards or district curriculum guides will guarantee that all students have access to common curriculum. Schools must also give teachers time to analyze and discuss state and district curriculum documents” (p. 39).

If schools want teachers to implement new teaching strategies, assessment tools and curriculum, then they must provide reasonable collaborative time to discuss and develop these new ideas.

Another conceptual framework that this research was based upon was Maslow's (1987) hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow, as cited in Kroth (2007) established a pyramid structure in which he categorizes needs into five areas: "physiological or survival needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualizing" (p. 8). IQ 4 on the impact of personalities within a collaborative setting could be identified with Maslow's hierarchy. Words that describe some of the interactions between the participants involved the "belonging and esteem" of individuals or teams (see Appendix P). The participants saw one another as strong personalities who could get through conflict with compromise and professionalism. All 10 teachers saw the value of being in a collaborative setting and shared how that made themselves better as individuals and as teachers. Julie stated that "personalities are what makes or breaks a team." Sarah said that "We click so well that our personalities gel." Meeting the emotional needs of belonging and esteem could result in teacher job satisfaction. Each participant indicated that it takes compromise and understanding to work collaboratively, but that it was worth it for them as professionals and for their students. The question for future research on the topic of teacher collaboration and job satisfaction is whether collaboration is successful if the personalities of a team of teachers do not "gel".

To coincide with this idea of Maslow's (1987) hierarchy and meeting the human need for safety, belonging and esteem I looked to IQ 5 concerning the role of administration. The idea of having a good relationship with your administrator was as

important to this group of participants as the personalities of the team. The data indicated that sound working relationships and successful job satisfaction depended on the personalities found within the administration (see Appendix J). Responses by the teachers from both teams expressed that they have a good working relationship with their administration, especially the principal. Their main requirement was to be left alone to do the job they were trained to do. They wanted administration to be a guiding partner, not a micromanaging entity. I could see future research conducted on the topic of teacher collaboration and job satisfaction as it applies to the relationship with administration. The satisfaction of teachers may depend upon the quality of the relationship of the administration.

The quality of personal prep time to collaborative time, as seen in IQ 8, resulted in a defined distinction between these two uses of time. Each participant found that prep time was for logistical items like; grading, lesson planning, and general preparation for classes (see Appendices M and Q). The collaborative time was for student emotional, personal, and behavioral needs (see Appendix I). Having both of these scheduled times, 80 minutes every other day for each, was very important to these participants. Much of the literature links the success of PLCs to job satisfaction in the ability of school sites to provide time for collaboration (Biddle, 2002; Eaker, et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 2004; Leo & Cowan, 2000; Senge et al., 2000; Sergiovanni, 1994). Without allotting time for teachers to interact during the scheduled school day the desired professional development is not going to be successful. “School systems simply must build teacher learning time into the school day” (Valli & Hawley, 2002, p.89). Asking teachers to meet 3 or 4 times a year during early-release days does not provide the time required to

develop quality learning for teachers, nor see collaborative interaction between teachers that might result in improved job satisfaction. The result of my interviews supports this theory that job satisfaction increases when collaborative time is scheduled within a school day.

As far as which better meets the needs of their students' personal prep time or collaborative time as seen with IQ 9, there was a split between teams. Team 1, the older and well established team saw collaborative time as meeting their students' needs better than their own personal time. The longevity of these team members had established what I saw as a family setting. Janice even called her team just that, a family. At one of the observations she had baked the teachers some pumpkin bread. Jesse was getting a cup of coffee which Josh keeps as an on-going pot in his classroom (see Appendix B1). At another observation I witnessed a lot of joking and light hearted kidding toward each other between Team 1 members. Julie had constructed math problems where the team teachers were components in very humorous ways. Janice asked me to close my eyes while she gave a suggestive hand gesture to Josh, in which all broke into laughter (see Appendix B3). During my interview with Jesse he described the team members as if they were siblings, "Josh and I have been together 9 years, we are the oldest, Janice came the next year (8 years on team), Korman 2 years after that, and Julie is the baby only on her second year here". This family mentality provides a strong collaborative environment where collaborative time is considered more essential to professional growth as well as meeting student needs.

### **White Team Interpretations**

The White Team indicated that personal prep time met the needs of their students more than the collaborative time. I believe this is due to the freshness of the team, not only as members, but also as teachers within the profession or at the Noble High School site. Even though Sarah had been a teacher for 12 years, she was new to Noble High and therefore to the team. She needed personal prep time to establish her curriculum and meet her students' needs. Andrea too was new not only as a Noble teacher but as a teacher in itself. She was still struggling with meeting the demands of the curriculum and how it applies to her students. Jen with 16 years of teaching and 12 of those at Noble was comfortable with the collaborative demands of team teaching. Her choice of dedicating her personal prep time to the needs of her students and not use this time to do the logistical demands of teacher preparation resulted in her selection of prep over collaborative time as meeting the needs of her students.

Jeremy had two factors which guided him to take prep over collaborative time in meeting his students' needs. One was that he was the only male on a four person team. He admitted that sometimes he's just not into the "touchy-feely" that comes with talking about students. This observation does not imply that only women engage in discussions of "feelings". Jeremy would like to see more interdisciplinary units between teachers and not as much emotional components to their team meetings. He stated that "sometimes I think it would be easier to be in my classroom and do my own thing" (see Appendix O3). My other belief about his choice of prep time over collaborative time was based on his professional history at Noble. Jeremy had been moved twice in the last 3 years onto

different teams. He questioned if that was a personality thing presented by the administration, or if it was due to retirements and layoffs. I add this information because I question if Jeremy had been involved long enough in a regular collaborative setting to make a distinction as to whether collaborative time was as beneficial as personal prep time when meeting his students' needs. This idea brings up a third research direction for future studies, whether length of time spent with a collaborative team impacts teacher job satisfaction?

### **Practical Applications**

With the completion of this research comes the question as to how the information can become useful. Secondary educational institutions may view these data as a reliable source in which to implement a PLC that includes collaborative school time for their teaching staff. Teachers are feeling isolated and dissatisfied in their profession because of this isolation. My data resulted in the desire to maintain or even increase collaborative time among the participants. This professional interaction provided job satisfaction for my participants. If school districts and administrators want to have a healthy satisfied staff then, as my research has demonstrated, implementation of scheduled school day collaboration would be beneficial not only to the teaching staff but to the students as well.

### **Social Change**

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge needed to address the problem of teacher job satisfaction by examining and describing the phenomenon of teacher collaboration in a PLC, and its impact on teacher job satisfaction. Sergiovanni (2000) stated, "The life-worlds of teachers are fragile. When motivation is down and

discretion is low, a teacher's sense of self-esteem becomes blurred" (p. 130). This research has sought to describe how teacher collaboration in the PLC concept can help in reversing this teacher job dissatisfaction. Research on collaboration and teacher job satisfaction will provide society with additional data in which school districts can implement structures where teachers may exchange ideas, teaching strategies and other professional insights that may improve their job satisfaction simply through collegial interactions found in a PLC. In addition it will add to the scholarly literature concerning teacher collaboration in PLCs and teacher job satisfaction. I believe that the data I have gathered involving collaboration and teacher job satisfaction has added to previous research concerning this topic.

The data show that for these participants to feel satisfied with their jobs as teachers they need collaborative time. They emphasized the importance of social and pedagogical impacts derived from collaboration (see Appendix R). They indicated that the contributing factor in improving teacher job satisfaction was to have more collaborative time (see Appendix H). The only drawback in teacher-to-teacher communication within a collaborative setting is that it lacks collaborative time with other department members (see Appendix G). The collaborative time they were allotted was sufficient, but some participants agreed that uninterrupted collaborative time was needed and could be met through other means (see Appendix H). "Teachers do not learn best from outside experts or by attending conferences or implementing 'programs' installed by outsiders. Teachers learn best from other teachers, in settings where they literally teach each other the art of teaching" (Schmoker, 2005, p.141).

My research takes Frederick Herzberg's job satisfaction research one step further. Herzberg (2010) concluded that job satisfaction stems from personal growth and a feeling of achievement (p. 115). The participants in my research saw characteristics of satisfaction to include "making a difference" and feelings of "respect". This coincides with Herzberg's findings, but in addition to achievement as a job satisfaction descriptor, my research reveals that to attain that feeling of achievement the participants needed collaboration (see Appendix I). This feeling of satisfaction through collaboration should lead to social change within educational institutes. Social change through improving teacher job satisfaction will assist in maintaining a positive, productive environment for today's teachers. Application of this study should result in social change within educational settings and will improve educational environments.

### **Recommendations**

As teachers continue to engage in the pressures of implementing new learning and teaching strategies, various curricula, and addressing government-mandated testing, they find themselves overwhelmed and lost behind a door of isolation without opportunities to engage in collegial activities that could reduce such pressures. Sergiovanni (2005) suggested that teacher collaboration in a community of practice is a "powerful way to improve teaching and learning" (p.123). Tegano and Moran (2005) indicated that "teachers in collaborative communities become students themselves in the art of teaching" (p.288). If we are to improve the field of education not only for our students, but also for our teachers we need to provide opportunities for teachers to grow as professionals. This opportunity can be found in scheduled school day collaborative time.

One of the most difficult things for a secondary school site to establish is collaborative time during the scheduled school day. The interdisciplinary model that can be found in the middle school concept does not always apply to the high school setting. As my research has shown, collaboration within departments might be the answer at the secondary level without an extreme make over of the entire student scheduling or a significant restructuring of the school facility. Creating collaborative time among staff members can be difficult. Just because something is hard does not mean it is impossible. “It is imperative that teachers be provided with time to meet during their contractual day. We believe it is insincere and disingenuous for any school district or any school principal to stress the importance of collaboration and then fail to provide them time for collaboration” (DuFour, 2006, p. 95).

Building a master schedule that allows for common preparation periods among teachers of the same curriculum or department is one way to start moving toward a collaborative environment. Here is a list of possibilities to implement such scheduling changes:

1. These small number of teachers who have the same prep time must agree to use 1 day a week to meet collaboratively and engage in common themes such as assessment tools, or lesson plans.

2. Another method to establishing collaborative time is by adjusting the start and end time of the school day. Core teachers such as those by subject, grade level, or other departmental structures meet uninterrupted for one hour between 7:30a.m. and 8:30a.m., one day a week. During this time the students are supervised by administration or noninstructional staff with a variety of activities such as breakfast, library or computer

research, open gym, or tutorials. The student schedule is adjusted between 5 - 10 minutes for each class. This way there is not any changes in bus schedules arriving or leaving for this day of teacher collaboration.

3. Most high schools already have in-service or faculty meeting times built into the school day. Instead of requiring all staff members to attend traditional housekeeping agenda meetings, which could be implemented through email or other electronic formats, allow them to use this time to meet in collaborative teams. This way the in-service or faculty time is used more wisely and demonstrates to the staff the administration's focus on providing professional time for its teachers.

The results of my research should be viewed by any secondary educational setting where teacher job satisfaction might be considered low. Frequent teacher turn-over, or negative school climate among staff members are signs of low teacher morale. As a teacher leader in my building, I plan on meeting with my administration and sharing my findings with them. We have tried, without success to implement a freshman academy professional learning community. I believe that we could establish a departmental collaborative time that would benefit teacher job satisfaction. The results of my research could be distributed among other administrations through publication of the data. In addition I could conduct professional learning workshops during our district development days as well as hold workshops at various professional development opportunities throughout the state and or region. Sharing my findings with other schools and districts could assist in their creating a more positive teacher satisfaction for their staff members.

### **Further Study**

PLCs, teacher collaboration, and job satisfaction are not new concepts. An extensive number of books and papers have been written about these ideas (Biddle, 2002; Eaker, et al., 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Hord, 2004; Leo & Cowan, 2000; Senge et al., 2000; Sergiovanni, 1994). Richard and Rebecca DuFour conduct seminars and workshops all over the country calling for the development of PLCs as well as teacher collaboration. My research shows that teachers are protective of the collaborative time they have together, and if they could have more of it they would be even more satisfied in their jobs.

Additional study of teacher collaboration and job satisfaction could be conducted though I believe it is time for action towards collaboration among professionals within a school setting. Implementation of collaborative settings should be established. Administrators should provide opportunities for teachers to work in professional collaboration and then see what fine-tuning needs to be done. If collaboration is done through subject or grade levels instead of interdisciplinary teams, maybe more productive student learning will evolve.

The participants in my study all seemed to say that external interferences from administration, parents and the demands of meeting the emotional needs of sharing the same students created a reduction in their interpretation of true teacher job satisfaction (see Appendix S). A study could be done using teams of teachers who meet collaboratively about just pedagogical factors and not specific student factors. A comparison study between teams who meet as interdisciplinary groups and teams who

meet strictly as departmental or as a curriculum might reveal a difference in the level of job satisfaction as well as the level of student learning. The focus question for this study would be; “Does collaborative time used specifically for pedagogical factors result in higher teacher job satisfaction over interdisciplinary collaborative time?” If we are truly going to try to create an environment where teachers are satisfied with their practice we need to implement scheduled school day collaboration among the professionals.

### **Reflection**

As a 20-year veteran of secondary education I have seen both sides of collaboration. The first 10 years of my teaching career were spent on a Native reservation in Southeast Alaska. I was not only the social studies teacher for all of the 130 high school students, I was the department. There was not another teacher on the island that taught secondary social studies. I had to teach, and at the same time learn about, subjects that were not covered during my undergrad work at Oklahoma University. These were subjects like; Northwest Coastal Native Studies and Alaska State History. By the end of my third year on the island I had rewritten the text for Native Studies and had taken my students to the state capital, Juneau, and to Washington D.C. to interact with their state and federal representatives.

Flying through the social studies curriculum pretty much on my own with only the pedagogical support of my science teaching husband, I wrote and rewrote social studies curriculum for six different preps. Isolated not only geographically, but also professionally I discussed with my husband the need to move to a more populated environment. We found ourselves in New Hampshire teaching at a middle school. I was now involved with an interdisciplinary team of four teachers working with 100 eighth

graders. I only had to teach United States History instead of five other subjects. The luxury of focusing on only 1 subject was heaven, but like some of my participants in my research I still found myself isolated from my department. We only had monthly department meetings and these were taken up with housekeeping items directed by administration. Sharing curriculum issues involved a minor part of the agenda. Also, like my participants, I entered collaborative time with my team hoping to develop curriculum, lesson plans and IDU's. But like my research showed, team time was dominated with student emotional needs more than pedagogical needs. Now, for the past 7 years, I am back in the traditional high school setting where even though our social studies department is all together on the same floor, we still teach behind closed doors. This isolation is professionally choking the staff members as we beg for more collaborative time within our department. We have even arranged our own after school meetings at a local diner where we shared teaching practices from different curriculums.

I considered my personal history of working in various collaborative and non-collaborative settings when I chose this research topic. I believe I entered the study with a passion toward learning more about teacher collaboration and how it impacts teacher job satisfaction. No researcher puts this much time and energy into something they are not interested in. I always kept in the back of my mind the possibility of discovering that the concept of collaboration brings job satisfaction would not be in alignment with the data.

Certain nagging questions permeated my thinking as I conducted this research. I wondered if having someone like Josh who was trained in leadership skills associated with working in collaborative teams might have impacted the more cooperative behavior that I found with Team 1. Questions could be asked like; can collaborative groups work

well together if they are directed from the administration to become a team like the White Team were, or in what way does the age of the group members impact the comradery found within a collaborative group. Another variable could involve the size in numbers of the collaborative members; is four too small, is 12 too big, does a leader have to be established or is a true democratic format successful. All of these questions could lead to further study.

I believe my interview questions were open-ended and non-bias. The participants were never guided to address their answers in any pre-directed manner. It appeared that with my last question concerning the value of personal prep time and collaborative time as meeting the needs of their students, the White Team saw “prep” time as more valuable. This is mostly due to the pedagogical relationship associated with lesson planning and assessment building as opposed to the focus on the emotional needs of students that interdisciplinary collaborative time demands.

My introduction within the teams into their collaborative environment was voluntary on their part. Though I suppose one could say the introduction carried a hint of administrative recommendation when Claudia, their administrator, was the person who made the suggestion that I observe them as opposed to any other teams. What does an employee do but say yes? Once I was seated with the teams during their meetings there appeared to be no animosity towards my invasion of their time. Each member conducted themselves in a very professional manner, discussing every-day personal activities as well as educational activities as if I were not there. They were all very gracious when giving up part of their prep time to answer the interview questions. I felt comfortable to ask additional questions besides the original nine during the interview process. The

atmosphere between me and the participants during both the observations and interviews was relaxed yet professional.

This study has not changed my thinking concerning collaboration and teacher job satisfaction; in fact it has encouraged it. I hope to become a stronger advocate for teacher collaboration within the educational world. My research has demonstrated that teachers want to collaborate in a professional manner. It also shows that collaboration leads to improved job satisfaction. Teachers want the autonomy of exercising their professional practice within their classrooms while pleading for the opportunity to share ideas in a collaborative environment where they can continue to grow in the career they have chosen. Even with the monetary hardships derived from low salaries, teachers will endure long hours, challenging working conditions, and yes low pay, if they can be treated as professionals. This professional environment must include scheduled school day collaborative time. I believe that if secondary education does not move toward collaborative time for their teachers, morale and job satisfaction will deteriorate even further than some schools districts are already experiencing.

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## Appendix A: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study conducted by Donna V Ackerman. You were chosen for this study because of your participation in a professional learning community and as an active member in a school scheduled teacher collaboration team. This form is a part of a process called “informed consent” to provide you with understanding of the study before taking part in its data collection.

Donna V Ackerman, a doctoral student at Walden University, is the researcher conducting this study.

**Background Information:** The purpose of this study is to determine if teacher job satisfaction is impacted by teacher collaboration which should be available within a professional learning community.

**Procedures:** Your school principal has given permission for this researcher to conduct face-to-face interviews with members of your teaching team and observations of your team meetings. The interviews should not last over 45 minutes each and the number of observations should not involve more than three. These interviews and observations will be audio taped. In addition this researcher will have access to artifacts such as team minutes.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one at your local school district will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during the study. If you feel stressed during the study you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel are too personal.

**Risk and Benefits of Being in the Study:** The risks of this study are small. Although this researcher does not know all the possible risks, some of the interview questions may bring up some bad feelings about a conversation or situation that has happened in your professional life. The benefits of this study, however, are great. With the information gathered from the interviews and observations, this researcher will determine if there is a relationship between teacher collaboration within a professional learning community and teacher job satisfaction. Reoccurring themes will be determined and coded providing the researcher with patterns that may or may not lead to teacher job satisfaction. The results of the study will be a tool for other schools to view in determining if professional learning communities should be implemented at their sites or at least establishment of teacher collaboration time within the school day for better teacher job satisfaction.

**Compensation:** There is no compensation for participating in this study.

**Confidentiality:** Your identity will be kept in strict confidentiality by way of changing your name within the study. All interviews and observational field notes will be kept in a fire proof safe and any electronic data will be kept under a “researcher only” password.

**Contacts and Questions:** Any questions you may have concerning this research can be addressed to the researcher Donna V Ackerman via email at [ackerman5775@yahoo.com](mailto:ackerman5775@yahoo.com) or by phone 603-522-8826. Additional inquiry can be addressed to the researcher’s committee chair, Dr. Candace Adams at Walden University at [cadams3@waldenu.edu](mailto:cadams3@waldenu.edu) Dr. Adams phone number is 480-636-7006 Mountain Standard Time. Dr. Leilani Endicott may be contacted at 800-925-3368, ext. 1210 for any questions concerning participant rights. Walden University’s approval number for this study is XXXX and expires on XXX.

Please return this form via email. Your email address posted on the space provided will act as the written agreement to participate in this research. You should print out a copy of this consent form for your records and as evidence of involvement in this research.

Thank you for your consideration of participation within this study.

Sincerely,



Donna V Ackerman

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above consent form and understand my involvement in this research. By completing the following and providing an electronic signature by way of an email address I am agreeing to participate in this study.

Printed Name of Participant

---

Date of consent

---

Participant’s Written or Electronic\* Signature

---

Researcher’s Written or Electronic\* Signature

[ackerman5775@yahoo.com](mailto:ackerman5775@yahoo.com)

---

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person’s typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

### **Appendix B1: Observation #1 Team 1**

Observation #1 Team1

Meeting begins at 7:40

Before meeting Students visit, discuss assignments; drop off assignments, make-up work

Sharing of coffee, Josh keeps a full pot always in his room

Meeting is held in Josh's room

Julie sends email to notify not being at school

Janice made pumpkin bread for staff

Janice writes agenda on board

Mentoring – ask Julie about 4 new ones

Jesse and Janice will take mentors on Tuesday, volunteer, no hesitation

IDU – interdisciplinary unit

Sped teacher discusses a student's work, updates what he is doing for classes

Most communication is via email

Andy Korman not at meeting, no problem with rest of staff, thinks he has duty

If staff member not in, a sub is provided

All are viewing their lap tops (Mac) on-going work while checking emails and student work

Monday minutes – note to parents informing of what's going on in class and for the team activities

IDU – hard to work on with Andy gone, Can see if Korman is online or not to let him know what the team is doing

Discussion of math activity, rotations, reflections on a graph

IDU – Julie and Jesse work together on Math theme

Discuss the next half day, the 10<sup>th</sup> college unit again, skipping, contacting kids to set up activities, using real people examples

Need to talk to a former (now 22) student who volunteers twice a week, questions how he works with kids, Janice will tell him to tone it down

Josh brings group back to meeting topics, half day unit

**Appendix B2: Observation #2 Team 1**

Observation #2 Team 1

Sped in to discuss a specific student

Decision to move student back under sped program, has aspergers

Discussion of student understanding of primary sources

Emails from Noel Lacrox wants to mentor:

opens to team as to allow

throw together with student (Emilie) but not run training for only one

Discuss former student who is now in Alt school and her family connections

Half day activities: Two weeks from today

Check emails from Josh

Still do Skipe? 6 accounts, two sessions, various career sources

A lot of coordination while on email and talking face-to-face

Seems to be communication with former students via Facebook

Still have an hour to fill on half day

Julie has an activity sheet that applies to college theme and incorporates math

Once again Josh brings group back to topic

### Appendix B3: Observation #3 Team 1

Observation #3 Team 1

Discussion of colleges

Julie shares math problems using team teachers as part of problems

Josh starts meeting – check in on half day as to skype

All members seem to collaborate without conflict

Joking among members is common

Discuss past half day projects and how they were graded:

- How to grade this time - show up and do presentation = “A”
- Janice makes suggestions, what do others think
- Good discussion, all input is accepted, Janice says, so “A’s”?
- Check rubrics from past to determine how to grade work
- Josh keeps rubrics on file
- Starts to check past rubrics and apply grades

All the time staff is viewing lap tops, emails, etc.

Nancy has 504 plans for staff to sign and see

Discusses new student, not happy with Alt program, will arrive Monday

Checks computer and brings student up on screen

What to do with students who don’t sign up for college trip

Janice gives friendly jester to Josh ☺ lots of humor and fun exchange while still getting work done

Former students enter to give birthday things for Mr. Korman

All major assignments have a rubric

Each member is doing own thing and still covering work as a team

Josh brings group back to rubrics and discussion of inter-discipline unit

### Appendix B4: Observation #1, White Team

- Only 3 here
- Jenn is sick
- Discussion on parent meetings
- Using email to communicate with staff, parents and students
- Using computer may be able to have meeting with Jenn even though she is home sick
- Claudia comes with info about a student
- Double checks student responsibility to follow up with staying after and getting work in
- Claudia sets standards about being concise, etc.
- If there is no staff member on pod then students cannot be on pod like past Tuesday
- Send kids to library Tues and Thurs if no staff member here after school
- Moving science and reading to Wednesday after school instead of Monday
- List of students who need to stay after for additional help if they don't show up they have an administrative detention
- Team is much younger and new to the profession
- Still working on discipline
- Need to meet with Jenn on developing an interdisciplinary unit
- Meet on Wednesday about making connections between curriculum
- Need an agenda to follow to make meetings more productive
- Looks at list of students who are failing compares which classes they are not doing well
- Question about how they can change students into different classes same subject
- Discussion on student moved from alt school to their team
- Group does not seem to have flow of meeting as the other team
- Group dynamics due to experience and leadership not same
- Goes over list of students one at a time and discuss how they are doing

### **Appendix B5: Observation #2, White Team**

- Team is conducting a group (student) exposing of shared emotional writings of who they are
- Conducted via power point
- Helps students to bond with each other
- Life Road Travels
- Jen brings group back to agenda
- Claudia joins group
- Discussion on which teacher is to cover which topic on agenda
- Special ed or guidance also joins, Lorie
- Share duties concerning honor students
- Team leaders can drive on team award for kids who brought in most cans
- White team character award of the month
- Kids want to nominate
- Suggested by Lorie, Homework pass to be more frequent
- Every Friday student of the week
- Claudia suggested personalize invitations
- Discussion about students connected with illegal mushroom transaction
- This is a new student on team who is involved with this illegal act
- Sarah seems uncomfortable of how this new student will impact team and classes
- Jen said let's take this seriously, call her into team meeting and discuss
- Claudia says need to talk with Nancy
- Jen said transition from alt to mainstream needs more attention
- Jen indicates a student who emailed about concerns of brother, see student page
- Andrea wants to know how to call student in for meeting as re-entry into team
- Most of meeting is breaking down personal needs of students, not academic

### Appendix B6: Observation #3, White Team

- Student is a team leaders voted on by peers
- Each teacher reports on student's progress
- Staff backs up what others say
- Claudia joins meeting
- Life's Road Maps activity with this student
- Teachers offer change in schedule to accommodate student's desire to be both on team meetings and continue "trombone"
  
- Staff talks after parents left
- Tease Jen about how another student talks about personal things in class and others say that doesn't happen in our classes
- Guidance councilor joins after parents leave (Shelly, new to me)
- Discussion of suicide and mental illness among students and their families
- Need to be aware of student's personal loss with suicide
- Another guidance member arrives who is shared with Team #1 (Nancy)
- Discussion of birthdays and aging
  
- New topic discussion about RTI ( Response to Intervention)
- Led by Claudia
- Student enters and needs Claudia's signature who redirects student to her office
- This RTI could become an artifact to use later
- Resources online for all to participate at same time (tool box)
- New program Noble using beginning with Freshman teams
- **Wonder how team feels about this activity, how it is led, if its an intrusion on time**
-

## Appendix C: Student Motivation

### Name: Student Motivation

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 1 reference coded [0.37% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.37% Coverage

- to really see the preverbal light bulb go off in a kid,

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [0.35% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.35% Coverage

- Student satisfaction,

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [0.66% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.66% Coverage

- students respond at end of year with positive remarks

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 1 reference coded [0.85% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.85% Coverage

- students are excited and seem eager to know what I'm teaching
- Receptive to learning

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [0.65% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.65% Coverage

- working with the kids and having direct interactions with them

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 1 reference coded [0.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.28% Coverage

- Kids you work with

## Appendix D: Self Worth

### Name: Self Worth

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 2 references coded [0.55% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.24% Coverage

- feel like you're making a difference

Reference 2 - 0.31% Coverage

- feel that you have some type of meaning and use

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [0.51% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.51% Coverage

- Did I do a good thing, help out a student

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [0.48% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.48% Coverage

- Getting to work with other teachers is amazing

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [0.46% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.46% Coverage

- Feeling respected and that you matter

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 1 reference coded [0.16% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.16% Coverage

- Comradery

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 2 references coded [0.55% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

- Successful collaboration

Reference 2 - 0.36% Coverage

- validation that for what you are doing is good

## Appendix E: Social

### Name: Social

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 2 references coded [3.31% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.65% Coverage

- we all have various strengths and weaknesses and we all over the course of time are aware of them

#### Reference 2 - 2.66% Coverage

- Working specifically with this team is really nice because we all have a similar belief in what learning and as to what education is
- At the same time are completely willing and able to challenge each other on things, I think that is really important, to give critical thinking as to what you believe in and be able to go back and re-evaluate and defend your position and we do that really well

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 3 references coded [2.36% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.42% Coverage

- Best thing, never feels like am alone with anything

#### Reference 2 - 0.75% Coverage

- Any time I have any kind of problem, big or small, I talk to one of my team mates about it

#### Reference 3 - 1.19% Coverage

- I think the feeling that you always have someone with you, that it is never you against the kids it's a group of teachers working with the kids

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 2 references coded [7.70% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 5.38% Coverage

- as an intern I tend to keep my mouth shut and listen its interesting see... 3 of them have been working together for a long time and then 4 of them now with Julie they all seem to pretty much have the same train of thought but at the same time they tend to disagree on things and its almost like a big cluster when they speak

#### Reference 2 - 2.32% Coverage

- They feed off each other well and I think that their ideas... they take words out of each other's mouths, so its like their on the same page

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 2 references coded [3.38% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.42% Coverage

- Know each other's personal lives

Reference 2 - 2.96% Coverage

- Josh and I have been together 9 years, we are the oldest, Janice came next year, Korman 2 years after that and Julie is the baby, only on second year here
- Josh and I go to Red Sox games, we know each other's kids, talk about this in class

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 3 references coded [5.34% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.38% Coverage

- Gong into team meetings even for venting or telling a good story I felt disconnected with what was going on with the kids in other classes

Reference 2 - 1.46% Coverage

- And sometimes its just like from the general like "ah this kid is driving me crazy" and the someone says "yep he's behaving the same exact way" so

Reference 3 - 2.51% Coverage

- Sometimes the kid is not bad enough that you need to search someone down, its just like it comes up in the conversation and all of a sudden you are talking about it' like I never really saw how bad he is until now I see its happening in all the classes

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [0.97% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.97% Coverage

- So when we meet and we sit down and talk about it sometimes it's the only time when I do that

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [3.00% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.60% Coverage

- You feel that sense of comradery again

Reference 2 - 2.41% Coverage

- It definitely makes you tighter as a group when you do know you're meeting every day or every other day, with just 4 or 6 people so you definitely bond

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 1 reference coded [1.95% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.95% Coverage

- It kind of opens up line of communication and I feel that professionally and socially that really helps to just allow us to sit back and look at each others work with not necessarily a judgmental eye but just a "this is what I'm doing" that worked for you

## Appendix F: Pedagogical

### Name: Pedagogical

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 3 references coded [1.71% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.37% Coverage

- So it helps balance out some of our pedagogical beliefs

Reference 2 - 0.52% Coverage

- help me critically evaluate some of my own practices and beliefs in education,

Reference 3 - 0.82% Coverage

- what they do in their classroom and how they deal with different content and issues and how I can apply that to what I do

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 1 reference coded [2.03% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.03% Coverage

- If it ever turns into like you have a hard kid, its not like I don't know what I'm going to do with this kid, its like what are WE going to do with this kid
- Even if you don't have administration support, you have that support with your teachers

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [4.50% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.50% Coverage

- I know what time period Janice is in
- When she is in Reconstruction, James Garfield use to do math problems just for fun
- I teach them a proof on the Pythagorean Theorem that was created by Garfield
- Students have no idea who Garfield is, tell them he was one of their former president who would wake up in the morning and do math problems and here is his proof

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 4 references coded [5.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.97% Coverage

- I feel it's a connection not only to the other teachers but to the content of what their teaching

## Reference 2 - 1.46% Coverage

- And sometimes its just like from the general like “ah this kid is driving me crazy” and the someone says “yep he’s behaving the same exact way” so

## Reference 3 - 2.51% Coverage

- Sometimes the kid is not bad enough that you need to search someone down, its just like it comes up in the conversation and all of a sudden you are talking about it’ like I never really saw how bad he is until now I see its happening in all the classes

## Reference 4 - 0.65% Coverage

- one of us might pick up on something that the other one doesn’t

## &lt;Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb&gt; - § 4 references coded [5.75% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.38% Coverage

- Sometimes the teacher collaboration, sometimes it’s the only time when I stop and look at what I’m doing honestly, being a new teacher

## Reference 2 - 0.97% Coverage

- So when we meet and we sit down and talk about it sometimes it’s the only time when I do that

## Reference 3 - 1.69% Coverage

- Without other people’s in out its like almost too over whelming its like “wait what do I need to think about, what do I need to do, how can I improve my teaching?”

## Reference 4 - 1.72% Coverage

- Its just so crucial to the student success for us to have common time to sit down and talk about their needs and talk about how we are meeting them and how we are not

## &lt;Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario&gt; - § 2 references coded [5.48% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 4.04% Coverage

- We have professional learning groups PLG’s where we sit down and talk about what we are doing in our classrooms and we might bring a piece of work to the table or a chapter in a book to the table and we discuss how we are doing something positive with that or o get feedback

- It kind of opens up line of communication and I feel that professionally and socially that really helps to just allow us to sit back and look at each others work with not necessarily a judgmental eye but just a “this is what I’m doing” that worked for you

Reference 2 - 1.43% Coverage

- What they are really trying to get us to do is look at student work, what we can do to help students improve in certain areas as teachers and using each other to sort of attack that goal

## Appendix G: Drawbacks

### Name: Drawback

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 1 reference coded [1.22% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 1.22% Coverage

- The down side of that is you never have a a team of teachers come in from the other side of the world, I have never had an art teacher sit down and talk to me about how I write tests

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 1 reference coded [2.79% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 2.79% Coverage

- I don't see the math department as much as I see my team, but I feel like ... 2 women that I work with, we write tests together and all, they are clear across the building and I'll go 3 or 4 days without them but we communicate do much on email that I feel like we're on the same page

## Appendix H: More Collaborative Time

### Name: More Collaborative Time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 1 reference coded [0.68% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.68% Coverage

- I think more opportunity to discuss ideas and beliefs with other people in other parts of the building

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [0.68% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.68% Coverage

- Maybe more collaboration with other teams

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [0.43% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.43% Coverage

- have professional development days

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 1 reference coded [0.17% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

- Time to plan and reflect

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 3 references coded [1.05% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.33% Coverage

- have more planning time with my department

Reference 2 - 0.53% Coverage

- We don't have a lot of time to get together and look at our assessment

Reference 3 - 0.20% Coverage

- More common planning time,

## Appendix I: Collaborative

### Name: Collaborative

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 1 reference coded [0.23% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.23% Coverage

- Hands down my collaborative time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 1 reference coded [0.19% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.19% Coverage

- Collaborative prep time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [3.46% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.46% Coverage

- As far as their emotions I would say team time, we really discuss who's having a tough time who's having a good time, what can we do to do better for those students, what do we do to do better for the group

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 1 reference coded [0.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.33% Coverage

- I would choose to have more time with my team

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 1 reference coded [0.26% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.26% Coverage

- Collaborative, definitely

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [1.69% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.69% Coverage

- Collaborative time is where we can actually sit and talk about the students and how we are meeting their needs, how we can best do things like interdisciplinary units

## **Appendix J: Administration**

### **Name: #5 Administration**

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 7 references coded [4.36% Coverage]

#### **Reference 1 - 0.75% Coverage**

- feel as a classroom teacher that your views and opinions can be heard at least superficially by the administrator

#### **Reference 2 - 0.60% Coverage**

- I think you need to feel that there are not any barriers between you and the administrator

#### **Reference 3 - 0.91% Coverage**

- nothing worst than being frustrated with something that is really an easy fix but you don't feel comfortable going to the administrator

#### **Reference 4 - 0.68% Coverage**

- Being able to talk to your administrator and not having that barrier up I think is really important

#### **Reference 5 - 0.23% Coverage**

- our principal does an excellent job

#### **Reference 6 - 0.57% Coverage**

- Claudia's job is primarily classroom management behavior issues as well as evaluation

#### **Reference 7 - 0.62% Coverage**

- I don't have a ton of interaction with her, but when I do she is usually pretty responsive

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 2 references coded [1.36% Coverage]

#### **Reference 1 - 0.58% Coverage**

- I'm really very happy with our current principal I think he's awesome

## Reference 2 - 0.78% Coverage

- I'm less pleased with our Dean, she's an administrator, she's in charge of all our discipline

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [1.06% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.06% Coverage

- I think the principal does a great job over-seeing everything

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 3 references coded [1.87% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.27% Coverage

- Do they leave us alone

## Reference 2 - 0.68% Coverage

- Do you have the trust to let us do our jobs correctly

## Reference 3 - 0.92% Coverage

- The only thing I need admin for is discipline that I can't handle in class

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 2 references coded [1.70% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.53% Coverage

- Its huge!! Its absolutely huge!!
- Do you have a principal who's ultimate desire is to build comradery necessary for people to want to do their jib or do you have a principal who is trying to micromanage your behaviors

## Reference 2 - 0.17% Coverage

- He is also approachable.

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 2 references coded [1.10% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.46% Coverage

- I think it's secondary as to how your team is

## Reference 2 - 0.64% Coverage

- I think our principal now is in the background until we need them

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 3 references coded [8.73% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.44% Coverage

- You can usually tell when in a school there is a good administration because the teachers are happy and they feel that their opinion matters

## Reference 2 - 4.96% Coverage

- The school climate is different, the way the teachers interact with each other might be different and that trickles down to the kids
- I think good administration needs to have sort of an omniscient presence, this sort of good entity that just let's the teachers do their thing with guidance
- When you feel like you're being micro-managed or like you don't have any freedom... and teachers are pretty stalwart independent bunch, so when they feel they're being stifled its usually not good

## Reference 3 - 2.33% Coverage

- Sometimes all these other people who pop in occasionally they don't really know what's going on and so they try to give you feed back and help you along and its like "go away, you weren't here, you don't know what's going on."

## &lt;Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England&gt; - § 2 references coded [5.45% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 3.51% Coverage

- Somebody made a point recently we don't have a contract right now, and in most high schools teachers would be freaking out at this point this late in the year and we're just not
- Maybe that is the telling of the trust we have in the administration and the respect we have for them

## Reference 2 - 1.94% Coverage

- I think the overall perspective of the administration is very supportive that works very hard
- They are intelligent they're respected, there's no animosity

## &lt;Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom&gt; - § 1 reference coded [1.90% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.90% Coverage

- Quite a bit
- How they run the school, how they respond to crisis or adversity, how they communicate
- Its huge, its huge

## &lt;Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario&gt; - § 3 references coded [3.31% Coverage]

**Reference 1 - 1.73% Coverage**

- I still don't feel like they were blowing smoke on those first two days, still feel like there's support there, I feel like they are genuinely interested and dedicated wow how we do and making sure that we're comfortable here

**Reference 2 - 0.46% Coverage**

- My personal opinion is that administration is very supportive

**Reference 3 - 1.12% Coverage**

- When I had my evaluation it was very comfortable, they weren't scrutinizing what I was doing, they were helping me to use the evaluation as a tool

## Appendix K: Teacher Pay

### Name: Teacher Pay

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 1 reference coded [0.23% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.23% Coverage

- Easy answer is always, pay me more

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 1 reference coded [0.18% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.18% Coverage

- Does more money count?

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [0.20% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

- More money

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [0.26% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.26% Coverage

- Obvious answer is \$

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [0.22% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.22% Coverage

- Higher pay, honestly

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [0.44% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.44% Coverage

- Profession in general I think money

## Appendix L: Ideal Collaborative Time

### Name: #7 Ideal Collaborative Time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 5 references coded [2.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.23% Coverage

- I would love a delayed start day

Reference 2 - 0.71% Coverage

- Create a structured scheduled time that people can get things done that need to get done, without students

Reference 3 - 0.41% Coverage

- We are very open about kids interrupting us in team meetings

Reference 4 - 0.33% Coverage

- No time here is sacred in terms of student-free

Reference 5 - 0.61% Coverage

- We work as professionals, treat me as a professional, give me time to do professional work

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 1 reference coded [0.25% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.25% Coverage

- I think what we have is good

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [0.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.80% Coverage

- I think the morning is our most productive time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [1.05% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.05% Coverage

- As long as we have the time available I don't think its really an issue, I don't care

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 2 references coded [2.39% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.74% Coverage

- An hour's probably not enough, probably not need more than an hour and a half
- But if you really want people to engage in a project, if you really want them to be able to do meaningful and serious work there has got to be extensive windows of time

Reference 2 - 0.65% Coverage

- more time needed where we are designing a big unit, we say can you give us a s retreat day?

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 2 references coded [2.23% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.90% Coverage

- Maybe a true dream would be a pull-out every once in a while, they use to have rolling subs where once every 2 months or so they just have a gang of subs come in and sub for us for half the day

Reference 2 - 0.33% Coverage

- Once a month maybe have a half day

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 2 references coded [2.22% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.73% Coverage

- if there was some way we could get paid to do some stuff over the summer

Reference 2 - 1.48% Coverage

- If we had some kind of time set aside where you could get together with your team and put together these really good IDU's that would be amazing

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [1.19% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.19% Coverage

- I think we need to work on is improve time spent on curriculum and disciplinary development work

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [3.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.45% Coverage

- Again if we just didn't have all the kids stuff on our plate there would be plenty of time

Reference 2 - 1.89% Coverage

- You'd think we should with 80 minutes, but then the Best Practice once a month or this RTI twice a month, few meetings

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 3 references coded [2.94% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage

- I'd like to see time in the summer to collaborate

Reference 2 - 0.40% Coverage

- I'd like to see more collaboration within the team

Reference 3 - 2.16% Coverage

- Building collaborating units, we don't do a lot of that during team time because there's so many other things we have to do and again we have the PLG's and the RIT and we have guidance and all these other components and so the housekeeping pretty much takes over every single meeting

## Appendix M: Personal to Collaborative Time

### Name: #8 Personal to Collaborative Time

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 2 references coded [1.10% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.40% Coverage

- Personal prep time usually gets taken up by catch up stuff

Reference 2 - 0.70% Coverage

- I don't do an actual lot of prep during the day because I will not shut my door if a student wants help

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 2 references coded [1.20% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.29% Coverage

- I get enough done with both of them

Reference 2 - 0.90% Coverage

- You have a duty in what use to be a prep block so you can imagine why some teachers are not happy about that

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 3 references coded [4.90% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.38% Coverage

- During team time all of us are still doing our own little things on the computers

Reference 2 - 1.51% Coverage

- During personal prep time we get a lot more logistical things done like grading, planning

Reference 3 - 2.02% Coverage

- During personal prep time you get more logistical things done and during team time you get more pedagogical things done

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 1 reference coded [2.31% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.31% Coverage

- This time is used strictly for my classes, the in class issues and team time is really for the "Tween-class" issues

- As far as quality they same value I think, just in different focus

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 2 references coded [1.75% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.10% Coverage

- I'm more likely to be writing curriculum with my team and more likely to be performing menial teacher tasks like grading and making copies during prep time

Reference 2 - 0.65% Coverage

- I think the serious work that only focuses on my classroom happens outside of the school day

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 2 references coded [1.24% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.90% Coverage

- I do little or no team stuff during my prep time but no academic stuff during my team time

Reference 2 - 0.33% Coverage

- My prep is purely for my academic

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [2.37% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.37% Coverage

- I have a prep time when there are 3 other study halls so the kids are always coming in my room and they are asking questions which is great, but then I realize "Oh my God, I only have a half an hour left to do what I wanted to do"

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 4 references coded [4.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.77% Coverage

- My prep time is working with kids, I don't use it for myself

Reference 2 - 1.41% Coverage

- I've been closing myself in the library for half of it for a couple of weeks writing letters of recommendations

Reference 3 - 0.37% Coverage

- Grading and all that goes home

Reference 4 - 1.73% Coverage

- The last team I was on was very male oriented and they did not enjoy spending time talking about kids, they felt that was a waste of time

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [3.16% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.65% Coverage

- Both are needed, I have a family so I just don't have the time outside of school to be monkeying around

Reference 2 - 1.51% Coverage

- But I choose to do a tutorial because I know that I can for 50 or 60 minutes grade papers, plan

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 4 references coded [3.26% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.61% Coverage

- My personal prep time I get to use however I want, and I use it to the fullest

Reference 2 - 1.08% Coverage

- Collaborative time like I said I feel like its taken up with all this jargon we are required to do and not so much what we really need to do

Reference 3 - 1.17% Coverage

- We are really on the same page, we get to the same results if we have goals, but it's the every other week we have RIT and every other month we have PLG

Reference 4 - 0.42% Coverage

- every team meeting we have something that's mandated

## **Appendix N1: Andrew**

### **#1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction**

- I use a very simple strategy, its Ok to be angry and tired at the end of the day, but you can't wake up tired and angry, you have to wake up very energetic and happy to be here
- The ability and willingness to impart knowledge, to really see the preverbal light bulb go off in a kid, I think is really the thing that drives most teachers
- When you work and you work and you work with the hope and the virtual belief that that's going to happen
- You just hope it happens so you can see it
- To be satisfied to feel like you're making a difference to quote a catch phrase
- To feel that you have some type of meaning and use

### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions**

- Teaming is great, when I applied for different jobs one of the things that I looked at was who would I be working with, would it be school with the traditional departmental structure or would it be a team
- And it came down to school that would have paid me significantly better than it does here, but I knew the people I would be working with and how they interact with each other and what their beliefs were and I felt that I would fit in with them
- I wouldn't say we all match each other perfectly, we all have various strengths and weaknesses and we all over the course of time are aware of them
- So it helps balance out some of our pedagogical beliefs
- Definitely being new and younger that have helped and shape some of the things I do, to help me critically evaluate some of my own practices and beliefs in education, simply be listening to what they do in their classroom and how they deal with different content and issues and how I can apply that to what I do
- It has been really helpful in my development to see what they do in classroom practice and to see them interact with each other and to kind of learn that it is very informal very non-structured mentorship by association
- Simple things like how do I get a field trip form signed/ I feel more comfortable going to someone who helps ease that first few years of social anxiety you have as a teacher which allows you to practice your craft a little bit better
- Working specifically with this team is really nice because we all have a similar belief in what learning and as to what education is
- At the same time are completely willing and able to challenge each other on things, I think that is really important, to give critical thinking as to what you believe in and be able to go back and re-evaluate and defend your position and we do that really well
- That helps develop both socially and pedagogically in the classroom

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- Because we are a large sophomore team and we have interns we typically don't take a lot of people on to our PLC PLG so it allows us to really focus on things like interdisciplinary learning or to have different critiques and evaluations of assessment or standard teaching practices
- The down side of that is you never have a a team of teachers come in from the other side of the world, I have never had an art teacher sit down and talk to me about how I write tests
- I am completely willing and open to present something at a PLG with my team and have them be willing to just take it apart
- Here you go guys this needs some work let me open up a word document and you just go and write and give me all the feedback you can on this
- It really helps, the bottom line is it helps kids learn it helps students develop and that to have that openness to be able to communicate between different content areas, between different belief systems and what a lot of people think about education is helpful and just getting you to think is always a good thing, don't be scared to think

### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- I have had a lot of pharmaceutical industry doing research outside of the education world
- Do to the nature of what we do here, working with 95% of your co-workers changing every 9 months the people who do remain the same, your team mates, the familiar faces, the personalities need to be balanced
- I think there is no way in dealing with teenagers that put you a little on edge can you hide that you can hide what you truly are or what you truly believe
- Everyone has good days and everyone has bad days and having the ability to recognize that with someone you work really closely with and go "OK, you're not having a great day, that's fine. Sure your new born is up, that happens"
- Janice who has two kids, when you're pregnant there are days when you go "Janice, OK what do you need? Do you need me to go get your lunch today?"
- And Julie is newer so that first few months is like feeling her out, "What do you believe in, what are you thinking?"
- Once you get to know each other we are fiercely protective of each other, but at the same time the first one who is going to critique me or make fun of me is going to be one of these guys
- But heaven forbid if someone within the building or someone outside the building tried to critique any work I presented, any single one of them would step up
- That's how our personalities work

- I think that's essential because it rubs off on kids to see us joking with each other or be willing to walk in and say "Oh I see what we are doing in math today, did you ever think about this Mrs. Gagnon, what if I thought about this this way?"
- "Well that's a good idea and thank you."
- The free flow and we are not afraid to leave doors open and wander around in the rooms
- That all builds personality and character
- *"I like that the idea that you could have someone critique your work and feel safe."*
- Very very safe
- And its not superficial critique, it is "you know what I think you are doing this completely wrong on every level and I really need you to re-evaluate this. Here's an article or here's something I tried a few years ago. Can you at least give it a shot"
- And to be willing to say that top somebody and not fear that they are going to ostracize me
- Or 3 days later to be able to say "yep, you were right I tried it, it didn't work, going back to the old way."
- And to not feel that I am this masterful soothe-sayer that can fix things, but to be willing to throw things back and forth is really helpful

#### **#5: Administration**

- I think its important that you feel as a classroom teacher that your views and opinions can be heard at least superficially by the administrator whether or not he truly values your opinions or is just giving you face time is irrelevant
- I think you need to feel that there are not any barriers between you and the administrator
- To go and say something because there is nothing worst than being frustrated with something that is really an easy fix but you don't feel comfortable going to the administrator
- You get frustrated and you get dissatisfied and then wheels start coming off
- Reality if you felt comfortable going to your administrator saying, "Hey I don't have any markers verses, Oh my gosh I have to go buy markers and they keep getting stolen this is ridiculous, my school doesn't provide markers." All of a sudden you have this negative view on your school verses going, "Hey can you get me some markers?" "Oh sure the art teacher has a huge stack, I'm sure she wouldn't mind."
- Being able to talk to your administrator and not having that barrier up I think is really important
- With our new administration here, our principal does an excellent job of that
- Very open door policy, its not like a doctor's office where you visit to schedule an appointment

- You literally just walk in, “Hey I have this idea or this issue.” “OK well can we schedule a time to talk about it.”
- It sounds simple but it is really nice even if he’s in a meeting to stop and have a 3 minute face-to-face and decide “Can I solve this now or do we schedule you later”
- This is immensely helpful to my overall view of how things work here
- *“How long has this principal been here?”*
- He’s been here since 4 years.
- He’s been here as long as I have
- I was an intern under the previous principal for 6 and a half months and then an interim principal
- Then the interim hired me and Joe came in and has been the principal since
- *“How about the dean, Claudia?”*
- Claudia’s job is primarily classroom management behavior issues as well as evaluation
- So if I have an issue with a student I send them to her
- Typically, actually in 5 years I have sent 3 kids to her , I usually deal with most of my discipline in house
- Its easier, so I don’t have a ton of interaction with her, but when I do she is usually pretty responsive
- I know she can’t make the kind of changes just by her position. But what she does, I consider her a behavior child issue and if I want structural philosophical policy change I have to go to the principal
- *“Do you think having the team aspect helps you with your classroom management?”*
- Yes, immensely
- Regardless of who you are or how long you’ve been here you can always learn something or get something from someone else
- I would say in an average year, 25 to 30% of our overall team meetings we will discuss a generic student issue. “So and so isn’t doing work. OK let’s look, have you done anything? Do you find anything that works with this kid?”
- Without fail we’ll find a kid who will refuse to do any history or English work cause they are very low readers, but have exceptional math scores.
- Our math teachers would not generally be concerned with this student’s grades.
- This happened a few weeks ago someone said, “What’s going on with this kid?” and our math teacher says, “He’s got straight “A’s” I don’t know what you’re talking about.”
- The child had a fear of English where there was a lot of public reading and speaking and an issue that he had to share a lot of stuff , was petrified
- Something like that I would have never known unless I had that team meeting to discuss something like that
- And it happens pretty regularly
- To say, “Hey I had rough class with so-and-so, heads up.”

### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Easy answer is always, pay me more
- I think more opportunity to discuss ideas and beliefs with other people in other parts of the building
- The down side of having this beautiful building that is quartered off is I don't end up on the other side of the world, as I call it, very often
- I know people over there very well but there would absolutely no reason for me ever to talk to a house English teacher
- They're not in my content, they're not in my academy and they don't teach the same community that I do
- There are probably 10 or 12 people in the building who don't know who I am
- I am typically identified as the big sketchy guy with the beard walking around
- They know I work here, they know I do something here, they probably don't know my actual name
- I think our structure really hurts us with staff relations like that
- Other schools have a bowling team with a combined age of over 140, so it forces you to get to know others
- All the new teachers can't hang out, its all in fun
- We are doing this in school cultures; obviously you don't have to but...

### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I would love a delayed start day
- When students show up at 10:00 and I expected to be here at my normal 7:40
- That's where you can do collaboration, where you can do meetings
- It is a very difficult sell to the public
- If you're not teaching you're not doing anything
- In an ideal world convincing people of that
- Create a structured scheduled time that people can get things done that need to get done, without students cause they're ...
- I live about 20 minutes away and Jesse lives about 40 minutes away and last year we had a 2 hour delay here but it wasn't bad when I left
- Got here and there was nobody here
- I see Jesse who says you have a 2 hour delay
- I'm not going to go home it's not worth it, I already had breakfast, you know what we're just going to work
- I got more work done in 2 hours as far as planning and instruction, actually did a little research on stuff, just the house-keeping stuff that can't get done when you have 85 kids
- We are very open about kids interrupting us in team meetings unless we have a specific issue
- Kids can walk in kids walk in on lunch all the time

- We are not a total shut down, we are literally on from about 5 after 7 until that last kid leaves about 5 after 3
- No time here is sacred in terms of student-free
- Kids know where I am all the time if they don't know where I am they'll email me and I'll get back to them
- Kids will come in during prep, typical before tests and stuff
- I have kids who just come in to talk
- I was editing English essays the other day during prep time
- It's a cultural expectation here and in my mind its your responsibility, you can't say no to a kid
- I have no problem after 3:00, but between 7 and 3 I am here to do work for you
- If that means I have to smash a sandwich in my face to help you with your math because you don't like your math teacher, what ever it is
- We work as professionals, treat me as a professional, give me time to do professional work
- Even with personal and collaborative time you can't do professional work in the middle of the day
- You have kids everywhere, emails

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- Personal prep time usually gets taken up by catch up stuff
- Talk to this person, follow up on that email
- Value face-to-face communication more than the average 25 year old
- Its really important to go and talk to somebody after you sent an email just to follow up
- I spend a lot of my time walking around, double checking and making sure things are all set
- The other part of that is I have a student or past student looking for stuff
- I don't do an actual lot of prep during the day because I will not shut my door if a student wants help
- Collaborative time we do a really nice job of putting the agenda up, working through an agenda and then at the same time there are definitely days where we are all have 90 minutes and do 30 minutes of work
- In converse we have 90 minutes and do 3 weeks worth of work
- Tomorrow is going to be a 90 minute 3 week work day
- Its bad when we are making Thursday morning's agenda on Tuesday afternoon
- You know that when you walk in, it goes up and we divide and concur
- We are really efficient and effective when we have a lot of stuff to do

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Hands down my collaborative time

- Especially when you're new to the profession and new to the building its very helpful because the nuances of who I call if... where do I go for... how do I... dumb little things that you are afraid to ask or don't know who to ask, you can ask your team mates
- Little tiny nuances of the building of how things work and why things work, not the super political culture of schools but the physical, how do I do this... my key doesn't work who do I see...
- Personal prep time is used by double checking on things

## Appendix N2: Janice

- 8 years at Noble
- 2 children, both girls

### #1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction

- Highly satisfied overall
- Only taught at Noble
- Like working on a team
- Doesn't like they are the 4<sup>th</sup> paid district in the area

### #2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions

- Best thing, never feels like am alone with anything
- I see adults all day long
- Not unusual for an adult to sit in my classroom
- I went and sat in English the other day and the kids asked "why are you here?" I replied, "Just for fun, I wanted to see what you were doing in English."
- Any time I have any kind of problem, big or small, I talk to one of my team mates about it
- Because I have access to them I don't have to wait for my prep time, or the end of the day
- I can go to them and say "what do you guys think about this..." and its done
- By being a team we loose the closeness with our department that other schools have
- I'm not close with my department, until this year where we wrote new curriculum for sophomore social studies, I have never worked with another member of the department on curriculum, but I have worked with my team on my curriculum
- I've my team my curriculum to help make it better but I have never worked with another social studies member
- I think when you gain one you have to loose something
- Departments meet once a month, I meet with my team every single day
- I don't feel that I have lost anything, we still get department time once a month and on half days, every 6 weeks or so we have a half day we get a couple hours
- I have met with the other sophomore teachers, we met for 3 days over the summer, but that was like our choice because we were writing this new curriculum
- I think the feeling that you always have someone with you, that it is never you against the kids it's a group of teachers working with the kids
- If it ever turns into like you have a hard kid, its not like I don't know what I'm going to do with this kid, its like what are WE going to do with this kid
- Even if you don't have administration support, you have that support with your teachers
- I just think that's so important

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- I think if you didn't have that built-in time in your schedule, you would always do things on your own
- I think teachers are so busy, I would envision that if you didn't have that built in time how would you do interdisciplinary work, or how would you meet about kids, or how would we do all the things that we do that are good for kids
- You would be forced to do them on your own time and you only have so much extra time
- I don't have extra time, so if I didn't have that built in time, even if I thought it was good for a kid I might not be able to do it because I would have to donate my own time
- I think we are able to do things like we have developed an interdisciplinary curriculum together
- We review each other's curriculum
- We discuss kids
- We work on things like we come up with things on our own a lot
- We were talking to another guy on the pod the other day and he said "I haven't seen any of the money from that grant" and we said "like that's funny we've seen a lot of it because we asked for it"
- We designed the mentoring thing last year
- We are very proactive and if you didn't have the time, I don't think any of that would happen or not nearly as much of it
- We've made alternate schedules for kids, like this one kid, I volunteered to let him stay in my room all day every day
- Honestly it didn't do any good to help him. But history was the only credit he was going to save, the other subjects were so far gone
- In a normal school you couldn't do things like that

### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- I think the good things that come from teaming, its hard work
- Basically I spend more time with these teachers than I spend with my family
- On our team we are all very strong personalities, we are all very passionate and while most of our philosophical beliefs are aligned, you're never going to find anyone that is 100% aligned
- And when we fight we fight to the death and that can make it really hard
- On the other hand we are at a point now that we have been together, well Julie was added last year, but the rest of us have been together along time and once you get to know someone's personality you can work around their strengths and weaknesses
- We just, we've learned how to work together

- For a long time I was the only woman on this team, they all joked that if “mama’s not happy, no ones happy”
- Thankful for Julie she gets some of the picking on now
- You are working very closely
- If you are not working on a team its just your curriculum, you can do it however you want, but when your working on a team its now 4 or 5 people’s curriculum
- And there’s compromises and sometimes your going to be really mad and sometimes you’re going to be really thankful that your team mate picked up some slack for you
- It’s a relationship, there’s ups and downs and its work for sure

#### **#5: Administration**

- Long pause
- I almost want to say that not really that much
- I’m really very happy with our current principal I think he’s awesome
- The contact I have with him is always positive
- I would say I’m less pleased with our Dean, she’s an administrator, she’s in charge of all our discipline
- I don’t really think it effects my job satisfaction
- There are parts that I don’t like and there are parts where I don’t think are handled correctly, but in the scheme of things it might anger me for a day or two here, but really when it comes down to it, I just decided that I handle my own discipline problems
- *If you send a student to administration they may not handle things the way you would want them to?*
- Or they may not handle it at all
- So really its what’s the point, if you are going to kick a kid out and they’re going to get sent back to you angrier than when they left in the same block, then I’d rather just keep them and deal with their anger
- We as a team don’t kick a lot of kids out
- The hardest kid I’ve ever had I have this year and I went and spoke to my dean about him and I said “I honestly don’t know what to do with him” and she said “You have to kick him out”, and I said “No”, and she said “You have to get over this idea where you won’t kick a kid out of class” and I was like “It’s a pride thing, its my job to handle them in my classroom” and she was like “It’s my job to handle them ...”

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Does more money count?
- I have been here for 9 years and I have not hit the \$40,000 mark yet
- I really am having trouble thinking of something
- I guess this grant we are working will give us money to do more stuff with kids

- I would like to do more stuff with kids like take them on more field trips and get them out in the world more and there's no money and we have to pay to use our district school busses and its like a ridiculous amount of money we have to pay so you can't do stuff with kids because there's never any money
- We got a grant to pay for the bussing to go to Boston with our kids but again you have to go out and spend time writing a grant to take kids to do something that's good for them
- I guess that's my biggest frustration is that there are things you want to do and you can't
- *I noticed there are picture out here of fly-fishing?*
- We go every year, the kids have to pay for it
- We make it so every kid can go so we organize fund raiser so when you try to do these things everything requires more of your time
- I guess the other thing is too, is in recent years with this scheduling they have kind of gotten away from, like the team meaning the kids use to be really sacred, like we had a schedule where we had all those kids for 4 blocks, so when we wanted to do interdisciplinary work we could make our own schedule
- Every year its gotten a little bit more away from that like adding the new math, it through that off because Julie will be teaching when none of the rest of us are
- So you can't just throughout Noble High School schedule any more
- Our guidance councilor and she folded down every kids that has a different schedule and its over half the kids
- What that means is now you have to make an alternate schedule for everyone of those kids to do interdisciplinary work
- So now something that we believes is good for kids has been made more difficult
- *"In the middle school where I taught you were given a block of time 7:45 to end of day and you made the schedules of when history was taught or when they are to go to industrial arts whatever. It was a lot of work at the beginning of the year but once it was done it was great. You could arrange things as a team because you knew what the schedule was."*

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I think what we have is good

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- I think they are the same, I get enough done with both of them
- We use to have twice as much prep time because we didn't have to monitor tutorials
- Now every teacher has a tutorial, I have a writing section
- I like that better than doing a tutorial, cause I hate tutorials
- *What is a tutorial?*
- It's a study hall, where no one actually does any studying, it's a babysitting block
- So some teachers feel like they don't have enough prep time

- I still feel like we have enough prep time
- You have a duty in what use to be a prep block so you can imagine why some teachers are not happy about that
- I think 80 minutes every other day enough
- Maybe my first year of teaching that wouldn't have been enough, but I think at this point I get everything done

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Collaborative prep time
- I feel that personal prep time is only about curriculum and I think collaborative prep time is about kids
- Its about how to deal with kids
- Its about how to become a better teacher
- Its about how to offer better curriculum to kids that is not just about your related study
- We pull in a lot of experts during that time, like guidance or special ed comes during that time, our dean comes during that time
- Its all about how can we make this better for kids and how can we work better with kids and sometimes how can we make kids work better with us
- And my personal prep time is just like grading
- I do sometimes work on curriculum but I very rarely sit and say "I would like to discuss with myself how to make this curriculum ..."
- I do reflections
- *"Its housekeeping?"*
- Yea, I don't want it taken away from me but its necessary but none the less...
- I don't get work done at home because of the 2 year old and 10 month old
- *Do you have a time during your collaborative time that you schedule parent meetings?*
- We had one yesterday, this particular student had 4 nm (not meets) and parent teacher conference are in 2 weeks and the parents didn't want to wait 2 weeks so they called his guidance councilor and she emailed us if we could meet during team meeting, so yesterday a half hour of our team meeting was meeting with them

#### *Shared own history of teaming and how we were put into teams, balloons*

- A lot of administrators think you can't just work with the people you like, its not that, I mean I might have chosen these people to be my friends, I don't know, but its that when you work together for a long time you've learned to work together, its really a process
- We've never had a year where more than one person left

- The White Team has had years where they've had 2 or maybe 3 new people, or every year someone has left, they've done good things but its like you can't get out of your own way because their always doing that storming phase ya know
- And we are like half the storming, we know how to storm and come back and be functional too

*Discussion about interviewing another team*

- Freshman and sophomores are called teams and juniors and seniors are called houses
- Some houses don't have team meeting even though they are supposed to, some use the time as well as teams
- They lose kids to vocational, so don't have as cohesive a group, they have smaller groups, because by junior year you've lost a lot of kids who drop out or whatever

### **Appendix N3: Jeff**

- Intern through UNH
- Full-time and not getting paid
- Write own unit and thesis for Masters
- Co-teach with Janice

#### **#1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction**

- Student satisfaction, when they perform and behave well
- When the teachers come to lunch together and interact with each other it is a big positive part of their day
- I've been told numerous times by various people on this team that their favorite time of the day is lunch or team meetings

#### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions**

- Something I've been experiencing a lot because as an intern I tend to keep my mouth shut and listen its interesting see... 3 of them have been working together for a long time and then 4 of them now with Julie they all seem to pretty much have the same train of thought but at the same time they tend to disagree on things and its almost like a big cluster when they speak
- Josh always tries to over talk over everyone else and he's got very deep pedagogical thoughts and I think, I don't think the rest of them don't per say but they don't speak that way
- Janice and Jesse are very practical, not saying that Josh isn't but ..
- What I mean by practical is they like to go through the steps but they don't want to do it like ...
- Josh says lets research it a little bit, let's do it with the kids and lets see how it turns out
- They feed off each other well and I think that their ideas... they take words out of each other's mouths, so its like their on the same page

#### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- I feel that if in a traditional school setting where you have an English department and a science department, people don't communicate as well together
- They are on different pages, they have different students
- Here we all have the same students, we all know what each other is teaching
- We keep each other updated, make sure we see how students are doing in each class
- We don't just care about our own there's no selfishness with that
- I think it benefits it a lot

- I can see the negatives of it... you don't get to see different kids, you get the same kids, at the same time there are the electives
- I just got kids through the Civics class where there were seniors and juniors, I don't normally get seniors and juniors
- Then there is the writing center I get seniors and juniors and its nice it's a little different
- For the teachers I think its definitely a benefit
- They don't seem to get sick of each other which is nice
- If they do they definitely hide it or they deal with it

#### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- They have disagreements with each other but it is never unsolved there's always a resolution and they work through it
- For the most part I'd say they are most of the time in agreement and they enjoying each other's ideas
- Sometimes they don't get along with other teams, not emotionally but pedagogical differences
- Intra-team is definitely good

#### **#5: Administration**

- It's a decent factor especially in this school where you have a dean who helps with discipline and things of that nature as opposed to a couple of assistant principals, which is what I was use to
- I think the principal does a great job over-seeing everything
- He is very organized
- The deans ... I feel there could be more of them and the teachers often say that
- Its tough to send the same kids over and over again for the same things
- But I think it takes a lot of the burden off the teachers
- A student being disruptive, "go to the dean"
- You try to do things first it just doesn't go to that
- *Do you find that let's say when one teacher has a problem with a student instead of sending them to the dean or out of the pod, do you see them giving a time-out so that another teacher can deal with them*
- I have heard of that happening, but I haven't seen it since I've been here
- We have definitely said "hey if you need to take a walk go for it" but I've never had it be like "so-and-so sent me in here..."
- But I feel like it would work if that teacher is not busy and would be better equipped to deal with hat person

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- More money
- Maybe more collaboration with other teams
- I know they have department meetings which gets other teams together
- I have yet to be a part of an academy meeting and don't know what they pertain to
- I know in department meetings Janice meets with other sophomore social studies teachers
- But I've never seen whole teams meeting with each other to discuss things
- Probably because the schedule doesn't allow for it

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I think the morning is our most productive time
- On the whole teachers want to get home, they have families to get to
- We get an hour and 20 minutes in team time
- We get a lot accomplished in this time

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- During team time all of us are still doing our own little things on the computers
- But also at the same time talking about what needs to be talked about during team time
- If someone has an issue with their lesson they may throw it out and see what kind of feedback they get from their team
- During personal prep time we get a lot more logistical things done like grading, planning
- These are things that wouldn't be done during team time cause there are more valuable things to get done
- During personal prep time you get more logistical things done and during team time you get more pedagogical things done

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Needs of my students I see as their education and their happiness and stuff like that
- As far as their emotions I would say team time, we really discuss who's having a tough time who's having a good time, what can we do to do better for those students, what do we do to do better for the group
- We are going on a trip to Boston and we are thinking about how we are going to work that out with people
- I feel I can meet their educational needs better during my personal prep time

## **Appendix N4: Jesse**

Teaches Math: Geometry, Algebra 2, 35 Sophomores, AP Seniors

2 children: 6 year old boy, 1 year old girl

### **#1: Characteristics describe satisfaction:**

- Do I want to come back everyday
- Did I do a good thing, help out a student
- Able to autonomous enough to be trusted to do my job
- Way I teach works, students respond at end of year with positive remarks “not like course, but you are OK”

### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact social and pedagogical interactions:**

#### **Social**

- Do things out of school before having own kids
- Know each other’s personal lives
- Gives impression to students that the team has a focus goal, we can predict how each other may respond, since of unity from a teacher perspective, kids pick up on it
- We are part of a team and the teachers know what they are doing
- Josh and I have been together 9 years, we are the oldest, Janice came next year, Korman 2 years after that and Julie is the baby, only on second year here
- Josh and I go to Red Sox games, we know each other’s kids, talk about this in class

#### **Pedagogical**

- Josh teaches Great Gatsby, I can talk about Gatsby in class
- Favorite question for students “What’s so great about Gatsby and not so great about Gatsby?”
- Science and math have a natural connection
- I know what time period Janice is in
- When she is in Reconstruction, James Garfield use to do math problems just for fun
- I teach them a proof on the Pythagorean Theorem that was created by Garfield
- Students have no idea who Garfield is, tell them he was one of their former president who would wake up in the morning and do math problems and here is his proof

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- For our group its wide open, all get a chance to speak
- We know when a student is struggling almost immediately because we meet every other day, we say so-and-so had a break down and was sent to the nurse, What's going on?
- We know quicker if something is going bad or good

#### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- All extremely different but we all work hard
- I don't think it has anything with personality as long as you're pulling your weight
- *"So you've been with Josh 9 years?" "In that time would you consider yourself as a group of adults like a family?"*
- Sure, yea, a professional family
- We argue and bicker all the time, and at the end of the day go home
- *"You can handle conflicts w/o causing a division?"*
- (laughs) Sometimes we take things personally, but ...
- Half of us are Rep and half Dem get into some hysterical political conversations

#### **#5: Administration**

- Do they leave us alone, really goes back to the first question
- Do you have the trust to let us do our jobs correctly
- If you want to come to class and see for yourself, the door's wide open
- Obviously admin can come in at any time
- Interns, they ask the interns "Which class is the best for you to see?" I tell them pick one, that keeps me on my game
- The only thing I need admin for is discipline that I can't handle in class
- If its gotten to the point that a student needs to be removed
- *"Have you had many conflicts with that?"* No, generally I will do less than 10 referrals a year and usually it's the same one or two kids *"The button pushers."*
- Yea, I'm at that point with one student now he can't bring his lap-top into class because he can't use it properly, he likes to play games and goof off, so the next day he brings it in, so I say "you've got to get it out of here" student says "no", I say "OK come with me..." I don't argue the students know, they know right off the bat, they will never serve detention with me ,I'll handle it all in class
- If discipline escalates to the point where a Dean needs to get involved that will happen, you can deal with it not me
- *"Do you feel that when admin does step in that they handle it the way you would like or is there ever a time when you go, ah...?"*
- Both times where I do like it and times where "What are you doing bringing this kid back to me?" You can't do that, there goes the whole dynamics of the class

- Rarely does that occur for me
- Sometimes its handled the way I see as appropriate and sometimes its not
- *“Do you feel like you know your students better than admin, you know what’s happening at home or Skippy is not feeling well ...”*
- Absolutely, students I know really well I can tell when they walk in if they’re having a good day
- *“I need to back up here, how many students are on Team 1?”*
- Enrollment ahs been as much as 110 – 115, and we are now down to 80
- *“Is that from the beginning of the year?”*
- A group of 80 sophomores, 110 was like 4 or 5 years ago
- *“Do you keep a team for 1 year or are you one of those who follow along?”*
- *“How do you feel about that, do you like having a group of kids for one year or would you rather follow them for 4 years?”*
- I don’t know how I would like it because I’ve never done it, positive is if you have a great group of kids you’ll have a great 4 years
- What are you going to get freshmen year? That’s the whole key
- Actually talked about looping
- Use to have a team freshmen and sophomore years, if a kid didn’t get along with a certain teacher parent could request to change teams
- Talked about looping sophomore and junior years
- Freshman is transition year, sophomores and juniors are meat and potatoes, seniors are ready to leave, check-out after Thanksgiving

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Obvious answer is \$
- Would like to have students who do homework and like my class, I have a couple
- They don’t like math and trying to teach something they don’t like
- They have a preconception of “I’m bad at this and I’m not going to do well.” That’s very difficult to overcome
- I just finished my Masters degree 2 summers ago, I wish I was able to that quicker and easier
- Only allowed to take 2 classes a year, I wanted to take 4 but they wouldn’t let me
- *“How does that work, allow but they would cover the expenses?”*
- Yea they’ll cover 6 credits I wanted to take 12, could have finished up in 3 years instead of 6 years
- *“Does your district provide you with opportunities to do workshops in house or out that they might cover expense s?”*
- Yea, as long as its approved, and can show it will help in my class, professional development

- Also have professional development days right before Christmas, no students but we are here doing workshops that you can sign up for
- Only issue with it is there are few that I find worth while

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- We have had our team meeting various times throughout the day and that doesn't really effect us at all
- As long as we have the time available I don't think its really an issue, I don't care

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- This time is used strictly for my classes, the in class issues and team time is really for the "Tween-class" issues
- As far as quality they same value I think, just in different focus
- *"Does the school give you a block of time and you decide which classes they go to, do you arrange that, or is that set by guidance?"*
- Set by guidance

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative time meet needs of students**

- Neither or both, apples to oranges
- Can't answer without knowing what are the needs of students
- *"So your personal prep time meets the needs of the students' academic, possibly?"*
- Yea, do we need to brush up on skills, but for team time like yesterday we had a student come in with Mom and Dad because he got the first progress report and he is not making it in his other classes
- Come up with an over-arching plan to get him to where he needs to be
- So I saw him this morning at 6:45, Dad brought him in
- *"Do you sometimes schedule parent meetings during your team time? Do you schedule guidance, I noticed you have a guidance and a special ed that is assigned to your team?"*
- Yes, and Lori has an agenda item dealing with her kids and Nancy and Shelly are guidance
- One or the two usually visit with us to check into information we need to know, concerns with that they may see that we don't know about yet and visa versa

## **Appendix N5: Josh**

- Teaches English 16 years
- Taught at Telstar a small school that there was one individual in each subject at each grade level, so it became much easier to say why wouldn't we give those individuals time together
- At Bonnie Eagle, just one year, no teams then but have now, just phasing in teams at the freshman level when I was there
- They are a partner of ours in the small learning communities grant
- Nobel started in early 1990, 91 happened quickly at grades 9 and 10
- Teams that were very successful, high levels of by-in for 7 to 8 years before they worked their way to the junior senior levels
- By in large at Noble people who didn't want to team moved to the junior senior level, they either accepted teaming or moved on

### **#1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction**

- Teachers who are satisfied are always trying to improve their practice
- They are in a constant state of isolating more strategies, more techniques that allow them to do the job even better
- That would include any number of things, you know like innovations in the field both partnering with other teachers, models of meeting even more students' needs, reflections about ... really asking tough questions about what you think you do well but others may not even see that
- When you are satisfied in the teaching field you are also in the state of learning

### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions**

#### **Social**

- A grouping of professional, whether on a team, or PLG or critical friends structure, the grouping of people can't be random and just hope that using a protocol from a training that they put me through as our team leader is instantaneously going to prompt that group of individuals to A) want to work together and then B) enjoy and be satisfied working together
- I think that concept is so off based and it has got to start with putting people together where there is some element of common vision, similarity, past history even, trust, respect
- I'll tell you a really clear example, when Janice interned on this team and when her cooperative teacher left to take an administrative position at another school they wanted to move another teacher from another team on to our team who had also interned on our team, we know from past history that she did not work very hard

- No matter what you did as a team there was not going to be an environment where those traits were true
- So I can't vision a scenario where we would have functioned at the level as we have for the last 9 years if we had the other instead of Janice
- *"How do you think the administration or district go about putting together the Cinderella team?"*
- I take that concept very seriously, for me when I use to teach the UNH program "Live Learn and Teach" that was perfect pipeline for staffing at Noble High , and I don't think it is not a coincidence that Janice, Jesse and Andy all came through that program and all interned on this team
- Then there was the capacity when the math opening arose there was such a strong and clear and coherent vision amongst... I mean we all teach, I mean we have different strategies in our classroom, but we all share a philosophy about what are we working towards, what's important.
- So when a math vacancy popped up there wasn't somebody coming through that natural pipeline you could coach any individual who came in provided they had that intrinsic desire to become a part of the team.
- Obviously that is a major issue when somebody is creating teams when somebody doesn't have that intrinsic desire to want to work with other people, then it goes back to that point that if this isn't what you want to do and this is what we are doing its not going to work.
- Our current principal is a genius with, OK I have a high functioning team down there with Team 1 let's let them do their thing and let's find out what resources they need.
- In the areas in the building where teams aren't functioning let's trouble-shoot why those teams aren't, let's not take a member of Team 1 and just assume they will create a functional team.
- *Has administration ever used Team 1 as a modeling example, not necessarily for a dysfunctional team, but a struggling team or new blend of teams ? And if so does that cause friction in the building?*
- Administration hasn't done that, but experience in the building does.
- When Team 1 is joining together collaboratively to do an interdisciplinary unit that the exhibition of that is a whole school demonstration of learning it drives that point home.
- When Team 1 creates a mentoring program fro dropout-likely kids and then publishes the results of that program at the school board level that creates a ... there is definitely in this school some elements of jealousy from other teams that aren't achieving at that level.
- To the point that might say, "well it can't be someone on Team 1 that shares that message cause they just get that they are the "Golden" children."
- Jesse was planning to do his internship here but the teacher he was going to do his internship left and being in the math field they said how would you like the job because he was more qualified than anyone they were going to hire, so he was like, I can skip my internship and start getting paid?

- He had already been here in the role of what we use to call the team assistant.
- It was an adult not specifically linked to anyone of the 4 classes but who flowed in and amongst the classes working with kids in what ever learning experience was appropriate.
- So when you factor that in with Janice and Andy' internship, every member had a year to observe before assuming a role on the team.
- So Julie is the outlier, there was never a year of observation, she did not go through the UNH program
- She went to this school as a student and worked at another grade level in the school and got moved as we started cutting positions
- She fits in perfectly, but I often wonder if that is because of how highly functioning the group is already
- What if you would put her into a group that ... how would she herself feel, I don't know
- *"Is it the group dynamics itself that made her fit in or was it her ability to fit in?"*
- She definitely watched more than talked last year and that model of don't ruffle any feathers and now her real voice, she is taking on more leadership things and the group felt more confidently about having her be the real point of contact on this drop out group mentoring this year

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- I think what influences teacher communication the most is the structural resources that we have to communicate with one another
- We are regularly together both in the design and proximity of the construction of the school and in the design of the bell schedule
- Team meeting time, with the common lunch time, with the common teaching blocks we are always together
- Communication is always influenced by those factors
- PLG professional learning group – groupings of teachers around the building with a trained facilitator that lead groups of teachers in a critical-friends-esque activities
- I always say to these guys we are in a constant PLG
- Our agenda from yesterday is still on the board (list them off)
- We come in, we do an agenda set, we all have an active voice in that, we are sometimes collaborating on student issues, we sometimes are working to build connections between disciplines
- *"The PLG time is in addition to your...?"*
- No they imbed it within team time, but basically they created the PLG for teams that didn't function honestly to formalize a set of procedures or actions that a team would go through and that's what I have worked really hard to communicate to these guys is that we already do these things

- All of these kinds of things through these PLG trainings are functions that you are already doing, you do it by habit
- *Gives me a manual of PLG protocols*
- Jesse would have conveyed to you... I could almost predict that any time the word PLG comes up, Jesse will say “alright let’s do some norm setting” because he is frustrated any time we go to a PLG and they use that Phrase
- I think that’s because this groups just sort of get’s it
- You sit down, you focus on a common mission together, you put your best foot forward and you communicate regularly
- I think that is because of the experiences this group has been through in the past

#### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- I think the world of each of them, there is a little bit, there is a quirkiness in each of us that is endearing
- With Andy, he’s the young one we can vicariously live through, with Janice it’s always about the baby pictures, with Julie its always about an intended statement that came out the wrong way, and with Jesse it’s the sarcastic wit
- There is something about the similarity of the intrinsic desire to teach and do the job well
- The comradeship present in and amongst everybody
- The past history, the experience and when you factor in those little quirkiness’s that make us all so different so its not like a carbon copy though
- *“You are still unique but so extreme that you can’t work together.”*
- Yea
- The other trait is that we yell at each other and then turn the page
- Take care of it and turn the page literally like 30 seconds later
- There isn’t a grudge that’s ever been held after we just yell at each other
- I don’t mean we really yell, just disagree
- There’s also an intolerance for incompetence
- There’s not an intolerance for making mistakes
- I believe there’s an overarching belief that you’ve got to experiment to find greatness, like there was never a hesitancy to try to work with dropout-likely kids because they were the scariest ones
- There was a design to experiment and try
- There is a difference between trying and failing and being incompetent at doing your job
- There is a spirit of trying to find the right way with also a frustration if somebody isn’t putting a foot forward that should be put forward
- There’s not really a tolerance for the figurative ball around the prisoner’s ankle, I mean somebody holding the group back for the sake of holding the group back

#### **#5: Administration**

- Its huge!! Its absolutely huge!!
- Do you have a principal who's ultimate desire is to build comradery necessary for people to want to do their jib or do you have a principal who is trying to micromanage your behaviors
- We've had both
- I will argue that even with the worst human being I know was the principal of this school at one juncture and the team became the support network as well for working for that individual and it was like, "We can get through this, principals only stay 3 to 5 years
- The current principal we have is the opposite
- He's like "What tools do you need to do your job well? If I can get them for you I will. Now go do your job. And I'm not going to interfere with that."
- He is also approachable. This morning I was stund about using MLA format to document sources, got my first set of papers. As a team we were emailing last night about this, and then we were pow-wowing in the back corner this morning. We were taking an inventory of at what grade level as a student did you learn these skills? Is this skill they should have learned already or are these skills we should be teaching them? Principal wanders in and he's brainstorming with us. "For me it was 9<sup>th</sup> grade." He joined in. The past principal would never have done that
- Its hard to be a risk taker, teaming is a risk so its hard when you don't have the support from the administration

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Student performance
- Autonomy
- Appropriate resources
- Time to plan and reflect individually
- Individual teacher accomplishment
- *"Can you elaborate on that?"*
- If you are able to reach bench marks within the teaching field, if there are things that you can do that document that you are doing a good job
- Like that could be national board certification, selected as presenter at conferences, actual awards

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I actually think that we are about perfect
- Somewhere between an hour and an hour and a half every other day
- An hour's probably not enough, probably not need more than an hour and a half

- But if you really want people to engage in a project, if you really want them to be able to do meaningful and serious work there has got to be extensive windows of time
- Another thing, goes back to administrative support, there has always been if we thought there was more time needed where we are designing a big unit, we say can you give us a s retreat day?
- Where we don't come to school but where we meet up at one of our houses for the entire day
- I think you need resources like that now and then in large chunks
- Maybe that's in the summer time, maybe a pull out from your teaching responsibilities
- *"That goes back to your administration trusting you, where you are at someone's house working and not drinking beer, and iof you are you're still getting the work done."*
- Absolutely
- They gave us a day to write a federal grant last year. We didn't get the grant, but we took the first day this year to apply again and make some changes.
- Try to bring \$425,000 dollars to Noble of our mentoring of dropouts
- *"What kind of dropout rates does Noble have?"*
- 74.6% of students graduate

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- You mean the amount of resources or the actual of work that I do?
- I'm more likely to be writing curriculum with my team and more likely to be performing menial teacher tasks like grading and making copies during prep time
- I'm doing more serious work with my team
- I think the serious work that only focuses on my classroom happens outside of the school day
- You give me time with adults I do high level work
- You give me time by myself I get my to do list taken care of

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- If you gave me the choice one over the other, I would choose to have more time with my team
- I think that's more valuable
- Teachers by nature are always planning for their own classroom
- I drive to school I'm thinking about it, I drive home, I'm out on the football practice, laying in bed at night, I'm planning for my class
- That time you give me to work with other adults is much more priceless

## Appendix N6: Julie

### #1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction

- Respect by your boss or principal, all administration really, just that you feel that they are behind you
- I'd say the same from your co-workers
- As far as the students go, like today it's a frustrating day because I feel like I'm working harder for them to learn than they are working at it
- Job satisfaction in on the days when the students are excited and seem eager to know what I'm teaching
- Receptive to learning
- I had an activity today and thought it would be fun, just show some enthusiasm
- Respect from the students as well

### #2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions

- Definitely makes us closer
- I can feel it on days, like last week we had PSAT so we didn't have a team meeting .so we went 4 days without a team meeting and I felt disconnected, I mean you see how we're set up, I couldn't get closer to the people, but I felt disconnected
- Gong into team meetings even for venting or telling a good story I felt disconnected with what was going on with the kids in other classes
- I feel it's a connection not only to the other teachers but to the content of what their teaching
- I like to know what they're teaching, what the kids are doing in the other classes
- I get that more from our team meetings
- And sometimes its just like from the general like "ah this kid is driving me crazy" and the someone says "yep he's behaving the same exact way" so
- It makes you feel better so you're not banging your head against the wall, its like oh I'm not the only one...
- Sometimes the kid is not bad enough that you need to search someone down, its just like it comes up in the conversation and all of a sudden you are talking about it' like I never really saw how bad he is until now I see its happening in all the classes
- *Does having the collaborative time get you a better familiarity with your students?*
- Oh yea, one of us might pick up on something that the other one doesn't
- Plus with math, a kid might be really good at math... in fact I have a kid right now, pretty good at math you know a "B" student, he doesn't write...
- If you give hi a writing assignment he'll stare at his computer the whole time ,
- So I kind of get that... weird he doesn't do that in my class

- So you see behaviors and things like that that don't happen in other classes
- Sometimes you have a kid and you start to see that oh my class is more important to him because that's the one where he's successful
- You find those pieces out too, you want to make sure to really bring up the fact that he's so successful in that class otherwise he doesn't get that all day

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- I think now with email and our computers it makes things a lot easier to communicate, even teachers who are not in my group
- I don't see the math department as much as I see my team, but I feel like ... 2 women that I work with, we write tests together and all, they are clear across the building and I'll go 3 or 4 days without them but we communicate do much on email that I feel like we're on the same page
- Those groups may help and we don't see face-to-face' but may not be as helpful unless you make the conscious effort to email

### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- They are pretty much everything
- Our team is very sarcastic, can't be serious for more than 10 minutes and I know for some people that would ...
- That's me to the tee, I can't be serious for 80 minutes or what ever
- Personalities are what make or break it, because I know there are some teams that struggle with
- I've been very fortunate, I've been on 2 teams of teachers and both have been the same, where we can joke and move on no one gets offended
- Personalities is what makes everything work, some people would dread team meetings where I look forward to it
- Share own experiences at RMS
- My first job in this district was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade school and that was the first team I had been on and they had just done that (busting up of functioning teams) I came in and replaced, and it was just 2 months after they had said "this team's really good, this team's really volatile lets which it everything up, and everyone was so bitter and I kind of come in the middle of that, "hey here I am"
- Luckily our team worked out, because you find out it's the same people, you take 2 from one team and put them on another team and they don't work out, so you find out that's what it really is, personality
- That is key to everything in making a team work
- I think of that sometimes when I'm in a team meeting and I think "wow I could think of another teacher who would be in here and would be going crazy right now" and we are just kind of making it work
- There's always those people who want to argue with everything

- Our team is pretty much “alright I’ll do that…” or if we don’t agree we can say “Ooh I don’t think so…” and we can compromise
- There are some people who take everything too personally and if they do don’t agree instead of compromising will fight until; their point is what comes out on top or they just never really agree
- I wouldn’t be able to work with somebody like that and luckily I have never had to work on a team like that

#### **#5: Administration**

- I think it’s secondary as to how your team is
- I deal very little with admin right now
- Its there and I think in a teaching community where you can go days without seeing your boss then you can go days without needing a decision from your boss
- At the beginning of the year you have the whole district comes and you have the meeting or whatever
- After that I’m always like “ why am I here…” and you never see those people again, like the superintendent
- I know the principal before this one would make decisions on the fly and everything would change mid-year
- I think our principal now is in the background until we need them then it really doesn’t effect my job satisfaction right now
- We have our little pod and we make the decisions here until it becomes a big behavior

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Pretty happy with my job right now
- All I can think of are silly little things like no duty
- Stuff like just leave me in my classroom
- I know I have to go to math meetings and stuff like that
- Maybe more support like always having someone in your classroom instead of only when you have 5 special ed kids in there
- I’d love to have a little side-kick at all times, that would be cool
- Go do this copying…
- Or like when you have a big class of say 20 kids and you’re doing this thing, hey can you take that group
- That would be my only reason to take an Intern I think, it would be like “you’re struggling, go in the pod with Mr. so-and-so and he will help you, he has the knowledge to do math”…

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I actually like our.. but I think its because its only my second year and I've never had this amount of time with an team before
- So with me its like "are you kidding me that we have a meeting 80 minutes long every other day and that's not even our prep"
- I remember what it was like at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade school
- We had 45 minutes every day when they went to gym or something where we had time and one of those blocks every week were for team time
- You take your prep away on the day you have team time
- This is like I'm meeting in a prep and I'm meeting in a block with them
- *That would make a lot of people jealous*
- Exactly so I really couldn't ... I think we have a lot of time
- Maybe like 5 years down the road I'll start thinking its not enough time but ...
- And there are definitely days where we look up and we go "oh my God its almost 9:00"
- Maybe a true dream would be a pull-out every once in a while, they use to have rolling subs where once every 2 months or so they just have a gang of subs come in and sub for us for half the day
- *Like a retreat*
- Yea, like an on-sight retreat and then at the end of our half day the subs move on to another team
- And at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade we would plan during that time this big event and we didn't get interrupted 50 times
- Once a month maybe have a half day
- *Even during your prep or team time you could still have student pop in*
- Right, like yesterday we had a parent meeting so we were cut off by half an hour

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- Totally different thing
- I do little or no team stuff during my prep time but no academic stuff during my team time
- If I didn't have both... my prep or team time would be ridiculously packed
- I keep them very, very separate
- My prep is purely for my academic
- Grading, prepping for the next day, writing a quiz whatever
- I see those two things as very separate
- They're both quality for what needs to be done

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Collaborative, definitely

- Sometimes during collaborative I've got the other teachers to bounce ideas off of and then the guidance councilors come in and we can bounce things off them and also the dean of students comes in
- We've got behavioral, we've got guidance and we also have academic things to bounce off
- So when I'm feeling really lost with a kid, I don't typically deal with that during personal prep time
- That's when I have all of those people in one room, during my prep time all the other teachers on the team are teaching and who knows if you can ever find the dean, and you go to guidance and there's a line of students out the door so
- *With all of this time, how much of this do you take home?*
- I take a lot of grading home
- I feel like its my second year of teaching here and like in my past jobs by year 5 its like now I'm relaxed enough and don't have to take as much home
- Team stuff not so much. Most of our team stuff we try to get done
- I think Josh takes a lot, but that's because he writes grants and he's a lot more into the administration type of it
- I do more like the secretarial stuff like sending emails and making the charts and stuff like that
- *Discussion about artifacts team minutes 27:30 on tape A-6*
- ***Monday minutes***
- Have a lot of mentoring notes when we were setting up the mentoring program

## **Appendix O1: Andrea**

### **#1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction**

- The kids, working with the kids and having direct interactions with them
- Seeing them grow from beginning of the year to the end is huge
- Before this I worked in outdoor ed and we had a different group of kids every week and it was really fun and engaging, but then they left and we had a new group of kids so we never saw that long term change, so that's what I like about teaching at a public school for a whole year
- Getting to work with other teachers is amazing because we are all in this for a common reason generally and they are all really fun people
- We are all sort of like minded, politically and socially so its nice
- Having that comradery, we are teachers and we know we're not getting paid a lot but we like it

### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions**

- Sometimes the teacher collaboration, sometimes it's the only time when I stop and look at what I'm doing honestly, being a new teacher
- Its pretty integral, actually, I feel like I get caught up in the everyday student interactions, like what am I doing next and how am I going to go back and fix that that its hard for me to sit down and say, "OK what are my core beliefs"
- So when we meet and we sit down and talk about it sometimes it's the only time when I do that
- Its actually pretty necessary
- Without other people's in out its like almost too over whelming its like "wait what do I need to think about, what do I need to do, how can I improve my teaching?"
- Its like I don't even know what I'm doing, laugh
- Before when I would teach and I didn't have this sort of common planning time, of course I was brand new, so I wasn't honestly thinking about it ever
- Now that I have it I can't imagine teaching without it, I really can't
- Its just so crucial to the student success for us to have common time to sit down and talk about their needs and talk about how we are meeting them and how we are not
- And not just how they're doing but also how we're doing
- I don't ever stop or have that time to say "OK how did that lesson go? Did that student get to the goal that I wanted them to learn?"
- Sometimes there's just no time, so when you have this every other day for 80 minutes its huge

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- It makes it more meaningful
- Without it its almost like the common day-to-day passing in the hallway, like “hey how’s this or how’s that or listen to what I did last night.”
- Kind of more light hearted and joking its just more superficial
- When you actually sit down and when you have that time the conversations are more meaningful, they get at the heart of teaching
- Its not “oh by the way we are going to do this next block are you game?” its more...
- We can dig a little deeper into the big picture than just rather just the day-to-day interactions

### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- They definitely do
- I have been part of a group where there is somebody who is the duck walker, like your on this track and they start walking like a duck they are going off in this direction and you need that person that focuses everybody
- Sometimes you can tell when people don’t really want to get down to this hard work because they want to talk about other things
- I feel like, these teachers have this comradery that you don’t see in other work places
- Personalities don’t really get in the way its more like a work ethic
- Someone is the task master so without that person it can be pretty tough sometimes

### **#5: Administration**

- I feel like I don’t have very much experience with this but, from what I’ve heard from other teachers...
- Here I have a little more contact than at the other school
- You can usually tell when in a school there is a good administration because the teachers are happy and they feel that their opinion matters
- Then there are other schools, you almost tell, like there is a trickle down if the administrator is not effective or is kind of a jerk
- The school climate is different, the way the teachers interact with each other might be different and that trickles down to the kids
- I think good administration needs to have sort of an omniscient presence, this sort of good entity that just let’s the teachers do their thing with guidance
- When you feel like you’re being micro-managed or like you don’t have any freedom... and teachers are pretty stalwart independent bunch, so when they feel they’re being stifled its usually not good

- *What did you think about today's RTI meeting?*
- (Hesitant) it was good, I think the activity was effective, sort of just getting us to look at the materials and to see ...
- You know it depends upon your administrator, sometimes your administrator can way-lay us a little bit in our conversations
- I guess part of that is because your administrator is not there all the time, they don't see all the interactions and so your team its almost like you're the core
- Sometimes all these other people who pop in occasionally they don't really know what's going on and so they try to give you feed back and help you along and its like "go away, you weren't here, you don't know what's going on."
- But if they introduce something new, something that will help us then that is different
- *Would you have rather used your time in other ways?*
- No, I think its good for us to stop, because a lot times we get so stuck on the kids and talk about them individually and what we do
- We really do need to step back and look at the big picture, I think that was important

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Higher pay, honestly
- I sat down and figured how much I make an hour and it sucks
- Then you talk to people in other countries and its like the status of teacher is like this elevated status and they make this amazing amount of money
- Here in this country, its like... its just a different story
- Have an assistant, like a TA that would do all the mundane tasks like the copying
- To do all the organizational things cause that's really where I feel like I could do so much more with the time I have
- And I feel another thing that would help is if we had a stronger bond between the community and the school, so parents and teachers were more of a team verses
- I can stand up there and teach and give all these meaningful assignments but if there is nobody asking about it or caring about it

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I think what we have now 80 minutes every other day is good but
- I think if there was some way we could get paid to do some stuff over the summer
- Once school starts it's a world-wind
- We had these plans to do this interdisciplinary unit and then we had this teacher change, and we tried to do it at the beginning of the year but it was just too crazy
- If your not getting paid that extra amount its summer, there's all these other things that do

- If we had some kind of time set aside where you could get together with your team and put together these really good IDU's that would be amazing
- Otherwise I feel like our 80 minutes every other day is good because I feel like if there was any more time we probably wouldn't use it effectively

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- We basically have the same amount of time, 80 minutes
- Mine happens to be on the days we don't have team time, which I think is good, it sort of spreads it out
- I feel like I have enough prep time, however sometimes I feel like this lap top gets in the way
- I'm spending like a half an hour doing emails rather than looking at my curriculum or looking at... I feel like technology is a curse, its wonderful but it's a curse
- I have a prep time when there are 3 other study halls so the kids are always coming in my room and they are asking questions which is great, but then I realize "Oh my God, I only have a half an hour left to do what I wanted to do
- Its good that the students can have access to me but that's supposed to be my time so that's tough
- Sometimes I literally have to leave my room to get things done
- The kids are more reluctant to knock on the door when we are all sitting in a meeting
- But they're freshmen, when you teach older students you feel you have more time cause these kids are so needy

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Both have equal impact but in different ways
- My prep time I'm creating lesson, doing the copying, writing on the board, up dating my web site, grading papers, entering the grades, those are all things that are necessary, the logistical things
- Collaborative time is where we can actually sit and talk about the students and how we are meeting their needs, how we can best do things like interdisciplinary units
- I guess now that I think about it without my prep time I don't think I would be able to do anything, but without the collaborative time, I would still be able to do the basics I just wouldn't be able to do them as well
- Now that I think about it is more important to have the prep time
- I don't know how people teach and have kids, I want to have kids but I don't know how it happens

- I need to stay after school and need to come in early, I need to be here more and when you have kids its like you have... which is good cause it almost take you away from the classroom
- I could literally stay here all the time and never feel like you're done
- I think collaborative time really helps the climate of the team
- When you don't have that time when you all are together, teachers usually have at least one person they go to, because they are next door to each other or they mesh better
- But with a team you have that collaborative time when you ask each other questions and bounce ideas off
- It really does help the team socially which is important
- Collaboration creates a better work environment

## Appendix O2: Jennifer

### #1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction

- Feeling respected and that you matter and that you can implement new ideas
- That you work in an environment that energizes you and that is esthetically pleasing
- Kind of open to doing things that are better
- The difference this building has made on the kids is ridiculous
- To think that they are deserving of this says a lot its really powerful
- The other school was just awful

### #2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions

- I think just overall builds community and that through community we are better as individuals as a whole
- A small school within a big school
- Now that I've been on this team for 4 years that means I have had every single student on this academy and that's an incredible feeling as your going about your day that you see 500 kids that you know pretty well its pretty amazing and now that those kids are seniors I'm writing letters of recommendations for seniors right now
- That concept of community is really power right now I think
- *This pod system seems to create a community fort his group*
- Initially the kids were very resistant, they didn't like the isolation, they didn't like being separated from all of their friends but I think the benefits far out weigh the cons
- *Do most of these kids come from a middle school concept where they were already on a team?*
- Yes, the middle school has been doing teams for at least 3 or 4 years however because of budget cuts there were 3 teams cut to 2 and having all of these kids on only 2 teams is not beneficial
- They came up pretty wild and out of control and I would love to know if it had anything to do with the class assizes and ratios
- With heterogeneous classes you just can't go that big, its just not effective
- *How many students do you have on this team?*
- We are very small, 75
- When I first started we had over 100 on each team

### #3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications

- I know in other schools I worked at it was very much your classroom was your world, you really only stepped out for a faculty meeting or when there was a problem or a duty
- I think it pushes you to grow as a person and a human being in ways the other organizing schools just doesn't
- I don't think teachers are very good at making themselves vulnerable and I also think teachers have a way of being very egotistical, they just assume what happens in their room is just the best and everybody else sucks
- So I think it kind of keeps you in check as a professional, which I think is really good

#### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- It can be tough, I've worked on a lot of teams and I know there were people who really didn't enjoy me and people I had to work hard to enjoy
- Again we ask the kids to work in groups constantly and I think we have to model this and it is hard and it's not always pleasurable
- If we are going top base our system of in the classrooms where we ask kids to work well together and play well together in the sand box then we need to do it too

#### **#5: Administration**

- Somebody made a point recently we don't have a contract right now, and in most high schools teachers would be freaking out at this point this late in the year and we're just not
- Maybe that is the telling of the trust we have in the administration and the respect we have for them
- We know that this is a financial debacle and economic reality that we all have to work through, but there's no antagonism that I see at all
- I think the overall perspective of the administration is very supportive that works very hard
- They are intelligent they're respected, there's no animosity
- But they are very busy so there's not like a constant interaction
- Its based on trust and a warm stance, I think we are all doing the best we can
- *What did you think about today's RTI?*
- I'm on the RTI committee and I know they want the other freshmen teams to do well with this so we were kind of a guinea pig to see... we've given you guys all these great tools is there ever a time to look at it and how can we create a protocol to help you look at it
- We were kind of guinea pigs to see how that protocol would work and we got something out of the experience and I think the experience will help the other teams so I think it was good

- *Did you find that it was a positive use of your time today?*
- I think it could have been shorter, I think we could have practiced beforehand
- You have to remember too that different people have different strengths and weaknesses, so just cause you might be super comfortable with something doesn't mean everybody in the room is
- So everybody benefits from it, so again I think you've got to oput your ego in check and just go with the process

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- Profession in general I think money
- Unfortunately we don't attract some of the best we could get if we could up the pay by about 20 grand or so
- I know a lot of fascinating and amazing people who would be dynamic teachers but just don't think they could live on the salaries so they won't even explore it as an option
- (Long pause) no its pretty amazing, its pretty great

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I think we need to work on is improve time spent on curriculum and disciplinary development work
- They want us to do that, but there is so much else to do that that often is on the back burner and we need to make it more in the forefront of what we think about and do
- Even if we say one meeting a week this is what we're doing, we've never been disciplined with that
- Cause there is so much else going on that always falls to the way-side
- I think that is place we need to work on improving
- The best of intensions but just no time

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- My prep time is working with kids, I don't use it for myself
- It's a drop-in support block for kids in my room
- If there's stuff I need to do I can
- I've been closing myself in the library for half of it for a couple of weeks writing letters of recommendations
- For the most part I don't use it as traditional prep block I use it as a support block for students
- Grading and all that goes home, which is not a good thing necessarily
- Collaborative time I would give it about 85% useful

- I think we still deal with people being late having to socialize
- I don't have the same social needs maybe as others, like I feel like we get a ton of time at lunch and before and after school
- For others they need that safety social building stuff so ...
- The last team I was on was very male oriented and they did not enjoy spending time talking about kids, they felt that was a waste of time
- *It was interesting this morning the way kids were handling this "Life Roads" ...*
- I've done it since I've been a teacher, but it was always in my classroom
- I've only done with the kids in front of the whole pod with all the teachers once, it was last year
- I was on the fence about doing it again that way because some of the teachers used the time to correct while kids were presenting, or they left the room
- I was really direct at the end of the year and said if you can't give your full respect and be in tuned then I just can't do it that way
- This year was much much better, but gain I think a lot of teachers are uncomfortable with that touchy feely so they kind of distancing themselves a little
- I think the benefits have been really good for the team

**#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Because I've donated my prep time to working with students that's huge, but its really not necessarily sane or smart, but I don't know where else I would do it
- Because of the demographic I choose to work in , these are hurting kids
- They need this time and support
- I think if I were working in a different socioeconomic situation I could use my prep time for correcting, copying
- These kids just need a little bit too much for that
- *Share time with a particular student and redirect to social worker*

## **Appendix O3: Jeremy**

### **#1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction**

- I taught at Spaulding for 6 years until 2005
- We may have come together for the Design Studio in trying to implement the Freshman Academy for Spaulding under Billy Douglas
- *Discuss attempt for academy and present 3 school aspect for Rochester*
- Comradery
- Treatment by administration, leadership, having a voice heard
- Kids you work with, most important
- Type of kids
- *Discuss meeting with parents earlier and the quality of that student*

### **#2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions**

- Definitely feel like you have to ... feel accountable to them, for teaching and doing a good job, coming to work
- Its not just you out there, its not like “uhh, I don’t want to come in today, I’m tired ...”
- You feel that sense of comradery again
- Let’s see. It definitely makes you tighter as a group when you do know you’re meeting every day or every other day, with just 4 or 6 people so you definitely bond
- And pedagogy? That seems like the part we are more forced to do, because we have all the kid issues and the team issues
- I think that’s why we have the Best Practices and we have PLG’s because I think that gets kind of dropped off with the teaming
- And its probably the most important

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- There’s no need for emails and its kind of day-to-day
- Well not even day-to-day it’s more like hour-to-hour communication
- So that’s good
- It can be a little... sometimes I think it could be easier to be in my classroom and do my own thing
- But I think overall that’s kind of why I can here
- *Share understanding about need to interact and need to do own work*
- We’re pretty good at that, there are times we won’t meet for lunch, we have other things going on

#### #4: Personalities impact collaboration

- That would be a good question for administrators I think
- I think that's what goes on when there's that shuffling, I'm not sure, no one has ever told me, but I think that's what happens
- Cause I got moved twice in the last 3 years
- I don't think it was me but you know either "A" people retire or they move or don't get rehired or whatever it is
- And then there are those other issues that they make those decisions
- Pull someone here and put someone there
- *Redirect to question have you been on teams ...*
- Yea, my last team was all male, laughs
- It was only 3 of us so it was a small team
- *What grade level were you at?*
- Seniors
- *Oh so it was like a House*
- We were House but we were only half a House because of staffing and things
- It was all male for a reason (hint of something more in his tone)
- *Oh you were Cleaning House...*
- Well, I believe it was an individual that needed to be just with males
- *Discuss own history of team changing at RMS*

#### #5: Administration

- Quite a bit
- How they run the school, how they respond to crisis or adversity, how they communicate
- Its huge, its huge
- Even in this teaming thing... I think administration can either make or break moral
- *What did you think about today's RTI? Was that productive use of your team time?*
- Yea I did
- I think sometimes we get talking so much about kids and their life and individual, we've got to start talking about the bigger picture, classroom instruction, connecting units and themes. That's where we need to go
- I get a little fed up, its like geese, we've got to move on
- I guess I'm not the big gushy want to know about very kid, ya know
- *Does that Life Travel, Road Travel ... are you comfortable with that? It seems interesting but also very risky for students and staff.*
- Yea it is, it definitely is

- I can see its value ... its definitely important, cause the other students get to know... cause they're going to be together for 4 years
- It needs to happen
- *And that was something you guys put together*
- Yea, England, I think England use to do it in a lot of her grades that she's taught at and she kind of adapted it to this

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- This idea that you can't leave until 3 right on the dot
- I come in at 7:00 or 7:10 and I'm not suppose to be here until 7:30 or whatever
- Having more flexibility with... if you get your job done just...
- But I also understand its contractual
- Free coffee in the teachers room
- They do a pretty good job of feeding us, once or twice we get to go to the Roundtable for lunch, that's a 5 course lunch, that's nice
- Employee of the month, teacher of the month, recognition

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I could say 4 hours but then you wouldn't be using your time wisely
- Again if we just didn't have all the kids stuff on our plate there would be plenty of time
- *You want to work more on curriculum and assessments*
- Right but I guess we don't have enough time currently
- You'd think we should with 80 minutes, but then the Best Practice once a month or this RTI twice a month, few meetings
- I guess we need that core time to be scared
- *Do all teams do the Best Practice?*
- Yea, it's a school-wide
- *The RTI is new, just for freshmen...*
- Yea, and the other freshmen teams are doing it too, just the freshmen level

#### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- Both are needed, I have a family so I just don't have the time outside of school to be monkeying around
- So personal prep time is very important
- I do a tutorial for that reason
- I could do the writing center or I could be a mentor or I could do a couple of other things
- *Tutorial is a study hall*

- But I choose to do a tutorial because I know that I can for 50 or 60 minutes grade papers, plan
- *You feel like your prep time is more important to you because how it effects your personal life after school...*
- As well as my professional life

**#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- Personal prep because I work individually, cause I can focus more when I'm working independently
- *More than with a team?*
- Yea I can get more done
- *And you feel that the things you get done during that prep time is more valuable to you? If you didn't have the RTI, the Best Practices, the PLG and you had just sacred team time to work on interdisciplinary ...*
- Yea, then your kind of killing two birds with one stone
- Quality of team time is working on lessons or units
- It's a big change, I came from seniors, or juniors and seniors
- Not like just freshman
- *Kill tape*

### Appendix O4: Sarah

- Seems to be a well balanced group of people
- First year, what have been looking for
- Teaching in Somersworth not happy

#### #1: Characteristics that Describe Satisfaction

- Successful collaboration
- When teachers easily share and take constructive criticism and use it to benefit them instead of thinking of it as an insult
- Important as a team to be able to do that and be able to share what we are doing in our classroom so it can benefit others
- Support from the administration, validation that for what you are doing is good and right and reasons for what you are not doing right and support for improvement
- Constructive criticism
- *In Somersworth you weren't getting this?*
- Pretty much, I felt like I had reached a plateau to get things to change there and it wasn't really working
- There have been a lot of changes since I've left
- We had a couple of principals fired and those who replaced them ended up leaving and so it's a completely new administration and superintendent and assistant superintendent
- I am more happy where I am now with more opportunity for growth

#### #2: Teacher collaboration impact on social and pedagogical interactions

- We have professional learning groups PLG's where we sit down and talk about what we are doing in our classrooms and we might bring a piece of work to the table or a chapter in a book to the table and we discuss how we are doing something positive with that or o get feedback
- It kind of opens up line of communication and I feel that professionally and socially that really helps to just allow us to sit back and look at each others work with not necessarily a judgmental eye but just a "this is what I'm doing" that worked for you
- More of the feedback kind of thing
- Here there is such a tremendous amount of collaboration
- I don't know if its school-wide but here with my team its that we all want to share we all want to work together we all see the benefit of working together
- Socially that helps us so much to get along day-to-day

- We're always sort of, nobody takes the lead and says you are going to do what I say, we all sort of... we fall into leadership when we need to be there or .. we take it as it comes
- Jen's a very natural leader and we don't bow down to her but we let her lead when its appropriate and then she asks us to lead when its appropriate
- Its just feels very comfortable because we all have that kind of attitude
- *Let me get a better understanding PLG? Is that within your curriculum?*
- Each team is part of a professional learning group
- I guess it was like cross-team last year and now its just the team
- Its basically anything goes, its looking at curriculum, classroom management, student work, techniques, pretty much everything
- I'm actually the facilitator, I find that interesting as a new teacher here
- What I understand so far its basically wide open
- We talk about through email what we think is appropriate to what we bring to the table
- It could be something going on that month, it could be kids who aren't doing their homework
- What they are really trying to get us to do is look at student work, what we can do to help students improve in certain areas as teachers and using each other to sort of attack that goal
- *Are you working with your team or other teams?*
- We are working within our team but we have a different focus than what we would do on regular team time, a more specific focus and there are protocols for it

### **#3: PLC Change teacher-to-teacher communications**

- To be honest with you I haven't had enough experience with it
- As facilitator of the PLG I set the protocol that we are going to be looking at a book that the district bought for all the teachers its called "Teaching Like A Champion" so there are 40 techniques in the book and they are revamping their evaluation process based on those techniques
- They asked us to read the book and we will be discussing it in our PLG
- *Were you in a PLC at Somersworth?*
- No, I had one team mate, but it was more like a gab and complain kind of session
- Here it feels like a more professional community, they kind of have goals and they know how they want to reach them, they might not be there yet, but they have goals and how they want to reach them

### **#4: Personalities impact collaboration**

- I think that our personalities in my experience with this team, we click so well that our personalities gel and we are able to collaborate very easily
- I can see how the dynamics on other teams might make that very difficult
- If someone was a very strong leader and likes to be in control that could be a problem, we don't have those kinds of issues on this team, we sit down at the table and we make it work
- I can see how personality clashes would be an issue, but we seem to collaborate very well

#### **#5: Administration**

- Interesting enough, its really neat to be a first year teacher
- I had to come to the first two "new teacher" orientation days
- I felt so great about it and how everyone was so supportive
- Now that I have been here a few weeks I feel that there is a very different feel among staff an dhow they feel about the way the administration supports us
- People tippy toe around the administration
- I still don't feel like they were blowing smoke on those first two days, still feel like there's support there, I feel like they are genuinely interested and dedicated wow hast we do and making sure that we're comfortable here
- My feeling from the Union was very different, it was protect yourself, they're out to get you kind of things, I still haven't figured that out yet
- My personal opinion is that administration is very supportive
- When I had my evaluation it was very comfortable, they weren't scrutinizing what I was doing, they were helping me to use the evaluation as a tool
- *You had Claudia in today with this new RTI, what did you think about that activity?*
- I think I knew with her coming in that we were sort of the guinea pigs for the activity
- I think it could have been useful, but I th8ink that the way it was presented wasn't as useful as it could have been
- *Do you think it was a good use of your time?*
- No, not really, I think we do those kind of things already on our own, talking about things like that in the PLG so it was sort of a repeat activity
- I think there was value in talking about some of the areas in which we have deficiencies in our classrooms, but I think it was kind of drawn out, we could have gotten to the point quicker and be done with it
- Actually it was a shortened version, she wanted to do this game activity, couldn't do it due to time constraints

#### **#6: Improve satisfaction not with a PLC**

- On a personal level I would like to have more planning time with my department

- We don't have a lot of time to get together and look at our assessment
- The assessments are supposed to be global, I mean if I am doing this in Algebra I then everyone else who is teaching Algebra I should be giving the same assessments and we don't have a lot of time to create those assessments
- So typically what happens is somebody creates it and shoots it on to the person who will be teaching that next and I don't find that that is very conducive to ... I like to make sure my kids know what they are going to do on the test while I'm teaching
- If I know and I have those goals in mind then I make sure they know what they need for the test, but I'm giving the test just before I'm going to give it and that doesn't really jive with me
- I'd like to either be able to create my own or make sure that we all have time to do that together so we all know what we are giving
- The reason that's happening is because they are coming away from standards based teaching in math and going to grading, so they have all these tests that are now useless cause they are creating new one to go along with the new grading system
- There was no time this summer from what I understand, no money to create time in the summer so we are all scrambling around trying to get that done
- For me that would be a big component of the job satisfaction
- More common planning time, we have plenty of time in our classrooms
- I have a whole block where I get to plan every day
- But that common planning time would be more important

#### **#7: Ideal collaborative time**

- I'd like to see time in the summer to collaborate and think about things before we are in the moment
- To really have a road map of what its going to look like
- I think its hard to do that the end of the year prior
- I think that when we are thinking about the lesson we are in or unit we are in and trying to plan for another unit it makes it really difficult, especially if your dealing with 4 different lives, 4 different teachers, 4 different families trying to get together and collaborate
- I'd like to see summer collaboration and get together on those kind of units that we do as a whole
- *Would you do that within your department, or interdisciplinary within your team?*
- Team, I'd like to see more collaboration within the team
- Our team time is really used to talk about kids and things we find productive in the moment,
- Building collaborating units, we don't do a lot of that during team time because there's so many other things we have to do and again we have the PLG's and the

RIT and we have guidance and all these other components and so the housekeeping pretty much takes over every single meeting

- So we don't have a lot of time to come up with collaborative units
- *Shared own experiences with RMS and freshmen academy at SHS*

### **#8: Compare quality of personal and collaborative time**

- My personal prep time I get to use however I want, and I use it to the fullest
- The way my prep time works out, it works out fantastically, I have on Day1 I have 4 full blocks in which I teach and on Day2 I have first thing in the morning I have team meeting and I have two blocks that I teach and my final block is my prep time
- So I use that to evaluate what I've taught and to set up everything for my next classes and I use the full 80 minutes to that and its fantastic
- It feels like, I just really love making sure I have everything done
- If I have to make photocopies I get to do that and have everything done and be ready for the moment without having to use any time after school
- Certainly I use that time after school for grading and stuff but the full 80 minutes gets me where I need to be for the next classes so its really nice
- Collaborative time like I said I feel like its taken up with all this jargon we are required to do and not so much what we really need to do
- Some of it I find valuable and some of it not so much
- *Do you think its because not you but as a team... the team itself is fairly new together?*
- I'm the newest, the rest are on their second year together and Jeremy and Jen I think are on their 4<sup>th</sup> year together
- Its not the fact that we don't collaborate well, we do
- We are really on the same page, we get to the same results if we have goals, but it's the every other week we have RIT and every other month we have PLG
- So we are required to do certain things, and as much as I think the PLG will be something wonderful, we do all these things already as a group
- I understand why they require it of everyone because I think there are a lot of teams that don't do what we do already
- That was one of the worries that we had at the beginning was that this RTI was going to take over the time we already use to talk about kids and talk about what we can do to better our classroom environment and use techniques to get everybody engaged
- It has certainly become that, now we have a list of 8 kids that we have to discuss them every time or we feel like we need to discuss them and how are these interventions working and that was part of what was valuable about today's discussion, was that we said "hey wait a minute we have all these 8 10 kids and we have all these interventions, what if we came up with one or two interventions

for all of these kids, the whole group and these kids who have some things they need to work on?”

- Rather than maintaining 10 different techniques or interventions we’ve got a couple that encompass everyone
- *So you feel deprived during your first block team meeting...*
- It ends up being everyone, every team meeting we have something that’s mandated

#### **#9: Prep time or collaborative which meets needs of students**

- I would say personal prep time
- I have a structure to it, I know what I need to get done right away, I have my objectives and I work through how I’m going to meet them with the kids
- Its just really ... like I said as much as we collaborate well together we talk about things that we know
- In terms of meeting my own goals in my classroom I feel that my personal time works better for me
- My personal time for me means I meet my objective math-wise , but I meet the needs of the students emotionally and socially better through collaborative time
- Personal is more academic and collaborative is more emotional and social
- To add to the summer time thing too I would like to see more academic planning time with the team, bring more academic things into the classroom that are a result of team planning
- *Share teaching in Alaska*

## Appendix P: Personalities

### Name: #4 Personalities

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 5 references coded [1.41% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.22% Coverage

- personalities need to be balanced

Reference 2 - 0.33% Coverage

- Everyone has good days and everyone has bad days

Reference 3 - 0.27% Coverage

- we are fiercely protective of each other

Reference 4 - 0.35% Coverage

- it rubs off on kids to see us joking with each other

Reference 5 - 0.25% Coverage

- we are not afraid to leave doors open

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 5 references coded [1.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.54% Coverage

- I spend more time with these teachers than I spend with my family

Reference 2 - 0.30% Coverage

- we are all very strong personalities,

Reference 3 - 0.28% Coverage

- we've learned how to work together

Reference 4 - 0.52% Coverage

- when your working on a team its now 4 or 5 people's curriculum

Reference 5 - 0.16% Coverage

- there's compromises

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [1.13% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.13% Coverage

- most of the time in agreement and they enjoying each other's ideas

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 2 references coded [1.38% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.55% Coverage

- All extremely different but we all work hard

Reference 2 - 0.83% Coverage

- We argue and bicker all the time, and at the end of the day go home

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 6 references coded [2.06% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage

- there is a quiriness in each of us that is endearing

Reference 2 - 0.31% Coverage

- comradeship present in and amongst everybody

Reference 3 - 0.31% Coverage

- we yell at each other and then turn the page

Reference 4 - 0.22% Coverage

- an intolerance for incompetence

Reference 5 - 0.27% Coverage

- not an intolerance for making mistakes

Reference 6 - 0.56% Coverage

- difference between trying and failing and being incompetent at doing your job

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 4 references coded [1.35% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.32% Coverage

- They are pretty much everything

Reference 2 - 0.40% Coverage

- Personalities are what make or break it,

Reference 3 - 0.45% Coverage

- we can joke and move on no one gets offended

Reference 4 - 0.17% Coverage

- we can compromise

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 2 references coded [2.43% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

- They definitely do

Reference 2 - 2.23% Coverage

- Sometimes you can tell when people don't really want to get down to this hard work because they want to talk about other things
- I feel like, these teachers have this comradery that you don't see in other work places

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [3.68% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.68% Coverage

- Again we ask the kids to work in groups constantly and I think we have to model this and it is hard and it's not always pleasurable
- If we are going top base our system of in the classrooms where we ask kids to work well together and play well together in the sand box then we need to do it too

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [1.62% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.91% Coverage

- That would be a good question for administrators I think

Reference 2 - 0.71% Coverage

- Cause I got moved twice in the last 3 years

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 2 references coded [2.74% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.66% Coverage

- we click so well that our personalities gel and we are able to collaborate very easily

**Reference 2 - 2.08% Coverage**

- If someone was a very strong leader and likes to be in control that could be a problem, we don't have those kinds of issues on this team, we sit down at the table and we make it work
- I can see how personality clashes would be an issue, but we seem to collaborate very well

## Appendix Q: Personal Prep Time

### Name: Personal Prep

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 1 reference coded [1.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.33% Coverage

- I feel I can meet their educational needs better during my personal prep time

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 1 reference coded [2.00% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.00% Coverage

- My prep time I'm creating lesson, doing the copying, writing on the board, updating my web site, grading papers, entering the grades, those are all things that are necessary, the logistical things

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [0.87% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.87% Coverage

- Because I've donated my prep time to working with students that's huge

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 1 reference coded [0.66% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.66% Coverage

- Personal prep because I work individually,

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 1 reference coded [0.23% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.23% Coverage

- I would say personal prep time

## Appendix R: Social Pedagogical Impact

### Name: #2 Social Pedagogical Impact

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 4 references coded [2.10% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.11% Coverage

- Teaming is great

Reference 2 - 0.57% Coverage

- It has been really helpful in my development to see what they do in classroom practice

Reference 3 - 0.66% Coverage

- is really nice because we all have a similar belief in what learning and as to what education is

Reference 4 - 0.76% Coverage

- give critical thinking as to what you believe in and be able to go back and re-evaluate and defend your position

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 4 references coded [1.92% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.32% Coverage

- never feels like I am alone with anything

Reference 2 - 0.38% Coverage

- Not unusual for an adult to sit in my classroom

Reference 3 - 0.56% Coverage

- Because I have access to them I don't have to wait for my prep time,

Reference 4 - 0.66% Coverage

- it is never you against the kids it's a group of teachers working with the kids

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 2 references coded [0.99% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.48% Coverage

- They feed off each other well

## Reference 2 - 0.51% Coverage

- its like their on the same page

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 2 references coded [1.93% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.15% Coverage

- Know each other's personal lives
- Gives impression to students that the team has a focus goal

## Reference 2 - 0.78% Coverage

- We are part of a team and the teachers know what they are doing

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 1 reference coded [0.24% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.24% Coverage

- grouping of people can't be random

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 3 references coded [1.21% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.26% Coverage

- Definitely makes us closer

## Reference 2 - 0.60% Coverage

- we went 4 days without a team meeting and I felt disconnected

## Reference 3 - 0.35% Coverage

- I like to know what they're teaching

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 3 references coded [3.61% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 1.58% Coverage

- Sometimes the teacher collaboration, sometimes it's the only time when I stop and look at what I'm doing honestly, being a new teacher
- Its pretty integral

## Reference 2 - 0.32% Coverage

- Its actually pretty necessary

## Reference 3 - 1.72% Coverage

- Its just so crucial to the student success for us to have common time to sit down and talk about their needs and talk about how we are meeting them and how we are not

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 2 references coded [1.83% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.32% Coverage

- I think just overall builds community and that through community we are better as individuals as a whole

Reference 2 - 0.51% Coverage

- That concept of community is really power

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [2.93% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.52% Coverage

- You feel that sense of comradery

Reference 2 - 2.41% Coverage

- It definitely makes you tighter as a group when you do know you're meeting every day or every other day, with just 4 or 6 people so you definitely bond

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 2 references coded [1.27% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.39% Coverage

- there is such a tremendous amount of collaboration

Reference 2 - 0.88% Coverage

- with my team its that we all want to share we all want to work together we all see the benefit of working together

## Appendix S: Satisfaction Characteristics

### Name: #1 Satisfaction Characteristics

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Andrew Korman> - § 4 references coded [1.36% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.29% Coverage

- ability and willingness to impart knowledge,

Reference 2 - 0.37% Coverage

- to really see the preverbal light bulb go off in a kid,

Reference 3 - 0.37% Coverage

- To be satisfied to feel like you're making a difference

Reference 4 - 0.33% Coverage

- To feel that you have some type of meaning and use

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Janice Eldridge> - § 1 reference coded [0.20% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

- Highly satisfied overall

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jeffrey Kaste> - § 2 references coded [1.41% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.33% Coverage

- Student satisfaction

Reference 2 - 1.08% Coverage

- interact with each other it is a big positive part of their day

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Jesse Jost> - § 2 references coded [0.89% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage

- Do I want to come back everyday

Reference 2 - 0.51% Coverage

- Did I do a good thing, help out a student

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Josh Gould> - § 2 references coded [1.49% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.91% Coverage

- Teachers who are satisfied are always trying to improve their practice
- They are in a constant state of isolating more strategies,

## Reference 2 - 0.58% Coverage

- When you are satisfied in the teaching field you are also in the state of learning

<Internals\Interviews Team 1\Julie Gagnon> - § 2 references coded [0.95% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.71% Coverage

- when the students are excited and seem eager to know what I'm teaching

## Reference 2 - 0.25% Coverage

- Respect from the students

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Andrea LaShomb> - § 3 references coded [3.16% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.75% Coverage

- The kids, working with the kids and having direct interactions with them

## Reference 2 - 1.42% Coverage

- Getting to work with other teachers is amazing because we are all int his for a common reason generally and they are all really fun people

## Reference 3 - 0.99% Coverage

- Having that comradery, we are teachers and we know we're not getting paid a lot but we like it

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jennifer England> - § 1 reference coded [2.00% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 2.00% Coverage

- Feeling respected and that you matter and that you can implement new ideas
- That you work in an environment that energizes you and that is esthetically pleasing

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Jeremy Hersom> - § 2 references coded [1.71% Coverage]

## Reference 1 - 0.16% Coverage

- Comradery

## Reference 2 - 1.56% Coverage

- Treatment by administration, leadership, having a voice heard
- Kids you work with, most important

<Internals\Interviews White Team\Sarah Cesario> - § 3 references coded [1.93% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.15% Coverage

- Successful collaboration
- When teachers easily share and take constructive criticism and use it to benefit them instead of thinking of it as an insult

Reference 2 - 0.60% Coverage

- Support from the administration, validation that for what you are doing is good

Reference 3 - 0.18% Coverage

- Constructive criticism