

2016

Teachers' Perspectives of Balanced Assessment

Michele Branch Branch
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2016

Abstract

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by

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The University of Missouri at Kansas City, 2004

The University of Missouri at Kansas City, 1998

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

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Abstract

Current research indicates that when properly implemented, professional development (PD) can positively affect teaching practice and student academic achievement. However, teachers at Lincoln High School (pseudonym) questioned the effectiveness of their district's PD: Balanced Assessment. Given the paucity of research on teachers' viewpoints of PD and how it impacts implementation, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine teachers' perspectives of Balanced Assessment as it relates to implementation in the classroom. Guided by Knowles adult learning theory, which states that adults need to make a connection to what they are learning to real life, this study examined 4 English language arts teachers and their perspectives of Balanced Assessment. The guiding research questions explored teachers' perspectives of Balanced Assessment, PD, and ways to enhance the training. The research design was a case study of 4 English language arts teachers and data collection included interviews and classroom observations. The data were analyzed by using HyperRESEARCH, and 4 themes emerged: voice, follow-up, same strategies but different names, and trust, results consistent with Knowles adult learning theory. Findings indicated that teachers' perceptions impact implementation and led to the creation of a 3-day PD plan. This PD incorporated the study's finding, and therefore provided teachers relevant sessions that incorporated teachers' voices and included follow-up. Social change implications include creating PD that includes the tenets of adult learning theory which could improve teacher instruction and increase academic achievement for all students.

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Section 1: The Problem

Improving academic achievement and teacher instruction is an integral part of education. It has become increasingly important with high stakes testing being directly tied to the evaluation a district's performance. With the inception of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), strategies to improve academic achievement have become paramount (Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008). One of the strategies many districts focus on to improve academic achievement is improving professional development (PD).

Teachers face the increased challenge of teaching diverse populations, incorporating technology, and meeting the challenges of student academic achievement on standardized testing. Historically, PD was incorporated by administrators bringing in outside speakers for a full PD day for a one-size-fits all topic; however, current research shows that effective PD is sustained over long periods of time, is collaborative, and involves decision-making by teachers (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). Today, PD includes such activities as on going, job-embedded staff development, college credit, and national board certification (Sawchuk, 2010a). Most districts create PD that supports new initiatives or supports the district or school's mission. Professional development has manifested over the years and has increasingly become a staple in improving instructional practices and enhancing academic performance

This project study addressed one high school's efforts to implement a district initiative called Balanced Assessment through PD. Section I presents the problem in the local context as well as the larger educational context. This section also includes the rationale for the problem, definitions of terms, significance of the problem, and the guiding questions. I also review the literature and present the conceptual framework that guided the study.

Definition of the Problem

The problem that led to this study was that many teachers at Lincoln High School (a pseudonym for the actual research site) resisted the idea of Balanced Assessment that is the focal point of the school's PD. Balanced Assessment focuses on the use of formative and summative assessment to gauge the success and gaps in learning that drives instructional change (Chappuis, 2009). The school houses approximately 1900 students from Grades 9 through 12. The student population comprises 75% White students and 25% minority students including Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other. The students at Lincoln High School come from mainly affluent families with only 18% eligible for free or reduced lunch. Lincoln High School has consistently scored above the state average in standardized tests and the American College Testing. *U.S. News and World Report* recently named Lincoln High School as one of the top 15 high schools in the state of Missouri. Lincoln High School is one of the few designated International Baccalaureate (IB) schools in the state, and the school offers numerous advanced placement (AP) and college credit courses.

Lincoln High School's stellar academic performance led many teachers to question the need for Balanced Assessment which was intended to raise academic achievement for all students. Teachers believed that the school was already performing well, and the immense amount of money and time to implement this program could be better spent elsewhere. The high achieving students who take the more rigorous courses are the same students who perform exceptionally well on standardized tests. These high performing students score above the state and national averages on tests such as the ACT, AP, and IB tests; conversely, some of the lower performing students score below state and national averages. Ultimately, the number of high test scores pulls the averages up from the lower performing students. Consequently, the lower

achieving students are often ignored because it appears that they are achieving at an acceptable level.

The PD plan for Balanced Assessment was a 5-year plan that started in the 2011-2012 school year. Subsequent years included the implementation of learning targets, formative and summative assessments, Common Core standards, student self-assessment, and revision. As with many PDs, if implemented properly balanced assessment may be beneficial to both teachers and students.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Teachers at Lincoln High School continuously engaged in various types of PD. The districts, like other districts, has jumped on the PD bandwagon and has adopted programs because they are the latest trend in education without looking at the district's needs or the student data. The programs are quickly discarded for yet another trend. This leaves teachers untrusting and wary of any program that the district wants to implement. Killion and Roy (2009) recognized that one of the key elements to successful PD is trust. If teachers at Lincoln High School do not view balanced assessment as program that is worth implementing for instructional improvement and student achievement, and not just a fleeting program, implementation will be difficult.

Many teachers were dismayed and resistant to the amount of time that was being spent on one initiative especially because the district was already performing at a high level (Teacher, personal communication, August, 2013). Teachers openly complained to each other and administration about the amount of time being spent and the agendas for the weekly PD days. Teachers were further dismayed that this initiative was something they were already doing in the

classroom, and they felt it was the same face with a different name (Teacher, personal communication, September, 2013). The problem involved time and money because the initiative was very costly and time-consuming. Some teachers either did not support the program or had major concerns regarding the manner in which the initiative was being implemented and felt that they had no voice in the program, process, or implementation. They further argued that the initiative was top heavy.

New teachers may be another hindrance to proper implementation of the program. In effective PD, teachers work collaboratively as they evaluate and strategize instruction as well as evaluate student work and data (Killion & Roy, 2009). Some seasoned teachers may not value a beginning teacher's opinion because he or she has little to no teaching experience, while a beginning teacher may be intimidated by a seasoned teacher. This could lead to less participation and even resentment. Effective PD provides the opportunity for all teachers to work together collaboratively with everyone's voice valued. Without trust and teachers working together, the proper implementation of Balanced Assessment will be difficult.

Balanced Assessment was initiated in hopes of raising achievement for all students especially the average or lower performing students, although the district recognized that change would not be imminent (Assessment Coordinator, personal communication, July 2013). The result of the assessments should reveal the meaning of Common Core standards and what students know and are able to do (Herman & Linn, 2013). The district is already known for its high scores on the ACT and state standardized tests and it wanted to expand this success to all students in every grade and in all content areas. The successful implementation of Balanced Assessment will come through effective PD. If teachers do not view this as a program that will

benefit their instructional strategies and raise student achievement, the implementation could be hindered.

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perspective of Balanced Assessment as it relates to proper implementation of the program through PD. Exploring teachers' perspectives of Balanced Assessment helped determine what aspects of PD needed to be changed and what worked well. The study also helped, in part, to determine whether the program was a waste of time and money. This information can be shared with other districts that have similar issues with the implementation of a time consuming, expensive program.

Definitions

The following terms are defined as they were used in the study:

Balanced Assessment: Learning cycle that includes selecting learning targets, providing instruction, assessing for learning, reteaching, practicing, and further assessing (Chappuis, 2009).

Structured teacher collaboration: Weekly, 60-minute collaboration sessions for the purpose of improving student achievement. The collaboration focuses on student work, setting explicit goals, and finding solutions to instructional issues (Lee's Summit R-7 School District, n.d.).

Professional development: A comprehensive, sustained, intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement (learningforward, 2014). According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2013), professional development is results driven, job-embedded, and standards based.

Perception: The process by which people perceive reality based on experiences and interactions with other people (Berger & Luckman, 1966). The process in which people perceive reality based on incomplete or unreliable information that guides behavior (Perceptions, 2014).

Collaboration: A form of professional development in which teachers work together to improve teaching and learning (Killion & Roy, 2009).

Significance

With the heavy burden on PD to improve instructional strategies and academic achievement, it is reasonable to think that effective PD can improve instructional strategies and improve academic achievement; however, teacher perspective of a PD can hinder the proper implementation of a program, and thereby hinder academic improvement. This study may be helpful to other districts that may be struggling with reluctant teachers resisting implementation of a new PD program.

Guiding/Research Questions

Do teacher perspectives of PD affect implementation and thus the success or failure of the program? Similar questions have spearheaded research surrounding the link between teacher perspective of professional development, teacher instruction, and academic achievement. The results of studies have not revealed a clear answer because the results have been varied. Desimone (2009) contended that PD needs to be examined at an individual level even though aspects of effective PD have been established. Borko (2004) revealed that there is little information about how and what teachers learn from PD. Although there have been studies done on the perception of teachers towards PD, there is a void in the literature pertaining to high

school English language arts teachers' perceptions of PD. This gap led to the research questions for this study:

Research Question 1: What are the English language arts teachers' perceptions of Balanced Assessment?

Research Question 2: What are the English language arts teachers' perceptions of the professional development for Balanced Assessment?

Research Question 3: What factors hinder or enhance the proper implementation of Balanced Assessment?

Research Question 4: What can be done at the local setting to maintain or change these factors?

These questions served as the catalyst for a case study design that was intended to increase the understanding of teachers' perspectives and proper implementation of Balanced Assessment PD. Teacher interviews and class observations provided the primary means of data collection to answer the questions and provide input on what needs to be improved.

Review of the Literature

The conceptual framework that underpins this study includes adult learning theory. A thorough search of literature was conducted in ERIC and Educational Research Complete through Walden University. A Boolean search was used using a variety of terms including *adult learning theory*, *history of professional development*, *benefits of professional development*, *barriers to professional development*, *teacher support of professional development*,

administrative support of professional development, teacher beliefs and professional development, professional development, teacher perspectives and professional development.

Adult Learning Theory

Traditional views of education have focused on the teaching of children. Pedagogy is taught to prospective teachers in college and continues through professional development and continuing education. Surprisingly, this same history has had little to no focus on the education of adults in light of the fact that some of the greatest teachers including the Greek philosophers Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato were educators of adults. With an influx of interest in PD as an integral part of student achievement, it behooves educators to look at adult learning when considering effective professional development.

A foundation for adult learning can be found in Lindeman's (1926) publication *The Meaning of Adult Education*. One of the premises of Lindeman's philosophy, which is in stark contrast to the education of children, is that learning should surround situations and not subjects. The curriculum focuses on the adult learners' needs while recognizing that adults bring with them certain experiences and situations. It is because of these experiences and situations that curriculum is derived. Lindeman maintained that the adult learner will reflect on experiences and thereby derive meaningful learning. This puts the teacher in a different position from that of a traditional role. In an adult class the student's experience counts as much as the teacher's knowledge. In some of the best adult classes, it is sometimes difficult to discover who is learning the most, the teacher or the students. Through the theory of adult learning, Lindeman made five assumptions: a) adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy, b) adults' orientation to learning is life-centered, c) experience is the richest source of adult learning, d) adults have a deep need to be self-directing, and d) individual differences

among people increase with age. Over the years other theorists have contributed to adult learning theory.

A key theorist who wrote many books regarding adult learning theory and brought the term *andragogy* to the forefront is Knowles (1984). Knowles presented six assumptions that serves as the basis for the androgical model. The first is that adults need to know why they are learning before the learning process can begin. This helps them make a connection to what they learn and how they can use the information in real life. The second assumption is that adults' self-concept is different from children's in that adults feel the need to direct their own life and take responsibility. The third assumption is that adult learners' experience plays a great part in the learning process. Children often have the same experiences; however, adults have lived longer and have had a wide array of experiences especially if they are much older. Because of this, adult learners bring a rich source of material: themselves. A major difference between children learners and adult learners is readiness to learn and orientation to learning which are Knowles' fourth and fifth assumptions. Sometimes children have trouble making a connection between what is learned and their own life. Adult learners need to make connections between what they are learning and real life, and they will be more apt to learn if they are taught according to real-life situations. The last assumption that Knowles presented involves motivation. Knowles maintained that adults are motivated both externally and internally. The external factors include pay raises and advancement in career related positions while the internal factors include job satisfaction and self-esteem (Knowles, 1984). Many of the assumptions of adult learning theory are seen in criteria for effective professional development.

Professional development has become an area of interest over the years as a rich source for academic achievement. Many teachers scoff at the idea of professional development or deem

it as a necessary evil that they must endure, and rightly so. Traditionally, professional development, for most school districts, consisted of a daylong guest speaker that may or may not be presenting something that is valuable to teachers (Killion & Roy, 2009). As seen in Knowles' (1984) third assumption of the importance of experience, teachers bring with them different levels of knowledge and skill, and the (PD) information may be something they already know and possibly know better than the presenter. Increasingly, effective professional development guidelines are recognizing the great inequities and disservices of current and past protocols for professional development. Killion and Roy (2009) outlined a huge change in regards to how professional development is established. As previously stated, professional development is often conducted a few times a year on designated professional development days. Killion and Roy maintained that the most effective professional development occurs through on-going, job-embedded collaboration. According to Killion and Roy, "collaborative professional learning is a powerful way to ensure great teaching for every student every day," (p. 17). One of the attributes of collaborative learning is teachers learning from each other's experiences, which gives them a baseline for self-reflection and improvement in their own practice. Teachers should play an active role in PD programs with options that meet their PD needs (Hofman & Tesfaw, 2012). Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, and Goe (2011) listed five characteristics of high-quality professional development: (a) aligns with school goals, (b) focuses on core content and modeling of teaching strategies, (c) includes opportunities for collaboration among teachers, (d) includes embedded follow-up and continuous feedback, and (e) includes opportunities for active learning of new teaching strategies.

Often teachers are disengaged in professional development because they do not see the connection or relevance in what they are supposed to be learning. Knowles (1984) addresses this

in the first assumption. Effective professional development incorporates collaborative learning. Teachers are invited to collaborate with their peers to improve their practice and raise academic achievement. This is done through observation, reflective dialogue, and looking at data and instructional practices. Hirsh (2009) listed several suggestions for effective professional development which aligns with adult learning theory. The first is that leaders should clarify the purpose of what is being learned. When teachers can make a connection to what they are learning, they will be more apt to learn and apply it to their practice. It is important for professional development leaders to provide options of how individual teachers want to learn, which may include creating common assessments, conducting peer observations, and developing lesson plans.

When looking at schools that used effective professional development to promote academic improvement, I noticed many theories of adult learning. Kose (2007) observed one middle school that used differentiated professional development to improve social justice. The crux of the professional development was recognizing that each of the teachers had different needs. The professional development centered on the whole staff, and then transitioned into small group discussions. The principal realized the importance of meeting the needs of every teacher instead of just some of the teachers. According to Kose the organizer helped meeting collective and individual needs. Adults need to know the rationale behind the information that is being presented to them and how the information can be of immediate use (Corley, 2011; Jarvis, 2012). This aligns with adult learning theory as teachers are able to connect what they learn to real life. I used adult learning theory to analyze the effectiveness of professional development Balanced Assessment.

History of Professional Development

Professional development for teachers is a relatively new concept. Prior to the 1950s, little was written or studied about PD. The only preparation teachers received was through their training programs that gave them the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the teaching profession, and then they were solely responsible for furthering their professional knowledge (Speck & Knipe, 2001). During the following decade, teachers and professors created teacher activity kits that were used as teacher learning opportunities (Sieveke-Pearson, 2004). Further changes came during the 1970s that consisted primarily of workshops and were followed by expert training, in which districts paid money to bring in an outside speaker to give a one-size-fits-all workshop. Schools decided the content of PD, and funding for PD came from a variety of sources including state and local funds and grants such as Title I and Title II (Corcoran, 1995; Desimone, 2009). Following this, a more managerial concept of PD and the idea of shared decision-making appeared. Out of this concept emerged programs such as professional learning communities. What has transpired recently is a student-centered PD in which the focus lies on PD improving student achievement (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

Today, PD still has many forms. These include bringing in an outside speaker to address the entire staff regarding one subject to offering a menu of PD opportunities to a select few. A key difference, however, is that today PD is tied to reforms, and is also tied to mandates. Some of these mandates include maintaining highly qualified teachers (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007; Cocoran, 1995). Most reforms place an emphasis on PD and teacher quality (Guskey, 2000). Additionally, No Child Left Behind requires that Title II funds be used for interventions that are scientifically based to improve student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007). Recently, collaborative inquiry and action research have appeared in PD. Researchers have

created a list of essential features of effective PD: experiential, based on inquiry, collaborative, connected to students' needs, sustained, intensive, and related to school improvement (Bezzina, 2006; Butler & Gerkin, 2006; Corcoran, 1996; Darlin-Hammond, Petty, 2007; Valli & Hawley, 2002).

Historically, and even today, schools will hire outside sources such as experts or individuals from educational agencies to teach or inform teachers on a variety of topics chosen by administrators. The more recent trend is to look in-house for trainers or for peer collaboration with the idea that teachers are more apt to respond better to peer-driven PD ((Bezzina, 2006; Corcoran, 1995; Weinbaum et al., 2004). This allows for a more grounded approach to PD and teachers are more likely to take theory into practice if they can find meaningful connections. The PD addressed in this study is collaborative in nature but driven by central office. Guskey (1994) stated that change is individual and organizational and that the teachers should be major players in the implementation and decision makers in the process and implementation of PD. In this study I looked at the concerns of the teacher as they pertained to their perception of the implementation of the current PD.

Guskey (1994) also recommended that an effective PD plan should be slow and steady. Teachers should realize that PD is a life-long learning experience (Suber, 2011). Enacting a large plan too quickly or with too little time can be counterproductive and even detrimental. Consistent evaluation of the plan and feedback will aid in effective implementation and time to make changes. Overall, it is a process that takes time and reflection. The plan addressed in this study is a 5-year plan with opportunities for teacher feedback and student assessments.

Professional Development: Benefits and Barriers to Successful Implementation

Many researchers have examined why PD is successful and why it is not. When PD is successful, it can be profound for both the teacher and students. Research has shown a plethora of reasons why PD is not successful. Identifying and addressing these issues can be beneficial to PDs that are not working or need improvement in certain areas.

Teacher Support

Often, teachers will try to implement PD only to find that they do not have instructional support. Park, Roberts, and Stodden (2012) conducted a study involving faculty members' perceptions and implementation of a 3-day workshop covering various aspects of teaching students with disabilities. Some of the results indicated that overall, the PD was received favorably but many participants did not have the technology and resources to properly implement all of the strategies learned in the workshop. Part of an effective PD is having materials that support the curriculum (Krus, Carlson, Roth, & Bourdelay-Parks, 2013).

Administrative support also plays a role in effective PD. Pan and Franklin (2011) conducted a study relating to proper implementation of incorporating Web 2.0 into the classroom after extensive PD and found that teacher-efficacy and administrative support were the greatest predictors of the use of this technology in the classroom. Little and Housand (2011) listed administrative support as one of the key elements in effective PD as administrators play a part in securing time, materials, and climate, and in engaging in the PD themselves. Kong, Hoare, and Yanping (2011) concluded that lack of administrative support hindered proper implementation of immersion education after teachers engaged in a lengthy PD program. Administrators are also responsible for securing time for teachers to collaborate. Collaboration provides an opportunity

for teachers to synthesize prior knowledge, experience, and resources that will ultimately help teachers transform their perspective and pedagogy Pella (2011). Lopez-Pastor, Monjas, and Manrique (2011) called for a more collaborative and democratic system of PD to improve teaching practice. Parise, Finkelstein, and Alterman (2015) reported that the most useful PD opportunities involved teachers learning from or with other teachers. When teachers have time to collaborate, and they focus on one, specific student learning need over a period of time, then the impact on student learning is great. This can only be done if administrators and teacher leaders create time and ensure that teachers are focused during collaboration (Biancarosa, Bryk, & Dexter, 2010). One way to ensure collaboration is creating professional learning communities that provides teachers an opportunity to dialogue with their peers (Stewart, 2014; Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015). Conducting a field test of the specific goal will help ensure that time will be well spent in collaboration (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2012). When teachers have the necessary tools and knowledge from PD, it can lead to positive student outcomes.

Teacher Beliefs

An important aspect of successful PD is teachers' beliefs prior to PD engagement. Professional development is likely to be more successful if teachers' beliefs align with the goals of PD (Gellert, 2008; Nichol & Turner-Bisset, 2006). If the beliefs do not align then PD becomes ineffective (Brinkeroff, 2006). Gibson and Brooks (2012) recognized that effective PD needs to be more than a one-size-fits-all approach after an interpretive case study garnered results that were not surprising to the researchers and supported their literature review. Most respondents found that they did not change their instruction as a result of their PD. This resulted from the teachers indicating that the new philosophy behind the new curriculum was what they were currently doing, so they saw no reason to change instruction. On the contrary, Polly, et al. (2011)

found that teachers who have certain pre-set beliefs about instructional practices are willing to change after PD if it includes looking at student work and examining the relationship between teaching and learning.

Many teachers, whether new or veteran, become apprehensive when there is change. In order to offset this, administrators and teacher leaders can anticipate this apprehension (McCaughtry et al., 2006) by having the teachers become aware and address their fears (Brown, 2004). When this happens, teachers' views can change which allows improvement in instruction and for students (Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 2004). Additionally, when teachers' beliefs align with the instructional strategies offered by PD, it can positively influence their teaching (Troia, Lin, Cohen, & Montoe 2011). If teachers are given time to reflect on their conceptions and beliefs as its consistency to their practice then they are more apt in considering new possibilities in teaching (Carrington, Deppeler, & Moss 2010).

Teachers' Perspectives

The way that teachers view PD has a great impact on the success of the program. Many studies have been conducted surrounding teacher perspective in relation to the success or failure of PD. Lee, Adamson, Maerten-Rivera, Lewis, Thornton, and Leroy (2008) incorporated teacher perspective towards PD in a 5-year PD program that focused on elementary teachers' practices and beliefs towards the teaching science and English language as well as mathematics for English Language Learners (ELL) students in an urban setting. This research was prompted by low scores earned by ELL students in science. The study included all third, fourth, and fifth-grade students from seven elementary schools in an urban school district. They concluded that the PD intervention had been effective and that teacher perception is an important part of PD.

Similarly, Kellerer, et al. (2014) found in their qualitative study that teachers teaching in a blended classroom found that PD improved their quality of implementing blended learning in their classroom.

Jones, Gardener, Robertson, and Robert (2013) researched teachers' perspective of professional development. The study focused on the teachers' perspective of the usefulness of PLCs. The results revealed that the majority of teachers felt the collaboration with peers improved their teaching strategies and deepened their content knowledge and their overall assessment and instructional strategies positively changed. Additionally, a recent study that examined North Carolina middle school teachers' perspective towards a specific instructional program and found that teachers, overall, thought the program was successful in improving instruction and student achievement. The teachers believed PD is successful when it is content-specific and involved collaboration with other teachers (Robinson, 2011).

Further, Guo and Yong (2013) conducted a study involving 12 early childhood teachers and their perspective on PD for early childhood teachers. The study found that teachers found the PD to improve their careers and job security because of the step-by step approach, the emphasis of differentiated goals for teachers in different professional ranks, and the collaborative and shared learning. Most did contend, however, that they felt it did not improve students' learning. Conversely, Sheets (2010) documented the involvement of history teachers in a Teaching American History grant that consisted of a year-long series of graduate style seminars. At the end of the PD, he found that most history teachers felt that the PD was effective for their classroom instruction and that overall the PD was effective because it was based on curricular needs, it was part of a culture of self-improvement, it was ongoing, and it included active learning strategies. Wilcox, Murakami-Ramalho and Urick (2013) also found, in their study of teachers' perspective

on Response To Intervention Framework PD, that teachers felt the most important part of PD was that it be imbedded and ongoing.

One way to offset this is for teachers to have input and planning of PD. Research indicates that most of the development and planning of PD is done by administrators without listening to the needs of the teachers (Hord & Tobia, 2012).

Implications

Current research describes various issues that hinder effective PD and also describes the great benefits it can create when implemented properly. This research was intended to identify what barriers existed to properly implement a specific PD program, Balanced Assessment. This is the first step in removing any barriers that exist to proper implementation. Other school districts with similar student demographics may benefit from this study by using the same techniques to implement a successful PD program.

After data collection and analysis was complete, my project involved creating a PD plan that positively influenced teachers' perception of Balanced Assessment based on adult learning theory and current literature that outlines effective PD practices.

Summary

Balanced assessment was a five-year PD program that involved much of Lincoln High School's time and money. Many teachers were disgruntled at the way it was being implemented and the amount of time that was being spent. Many research studies have concluded that PD is often times ineffective because of teacher beliefs, teacher perspectives, lack of support, and no voice in decision making; however, research also indicates that when effective, PD can have a

positive impact on instruction and academic achievement. Implementation of adult learning theory into PD can help this positive impact.

The next section, Section 2, describes the methodology used to investigate the problem using a qualitative, case study. A justification of why a case study was used instead of other methodologies is explained. It also provides information and justification for the participants that was as well as procedures for gaining access to the participants and the ethical measures taken to protect them. The means of data collection, teacher interviews and class observations, will be discussed as well as establishing credibility of the findings. The analysis of the data will be described in great detail as well as dealing with discrepant cases.

Section 2: Research Methods

Research Design and Approach

On a basic level, research involves asking questions, collecting data, and obtaining the answer to the question. Educators engage in this process often without documentation. Conducting formal research is much more involved and requires much thought and time and consists of six steps: identifying a research problem, reviewing the literature, specifying a purpose for research, collecting data, analyzing and interpreting the data, and reporting and evaluating research (Creswell, 2012). One of the first decisions a researcher must make is deciding the research design. Quantitative research is reserved for researchers who have already identified a problem and want to explain why it occurred and makes assumptions about the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2012). Conversely, qualitative research studies a central phenomenon in which the researcher does not know the variables, but rather collects data from participants to answer the research question. For this particular study, qualitative research

was the most appropriate because I examined teachers' perspectives on a particular professional development.

There are many types of qualitative research designs: ethnography, case study, phenomenology, grounded theory, and narrative (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Additionally, there are anthropological studies, biological studies, cognitive studies, historical inquiries, personal accounts, and sociological studies (Lancy, 1993). Researchers must look at their research questions to determine the appropriate design.

Rationale for Research Design

After careful analysis of my research questions and problem statement, I chose a case study research design. Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) defined a case study through the lens of constructivism which indicates that "truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective" (p. 545). My research addressed teachers' perspectives of a particular PD, Balanced Assessment, which involved participants revealing their experiences based on their reality. Yin (2014) suggested using a case study when the study includes how and why questions, when the researcher cannot manipulate the behavior of the participants, when the researcher wants to cover contextual conditions because they are related to the study, and when the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and the context. Lodico, et al. (2010) explained that a case study is used to understand an individual, a group, or a situation. In my case, I took an in-depth look at a group of four teachers. Creswell (2012) stated that a case study is used to take an in-depth look at a bounded system that includes an activity, event, process, or individuals based on extensive data collection. In this research study, the bounded system was a group of individual teachers.

Careful consideration was given to other research designs, but they ultimately proved to be inappropriate for this particular study. Yin (2014) stated that in order to determine what method to

use, researchers must consider three conditions: the type of research posed, the extent of control that the research has over the events, and the degree of focus on the present rather than the past. Narratives are used when the researcher wants to capture the experience or story of one individual in a chronological manner. The data collected consists of the stories that the participant tells either through informal conversations or observations. The researcher then looks for emerging themes from the stories (Creswell, 2012). I quickly eliminated narrative because I did not want to focus on the story of just one or two participants but rather wanted to capture a bigger picture. Histories were also quickly eliminated because the focus is on the past and my research focused on current events.

I eliminated ethnography because although this type of design addresses a group, the focus is on the cultural practices of the group in which the researcher becomes immersed. The researcher spends an extended period of time documenting the practices of the group through observations and interviews (Creswell, 2009). My study was shorter in comparison to the amount of time that ethnography requires and did not focus on the culture of the group.

Grounded theory is used when the researcher is searching for a theory or explanation about a process. This theory emerges from the research that is obtained and aligns with the researcher's problem and is more accurate than assigning a current existing theory. Grounded theory is also used when researchers want to study a process (Creswell, 2012). Grounded theory focuses on establishing a theory that is grounded in the data (Merriam, 2009). I did not attempt to do this nor was there an attempt to generalize the study to a larger population beyond the research site (Lodico, et al., 2010).

Although there are many benefits to case study, researchers understand that there are drawbacks to case study research. One in particular is many researchers believe it lacks rigor. A

major cause of this is a limited number of resources for researchers that provide systemic procedures. Additional concerns include the inability to generalize findings, the research taking too long, and an unclear advantage in comparison with other methods (Yin, 2014).

Participants

For this qualitative case study, purposeful sampling was used. In quantitative research, sampling is done randomly; however, in qualitative research the researcher intentionally chooses a particular site and participants, which is known as purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling helps researchers understand a particular phenomenon: therefore, researchers choose sites and participants that will best contribute to this understanding (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative research allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and the fewer the participants, the deeper the inquiry. The participants included four English language arts teachers who teach English 12, which is a senior class, and who make up one of the groups that meet every Wednesday morning for PD on Balanced Assessment. They were all veteran teachers who had taught more than 10 years and all of them have master's degrees. All of the participants have been in the district for more than 5 years, and have participated in all PD related to Balanced Assessment.

Before any study took place, Walden University IRB approved the research and made sure the benefits outweighed the potential harm to the participants. I submitted the IRB form that asks vital questions pertaining to the study and information about potential participants. This protected both the researcher and the participants (Walden University Center for Research Support, n.d.). Before selecting any participants, I gained written approval from the principal of the school (see Appendix B) as well as a signed consent form from the participants. The consent form included information about the study and an assurance that they could discontinue the study

at any time. Risks and ethical concerns exist whether the researcher is part of the school, or is coming in as an outsider. Creswell (2012) addressed risks and ethical concerns. I gave all pertinent information regarding the research to all participants in the study. I was also cognizant of the participants' privacy and dignity, and I made sure that I presented all information honestly. I was careful and kept disruption of the school and classrooms at the research site to a minimum. Creating trust helped me solidify my relationship with the participants. I did this, in part, by sharing my research goals and findings. Confidentiality is paramount in any study. To protect the participants' privacy, a pseudonym was used for the school and for each of the participants. The data from the interviews and observations were kept in a separate folder in my computer that is password protected. After I analyzed the data, I used member checking to ensure that all data collected were accurate.

Data Collection Methods

One of the first steps a researcher must consider is methods of data collection. This is done by considering what method of data will best answer the research questions. In a case study, this is usually done with observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials. This type of data is appropriate for a case study because the intent of a case study is gain an in-depth understanding of the issue. Most research methods require one type of data to obtain the information needed to answer the research questions. The case study requires several types of data, which strengthens the case and ensures credibility. There are four types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory, and methodological. I used data triangulation in this study. In data triangulation, multiple sources of data are used to corroborate the findings (Yin, 2014). For this study I chose observations and interviews, which are typical for a case study, and yielded the data needed to answer the research questions.

I interviewed each of the participants. Before the interviews took place, I tried out the questions in pilot form. I randomly choose another English teacher from a different PD group and conducted an interview with the same questions. Stake (1995) maintained that trying out questions in a pilot form should be standard. When I interviewed my participants, I decided what type of interviews to conduct. Yin (2014) presented three types of interviews: prolonged case study interviews, shorter case study interviews, and survey interviews. Creswell (2012) also presented multiple types of interviews: one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews, telephone interviews, email interviews, and open-ended questions on questionnaires. I used shorter case study, one-on-one interviews as more focused and still allowed the interview to be open ended. I interviewed each of the teachers once after in a nearby coffee shop. Each interview took approximately one hour. Lodico, et al., (2010) presented certain guidelines researchers should follow when conducting interviews: Begin the interview by reintroducing yourself, remind the participant of the confidentiality of his or her responses, obtain general descriptive information, strive for neutrality, use effective probes, and record the interview data. For each of my participants, I began with a set of issue-oriented questions. It was important that each of my participants told his or her own story and different questions emerged through the conversations (Stake, 1995). Lodico, et al., (2010) recognized that the researcher might ask probing questions when other issues and answers emerge. An accurate documentation of the interview is vital. I did not tape record the interview as my main focus was listening to the stories and deriving meaning from the answers and the participants' experiences, rather than focusing on what was said verbatim (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). It was important that immediately after the interview, I accurately documented the interview. I did this by typing an account of the interview and

focusing on the key ideas and episodes (Stake, 1995). I saved a folder for each participant on my computer which is password protected. I gave the transcripts to each participant for accuracy.

Unlike other types of research, it is important in case study research to have several types of data. In addition to interviews, I also conducted class observations. This was done during my third hour plan time and with my principal's permission, and during first hour because my co-teacher conducted the lesson for our class. I conducted an observation for each teacher over the course of a month. I did not tell the teacher what day or hour I would come, so the teachers did not change the lesson in anticipation of my observation. My job as a researcher during the observations was to write down accurate, unbiased accounts of the classroom. Creswell (2012) suggested creating an observation protocol that is used for taking field notes prior to the actual observation. My form had a header to record the setting, time, place and my role. Under the header, I had two columns, one for the description of events and the other for a reflection about the events. This data sheet helped me stay organized as I looked for common themes and trends. I let the observations tell the story (Stake, 1995). Observational evidence is important in adding information about the topic or problem at hand (Yin, 2014). After each observation, I typed my notes and my story emerged (Stake, 1995). I stored all documents pertaining to the observations in the participant's folder on my computer. I will keep all of the hard copies in a manila folder that has the pseudonyms of the participants in a locked cabinet file to ensure privacy and protection for my participants for 5 years.

Establishing an organized system for all data collected is essential for emerging understanding and thorough analysis. As previously mentioned, all field notes, interview notes and write-ups will be kept in a computer file and a hard copy file that is organized by the four participants. Additionally, I kept a log of when and where all data was collected as well as a

personal reflective journal that will also be kept in its own file. Yin (2014) maintained that researchers in case studies are looking for patterns, insights and concepts in the analysis phase. Having my data organized helped with this after my data were collected.

Role of the Researcher

As the sole researcher in this study, it was important that I disclosed that I was a teacher at Lincoln High School for 9 years and had participated in all of the PD for Balanced Assessment. The English Language Arts Department was the largest department in the high school with 18 English teachers on staff. The department offered courses in journalism, drama, creative writing, and required core English classes. The department was divided into subgroups based on teaching assignments. These subgroups also made up the PD groups that met every Wednesday morning. I was in the English 9 subgroup and did not hold any type of authoritative position in the department, school, or district. The department only interacted as a whole a few times a year for department meetings. I had very little contact with the participants. As a researcher who had engaged in the PD that was the focus of this study, it was important that I recognized that I could hold certain biases towards the data. Understanding that bias can exist in research, I conscientiously followed steps to ensure that I avoided bias as much as possible. Yin (2014) suggested several guidelines a case researcher can follow to help avoid bias: ask good questions, be a good listener, stay adaptive, have a firm understanding of the issues that are being studied, be sensitive to contrary evidence, and be ethical. These are the attributes I followed to conduct ethical, sound, unbiased research.

Data Analysis

There are different techniques involved in analyzing data. The method is determined by the researcher's preference and the method that will yield the best results. Creswell (2012)

indicated that coding is an essential part of the analysis because it helps make sense of the data. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) listed several types of coding including setting/context, situation, process, activity, event, strategy, narrative, and method codes. Choosing the type of code is dependent on the type of research that will be done and the research questions. Several methods are suggested to analyze the interviews and the observations. I used HyperRESEARCH to identify themes and trends (Researchware, Inc., 2015). HyperRESEARCH is a software that is used for qualitative research. After I established a new study. I used the autocode feature to look for specific words and phrases. This program does not analyze the data but organizes it so the researcher is able to find themes. I then looked at the themes and analyzed them through the lens of the research questions which enabled me to answer them. The teacher observation field notes had carefully written observer comments about ideas that were generated during the observations. Bogdan and Biklen (2002) recognized the observer comments as essential to field notes because they allow the researcher to stimulate critical thinking rather than being a mere note taker.

Every researcher must establish credibility for the findings. There are many ways to establish credibility for the findings in case study research. In this particular type of study, Creswell (2012) mentioned several validity techniques. Member checking asks the members to check the accuracy of the account. After my analysis, I asked one the participants to read my report and decide if it was complete, realistic, and if the interpretations were fair. Triangulation is another way to ensure credibility. Triangulation is used to check the accuracy of information by using two or more types of data, methods of data, and different individuals that will help determine the consistency of the findings (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). In this

research, I collected data from interviews and observations. To ensure validity, I looked at the results from both types of data to ensure that they yielded the same results.

Through the analysis of my data, I was prepared to find discrepant cases. In the presentation of my finding, I disclosed any discrepant data and explained why the data was not congruent with the rest of the findings.

The Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) granted approval for data collection on July 31, 2015, (approval # 07-31-15-02906850) and expires July 30, 2016. After I received the approval notice from the IRB (see Appendix C), I sent an email (see Appendix D) to all of the English 12 teachers who met the criteria of teaching English 12 and who had participated in all of the balanced assessment professional development. Four out of the 6 possible participants responded to the email indicating that they wanted more information. The participants were then sent a consent form (see Appendix E) that detailed the study, procedures, risks and benefits, privacy, and ensured that the participation was voluntary in nature, and they could discontinue their participation at any time.

After the participants signed the consent form, I began scheduling interview times for each of the 4 participants at a local coffee shop near the school and dates for the classroom observations. The dates for the classroom observations were not revealed to the participants as I wanted as close to an authentic observation as possible. Wednesdays were block classes, so I chose these days to observe as it gave me a chance to observe for at least an hour. To protect anonymity, I assigned the participants a number. Participant One was observed on September 2; participant two was observed on September 9; participant three was observed on September 16; and participant four was observed on September 23. Each observation lasted approximately an hour. I came in before the students and sat in the back to make myself unobtrusive. I had my

observation sheet which had the date, time, and participant's number at the top and wrote down the description of events in the left column (See Appendix F). The descriptions were written down as sentence fragments or a list of events that occurred in the classroom by the teacher and students, which also included dialogue. I also wrote down what was on the board or displayed on the Smartboard. Throughout the observation, I made a conscious effort to write down exactly what occurred without any biased words or interpretations. After each observation, I immediately typed up what I had written and begin filling in the right column which was the reflection. My reflection was written through the lens of the problem statement and research questions. Once this was done, I saved the typed observations in a folder that I created on my laptop which is password protected. Additionally, the handwritten notes were saved together in a manila folder that will be kept in a locked cabinet in my classroom for five years.

The second type of data were interviews (see Appendix G). I scheduled the interviews with each participant that was convenient with their schedule. Before the interviews occurred, I conducted a pilot interview with a participant with the same criteria but who taught English 9. The pilot interview allowed me to practice asking question, sub-questions and probing questions. It also allowed me to practice writing down the answers. I quickly realized that trying to write down answers in full sentences was not plausible, so I wrote them in fragments. I also learned that there would be a lot of probing and clarifying questions to add.

The interviews occurred within the month of September 2015 at a coffee shop approximately a mile away from the school. The interviews occurred in a corner table and away from surrounding people to ensure privacy. Each interview lasted approximately an hour. The participants were each asked the same ten pre-established questions, but a variation of clarifying and probing questions occurred for each participant. Immediately following the interviews, I

typed up the responses in full sentences and was conscious about not using any bias interpretation or language. Similar to the observation notes, I saved the typed interviews in a folder on my password protected computer, and the handwritten interviews were saved in a manila folder in a locked cabinet in my classroom which will be kept for five years.

Evidence of Quality

One element of this research that was paramount to me was the assurance of credibility to the study, the data, and the findings. I wanted to make sure that the voice of my participants were heard through their words and actions. There are many ways to give credibility to a study and in my case study I used triangulation and member checking. The two types of data that I used were interviews and classroom observations. Rubin and Rubin (2005) maintain that thoroughness of the investigation comes from care and completeness. I completed this as I looked for repetition of themes in both the interviews and classroom observations while also analyzing any disagreeing or dissenting data.

Member checking was done after each piece of datum was collected. After each interview, the participants were able to look at the responses, quotes, and summaries I wrote down to ensure that they were identical to what they meant and said. All of the participants were in full agreement with what they said and what I wrote down. After each observation, the participants were given the observation sheet to look for any discrepancies. All of the participants were in agreement with my notes on the observations.

Findings

The problem that prompted this research was that teachers at Lincoln High School resisted the idea of Balanced Assessment, which was the focal point of the school's PD. Further,

this research attempted to answer four research questions: What are the English Language Arts teachers' current perception of Balanced Assessment? What are the English Language Arts teachers' current perception of the professional development for Balanced Assessment? What factors hinder or enhance the proper implementation of Balanced Assessment? What can be done at the local setting to maintain or change these factors?

After analyzing the data, four themes emerged: voice, follow-up, same strategies but different name, and trust. These themes helped address the problem and answer the research questions.

Research Question 1:

What are the English language arts teachers' current perception of Balanced Assessment? One theme that emerged from the data that answered this question included the participants felt like they had no voice in the direction or decision making with Balanced Assessment PD. When interviewed, all of the participants commented that they felt they were not part of the process when PD was implemented. The PD was determined by central office and in part by the building principal. When asked about the overall perception of Balanced Assessment PD, Participant Four responded, "I feel like a poodle in a circus. I just do what I am told and jump through any hoops they tell me." This sentiment was echoed by the other participants who also felt that they were not part of any of the decision-making process and were never asked by central office or building administration for input.

Participant One was especially dismayed as she had been on the curriculum writing team for Phase I, and had put in many hours outside of school time in aligning assessments to Balanced Assessment, "At the least, I thought they would ask the teachers who were on the

curriculum teams for suggestions and ideas for our PD days or collaboration times.” Participants Two and Three expressed that, even though they believe that teachers should give some input to the topics and implementation of PD they have little hope of that happening based on past experience. Participant Three said, “I have been in this district for 13 years. We have had some good PD and plenty of bad PD, but it has always been at the discretion of central office, administration, or a committee. I am not sure how we can get that to change.”

Research Question 2:

What are the English language arts teachers’ current perception of the professional development of Balanced Assessment? Another reoccurring theme that emerged during data analysis was participants felt that many of the elements of the PD they attended resembled or was identical to what they had been doing for years, but with a new name. The strongest strategy that participants had been using was formative and summative assessments. During the observations, I observed Participants Two and Three use formative assessment through questioning to discuss the literature they were reading which helped the teachers know if the students understood parts of the reading. They both used higher level thinking questions to students and based on the response, would move on to another question or clarifying questions. This was evident when Participant Two was teaching the play, *A Doll’s House*, and asked the students: How would the audience have responded to Nora leaving her family during Ibsen’s time period? Many students responded that many mothers leave their family. Then the teacher asked the class about the role of the mother during the late 1800s and how people viewed divorce and the laws surrounding mother’s legal rights. After this, three students responded that the audience during this time would have been shocked and it would have been considered a scandalous ending. After the discussion, and for the last 10 minutes of class, the teacher started

the students on a supervised writing assignment that they would finish the next day. The teacher put five questions on the Smartboard, and the students chose one of them to turn into a full essay that required textual support. In the interview Participant One said this allowed her to assess the student's understanding of the play as well as the literary techniques she had been teaching. She also said that she had been doing these types of assessments for years and that balanced assessment PD had not changed anything.

Participant Three also used questions for formative assessment when she discussed the introduction and thesis for an argumentative research paper. She began the class by presenting a PowerPoint of the formula for constructing a thesis for argumentation and examples of introductions. There was also a section on ways to begin a paper. As a class, they came up with a thesis and then listed what would go in the introduction. The rest of the time was spent with the students starting their own introduction while she walked around and monitored students' progress and answered any questions they might have. In the interview, she said this is something she has always done and was regardless of Balanced Assessment PD. In the observations for Participants One and Four the students worked independently. Participant One had the students in groups as they made a game board. As a probing question, I asked her what that would eventually lead to, and she responded that it would eventually lead to a review for their unit test. She too responded that she uses assessments to gauge learning and change instruction but also replied that it wasn't something that all teachers have always been doing.

Participant Four's class was working independently on grammar from their grammar books and then lessons from the program noredink (NoRedInk Corp., 2015). In the interview, as a probing question, I asked her if she was planning on a summative assessment for their

grammar, and she said she will test them through a multiple choice unit test and also on the final exam. These are assessments that she had always done despite balanced assessment.

Research Question 3:

What factors enhance or hinder proper implementation of Balanced Assessment? In the interviews, participants were asked to identify and explain some elements that hindered or enhanced their implementation of Balanced Assessment in their classroom. Participant One commented, “We spent the first year creating learning targets for each skill. These targets were to be written on the board and used as a guide for learning. We are now in the fourth year, and no one talks about learning targets anymore.” When I completed my observations, I noticed that none of the participants had learning targets written on the board. This observation led to a probing question to my original interview questions: Why didn’t you put learning targets on display? Participant Four responded, “I forgot about them. My evaluator has never mentioned the fact that I don’t have them up. They were a big deal when Balanced Assessment started, but now the focus is on formative assessment.” Participants Two and Three indicated that they do put them up occasionally but not on a regular basis. Participant Two added that she had not been given the targets and wasn’t quite sure what to write. It was conclusive that the participants’ perceptions were that there was little to no follow up on the use of learning targets which inhibited proper implementation of Balanced Assessment.

One of the corner-stones for Balanced Assessment is the use of formative and summative assessments. Many PD sessions have focused on various strategies for using formative assessments. Ideally, the district would like teachers to conduct some type of formative assessment every seven minutes and adjust instruction accordingly. Although all participants

agreed that formative assessment is important, they felt that once PD surrounding formative assessment was over, there was no follow-up. Participant One stated that she wished there was a discussion in the cohorts about what formative assessments strategies went well and what didn't go well, "Some of the strategies that we learned in the PD sessions were useful, like the exit tickets. I would like to hear how it worked with other teachers." In the classroom observations, Participants Two and Three used questioning to formally assess. Participant Two finished reading Henry Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*, and a class discussion ensued about the ending. The participant took the opportunity to ask probing and additional questions to keep the discussion going and to assess understanding and analysis of the play. She did not employ any of the techniques that were presented in PD. During the interview, I asked probing why she did not use one of the techniques that were presented at the PD, "I have used them before, and some of them worked well. I usually use thumbs up/thumbs down. I just don't use them as often as I should." When I asked her why she replied, "It can be time consuming and if I stopped too much for the strategies, it would be difficult to get through the curriculum." I then asked her if she and her English 12 cohort group followed up on the strategies they implemented in her classroom and she responded that there is little talk about the results but occasionally someone will tell the group if he or she used a new strategy for formative assessment. She further explained that no administration or personnel from central office has ever have a follow up discussion with her or her group about the implementation or results from the strategies learned from PD about formative assessment.

The writing teams created summative assessments that core teachers gave their students throughout the year to assess certain skills. The process included giving students the tests which, for English 12, included a combination of short answers, essays, and multiple choice, and

grading them and sending them to central office to be evaluated. The goal was to look at the data and then change instruction based on what areas were low. This began in year two of the implementation of Balanced Assessment. During the classroom observations none of the participants gave any type of summative assessment either from the unit, curriculum, or state. The interview question pertaining to overall perception of Balanced Assessment gave an insight to views on summative assessments. All participants agreed that summative assessments are vital in all arenas of education to measure a student's growth of learning; however, in relation to the summative assessments that were particular to balanced assessments, views were quite different. Participant One responded, "The assessments that we gave the students the second year was nothing short of a nightmare. All of the tests had major mistakes and the third test we gave them was an essay that we were supposed to grade and record. This was on top of all of the other grading we did. The assessments did not align with the curriculum so most students did not do well." Participant Three became angry as she described the district-created assessments, "We only did them for one year and the program that ran them, Schoolnet, had so many issues that the tests were abandoned after only one year of use (Pearson Education, Inc., 2015). The teachers that spent summer hours and multiple days writing them were beyond angry. That was two years ago and we have never heard about them again." Participants Two and Four agreed with the frustration with the other participants. Participant Four commented that she was already weary when Balanced Assessment started and when the assessments ceased to exist she became even wearier. When asked if summative assessments were ever part of PD, the collective answer was no and Participant One included that she would be open to PD for summative assessments for her units. Overall, all participants felt that regarding the biggest aspects of Balanced Assessment,

there was little to no follow up on data or instruction which gave them a negative view of Balanced Assessment and the PD.

Another reoccurring theme that emerged during data analysis was participants felt that many of the elements of the PD they attended resembled or was identical to what they had been doing for years, but with a new name. The strongest strategy that participants had been using was formative and summative assessments. During the observations, I noted Participants Two and Three used formative assessment through questioning to discuss the literature they were reading which helped the teachers know if the students understood. Participant Two also used questions for formative assessment when she discussed the introduction and thesis for an argumentative research paper. She began the class by presenting a PowerPoint of the formula for constructing a thesis for argumentation and examples of introductions. There was also a section on ways to begin a paper. As a class, they came up with a thesis and then listed what would go in the introduction. The rest of the time was spent with the students starting their own introduction while she walked around and monitored students' progress and answered any questions they might have. In the interview she said this is something she has always done and was regardless of Balanced Assessment PD. Students worked independently in the observations for Participants One and Four. Participant One had the students in groups as they made a game board. As a probing question, I asked her what they would eventually learn and she responded that it would eventually lead to a review for their unit test. She too, responded that she uses assessments to gauge learning and change instruction but also replied that it wasn't something that all teachers have always been doing. Participant Four's class was working independently on grammar from their grammar books and then lessons from the program noredink (NoRedInk Corp., 2015). As a probing question, I asked her if she was planning on a summative assessment for grammar, and

she said she will test them through a multiple choice unit test and also on the final exam. When asked how they would envision PD for the upcoming years the theme in their responses was they would like to see PD that was relevant to what they were doing and something new. The observations and interviews revealed a theme of the participants recognizing that the PD for balanced assessment is something that they have been doing for years but with a new name.

Research Question 4: What can be done at the local setting to maintain or change these factors?

When asked how they would envision PD for the upcoming years the theme in their responses was they would like to see PD that was relevant to what they were doing and something new. Participant One said, “All of the students got Chrome books this year. Most teachers who have been out of school for a long time do not know how to use technology as a tool for learning. Including myself.” Participant Four replied, “I think some of the PD we do is good for brand new teachers, but for teachers like me who have taught for a long time, it is old news.” The observations and interviews revealed a theme of the participants recognizing that the PD for Balanced Assessment is something that they have been doing for years but with a new name.

A theme that was threaded throughout the answers during the interview questions was trust. All of the participants had been in the district for over 10 years and had been through multiple initiatives and PD. When asked the interview question: Explain your initial reaction when the district introduced Balanced Assessment to you, Participant Two responded, “I literally rolled my eyes. We had just finished a reading initiative and had to document on a weekly basis how we were implementing the reading strategies we learned in PD. The students also had 20 minutes of silent sustained reading. We did this for three years, and then it was suddenly gone.”

Participant One pointed out that, “Our district usually follows educational trends or what the neighboring districts are doing even if it benefits our students or not.” Participant Four added that the district started an intervention time during the day that lasted for 25 minutes in the 2014-2015 year that cut class time down to 48 minutes, “The district next to us implemented an intervention time, so I guess we had to too.” Participant Three added, “We have had some good initiatives that benefited teachers and students but they would only be around for a couple of years and then they would be gone without any explanation. I really believe that there are people at central office that need to keep their jobs and they have to have something to do, so they go and find new initiatives.” I then ask them if their view of this inhibited or enhanced the implementation of Balanced Assessment into their classrooms and they all agreed that they didn’t take the initiative that seriously because they knew it would be gone. Participant One added, “They don’t take it seriously so why should we?” The observations solidified these responses since the participants had little to no implementation of Balanced Assessment.

Results in Relation to Conceptual Framework

The results yielded four themes: voice, follow-up, same strategies but different name, and trust. As established in the conceptual framework, adults learn much differently than children. The results from the data analysis reflect that adult learning theory in many ways. All of the participants indicated that they wanted PD that was meaningful and useful. This aligns with Knowles’ first assumption that adults need to know why they are learning in order to make connections. One of the themes, same strategies but different name, indicates that the participants felt that aspects of the PD for Balanced Assessment was something they were already doing and were unable to make a connection as to how it would be useful in the classroom and could not make a connection to the learning. Knowles’ second assumption is that adults need to self-direct.

This is evident when participants felt that they had no voice or input in the direction of the PD. This is important to adult learners as they can have input into what they regard as relevant and meaningful to their work. Knowles' fourth assumption is that adults need to make connections to what they are learning in real life. The participants could not find much meaning in the PD they received for Balanced Assessment making it hard to connect to their profession. This is part of the hindrance that was evident in implementing the PD. Understanding the aspects of how adults learn and the analysis of the data, created a baseline for the project which was a PD plan.

Evidence of Quality

One element of this research that was paramount to me was the assurance of credibility to the study, the data, and the findings. I wanted to make sure that the voice of my participants were heard through their words and actions. There are many ways to give credibility to a study and in my case study, I used triangulation and member checking. The two types of data that I used were interviews and classroom observations. Rubin and Rubin (2005) maintained that thoroughness of the investigation comes from care and completeness. I completed this as I looked for repetition of themes in both the interviews and classroom observations while also analyzing any disagreeing or dissenting data.

Member checking was done after each piece of datum was collected. After each interview, the participants were able to look at the responses, quotes, and summaries I wrote down to ensure that they were identical to what they meant and said. All of the participants were in full agreement with what they said and what I wrote down. After each observation, the participants were given the observation sheet to look for any discrepancies. All of the participants were in agreement with my notes on the observations.

Discrepant Cases

Although the data were collected from various participants and the responses and observations were varied, there were no discrepant cases. Discrepant cases occur when the researcher encounters viewpoints from respondents that differ from the literature or researchers find unexpected or contradictory data (Glesne, 2011). This particular research study had 4 participants from the same setting. Discrepant cases may likely have occurred if there were more participants from a variety of grades and subjects and if the participants were from different schools or districts.

Conclusion

This qualitative case study involved four English language arts teachers' perspectives over a particular PD: Balanced Assessment. Face-to-face interviews and classroom observations were used to collect data to answer the research questions: What are the English language arts teachers' current perception of Balanced Assessment? What are the English language arts teachers' current perception of the professional development for Balanced Assessment? What factors hinder or change the proper implementation of Balanced Assessment? What can be done at the local setting to overcome these factors? After careful analysis using the program HyperRESEARCH the themes that evolved were voice, follow-up, same strategies but different name, and trust. Triangulation and member checking ensured the validity of the findings. The results of the data analysis along with adult learning theory will guide the proposed project. The proposed project is a 3-day PD plan that gives teachers an opportunity to have a choice in their PD that is relevant to their experience and background, collaborate with peers, as well as have a voice in future PD. Section three gives a detailed account and goals of the proposed PD, a

rational and a thorough review of literature. Implementations, a timeline, and how the project will be evaluated will be discussed. The section will end with local and far-reaching implications for social change.

Section 3: The Project

In this section I give a description of the project as well as the goals and rationale. I include a review of the literature and describe the direction of the project. I then describe how the project will be implemented with potential resources and existing supports as well as potential barriers. I also give a proposal for implementation and a timetable along with the roles and responsibilities of students and others. Finally, I give a description of the evaluation of the project. I conclude with the local and far-reaching implications of social change.

Description and Goals

This project consists of a 3-day PD plan. Teachers will attend two workshops addressing various topics in the morning and then spend the afternoon to discussion and reflection on one of the sessions of their choice to discuss plans for implementation and follow-up. The problem statement in Section 1 included the following: Do teacher perspectives of PD affect implementation and thus the success or hindrance of the program? The process of data collection and analysis as well as a thorough look at the current literature helped answer this question. Teachers' perspectives do influence implementation in the classroom. The themes that emerged in the analysis revealed that teachers want input and relative PD that they feel will help instruction. In response to this, the project included a variety of PD that was relative to teachers' experience, education, and subject matter. The goals of the 3-day PD are to give teachers a

variety of topics that pertained to instruction and give them an opportunity to have some control over their PD as they choose what sessions they want.

Rationale

This project was based on the problem, research, and data that were collected and analyzed. The development of the project came directly from the results of the data analysis. Teachers wanted relative PD that would help them in the classroom as well as input and follow-up. This project offers all of these options. There are several PD sessions that vary widely in topics, and teachers have a choice in what they will focus on as well as continuous follow-up with peers throughout the year. Murray (2014) recognized the importance of collaboration as essential to effective PD: “This type of powerful teacher collaboration builds trust, leads to greater willingness to innovate and take risks and learn from mistakes, and share successful strategies with teachers,” (p. 25). This project included the criteria from current literature, adult learning theory, and data analysis.

Review of Literature

Part of creating the PD plan was based on current literature and adult learning theory. For this review of literature I turned to several databases: ERIC, Educational Research Complete, Teacher Reference Center, and ProQuest Central. I also referred to learningforward.org. The key words used for the data bases included effective professional development, teacher autonomy, teacher choice in professional development, adult learning and professional development, adult learning, professional development and collaboration, professional development and voice, professional development and follow up.

Adult Learning Theory

When planning PD, incorporating adult learning theory helps ensure that teachers are part of the learning process and also gives them a sense of control and empowerment. When teachers are part of the learning process they feel more like professionals who are part of a bottom-up organization rather than top-down (Steinke, 2012). Knowles (1984) identified six assumptions for adult learners which are reflected in the project. Specifically, the various PD opportunities and the choices the teachers make reflect the assumptions that adult learners bring with them life experience. These issues come into play as teachers have a variety of experiences that could help determine what PD they want to explore further. Finally, adults need to know why they are learning. Giving teachers a choice will allow them to connect their learning to their practice.

Effective Professional Development

There is no one universal definition for effective professional development, but most scholars agree on certain criteria. Learning Forward (2012) presented learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, and outcomes. Hirsch (as cited in Stansbury, 2012) contended that before districts can implement these standards, four prerequisites must be met: (a) educators must commit to ensuring that all students succeed, (b) educators must be ready to learn continually, (c) school district officials understand that professional learning involves collaborative inquiry and learning, and (d) school district officials must understand that educators learn in different ways and at different rates. Bayar (2014) identified key components that constitute what teachers believe to be effective professional development: match to existing teacher and school needs, teacher involvement in planning PD activities, active participation in activities, long-term engagement, and high-quality instructors.

Many studies have been conducted concerning success in PD when it reflected effective PD strategies. Stanley, Snell, and Edgar (2014) studied eight music teachers and found that collaboration was identified as a key component to the participants' success in their PD. Having high-quality instructors includes teachers being highly knowledgeable about their subject matter. PD that incorporates content-specific topics can help attain this. McConnell, Parker, and Eberhardt (2013) conducted a 4-year study involving 206 science teachers involved in a problem-based learning project PD, and found that "teachers with a range of incoming, content knowledge are able to gain new ideas, clarify existing understandings, and/or apply ideas to authentic context more accurately" (p. 221). Similarly, Sanchez (2012) conducted a qualitative, 4-week summer PD that surrounded the South Texas writing project PD with 15 teachers. Part of the results indicated that "teachers had engaged in a deeper understanding of the challenges involving writing, an awareness of strategies and resources for teaching writing, and an understanding of the importance of being a reflective practitioner" (p. 48).

The current literature and research outlining essentials in effective PD align with adult learning theory. Adults are intrinsically motivated, and participating in PD that is relevant and practical to take back to their classroom will help ensure that PD is effective and will help instruction and student achievement. Further, relevant PD helps adults answer the question as to why they are learning.

Collaboration

One of the essential ingredients for successful PD is collaboration. Teachers discuss topics such as teaching and assessment strategies, materials, goals, frustration, and student achievement. This dialogue leads to trust and a willingness to take risks as well as share

successes and failures with colleagues. These discussions are likely to lead to greater student achievement (Murray, 2014). Learning is not only a cognitive process but also a social one. Worthwhile learning takes place when there is collaboration. “Framing adult collaborations around common concerns for students can elevate relevance to, commitment from, and learning by teachers (Tallerico, 2005, p. 41). In the past, teachers received PD passively, but today effective PD occurs in an active and consistent teacher-based environment supported by peers in a professional learning community (Steinke, 2012). Shanks, Miller, and Rosendale (2012) found that effective PD also occurs when teachers are able to plan and execute PD to improve their instruction.

When teachers collaborate they take on more responsibility for their learning and become both a support system and knowledge base for their colleagues (Freidus et al., 2009). Further, when teachers collaborate they feel a sense of community and importance and take pleasure in working with like-minded people (Steinert, et al., 2010). De Groot et al. (2014) found that when professionals share and create knowledge it can support continuous learning: “At the highest level, when members interact with each other within an aspect of critically reflective dialogue, opportunities for learning seem to be optimally utilized,” (p. 21). Leclerc, Moreau, Dumouchel, and Sallafranque-St-Louis (2012) also found that a key element to student learning included teachers working together with other professionals: “Teachers working in this type of environment are well-informed at the pedagogical level, are committed to continuing professional development, and consider student learning as their key calling,” (p. 2). Teachers from all levels of experience find that the opportunity to connect with other teachers is an effective way for professional development to occur (Compton, 2010). Similar results were found in a study conducted by Jao and McDougall (2015) in which teachers indicated that they

found PD more meaningful and successful when there was a mix of collaboration. Gabriel, Day, and Allington (2011) interviewed 30 exemplary fourth grade teachers and found that three factors were influential in becoming an exemplary teacher: specific types of PD, collegial support, and a sense of engaged autonomy. Specifically, on collaboration Gabriel et al. found that “collaboration also is important, but only when it’s not contrived participation driven by mandated paperwork. Collaboration must be a genuine sharing of ideas, questions, and frustrations,” (p. 41). Similarly, Chaudary and Imran (2012), found through teacher interviews that “they [teachers] expressed their liking for developing cultures of collegial support at their workplace where they could collaborate, share and reflect” (p. 92).

The current literature for collaboration reflects aspects of adult learning theory in that being able to collaborate on relative topics gives the adult learner tools to become problem solvers. Collaboration further allows teachers to share and apply the vast amount of experience they have acquired. The PD plan allowed teachers to spend time collaborating with colleagues over chosen topics and time to reflect and dialogue after implementation into the classroom.

Voice

Many teachers, including the participants in my study, feel that they have no voice in PD and that it is often determined by administrators or central office. Teachers must be the first ones consulted when determining PD. Many times administrators or curriculum specialists, the ones far removed from the classroom, determine PD and teachers are more of an after-thought (Avargil, Herscovitz, & Dori, 2012). Adult learners are self-directed and intrinsically motivated which is different from how children learn and PD should reflect this (Beavers, 2009; Buchanan, 2012; Cummings, 2011). Mansour, EL-Deghaidy, Al Shamrani, and Aldahmash (2014) revealed

that the teachers' development can be effective and successful when the teachers can collaborate and participate in developing the content of PD. Shurr, Hirth, Jasper, McCallow, and Heroux (2014) posited that a component of professional development is self-directed by the teachers, and the learner takes the role in facilitating his or her own growth. Varela (2012) maintained that one of the sins of professional development is the lack of differentiation and that "teachers should be involved in the selection of professional development" (p. 18).

Several of the participants in my study expressed concerns about over the lack of decision making in their PD. The PD project created opportunities for teachers to have a say in what they are learning by giving them choices of what PD they will participate in and a survey of what topics they would like for PD for second semester.

Follow-Up

Often teachers participate in PD, and there is little or no follow-up which limits the value no matter how relative or valuable to teachers it is. The participants in my study expressed concern that when they participate in PD, there is usually no follow-up. This drove my project as there was time for follow up on each session. In the literature, follow-up is also cited as being a driving force behind effective PD.

Desantis (2012) conducted research on PD involving interactive white boards and found that "training sessions are insufficient preparation for teachers to fully capitalize on the IWB's potential," (p. 52). Wei, Andree, and Darling-Hammond (2009) contended that effective PD must be "ongoing and in teachers' context" (p. 28). Hough (2011) concluded, after a longitudinal study of 2,300 teachers in 241 schools, that the implementation of character education was a success in part because of expert-led and sustainable PD. Similarly, Brown and Inglis (2013)

looked at PD in early childhood education and determined that the biggest factors for success were continued dialogue after the initial PD.

Implementation

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

There are many potential resources at the study site. Many teachers who are experts in their field could present the PD topics that are available. Many of the teachers are used to doing this as many have presented at conferences, staff meetings, and other PDs. Lead teachers, instructional technology leaders, and curriculum specialists can also offer their expertise in advising on the creation and revision of PD topics. There are many resources that are already in place. Time is already built into the calendar to present PD and collaborate. All of the teachers have a laptop computer and access to Blackboard in order to access the Powerpoints or engage in discussion after PD. The computer will also be used for evaluations that the teachers will complete after the PD sessions. Smartboards and rooms are available for presentations and collaborations.

Potential Barriers

Even the most thought-out PD plan can include barriers. Time is one factor that is always a hindrance in PD. Even though there is time allotted for PD, teachers will still need to fill out the interest inventory sheet and evaluations for the sessions which could run outside of the allotted PD time. Further, teachers may need more time for follow-up and collaboration than the 3 days of PD. Teacher buy-in is also a potential barrier as many teachers participate in PD because it is mandated and have had poor experiences with it before and may put up a wall no matter how well the PD is organized.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The proposed implementation of this project is during the planned August PD time for the 2016-2017 school year. The following is a detailed timeline:

June 2016: (First Monday): The findings and implications of the study will be presented to the building principal, lead-teachers, and curriculum specialist at the monthly site-based team meeting. The 3-day PD plan will also be presented.

June 2016: The curriculum coordinator, two media specialists, the English lead-teacher, and history lead-teacher will be asked to present a session.

July 2016: An email will be sent out to all teachers with a link detailing the contents for the 6 PD sessions. The teachers will sign up for 3 of the break-out sessions.

July 2016: The principal will send out the annual welcome-back-to-school letter that includes the PD dates.

August 2016- Teachers will be given their session dates, times, and room numbers on the first day back at school.

August 2016: Teachers will attend the PD sessions and their chosen break-out sessions during 3 of the 5 in-service days.

August 2016: Teachers will be given a survey about their PD sessions.

September 2016: Teachers will be given a survey indicating their desired topics for future PD.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

Researcher

This PD plan was created in response to the analysis of data and my participants' request for PD and current literature over effective PD. It was my responsibility to create the PD sessions and supporting documents as well as the evaluations and surveys. It was also my responsibility to make sure that the goals of the PD were carried out as well as securing appropriate rooms and equipment for the presenters.

Teachers

It is the role of the teachers to sign up for the break-out sessions that aligns with their needs and interests. It is also the role of the teachers to be honest in the evaluations and the interest inventory for future PD topics. The teachers have a responsibility to collaborate with their peers and to implement their new knowledge and strategies in the classroom.

Others

The role of the administrators will be to support the PD and ensure that any materials needed will be available. The media specialists will ensure that technology is ready and available on the PD days. The role of the presenters will be to familiarize themselves with the presentation and present on the PD days.

Project Evaluation

The proposed PD plan was established in order to give teachers choices on topics that are relevant to their instructions. It further gives them a chance to have their voice heard for future PD. Caffarella and Daffron (2013) defined program evaluations as "a process used to determine

whether the design and delivery of a program were valid and whether the proposed outcomes were met” (p. 202). It is then essential for me to give teachers an opportunity to evaluate each PD session they attended.

Teachers will be given an evaluation sheet that is summative in nature after each PD session and will be given a week to turn it in to me. This will help determine how to improve future PD and what to keep or remove altogether. The results will be analyzed and given to the building principal and PD committee. The evaluations will be a good determination of the overall effectiveness of the PD sessions and will give direction to future PD. It will also help determine if the learning objectives were met. Evaluations are a great tool to determine the success of a program and to help evaluate the needs of the teachers.

The overall goals of the PD were for the teachers to have a choice, learn various teaching strategies, collaborate with peers, evaluate their PD sessions, and to have a voice in future PD. The overall evaluation goals were to give teachers a chance to have their voices heard on their perspective of the PD sessions they attended. It is a tool to help refine, delete, add, and evaluate the PD so changes can be made. The key stakeholders included the teachers, administration, curriculum coordinator, and the students.

Project Implications

Teachers are on the frontline in education. They are the ones who are the closest to students and who ultimately are responsible for carrying out effective methods of instruction and the curriculum. Teachers need to continuously hone their skills and keep up-to-date on current teaching methods to give their students the best quality education that will prepare them for society. The PD I created offered several sessions that employ teaching methods for all teachers.

This project evolved out of concern for the students who were not as academically strong as many other students in this affluent district. The PD offered can help strengthen the skill level of every teacher and will help regular and lower level students. It further gives the teachers who teach all skill levels to collaborate about teaching strategies that will benefit all students and not just the high academic achieving students. School districts across the country also struggle with creating an academic setting that benefits students of all levels. Providing PD that gives teachers relevant information, a choice in their PD and the opportunity to collaborate with peers is a start to creating social justice that will carry to all students.

Conclusion

In this section I gave a detailed description of the project and goals of the project. A rationale and a thorough review of literature gave credence to the development of this particular PD. The implementation included potential resources, existing supports, and potential barriers. I then gave a detailed proposal for the implementation and timeline for the PD. Roles of the student and others were discussed. A description of how the project will be evaluated and the implications were discussed; and lastly social implications, both local and far-reaching, were discussed.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

When I decided to embark on the massive endeavor of obtaining my doctoral degree, I was fairly confident as a professional, student, and researcher. Through this journey, I have realized how much this process has challenged me in all three areas, and my growth has been profound. It has built my character and has made me hone my skills in all aspects of my profession. This project has been a mirror to my skills as a professional and a scholar.

In this section, I described the strengths of my project as well the limitations. I reflect on my scholarship, project development, evaluation, leadership, and change. I reflect on my growth as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Finally, I reflect on my project's potential impact for social change, the implications, applications, and direction for future research, and recommendations for further study.

Project Strengths

There were several strengths of this project. First, the problem that spearheaded this project remains a common one that many school districts face and that teachers have grimaced over for years: professional development. Further, the research methodology of a case study allowed me to delve deeply into the perceptions of four English teachers. The data that were collected gave me a direction for my project in developing a professional development plan that encompassed the current literature of effective PD, the participants' views on PD, and adult learning theory. The participants said they wanted input in the direction of the PD and that PD needed to be relevant to their needs. The PD plan had a variety of choices for teachers and they got to choose their break-out sessions that best aligned with their needs. Teachers were able to have a voice in future PD via their interest inventory sheet and were able to give feedback for the PD they attended. Avargil et al. (2012) maintained that teachers are the first ones who need to be consulted about contents of PD instead of it being completely decided by administration and curriculum specialists who are removed from the classroom.

This project, a professional development plan, is a good starting point or template for other school districts that are looking to evaluate their PD. Professional development and district-wide initiatives can be costly and time-consuming. Conducting research prior to implementation

can save districts time and money. Looking at in-house solutions is a good way to start. Chapman (2012) explained that obtaining creative solutions to budget problems begins by allowing their own staff members to be self-directed and acquire leadership. The template for my plan can be a starting point for districts, and they can tailor it to suit their needs.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

Although the project exhibited many strengths, there were limitations as well. One of the first limitations was that although there are many PD opportunities, some teachers still may have difficulty finding a PD that fits their particular needs. Teachers have a variety of experiences and educational backgrounds, and they teach a variety of grades and subjects, which makes it difficult to accommodate everyone especially in one school year. This could cause opposition to the PD which could undermine the goal of the project. There are, however, measures that could be used to remediate the limitations.

Professional development opportunities do not exist solely at the school or district level. There are many external PD opportunities that teachers could attend that are more tailored to their needs. Many school districts offer PD that is open to neighboring school districts. If districts make these opportunities available and communicate to the teachers the different options, teachers will be more apt to feel like the district is creating PD that is relevant.

This project is a response to one high school and may not reflect the needs of all the schools in the district or in other districts. Other districts may already have effective professional development in place or may need to make some minor adjustments. The plan, therefore, may need alterations or be entirely unnecessary. This plan evolved from one school's needs and every school has its own issues that may require different solutions.

Scholarship

During my 18 years in education, professional development has always been a passion of mine. I served as PD chairperson for 5 years at my prior district. I learned early in my profession that education is constantly changing, and with this change teachers must adapt. The only way this can be effectively done is through giving teachers the knowledge and skills they need. This comes from effective PD. I am passionate about having the most qualified, well-informed teachers in the classrooms because this will benefit every child. Many school districts struggle with finding ways to employ effective professional development. My 5-year doctoral journey has taught me that knowledge is power, and research can bring about change.

The knowledge that I have acquired and the skills that I have honed transcends anything I could have imagined when I began this journey. The vast amount of literature that I have read on professional development and the research skills that I have honed have given me the confidence and ability to effect change. I plan on using my knowledge and skills in my current school and future schools. Further, I have the knowledge to continue my scholarly work by writing professional articles and presenting at various conferences.

I am currently teaching online classes for my district. One of my interests lies in online teaching, which is the current direction of education. Online PD is an excellent way for teachers to acquire knowledge that is relevant to them and it gives teachers the freedom to engage in PD at their own pace and time. My academic endeavors have given me the skills necessary to create PD opportunities for online teachers as well as regular teachers in an online format. These and future endeavors may not have been possible if I had not embarked on this doctoral journey.

Project Development and Evaluation

One of the most important elements I learned during the development of my project is realizing the vast amount of time and effort it takes to plan effective PD based on current literature, adult learning theory, and the results from my study. A project is not created by one person. This particular project was initiated by me but in reality, when I implement it, many people, such as administrators, lead teachers, and curriculum specialists will look at it and give their feedback, which could lead to possible changes. Developing a project also involves considering the audience and making sure that the teachers and staff will gain valuable information to take back to the classroom.

In reflecting on project development, I realize that there may be some teachers who will complain no matter how effective or relative PD is. To combat this, I realized that letting teachers express their concerns and input is vital because there may be other reasons why they are resistant. I also realized that PD may not impact every single person. This is why it is important to have a variety of PD on a consistent basis and to inform teachers that PD can also be obtained outside a school or district-driven PD. Overall, I learned that PD is not as easy as I once believed.

Leadership and Change

I learned that being a true leader is not working by oneself. It involves the collaboration of many people focusing on the same goal. It also involves serving as a leader but also being a team player. A leader does not make all of the decisions but rather makes a collaborative decision based on the needs of the collective whole. In education, the ultimate goal should benefit student achievement. It is imperative that the leader establishes trust and good

relationships with all stakeholders through productive conversations. Leaders carry out the visions and goals of the group and are able to offer support in any way possible.

In each organization and leaders may take on different roles. In education, leadership is not confined to administrators at central office and at schools. Leadership can be found in teachers and other stakeholders including students. Although it is ultimately the responsibility of a building administrator to carry out the visions and goals of the school, he or she cannot do this alone. It must be done with and supported by all of the stakeholders for it to be effective and meaningful.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

As far back as I can remember, I have always loved going to school and learning. I knew that that I would obtain my master's degree but never imagined that I would obtain a doctorate. This journey has been by far one of the greatest joys of my life but has also been very difficult and has stretched me both emotionally and academically. There were many times when I thought I could not complete my program. I learned that it takes an enormous amount of support from friends, family, and instructors. I also learned that I had to believe in myself and my abilities.

One of the greatest feats that I accomplished as a scholar is understanding of the structure of research and knowing how to be an effective researcher. I now have the knowledge and skills to investigate, research, and problem-solve. I have also become much better at time management. Most students cite lack of time as the biggest hindrance of their scholarly work. This was also true of me. In my program, I had to balance my work as an educator, wife, mother and scholar. I also gave birth to my daughter in October, 2013, which altered my timeline in finishing the

program. I am looking forward to furthering my career and embarking on other scholarly writings.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

From the time I was very young, I knew I wanted to work in some capacity with children. In college, I found that my passion for literature coupled with my passion for children created a natural career path: a high school English teacher. As I started taking education classes as an undergraduate, I realized quickly that this was a profession that was constantly changing, and I further realized that the educational system in the United States has many inequities. The university I attended as an undergraduate places heavy emphasis on urban education. When I began teaching in an urban district, I realized quickly that many teachers did not have the skills to teach in an urban area. This is where my passion for professional development began. I worked with one of my professors in devising a series of workshops that surrounded Payne's (2005) work. This started some discussions, and some of the teachers' perceptions changed. It was at this point that I realized PD can be very effective for teachers and students.

During my 18 years of teaching, I have seen education change exponentially in many areas. Most recently, online education has permeated the school system, and it is imperative that teachers have the knowledge of using technology as a tool for teaching online. Again, PD is imperative to give teachers the knowledge and tools necessary for this change. Online teaching is also a passion of mine and I look forward to becoming an integral part of the implementation of PD for online teachers as one of my future endeavors.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

One of my main concerns and challenges of developing my project was making sure that it was derived from my results, theoretical framework, and the scholarly literature. Professional development has always been a passion, and I wanted to create something that I was able to implement. Another challenge was creating something that all teachers were able to use and that other districts could use fully, partially, or as a template.

As I was putting my project together, it was much more difficult than I realized. I found myself looking back at my results and the original problem to make sure that I was creating something that addressed the problem. I also found it difficult to make sure that each minute in the PD plan was meaningful because teachers' time is precious. I also had to keep in mind that each teacher has different needs based on experience, education, and subject matter. Overall, I felt that creating this PD plan made me realize how challenging it can be; but with careful planning, it can be rewarding and beneficial to teachers and students.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

One of my biggest passions in my career has been equitable education for all students. I have worked in rural, urban, and suburban districts and have seen first-hand the inequality among these districts. Often in rural districts, money and quality teachers are hard to acquire. My first district was in a farming community, and there was no curriculum or complete sets of novels. The pay was not competitive, and many teachers only stayed a few years. The quality of education that these students received was below that of suburban districts that had the funds for up-to-date technology, curriculum, supplies, and quality teachers. Similarly, in urban districts, the students face the same inequities as rural students but often are also plagued by poverty and

broken homes. Many students cannot see the connection between education and prosperity. Further, in wealthy suburban schools, such as my research site, students have family support, high expectations, quality teachers, rigorous curricula, and adequate supplies: all of the tools students need for success. However, even in these schools, many struggling students, particularly minority students, are swept under the rug while the high achieving students carry the weight of providing all of the school's accolades. Because these types of schools are deemed high achieving, little is done to help raise the academic achievements of the lower performing students.

It is my hope, that PD can start conversations about these students and can give teachers the tools to help lower performing students and not just focus on the high performing students. My project included many options that provided teachers with opportunities to improve their professional growth and strengthen their areas of weakness. Most teachers in a school are at different stages in their careers and need different types of knowledge and tools. It is my hope that one day all students will have the same opportunity for a quality education no matter where they live or what their background is.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This project addressed the needs of one particular school. The implications of the study indicated that teachers need to be heard and have an input in the direction of PD that will be applicable to their particular needs. These concerns along with trust and follow-up, gave teachers options and directed my PD. Many school districts around the United States struggle with the same issue of implementing effective PD. This project can be used as a template for other school districts offering a variety of PD to teachers based on their needs.

This study was confined four teachers in one particular subject in a particular set of circumstances. Other school districts could broaden the research to include more teachers and a variety of subjects. The results of their research could lead to developing PD that would benefit all teachers. This could also help determine whether a particular PD was working and ultimately could save money. In the end, this could benefit all students' academic performance.

Conclusion

In Section 4, I identified the project's strengths and recommended remediation and limitations. I reflected on my scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change. I analyzed myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Finally, I described the project's potential impact on social change and the implications, applications, and directions for further research.

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Appendix A: The Project

Lincoln High School A School of Excellence



Professional Development: August, 16, 17, 18, 2016

Schedule

Day 1

7:30-8:30- Session One

8:30-8:45- Break

8:45-10:00- Continue Session One

10:00-10:15- Break

10:15-11:15- Session Two

11:15-11:30-Break

11:30-12:30- Continue Session Two

12:30-1:30- Lunch

1:30-3:00- Break Out Session

Day 2

7:30-8:30- Session Three

8:30-8:45- Break

8:45-10:00- Continue Session Three

10:00-10:15- Break

10:15-11:15- Session Four

11:15-11:30-Break

11:30-12:30- Continue Session Four

12:30-1:30- Lunch

1:30-3:00- Break Out Session

Day 3

7:30-8:30- Session Five

8:30-8:45- Break

8:45-10:00- Continue Session Five

10:00-10:15- Break

10:15-11:15- Session Six

11:15-11:30-Break

11:30-12:30- Continue Session Six

12:30-1:30- Lunch

1:30-3:00- Break Out Session

Session- Brain Breaks

This session reveals what a difference brain breaks can make in your classroom. We will visit Marcia Tate's strategies to keep your students engaged and actively participating.

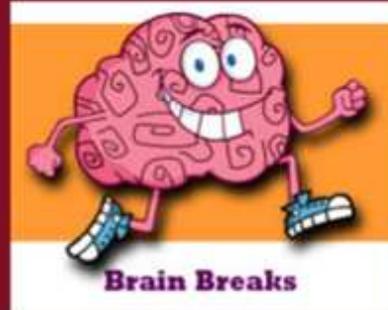
Learning Objectives-

Understand brain breaks

Understand how brain breaks affect the brain

Understand how to create your own brain breaks in the classroom

Brain Breaks



Facts About the Brain/Learning

- A child in a stimulating environment has a **25% greater ability to learn.**
- Learning new things changes the brain by adding new dendrites.

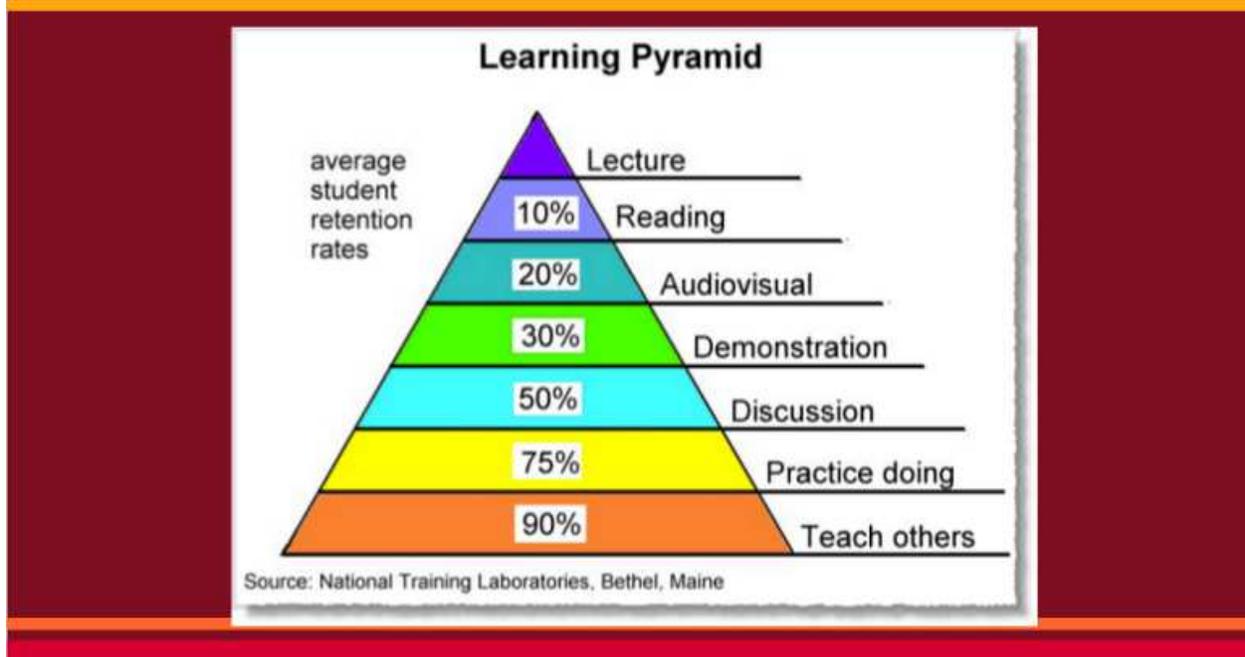
The brain does not work efficiently under high stress.

Giving short breaks allows the brain to recharge!



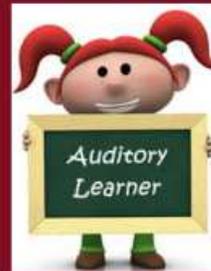
Retention Rates: Partner Up

Audiovisual
Demonstration
Discussion
Lecture
Practice doing
Teaching Others
Reading



Pair and Share

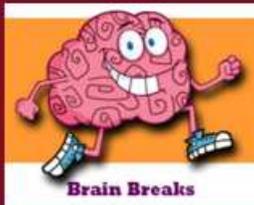
- Find your learning style group
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Tactile



Group Task

1. Discuss what your **learning style** means to you as an educator.
2. As this type of learner, what strategies or activities help you learn best?
3. Be prepared to share **ONE** strategy with the whole group.

(5 minutes)



Beach Ball Fun

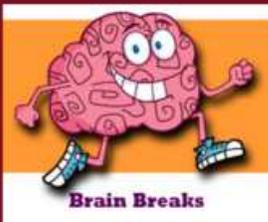
*Keep the beach ball from hitting the ground.

*1 minute.



Why are learning styles important?

- Teachers naturally use strategies that work for them personally-comfort level.
- Use various strategies to reach ALL types of learners in your classroom. Helps students to hone in on how they learn best!



Spot the Difference

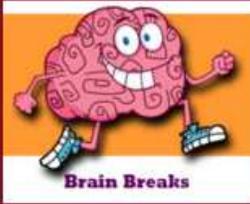
How many differences do you see?

Ready, set....GO!

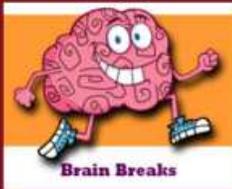


Instructional Strategies That Work

6. Humor
7. Manipulatives, Experiments, and Models
8. Metaphors, Analogies, and Similes
9. Mnemonic Devices
10. Movement

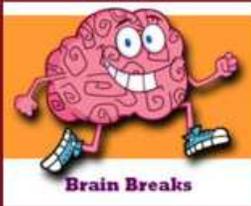


This or That?



This or That



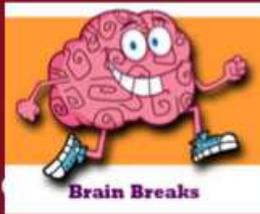


This or That



Instructional Strategies That Work

11. Music, Rhythm, Rhyme, and Rap
12. Project-Based Instruction
13. Cooperative Learning
14. Role Playing, Drama, Charades
15. Storytelling



Air Writing

- Turn to your shoulder partner.
- Using your non-dominant index finger, write in the air what you ate for breakfast.
- Partner's guess.
- Switch.



“Like Miracle-Gro for the Brain”

*Increase oxygen to the brain that may enhance its ability to learn

*Alterations to neurotransmitters

*Structural changes in the central nervous system.

Instructional Strategies That Work

Allowing student to complete projects in a variety of ways:

- *Create a presentation using technology
- *Create a song
- *Create a poster and write a report

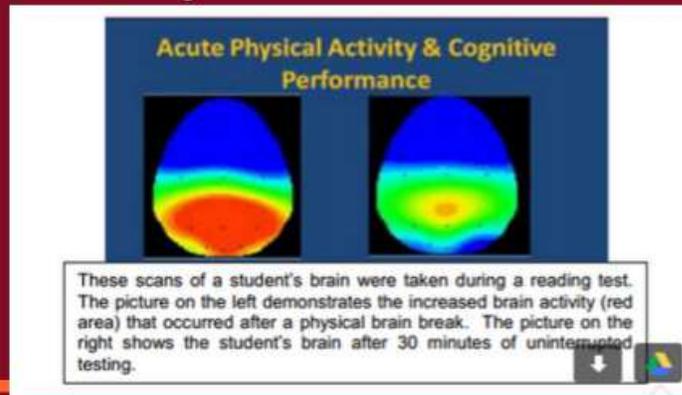
Instructional Strategies That Work

Allowing student to complete projects in a variety of ways:

- *Create a presentation using technology
- *Create a song
- *Create a poster and write a report

Why Use Brain Breaks?

- Scientifically based



Why Use Brain Breaks?

- Use with students when their attention starts to wane.
- Brain breaks give the mind a quick refresher to be able to learn more information.
- Re-energize your students
- Re-energize yourself!
- They only take a minute or 2!

Brain Breaks-Break-Out Session

- 1) *Get into groups of 2-3.*
- 2) *Discuss what you learned during the session*
- 3) *Create three brain breaks that you will be able to use in your
classroom.*
- 4) *Share with your group.*

Session- Digital Citizenship

How has our world changed because of technology? This session discusses digital footprint and positive and negative web presence.

Session Objectives:

Understand digital footprints

Understand positive and negative web presence

Understand the affects it can have on students

Digital Citizenship

Managing Your Digital Life



Digital Footprint

A **digital footprint** is the data that is left behind by users on **digital** services.

PERMANENT!!



In the good old days.....



but now!

Operator	Field levels...
teacher search	containing both "teacher" and "search". This is the default operator.
"happy hour"	containing the exact phrase "happy hour".
use OR rules	containing either "hour" or "table" or both.
use AND	containing "hour" but not "table".
!table	containing the heading "table".
from:username	sent from person "username".
to:username	sent to person "username".
@username	referencing person "username".
"happy hour" near "bar"	containing the exact phrase "happy hour" and sent near "bar".
near:NYC within 10mi	sent within 10 miles of "NYC".
superhero since:2010-10-01	containing "superhero" and sent since date "2010-10-01" (year-month-day).
file:ms1010-10-01	containing "file" and sent up to date "2010-10-01".
more:happy :)	containing "happy", but not "happy", and with a positive attitude.
right :)	containing "right" and with a negative attitude.
table ?	containing "table" and asking a question.
!table:NYC	containing "table" and being in NYC.
news:search:teacher	containing "news" and entered via TeacherFeed.

Digital or Online Presence

-An **online presence** is any existence of an individual or business that can be found via an **online** search.

-What if I only knew you from your online presence?

-Positive or Negative?

Negative Web Presence

1. Provocative or inappropriate photos
2. References to drugs and alcohol (think college parties)
3. Poor communication (yes, spelling and grammar count even on Facebook)
4. Bad-mouthing a previous or current employer or teacher/professor
5. Discriminatory comments on race, religion, and gender
6. Evidence the candidate lied about his or her qualifications

"What You Need to Know About Your Student's Web Reputation." *What You Need to Know About Your Student's Web Reputation*. UniversityParent.com, n.d. Web. 14 Aug. 2015.

How important is being a good digital citizen?

Meet Justine Sacco
Public Relations Executive for
IAC/InterActiveCorp; a
American media and internet
company

Taking a vacation to visit
relatives in Johannesburg,
South Africa



7

On her flight from NY to South Africa, she kills some time on Twitter....



Justine Sacco @JustineSacco

"Weird German Dude: You're in first class. It's 2014. Get some deodorant." -Inner monologue as I inhale BO. Thank god for pharmaceuticals.

22h



Justine Sacco @JustineSacco

Chili- cucumber sandwiches- bad teeth. Back in London!

from Hillingdon, London

Reply Retweet Favorite More

10h



Justine Sacco

@JustineSacco

Follow

Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just kidding. I'm white!

Reply Retweet Favorite More

289

RETWEETS

106

FAVORITES



10:19 AM · 20 Dec 13 · from Hillingdon, London

Justine had 160
followers on Twitter

8

While in flight from London to Johannesburg (11 Hours with phone on “Airplane” mode.)

The screenshot shows a Twitter thread by Justine Sacco (@JustineSacco). The main tweet, posted at 7:19 AM on Dec 13, 2013, reads: "Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just kidding. I'm white!" It has 4,161 retweets and 2,112 favorites. A reply from the same user at 10:19 AM on Dec 13, 2013, says: "Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just kidding. I'm white!" This reply has 3,115 retweets and 1,469 favorites. The thread also shows a tweet from another user at 10:19 AM on Dec 13, 2013, with 4 retweets and 2 favorites.

9

Her tweet was trending worldwide



Viral. #HasJu

Zac @Zac_R
 Yup, @JustineSacco HAS in fact landed at Cape Town international. She's decided to wear sunnies as a disguise. pic.twitter.com/2l3WZQClci

- Chelsea Custer** @chadwisnaght
 Hey, @JustineSacco, just because you delete a tweet doesn't mean the Twitterverse forgets! #HasJustineLandedYet #JustineHasLanded
- Diomira** @Diomira
 @JustineSacco deleted the tweet! #justinehaslanded
- Cliff Benston** @cliffbenston
 #justinehaslanded THE TWEET IS GONE BUT SCREENSHOTS LAST FOREVER
- Wendy Carson** @SpringeBlance
 Tweet deleted!!! Lololol tooooo late #JustineHasLanded
- Dap the Halls** @dapthehalls
 She landed! Tweet deleted! #JustineHasLanded
- sy19025** @sy19025
 @CarliMama9 @DirtyVegast @JustineSacco ITS BEEN DELETED! SHE HAS LANDED. #hasjustineLandedYet #justinehaslanded

I d
thi
ear
#H



Click

Justine Sacco @JustineSacco6
 STOP GIVING MY FAMILY DEATH THREATS. PLEASE, I BEG YOU.
 12/21/13, 3:16 AM
 14 RETWEETS 2 FAVORITES

Justine Sacco @JustineSacco6
 MY FAMILY IS DONE WITH ME. IM JUST ALONE IN MY HOTEL ROOM WITH NOTHING. ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. IM DONE. IM SHOT. IM FINISHED.
 12/21/13, 3:26 AM

Justine Sacco @JustineSacco6
 I'M SERIOUSLY HAVING PANIC ATTACKS WONDERING IF SOMEONE IS GOING TO HARM ONE OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS. MY LIFE IS RUINED ALREADY. ARE YOU HAPPY?
 12/21/13, 3:23 AM

Justine Sacco @JustineSacco6
 I HAVE APOLOGIZED MULTIPLE TIMES TO MULTIPLE MEDIA OUTLETS AND AM STILL RECEIVING THREATS. WHY CAN'T IT STOP?
 12/21/13, 3:18 AM

St. Augs is holding classes tomorrow and students in Falcrest still don't have power. Like, wtf. Really? #dumb.



Tweet from student Roman Caple

quoted from <https://www.thefire.org/college-student-denied-graduation-walk-following-innocuous-facebook-post/>

A screenshot of a Facebook comment interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the word "facebook" in white. Below this, a comment is displayed. The comment starts with "Hi [redacted]". To the right of the comment text is a green button with the text "See Comment". The comment itself reads: "Roman Caple commented on Saint Augustine's College's status." Below this, the comment text is shown: "Roman wrote: 'Here it go!!!! Students come correct, be prepared, and have supporting documents to back up your arguments bcuz SAC will come hard!!!! That is all'". Below the comment text is a yellow button with the text "See the comment thread". At the bottom of the comment area, it says "Reply to this email to comment on this status." followed by "Thanks, The Facebook Team". At the very bottom of the screenshot, there is a small URL: "http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/10/roman-caple-banned_n_860234.html".

facebook

Hi [redacted]

[Roman Caple](#) commented on Saint Augustine's College's status.

[Roman](#) wrote: "Here it go!!!! Students come correct, be prepared, and have supporting documents to back up your arguments bcuz SAC will come hard!!!! That is all"

[See the comment thread](#)

Reply to this email to comment on this status.

Thanks,
The Facebook Team

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/10/roman-caple-banned_n_860234.html

Positive Web Presence

1. A positive picture of a candidate's personality
2. Professionalism
3. A profile that supported job qualifications
4. Well-rounded interests
5. Effective communication skills
6. Creativity in posts
7. Authentic references through commentary

"What You Need to Know About Your Student's Web Reputation." *What You Need to Know About Your Student's Web Reputation*. UniversityParent.com, n.d. Web. 14 Aug. 2015.

19

Building a positive web presence

A student discusses how his web footprint works in his favor.

-Common Sense Media

20



Social Media

A source for information?

People's Daily Online 人民网
Broadcasting & Media Production · 331,909 Likes · Like Page

Giant squid washes ashore in California. The sea creature was 160 feet and is the second massive sea creature discovered ashore in recent months. Both came from the waters near the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant in Japan. Scientists suspect their gigantic size is caused by the genetic mutations that that triggered uncontrolled growth – or “radioactive gigantism.”



about an hour ago

Gross
exaggeration
and
sensationalism.





A screenshot of a Facebook post by Morgan Freeman. The post features a large photo of Freeman wearing a cap and a white shirt. To the left, there is a smaller photo of him with the text "R.I.P M" and "974,103 likes". The post text reads: "Like Mark Twain, I keep reading that I have died. I hope those stories are not true... But if they are, I'm happy to report that my afterlife seems identical to my life when I was alive. I did go to Las Vegas to begin work on the film 'Last Vegas.'" Below the text are engagement metrics: "31,374 people like this.", "1,953 shares", and "6 of 2,271" comments. Two comments are visible: "Charles Rich I hope you are with us for some time to come. Someone has to bring intelligence to our movie and television screens. December 15, 2012 at 4:53pm" and "Julie Williams LOL!!!".



This section contains three social media posts. On the left is a Facebook post titled "Country Music Legend Willie Nelson Dies at Age 81" with a "HOAX" stamp. In the center is a Twitter post by John le Carré. On the right is a screenshot of a news website with a headline about Miley Cyrus.

Country Music Legend Willie Nelson Dies at Age 81
A Facebook post featuring a black and white portrait of Willie Nelson. A large red stamp with the word "HOAX" is overlaid on the image. The text "Willie Nelson 1933-2015" is visible below the portrait.

John le Carré
A terrible news. My publisher phones me announcing that J.K. Rowling dies by accident. Few minutes ago. No words!
41 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE
6:08 AM - 2 Jan 13 Embed this Tweet

NEWS ENTERTAINMENT & ARTS
Miley Cyrus confirmed dead. Caused by drugs and alcohol abuse.

Skewed View of what's "News"



Taylor Swift
@taylorswift13

Follow

Two VMA nominations!! If you vote and get us one, I promise to keep a firmer grip on the mic this time ;) mtv.com/ontv/vma/

Reply Retweet Favorite More

16,722 RETWEETS

13,685 FAVORITES



9:27 AM - 17 Jul 13



TMZ CELERS VIDEOS PHOTOS THE SPORTS THE TV STORE TMZ TOURS SIGN IN REGISTER

Rob Kardashian Emerges After Weight Gain Reclusivity -- Looks Like THIS?!
Gotta say ... this is rather unexpected, huh?
SEE MORE +

FISH WRAPPER

JON HAMM & JENNIFER WESTFELDT BREAKING UP
9/20/13 2:38 PM PDT BY TMZ STAFF

BREAKING NEWS

NFL'S CHRIS JOHNSON I BELIEVE IN TEBOW ... Don't Give Up On NFL!
Tim Tebow's not some laughing stock amongst his peers ... just ask NFL superstar Chris Johnson who tells TMZ Sports point blank -- he thinks Tebow BELONGS in...
CLICK TO VIEW +

GUESS THE LABORING LADY
CLICK TO SEE THE STABLE!

Technology Firms Tangle With U.S. Over Data Access

By NATH APPELBO, DANIEL C. BARKER and STEPHEN A. SCHWARTZ
4:38 PM ET
Government conflicts with Apple and Microsoft reflect heightened tensions by businesses latest on demonstrating efforts to protect customer information.

Migrants Stagger In, Outpacing Pledges of Shelter in Europe

By MARK LEMMON, ANDREW SELLNER and ANASTASIA SIKKOU
8:48 PM ET
France said it would accept 34,000 asylum seekers over two years, Britain plans to accept 20,000 Syrian refugees and Germany set aside \$6.7 billion to help new arrivals.
Europe's Right-Wing Parties May Benefit From Crisis
6:13 PM ET

Lawyer for Cuomo Administration Shot in Head in Brooklyn



Boating ship hulls lying in Terfenka, a village of 1,000 people on the Barents Sea, dominated by George VII Island.

Ice Melt Isn't Opening Arctic to Oil Bonanza

By STEVEN LEE WEISS and CLAYTON KRAMER
The region remains inhospitable for drilling, while environmental concerns, a sagging market and sanctions against Russia also have impeded plans.

Ex-Police Commissioner Blames Mayor for Rise in Killings

By MARK ROSENTHAL, 7:23 PM ET
Raymond Kelly, whose memoir comes out on Tuesday, said that the curtailment of police stops in New York by Mayor Bill de Blasio's administration had led to more violence.

Murray's Streak Ends With Loss to Anderson

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 48 minutes ago
Andy Murray was ousted before the quarterfinals at a major for

The Opinion Pages

India's Middle-Class Revolt
By THE EDITORIAL BOARD
A protest by 500,000 members of a relatively well-off caste is a rebuke of the government's economic policies.

- Editorial: You Deserve a Raise Today. Interest Rates Don't.
- How Sexual Attraction and Fidelity
- Column: Aylan Kurdi's Europe
- Krugman: Trump Is Right on Economics
- Artful: The Internet of Way Too Many Things

Watching



Protesters in Duma held their third funeral in six weeks, as they buried victims of an arson attack in which Jewish extremists have been accused.
The New York Times

Chad's former president was hauled by guards into a special court as he began a new struggle with the judges over their right to try him on charges of crimes against humanity.
The New York Times

A referee who was pummeled by two high school football

@foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
We wish @joeobiden the best of luck as our new President of the United States. In such a time of madness, there's light at the end of tunnel.
9 hours ago

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
BREAKING NEWS: President @BarackObama assassinated, 2 gunshot wounds have proved too much. It's a sad 4th for #america. #obamadead RIP
9 hours ago

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
#ObamaDead, it's a sad 4th of July. RT to support the late president's family, and RIP. The shooter will be found
9 hours ago

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
@BarackObama shot twice at a Ross' restaurant in Iowa while campaigning. RIP Obama, best regards to the Obama family.
9 hours ago

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
@BarackObama has just passed. Nearly 45 minutes ago, he was shot twice in the lower pelvic area and in the neck; shooter unknown. Bled out.
9 hours ago

foxnewspolitics foxnewspolitics
@BarackObama has just passed. The President is dead. A sad 4th of July, indeed. President Barack Obama is dead
9 hours ago

AP The Associated Press @AP

Following

Breaking: Two Explosions in the White House and Barack Obama is injured

Reply Retweet Favorite More

1,420 RETWEETS 61 FAVORITES

AP Stylebook @APStylebook

Follow

The @AP Twitter account has been suspended after it was hacked. The tweet about an attack on the White House was false.

Reply Retweet Favorite More

425 RETWEETS 11 FAVORITES

10:27 AM · 23 Apr 13



THIS TESCO ON OAK STREET, LONDON REFUSED TO SERVE A SOLDIER BECAUSE HE WAS IN UNIFORM AND THEY WERE AFRAID IT WOULD OFFEND MUSLIM CUSTOMERS SHARE IF YOU THINK THIS IS AN OUTRAGE



Political Motives

Avoid being an online idiot

Be suspicious of what you read
Confirm news with reputable sources

It's better to be right than first
Your reputation suffers when you post
inaccurate information

www.snopes.com

The screenshot shows the Snopes.com website interface. At the top is the Snopes.com logo with the tagline "Rumor Has It". Below the logo is a banner for Snyder's of Hanover "HOT Buffalo Wing Pretzel Pones" with a "SAVE NOW! 55¢" offer. The main content area is titled "What's New" and features a grid of social media sharing options (Email, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon, Dribbble, YouTube, RSS) with counts for each. Below this are three news items: "25 Hottest Urban Legends", "Black Panther Massacre on 9/11" (labeled as a fact check), and "Sold Glory". On the right side, there is a search bar and social media follow buttons for YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. At the bottom right, there is a small advertisement for "BURNETT DRISKILL" regarding Social Security Benefits.

Satirical Sites

LAST
WEEK
TONIGHT
WITH JOHN OLIVER



 **the ONION**
America's Finest News Source



 *The Spoof!*

THE NIGHTLY!
with LARRY WILMORE



SPORTS PICKLE

 **PRIVATE EYE**

Digital Citizenship- Breakout Session

- 1) *Get into groups of 2-3.*
- 2) Discuss what you learned in the session
- 3) Jot down or discuss ways of implementing information from the workshop into your classroom. Think about the implications it has on future jobs and research.
- 4) Start creating lesson
- 5) Share your ideas/lesson with group.

Session- The Many Faces of George Washington

When asking students about the identity of George Washington, most will say he was a general or the first president. Those these were two of his roles, he was a complex figure who took on many other roles that can teach us a great deal about the 19th century world in which he lived and worked.

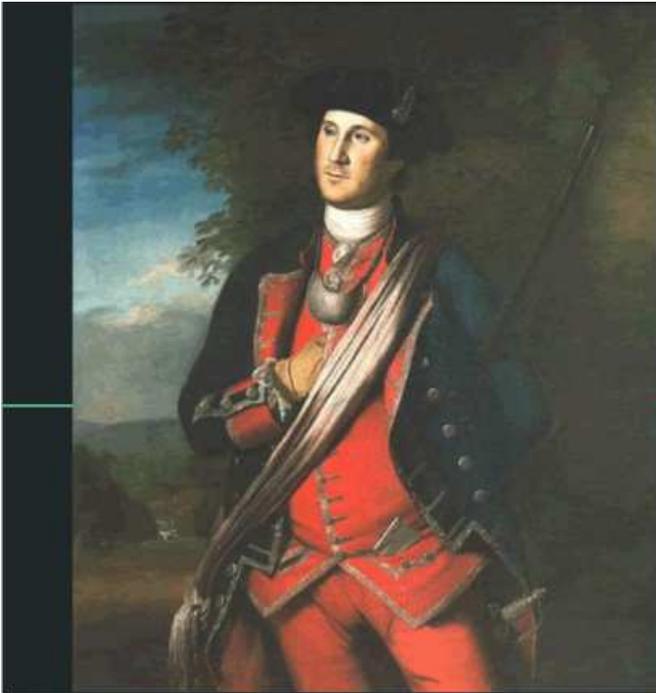
Objectives:

Understand the importance of learning history through George Washington

Understand the importance of teaching other aspects of a historical figure



The Many Faces of George Washington



Portrait of George Washington

Charles Willson Peale
(1772)



The
Washington
Family

Edward
Savage
(1789-96)

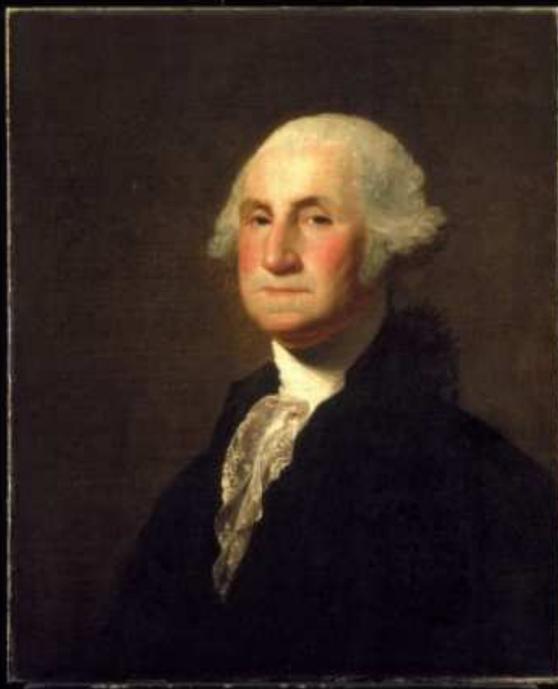
This is NOT a
CHAIR



Washington's Dentures

Made in America,
1790–1799

*Purchase, 1949
[W-1520/A-B]*



George Gilbert
Stuart's circa 1798
portrait of George
Washington.

*(Mount Vernon
Ladies' Association)*



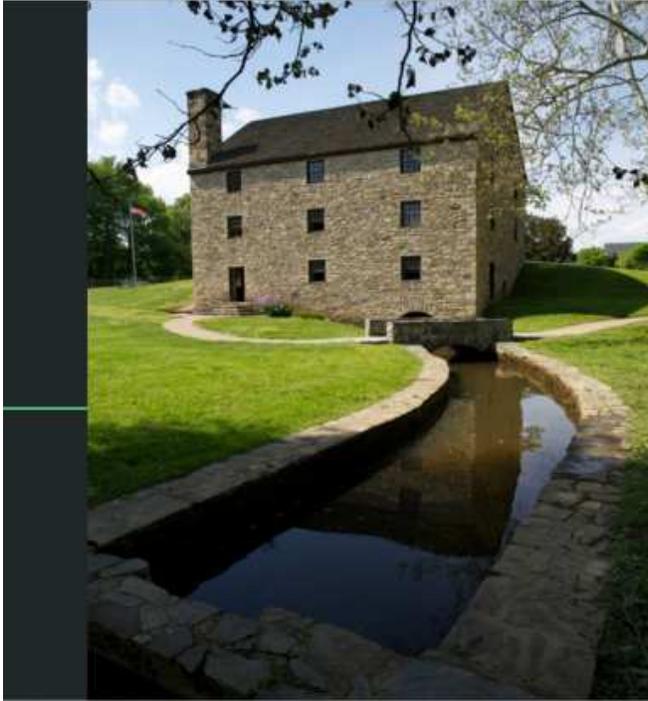
Washington's
Sixteen Sided
Barn

[Treading
Video](#)



Washington's
Sixteen Sided
Barn

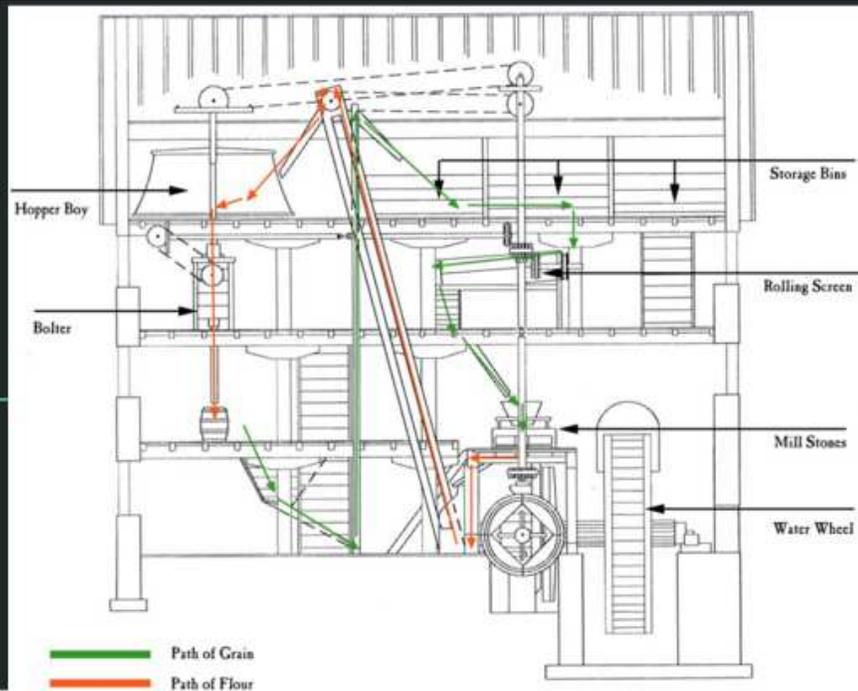
[Treading
Video](#)



Washington's Gristmill

Oliver Evans Automated System

Illustration of the Oliver Evans automated mill setup within Washington's Gristmill at Mount Vernon (Mount Vernon Ladies' Association)



His Excellency General Washington Phillis Wheatley (1775)

*"Proceed, great chief, with virtue on thy side,
Thy ev'ry action let the goddess guide.*

*A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine,
With gold unfading, WASHINGTON! Be thine."*

— ◦ WASHINGTON'S PRESIDENCY ◦ —
See videos discussing George Washington's presidency



Ron Chernow on George Washington
Pulitzer-Prize winning author Ron Chernow shares his thoughts on Washington, Hamilton, and the new Broadway...

Establishing the Presidency

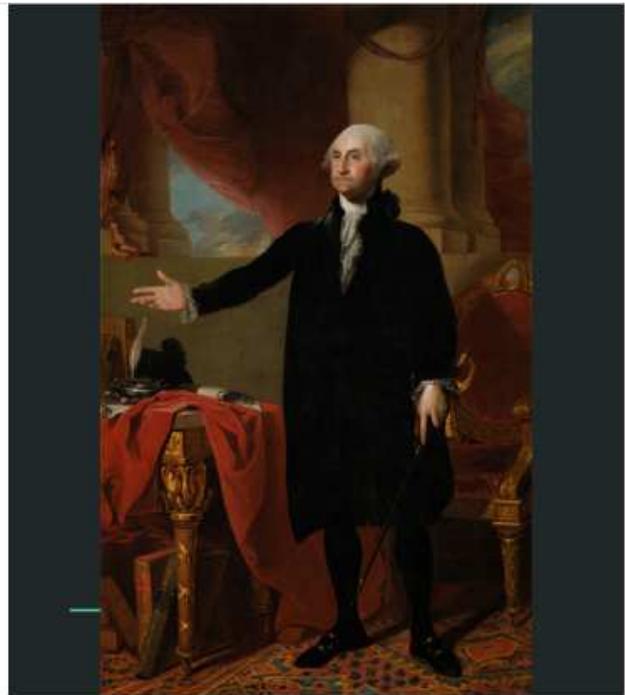
The First State of the Union Address

In our progress towards political happiness my station is new; and, if I may use the expression, I walk on untrodden ground. There is scarcely any part of my conduct wch. may not hereafter be drawn into precedent.

George Washington to Catherine Macaulay Graham
January 9, 1790

Landsdowne Portrait of George Washington

Gilbert Stuart (1796)



The Many Faces of George Washington- Breakout Session

- 1) Get into three groups
- 2) Open up the following attachment from your email to access the links
- 3) Each group will then fill out the question based on their reading
- 4) After the groups are done, they will share their answers
- 5) Discuss how an Object Investigation like this can be incorporated into your classroom
- 6) If time remains, begin working on a lesson

The Many faces of George Washington: Object Investigation

- 1) What theme seems to link all of the documents in your group?
- 2) Based on this theme, how would you complete the sentence..."George Washington is _____"
- 3) How did each of the objects play a role in this part of Washington's identity?

Group 1)

- *House Bell
- *Plans for West Elevation and Cellar
- *List of Slaves at Mount Vernon
- *Mount Vernon Distillery and Fishery Ledger
- *Fragment of George Washington's "Compend of Husbandry"

Group 2)

- *Don Quixote
- *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire Volume I
- *Harpsichord
- *Staghorn Coral

Group 3)

- *Bastille Key
- *Coat
- *Trunk
- *Braddock Sword
- *Suite

Session- Grading to Support Learning

This session investigate various purposes and types of assessments. It also shows how formative assessment increases student learning and achievement and using only summative evidence to determine a student's grade. It also investigates how including homework in the final grade of a student distorts grades as a measure of learning.

Objectives:

Understand the purpose of formative and summative assessments

Understand the effect of homework grades on true measure of learning

GRADING TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Professional Development
Lincoln High School

August 16, 17, 18, 2015

**LEARNING IS A PROCESS IN WHICH LEARNERS
INCREASE THEIR KNOWLEDGE,
UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS AS A RESULT OF
EFFORT, INSTRUCTION, FEEDBACK FROM
TEACHERS, PEERS, AND SELF ASSESSMENT.**

USE ONLY SUMMATIVE EVIDENCE TO DETERMINE GRADES

Don't use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades.

“When determining what to grade, the answer is simple. Grade only learning, and grade only the student's last best effort.” (Vatterot, 2015)

DIAGNOSTIC

- Designed to determine a student's attitude, skills or knowledge in order to identify student needs.

FORMATIVE:

- Designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program for individual students or for a whole class.
 - Assessment FOR Learning

SUMMATIVE

- Designed to provide information to be used in making judgments about a student's achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction.
 - Assessment OF Learning

WHAT DOES FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT LOOK LIKE?

All those activities undertaken by students and teachers that provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities.

Must be: timely, descriptive, relevant to the learning targets and **LOW STAKES**. (Allow for adjustment before it counts!!)



TEACHERS AND STUDENTS
NEED TO RECOGNIZE WHEN
ASSESSMENT IS **FOR**
LEARNING, AND WHEN IT IS
OF LEARNING.

It is easy to tell in Sports...but not so easy sometimes in the classroom!

“Firm Evidence shows that formative assessment is an essential component of classroom work, and that its development can raise standards of achievement for ALL students.” (Black and William, 1998)



THREE TYPES OF STUDENTS

How will each student benefit from using only Summative Grades?

INCLUDING HOMEWORK IN GRADES CAN ACTUALLY BE HARMFUL TO STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

For struggling students: "I don't understand, and I don't want to get a bad grade, so I just won't do it."
vs. "It's safe to try because if I try, I will get feedback on what I did well, and what I need to work on."

For High Achieving Students : A student scored 30%, 50%, and 70% on his quizzes, and 90% on her test! Her overall grade is actually LOWER than his achievement.

"If we expect students to take ownership of their learning, we must accept the fact that learning is not error free—mistakes *will* be made during learning. If we want to encourage students to view mistakes as a necessary step in learning, we need to remove the threat of grading." (Vatterot, 2015)

WHAT ABOUT HOMEWORK?

IF HOMEWORK ISN'T GRADED, DOES IT COUNT?

- Yes, because it helps pass the summative assessment.
- If it doesn't count, there is no motivation to cheat; the motivation is to pass the summative assessment.
- Accountability comes from when the student passes or fails the assessment.

SO WHAT ABOUT HOMEWORK?

We have done an excellent job of “training” students to do homework because they are getting “points” for it. We can “train” them out of it too!
Each student should have a clear understanding of how the homework will contribute to their learning....that is where the motivation comes from!

IN ORDER TO MAKE A SHIFT, STUDENTS MUST BE INVOLVED.

Including only Summative assessment in grades results in the students becoming more responsible for their learning.

Assessment must be clearly tied to the learning targets, and students must review feedback from teachers and peers. Ultimately, and with a lot of practice, students will be able to assess their own progress, and make adjustments to their own learning.

“The test of a successful education is not the amount of knowledge that a pupil takes away from school, but his appetite to know and his capacity to learn. If the school sends out children with the desire for knowledge, and some idea about how to acquire it, it will have done its work. Too many [children] leave school with the appetite killed and the mind loaded with undigested lumps of information.” (Sir Richard Livingstone, 2003)

Grading to Support Learning- Break-Out Session

****Teachers will need to bring their laptops so they can access their grades****

- 1) Teachers will get into groups of 2-3
- 2) Access your gradebook
- 3) Write down and categorize your grades
- 4) Determine how many homework, formative, and summative assessment grades you have
- 5) In your group discuss your findings. What will you continue to do the same? Will you do anything differently? How will this change the way you grade or will you stay the same?
- 6) Be prepared to share out your group's findings to the entire session

Session- Exit Tix

This session introduces teachers to Exit Tix which is a formative assessment tool available online. Participants will learn how to set up their classes, create and assign an assessment and view results.

Objectives:

Understand Exit Tix

Be able to access Exit Tix

Be able to Create an Exit Tix

*EXIT TIX
BASICS*

*HOW TO SIGN
UP!*



et

Login Class Code

username

password

[forgot password?](#)

login

[f](#) [g](#)

[Get a Free Teacher Account](#)

Use course and term editor to edit and group classes

Classes | Calendar | Assessments | Item Bank | App Center

ExitTicket 4 User Guide | Course & Term Editor

Classes Performance

Today's Assessments



1st Period
Course Name 1

Edit Class | Scorebook

Today's Assessments



4th Period
Course Name 1

Edit Class | Scorebook

Today's Assessments



2nd Period
Course Name 2

Edit Class | Scorebook

Today's Assessments



3rd Period
Course Name 2

Edit Class | Scorebook

After selection course and term editor select edit

Edit school term, courses, classes

Rename here - note you cannot drag classes from one group to the next, you can toggle to inactive if you do not need a class. It is possible to add more than 2 groups.

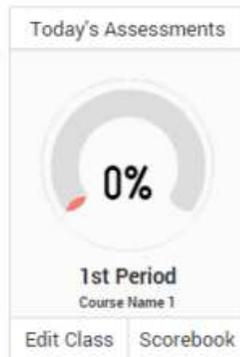
2016 Term | From Jul 31, 2015 To Jun 29, 2016

Edit Term

Course Name 1 (Edit)				
<input type="checkbox"/>	1st Period (Edit)	173755	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active	Add Students
<input type="checkbox"/>	4th Period (Edit)	173755	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active	Add Students
Add a Class (i.e. section, period or group)				Add Class
Course Name 2 (Edit)				
<input type="checkbox"/>	2nd Period (Edit)	173758	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active	Add Students
<input type="checkbox"/>	3rd Period (Edit)	173757	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active	Add Students
Add a Class (i.e. section, period or group)				Add Class
				Add New Subject or Course

How to add students

On the Home Screen select the course
Select Add students



Today's Assessments Calendar Assessments Scorebook Student Admin Edit Class Add Students

CLASS CODE

bkm818606

1) Web: <http://exitix.com>
2) Tap on "Class Code"

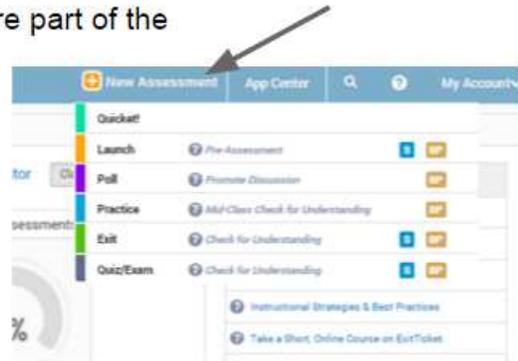
1) Apple/Droid app: Launch App
2) Tap on "Class Code"

Have students sign up with google and enter the class code. Make sure they use their school email address.

If students receive an error message download the app from google app store.

*HOW TO BUILD A
LAUNCH OR EXIT*

- Select New Assessment in Upper Right of Toolbar.
- Choose Launch or Exit (if you would like assignment to be graded), Practice (if you do not want it graded).
- Note: Launch, Exit and Practice are part of the free version - others are paid.



Launch Editor

Overview Standards Questions Preview

Meets Standard

Assessment Title

Options

Assessment Timer:

Reveal Answer?

Show Result?

Randomize Order?

Publish Date

Publish Date

Select Classes	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> 4th Hour Algebra 1	hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> 5th Hour Algebra 1	hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> 7th Hour Algebra 1	hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> 1st Hour Algebra 2	hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Hour Algebra 2	hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Hour Algebra/Geometry 3	hidden

Title the assignment.

Answer the 4 questions

Select the date or dates you wish to give the assessment

Select the courses you wish to assign the assessment to. (Be sure status says visible - toggle by selecting hidden)



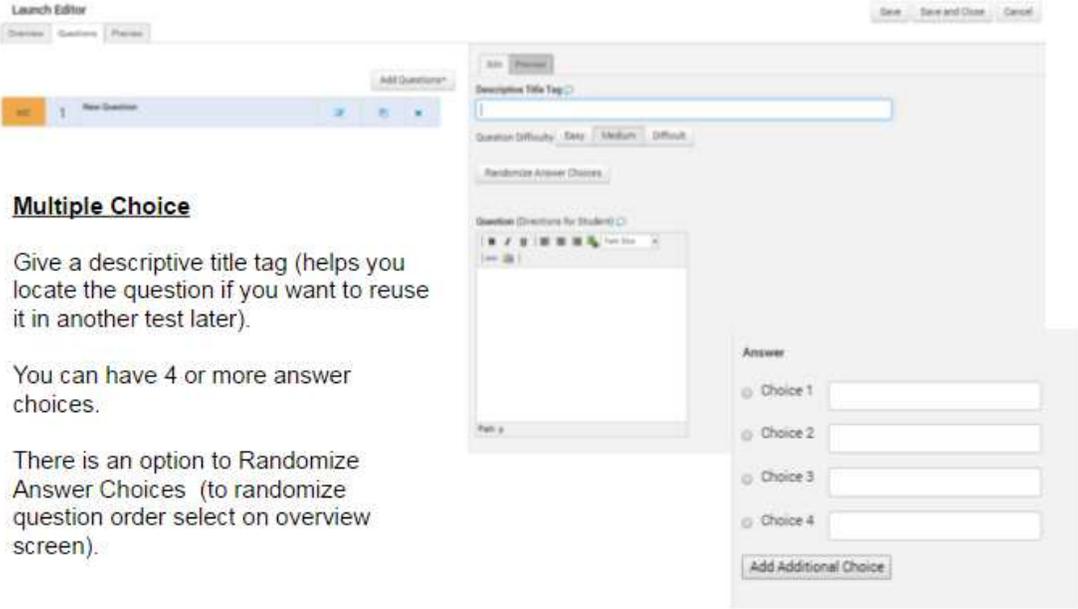
Launch Editor

Overview Questions Preview

Select Questions at the top

Add Questions*

You have three possible question types:
Multiple Choice
True/False
Free Response



Launch Editor

Overview Questions Preview

Add Questions*

Save Save and Close Cancel

Multiple Choice

Give a descriptive title tag (helps you locate the question if you want to reuse it in another test later).

You can have 4 or more answer choices.

There is an option to Randomize Answer Choices (to randomize question order select on overview screen).

Question Difficulty: Easy Medium Difficult

Randomize Answer Choices

Question (Directions for Student)

Answer

Choice 1

Choice 2

Choice 3

Choice 4

Add Additional Choice

Launch Editor Save Save and Close Cancel

Overview Questions Preview

Add Questions*

MC	1	New Question	?	↺	✕
FA	2	New Question	?	↺	✕

Free Response

Give a descriptive title tag (helps you locate the question if you want to reuse it in another test later).

You can enter multiple correct answers by separating with a semi-colon (;).

Be sure to consider every possible way they can type their answers in.

Edit Preview

Descriptive Title Tag [?](#)

New Question

Question Difficulty Easy Medium Difficult

Question (Directions for Student) [?](#)

Part: p

Answer

Free Response

You can preview the assessment - note that students will only have questions presented to them one at a time.

Launch Editor Save Save and Close Cancel

Overview Standards Questions Preview

Preview

3.1 2 Step Equations A

2 step equation

$4n - 8 = 10$

Do NOT enter in =

Your Answer:

4

Next

2 step equation

$\frac{x-4}{8} = 2$

Do NOT enter in =

Your Answer:

20

Next

2 step equation

$\frac{w}{2} - 8 = 6$

Do NOT enter in =

Your Answer:

28

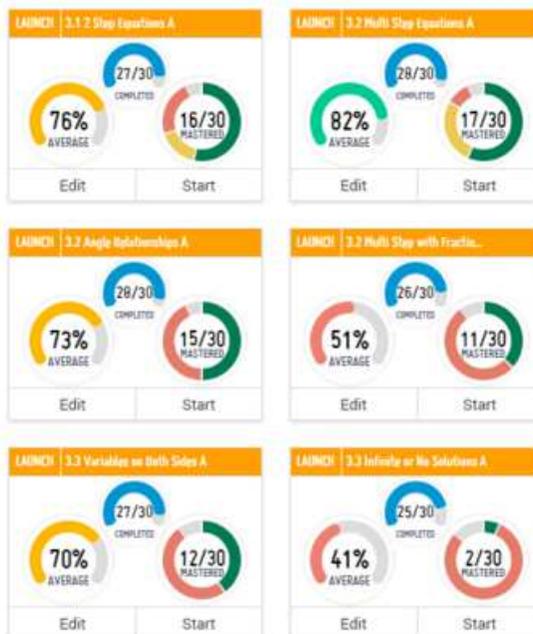
Next

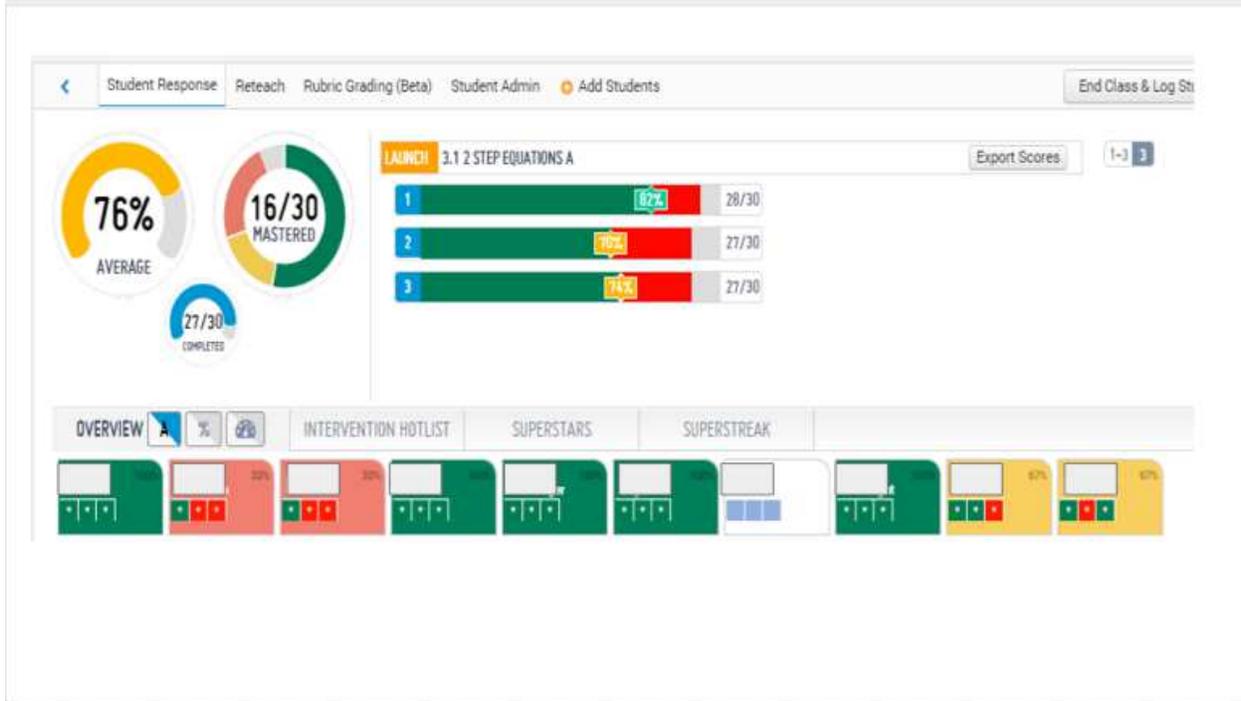
HOW TO VIEW RESULTS

On the day of the assessment - select the Course (on the home screen) and you can view each live assessment.

If looking for past assessments select from the calendar screen.

All Students





Select a kids name to see exactly what they entered or selected.

67%	ANSWER TIME AVG
2 step equation	2 step equation
$4m - 6 = 10$ Do NOT enter m = <input type="text" value="4"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/>	$\frac{x-4}{8} = 2$ Do NOT enter x = <input type="text" value="20"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/>
	2 step equation $\frac{w}{2} - 8 = 6$ Do NOT enter w = Wrong answer entered: $w = -4$ <input type="text" value="28"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/>

Use RETEACH (in projector) mode to go over questions.
(Teacher mode has kiddos names)

Day 1	Answers
From Day 1 - Inequalities and Graphing on the Number Line... Example 1: c... the answers were...	yes, no, yes 21% 
	no, yes, yes 07% 
	no, no, yes 69% 
	yes, no, no 03% 

Exit Tix- Break-Out Session

****You will need your Laptop****

During this breakout session you will be able to create an Exit Tix for one of your classes. Be prepared to share your Exit Tix!

Session: Socratic Seminar

This session gives an overview of the Socratic Seminar and can be used by any subject. You will learn the purpose, rules, and sample questions.

Objectives:

- *Understand the history of Socrates
- *Understand the definition of Socratic Seminar
- *Understand the rules of Socratic Seminar
- *Be able to implement into the classroom

Socratic Seminar

PD- Aug. 16, 17, 18



Session Objectives

- *Understand the history of Socrates
- *Understand the definition of Socratic Seminar
- *Understand the rules of Socratic Seminar
- *Be able to implement into the classroom

Socratic Seminars

Questions, not answers are the driving force in thinking and learning



What does Socratic mean?

The Greek philosopher Socrates believed the best way to think and learn was through disciplined conversation...dialect.



Dialectic

The practice of examining opinions or ideas logically often by the method of Questions and Answers.



What is Socratic Seminar?

*A teaching strategy to encourage students to engage in critical thinking, listening, communicating, and wonder

*A forum in which the students determine the flow of the classroom and teachers serve as facilitators



What is Socratic Seminar?

*An atmosphere of intellectual engagement, cooperation, and conversation. Students learn the difference between dialogue and debate

* The goal is not to answer the questions, but to generate more question

Teacher's Role

*Facilitator, not director

*Teacher's sole responsibility is to pose well thought out, open-ended questions



Teacher's Role

- *The teacher does not respond to the answers
- *The teacher can ask more questions if the dialogue stops or becomes repetitive



Guidelines

- *The group sits in a circle so everyone can make eye contact
- *Only students who have prepared for the seminar should participate

Guidelines

- *Silence is not bad
- *Allow the discussion to flow on its own
- *Students respect one another



Guidelines

- *One student speaks at a time
- *Answers should include academic support
- *Allow for post-seminar reflections



Students' Responsibility

- *Be prepared
- *Help the direction of seminar
- *Utilize critical thinking, listening, and communication skills
- *Respect other opinions



Rules

- *Do not raise your hand
 - *Do not interrupt when another student is speaking
 - *Speak when the student is done
 - *Ask clarifying questions
 - *Use academic evidence
 - *Be respectful to all opinions
- *



Sample Questions from Literature

- *Who is ultimately responsible for Romeo and Juliet's death?
- *How does Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius affect the plot?
- *Do you consider Lenny's death as a mercy killing or murder?



Sample Questions from Science

- *Should there be limits to scientific experiments?
- *What are ethics?
- *What are some consequences of genetic engineering?

Sample Questions from Physical Education



- *Should schools only serve healthy food?
- *How does physical education affect other aspects of our lives?
- *Is our country too obsessed with sports?

Final Thoughts!



- Choose engaging, rich texts
- *Allowed students to get warmed-up
- *Pose open-ended questions to get started
- Be prepared to ask probing questions if discussion stalls.
- *Model behavior for students

Socratic Seminar- Break-Out Session

****Bring Your Laptop****

You will be given time to create your own Socratic Seminar for one of your classes. Be prepared to share your lesson.

Professional Development- Session Survey

Session Name- _____

Please rate the following statements: disagree, strongly disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree.

1) This session helped me gain new information and skills.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Undecided

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2) This session was relevant to my needs.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Undecided

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3) This session was communicated clearly and effectively by the presenter.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Undecided

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4) I will be able to use the knowledge gained in this session in my classroom.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Undecided

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5) The break-out session was useful.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Undecided

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

What suggestions do you have regarding the quality of the PD session?

What was the most useful part of the PD session?

What was the least useful part of the PD session?

Please explain how the session could be improved.

Teacher Survey- Future Professional Development Opportunities

- 1) What PD have you recently participated in?

- 2) Explain your overall experience with PD at LHS.

- 3) How has PD helped you as a teacher?

- 4) Explain any PD that you felt were not valuable to you as a teacher.

- 5) What are some PD opportunities that you would like to see LHS offer.

- 6) What are some current topics you would like to learn more about?

- 7) Explain how you would like PD to look at LHS.

Appendix B: Approval Letter of Cooperation

July 21, 2015
Lee's Summit North High School
Principal- Jeff Meisenheimer, Ed.D

Dear Michele Branch,

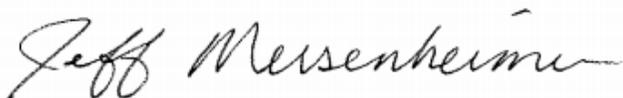
Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled *Teachers' Perspectives of Balanced Assessment: A Case Study of 4 English Language Arts Teachers* within the Lee's Summit North High School. As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit four English Language Arts Teachers, conduct classroom observations, interviews, member checking, and provide results and disseminate data upon request. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include allowance of teacher participants. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,



Principal, Lee's Summit North H.S.

Appendix C: IRB Approval for Research

Dear Ms. Branch,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Teachers' Perspectives of Balanced Assessment: A Case Study of Four English Language Arts Teachers."

Your approval # is 07-31-15-0290685. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on July 30, 2016. One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 1 week of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the IRB section of the Walden website: <http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMUx43pZegKlmdiQ_3d_3d

Sincerely,

Libby Munson

Research Ethics Support Specialist

Office of Research Ethics and Compliance

Email: irb@waldenu.edu

Fax: [626-605-0472](tel:626-605-0472)

Phone: [612-312-1283](tel:612-312-1283)

Office address for Walden University:

100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900

Minneapolis, MN 55401

Appendix D: Invitation to Participate

Email for Possible Participants

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Michele Branch, a doctoral candidate at Walden University. The study examines teachers' perspectives of professional development and how it effects implementation in the classroom. You were selected as a possible candidate because you have participated in Balanced Assessment PD and teach English 12. The data collection includes an hour-long interview with questions that pertain to your experience with Balanced Assessment professional development and an hour-long classroom observation. You will also be asked to look at your interview and observation notes to check for accuracy. You will have two weeks to complete the accuracy check. If you are interested in gaining more information about the study, you will be given a detailed description of the study, procedures, voluntary nature of the study, risks and benefits, issues of confidentiality, and more contact information. Please feel free to ask me any questions. If you would like more information about the study please contact me at michele.branch@waldenu.edu or at 816-878-3949.

Thank you,

Michele Branch

Walden University

Appendix E: Participant Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study of Teachers' Perspectives of Balanced Assessment. This study examines how teachers' perspectives of professional development affect implementation in the classroom. The researcher is inviting teachers who teach English 12 and who have participated in all Balanced Assessment professional development. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Michele Branch, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a teacher, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze how a teachers' perception of professional development affect implementation in the classroom.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- One-on-one personal interview which will take approximately an hour and will take place of a decided neutral environment like a local coffee shop or library
- Allow a classroom observation which will take approximately one hour. The focus of the observation will be to observe actions of the teacher in relation to the Balanced Assessment strategies and focus
- Check for accuracy on the interview and classroom observation. This will take approximately 1-2 hours and you will be given two weeks to complete the accuracy check.

Here are some sample questions:

- (1) What Balanced Assessment PD activities have you participated in?
- (2) Describe the topics you learned about in Balanced Assessment PD
- (3) Explain your initial reaction when the district introduced Balanced Assessment to you
- (4) Describe what you and your cohort discuss pertaining to Balanced Assessment

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at Lee's Summit North High School 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 later. You may stop at any time. Further, since the researcher is already know to the participants, declining or discontinuing participation in the study will in no way negatively impact the relationship between the researcher and the participant.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing. There is a minimal chance that you may feel some discomfort during the observation and/or the interview. The overall anticipated research benefit may help the school to better understand teachers' perceptions of Balanced Assessment professional development and the perceived effects it has on classroom practices. The result of the study may impact Balanced Assessment professional development activities and practices.

Payment:

You will not receive payment for your participation, but you will receive a thank you card and a Starbuck's gift card of \$10.00 as a mere token of appreciation.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study. Data will be stored in password-protected computer and a locked file cabinet. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via michele.branch@waldenu.edu. Please allow 2 weeks for questions and considerations. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-31-15-0290685** and it expires on **July 30, 2016**.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Appendix F: Sample Observation

Participant 2

Setting- English 12 Classroom

Place- Lincoln High School

Time- 9:10 a.m.-10:00 a.m.

Role Researcher/Observer

Observation of Teacher Participant's Actions

<u>Description of Events</u>	<u>Reflection</u>
No learning target	No implementation of aspect of
Characters' name on board	BAPD.
The activities on board written:	
Finish <i>A Doll's House</i>	
Discuss	
Read alternate ending	
Start Supervised Writing	
Students walk in take their seat	
Teacher tells them to get out their play "A Doll's House"	
Last few pages of the play	
Read aloud-Students have parts	
Teacher stops and asks if they were surprised Nora left her family	Series of questions.
Many students spoke out at once	Formative Assessment.
Teacher called on female student	Only Q&A
Student said she was surprised	No implementation of

Students murmur in agreement

Teacher discusses that during the time period late 1800's. How would audience respond?

women walking out on their family was unheard of, shocking and scandalous

What was the role of women? How did people

View divorce? What were women's legal rights?

What was Ibsen trying to say about women in the time period?

Male student called on: They were suppressed.

Several students chime in-

Women did not have choices

They stayed trapped in marriages

Did not have any legal rights.

Teacher reads the alternate ending to class-

Approx.. 2 pages

This one had Nora staying.

Students talking at once.

Teacher called on female student.

She answered- there would be no point to the play.

The whole play is about the suppression of women during the time period.

Many students agreed.

Teacher told them that audiences thought original ending was to

Scandalous during the time period. For many years this was the ending

When performed on stage.

other strategies of formative assessment presented in BAPD.

Male student said- I am glad it was changed back.

A class consensus.

Teacher turned on Smartboard.

Three questions were displayed.

Students chose one for their supervised essay.

The got to work the rest of the time on their essay.

Teacher walked around as students worked.

Summative Assessment. Result of PD?

Was this something participant would

Have done without BA? Part of PD?

No evidence of student monitored
learning

Appendix G: Sample Interview Questions

Teachers' Perspectives of Balanced Assessment: A Case Study of Hour English Language Arts Teachers

Interview Questions

(1) What Balanced Assessment PD activities have you participated in?

The district-wide introduction to Balances Assessment, the Balanced Assessment Consortium, skill-based learning, formative and summative assessment PD. I also went to the discussion on students assessing their own grades and using grades to assess learning from our formal principal that we were given on the first day back at school.

(2) Describe the topics you learned about in Balanced Assessment PD.

Skill-based learning, students tracking their own grades, learning targets, and formative and summative assessments.

(3) Explain your initial reaction when the district introduced Balanced Assessment to you.

Very skeptical. The district is constantly adding things to our plate and this is just one more example. I feel like we are test dummies for the newest thing in education. I think this sends a message to the teachers that we are not good enough. We want to be like all the other schools. I sometimes wonder if the district has to come up with something new so people at central office can keep their jobs. I then told myself that this too shall pass.

(4) Describe what you and your cohort discuss pertaining to Balanced Assessment.

It has changed since this all began. We used to talk about how to use formative assessment in the classroom like the whiteboards, red cups, and exit tickets. We would use them in the classroom and then we would tell our group how it worked. We also used to work on writing learning targets for each lesson. This lasted about a semester and then we quit after school discussions died down about learning targets. Now we just work on making up tests and share lessons. I think the time is useful but it really isn't over Balanced Assessment.

(5) Explain how you have implemented Balanced Assessment in your classroom

Some of the things that are in Balanced Assessment I was already doing so I don't know if it is really me implementing Balanced Assessment. I think every teacher uses formative assessment

to gauge their students' learning and then make adjustments. Teachers also use summative assessments to see if their students learned. This is nothing new. We also see summative assessments being used in state standardized tests and district tests. For a while I put up the learning targets but that was because I knew an administrator might come in and make sure they were up. I went over them with the students but it didn't really seem to have an effect. I quit putting them up because we quit talking about them. I still have my students check their grades but I don't think that is what they intended by student self-assessment. We were introduced to this but it wasn't explained well and we never talked about it again. The only thing I still do that I learned in a PD are the cups. My students turn their cups down if they don't understand something. Although many of them end up playing with them and I don't really think it tells me if they are learning or not.

(6) Explain how Balanced Assessment has affected your instruction.

Overall, I don't think it has. Like I said, most of the things we talk about I was already doing in the classroom. Learning targets were new and I did them for a while but it didn't affect the way I taught. I tired some of the formative assessment strategies for a while but they seemed to take up a lot of time and I didn't see that it gave me any valuable information. I would like to have learned more about student self-assessment but it was only verbally introduced to us and then we never heard about it again.

(7) Explain how Balanced Assessment has affected learning and student achievement in your classroom.

I don't think that it has. Any achievement that is tied to what Balanced Assessment is, I was already doing. So I don't think that any achievement is because of Balanced Assessment. I don't think the district has collected any data to determine if Balanced Assessment it working. Overall, I don't think we know.

(8) What are some factors that have either enhanced or inhibited implementation of Balanced Assessment in your instruction?

The only enhancement it has had is that I am more conscientious about how formative assessments can be used to guide my teaching. I would say that the biggest factor that inhibited was the lack of follow-up. We would learn something and be expected to implement it and then we never heard about it again. The first year we really focused on learning targets and spent a lot of time writing them and then by the second year they sort of just went away. I don't think anyone really knew what to do with them. I also think many teachers, including myself didn't ever see the big picture of why we were doing it. There was never any talk of what we were supposed to do after we had a PD session with Balanced Assessment. When we all went to the introduction session the Assessment Coordinator for the district presented Balanced Assessment like it was going to revolutionize teaching and learning. By the end of the year it was already losing steam.

(9) What is your overall perception of Balanced Assessment PD?

After dealing with this for several years, I think it has been a waste of time and nobody takes it seriously. We are all just waiting for it to go away. Of course then something else will emerge and we will be dealing with something else. There is always something new. I think if they had ever presented something that was new and we really thought was helpful we would have been more excited by it.

(10) How do you envision the PD of Balanced Assessment for the next three years?

I think we will see it completely go away. I see that already. I have seen so many plans come and go over the years and this one will be no different. For once I would like to have PD that I can really use. Maybe something with technology since all of the students have Chromebooks now. It is always just forced down our throats. The ones that plan it are the ones most removed from the classroom.