

Organizational Conditions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogies:

Looking at African American Schools

BY

FATIMA BRUNSON

B.A., University of Michigan, 2010

A.M., University of Chicago, 2012

THESIS

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Policy Studies in Urban Education
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Chicago, 2020

Chicago, Illinois

Defense Committee:

Benjamin Superfine, Chair and Advisor

David Mayrowetz, Policy Studies in Urban Education

Danny Martin, Curriculum & Instruction

Decoteau Irby, Policy Studies in Urban Education

Mark A. Gooden, Teachers College at Columbia University

© 2020

FATIMA BRUNSON

All Rights Reserved

Dedication

First, this dissertation is dedicated in loving memory to my first classmate and late cousin, Stephon Brunson, and all the other youth who left this earth way too soon.

Second, this dissertation is dedicated to the hard-working individuals who spend their lives in front of the classroom aiming to increase the learning opportunities received by historically marginalized groups. Thank you for your service. You are needed. And you are appreciated.

Acknowledgements

Although I worked on this dissertation alone, finishing this project would have been impossible without the love and support of my personal and professional network. First, I would like to thank divine intelligence for the gifts developed along this journey. And, in no particular order, I would also like to acknowledge my family and friends who have supported me along the way. I would like to thank my mother, Janice Brunson, and my father, Maurice Brunson. I would not be here today without your spiritual guidance, emotional and financial support. I would like to thank my little sister, Shaurice Brunson for always being there for me no matter what it is, and for always making me laugh when I need it the most. I would like to thank my Grandmother, Dora Campbell, for everything you are to me and my entire family. You are truly my earthly angel. I would like to thank my aunt Evelyn “Tee-tee” Emmanuel, for always supporting and encouraging me to live wholly in my truth. I would like to thank my Chandler side of the family, with a special shout out to my Uncle Jimmy Lee and Aunt Katie for their continued love and support. I would like to thank my Brunson side of the family, with a special shout out to my Auntie Diane and Uncle Carl for your special support for all of my academic achievements. I

would like to thank my best friend, Danielle Busby, PhD for believing in me and seeing the light inside of me, even when I could not see it myself. I would like to thank my classmate, colleague, and close friend, Gauri Vaishampayan, PhD for walking this path with me, and for being here every step of the way. Your emotional and professional support are truly invaluable. Thank you for being my community throughout this time. I would like to thank my God family and special shout-out to my god parents: Johnathan and Tawanda Williams. I am grateful for your continued support throughout my lifetime and for providing me with home cooked meals I will remember for a lifetime. Thank you to my Chicago Family, especially Rena and Tony for helping navigate Chicago, your willingness to support me is treasured, more than you could know. I would like to thank my Southfield crew: Brittany VP, Kristina, Dorie, Brittany S., and Andrea. You all have truly been my anchor, and for that I am forever grateful. I would like to thank my friend Jared. You have truly been a source of inspiration. Thank you for your intellectual, emotional, and financial support. I would like to thank my Chicago crew: Shonari, Sierra, Marvin, and Deante. Thank you for holding me down and weathering all the literal and metaphorical storms with me. I would like to thank Sally EK, Wasan, Mamizz, Evin, and my entire LaQuart family. Thank you for being a safe haven and providing me with the time and resources to write. I could not have made it through the proposal stage without you. I would like to thank Stephanie Jean-Baptiste. You have truly been helpful on this academic and spiritual journey. I would like to thank Winley K, PsyD. You have been the best accountability partner a girl could ask for. You are appreciated. I would like to thank Tynneal Grant, you have been a total inspiration as I crossed the finish line. I would like to acknowledge Dr. Christopher Miller for helping me understand the art and the science of teaching. Thank you for helping me renew my love of learning, and showing me how to make work feel like play. I would like to thank my dissertation committee chair and academic

advisor, Dr. Benjamin Superfine. Thank you for your support and commitment to helping me realize this entire project. I would like to thank my dissertation committee: Drs. Mayrowetz, Martin, Irby, and Gooden. Your guidance and support is cherished. Finally, I would like to thank the staff at both Wells High School and Cooper High School for participating in my study. They are an endless source of inspiration and continue to inform my research and practice. While space is limited and I am not able to thank everyone who has accompanied me and supported me on this journey, you are appreciated. And I thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Background	6
Demographic Divide	12
Statement of the Problem	16
Study Aims	18
Theoretical Framework	19
Chapter Two: Literature Review	23
Defining CRP	29
Challenges to Implementing CRP	36
Limitations of Teachers Commitments	42
Organizational Supports for CRP	45
Theoretical Framework	50
Chapter Three: Methods	69
Study Purpose	69
Research Design	71
Unit of Analysis	72
Chapter Four: Findings- WHS	92
Wells High School	93
Leadership Moves	98
Organizational Structures	108
Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration	109
Informal Social Structure	119
Instructional Conversations	133
Chapter Five: Findings- CHS	151
Cooper High School	151
Leadership Moves	154
Organizational Structures	160
Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration	160
Informal Social Structure	173
Instructional Conversations	188
Chapter Six: Discussion	218
Exploring Research Question 1	219
Exploring Research Question 2	228
Study Limitations	237
Research Implications	237
Appendices	244
Appendix A: Conceptual Map	244
Appendix B: Selection Criteria Chart	245

Appendix C: Data Collection Chart.....	246
Appendix D: Interviews and Observation Protocol.....	247
Appendix E: Table of Participants.....	251
Appendix F: Codebook.....	253
Appendix G: Discussion Chart.....	264
Appendix H: List of Terms.....	267
References.....	269

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table	Page
I. Figure 1.1: Conceptual Map.....	50
II. Figure 1.2: Selection Criteria.....	76
III. Figure 1.3 Data Collection Chart.....	78
IV. Table of Participants.....	83
V. Discussion Chart.....	264

Abstract:

Culturally responsive pedagogy is a dynamic approach shown to be effective when attempting to increase learning opportunities for historically marginalized groups, particularly African Americans. While there is a growing amount of evidence suggesting teachers incorporate cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively (Gay, 2002); a significant amount of evidence (e.g., Enyedy & Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Young, 2010) points to a lack of understanding, after pre-service training, of what it means to be a culturally relevant teacher (Dixson & Dodo Seriki, 2014) or that culturally relevant pedagogy has been reduced to a set of fixed behaviors (Ladson-Billings, 1995). At the same time, theories for enhancing teachers' instructional capacity highlights the importance of formal and informal mechanisms for improving teachers practice school wide. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of schools in supporting and developing teachers' adoption of culturally responsive pedagogies. I employed qualitative research methods, using a replication case study design looking at two predominately African-American school organizations. By conducting semi-structured interviews, observations, and a document analysis, the findings highlight major influences on teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting culturally responsive pedagogies.

Chapter One: Introduction

Research concerned with equitable student outcomes reveals a strong need for educational curriculum and practice to respond to the specific academic, cultural, and social needs of culturally unique, racially minoritized students. (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 1990; Howard, 2003; Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis 2016; Payne, 2008; Howard, 2003). Rather than organizing schools to pair students with the most expert teachers, who may be able to *catch them up* with their peers, our education system does just the opposite (Payne, 2008). Previous research indicates that high minority schools, on average, are assigned to teachers with less experience, less education, and less skill than those who teach in predominately white and racially mixed schools. (Mangiente, 2011; Peske & Haycock, 2006). For those in secondary schools serving the most minority students, almost one in three classes are assigned to an out-of-field teacher compared to about one in five in low-minority schools (National Center on Educational Statistics, 2000, 2006). Overall, the evidence on the distribution of teacher quality is unequivocal. Regardless of how teacher quality is measured, minority children get fewer than their fair share for high-quality instruction.

At the same time, there is consensus among scholars that culture plays a significant role in shaping the thinking, behaviors, and practices of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other school stakeholders (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996; Irvine, 1990; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Scholars in anthropology have produced literature describing these types of *culturally responsive pedagogies*. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) is one research-based model that has increasingly become a part of instructional reform efforts in K–12 schools. The current study is inspired by the work on culturally relevant pedagogy, which is a pedagogical model defined by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995, 2001, 2009). The grounding research examined

the pedagogical practices of successful teachers of African American children. Her work included specific types of knowledge, teaching commitments, and student outcomes associated with the practice. Scholars (Gay, 2000, 2002; Howard, 2003) have also advanced the theory by describing specific skills and classrooms practices; they have often been referred to as *culturally responsive teaching*. This framework allows practitioners to examine and modify their classroom practices in order to effectively teach all children, particularly students of color (Seriki & Brown, 2017). Their combined work and the work of other prominent multicultural education scholars are used to describe enactments of CRP.

While empirical research has shown the effectiveness of CRP (Esposito & Swain, 2009; Howard, 2003; Milner, 2011; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), a significant amount of literature (e.g., Enyedy & Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Young, 2010) suggests that there is a lack of understanding for what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher (Dixson & Dodo Seriki, 2014) or that CRP has been reduced to a set of fixed behaviors (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The research presents a conundrum for schools in service to racially minoritized youth. Multicultural education scholarship highlights CRP as a necessary component for effective teaching practice, particularly when working with African American youth. However, there is little evidence of teacher candidate success with culturally responsive approaches. Since the groundwork on culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy; multicultural education scholarship has been saturated with research that highlights the failure of teacher education programs in preparing preservice teachers for work in culturally diverse schools (Gay, 2000, 2002; Howard, 2003; Wiggins & Follow, 1999). Current research suggests students of color are still marginalized in schools (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Gay, 2003). According to Prescott and Bransberger (2008), schools will become more racially and culturally diverse in the future.

They projected that by, this year, 2020, nearly half of all high school graduates will be students of color (Prescott & Bransberger, 2008). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), since the fall of 2014, less than half of students in public schools are white

At the same time, the teaching force has become less ethnically and racially diverse (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010), with a growing white female population. Scholars have referred to this “browning” of the student body population and a “whitening” of the teaching force as the demographic divide between students and teachers (Gay & Howard, 2001). With this, scholars contend that the demographic divide poses a cultural divide between students and teachers. This type of cultural divide can also exist between teachers and students of the same race. This dynamic is explored throughout this document. Furthermore, research looking at teachers’ enactments of CRP highlights the limitations of teachers’ cultural knowledge for adapting their practice to more responsive instructional strategies. Scholars point to a lack of commitment after teachers’ preservice experience for teaching in settings where the majority of students belong to racially minoritized groups. With this, it remains imperative that schools create spaces where educators are pushed on their thinking regarding race (Maxwell, 2014). and encouraged to adopt a social justice orientation (Villegas, 2007).

Influencing Teachers’ Knowledge and Commitments for enacting CRP

While the theoretical grounding is inspired by skilled, dedicated teachers who have devoted their lives to serving minoritized youth, they are the exception. We know less about how schools in service to racially minoritized student bodies, today, are influencing the components necessary for teachers to enact a culturally responsive pedagogy. This research is in response to scholarship on teacher quality in high minority schools, empirical evidence positing culturally

responsive pedagogy as effective instruction for African American students, and limitations of preservice teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting cultural responsiveness.

Schools play an important role in shaping the quality of instruction received by students (Printy, 2010). Scholars point to a need to align formal mechanisms for teachers' learning and collaboration with the schools' informal social structure, if schools are to achieve school wide instructional effectiveness (Penuel et al., 2010). While this research seeks to look beyond traditional measures of effectiveness by promoting the use of culturally responsive pedagogies, I relied on the contributions of school organizational and leadership theory to guide my inquiry on school level factors related to teachers' pedagogy. In particular, I paid close attention to theories that spoke to the positive, although, incremental improvements presented within the literature surrounding the racialized academic achievement gap. By relying on theories focused on school wide instructional effectiveness, this research was inspired by the need to influence teachers practice across the school building, specifically for schools in service to historically marginalized groups.

Ultimately, I combined the knowledge surrounding multicultural education with that of school organizational and leadership theory to better understand how school level mechanisms, within predominately racially minoritized context, influence teachers' pedagogical practice. Accordingly, I highlight the extent to which these variables relate to necessary components for enacting CRP. I learned that school level supports for learning narrowly focus on formal professional development sessions (Easton, 2008; Day, 1993). I learned that supports for teachers' collaborative tasks focus on the importance of teacher teams (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015; Johnson, 2003). As well, I learned that improving teachers' collaboration heavily depends on the staff professional learning community (Jackson &

Bruegmann, 2009; Little, 2012). Further, I relied on Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis' (2016) work on culturally responsive school leadership to conceptualize the ways in which leadership behaviors might shape the formal and informal structures impacting teachers' practice. With this in mind, my research inquiry became centered understanding how formal and informal aspects of teachers' work place influenced their ability to be culturally responsive.

The research on teachers practice points to the combination of skill and will for effective instruction (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 2000). To narrow my scope, I focused on the elements of teachers practice that might represent their knowledge and commitments, specifically related to culturally responsiveness. In doing so, I highlight the research on teachers' knowledge and teaching commitments as significant contributors to their ability to adapt their practice in order to meet the needs of their students. Traditionally, scholars have referred to this ability as scaffolding. Given the research on the consequences of cultural mismatches in the classroom and the continuation of the demographic divide in schools, this research argues for an understanding of scaffolding through a culturally situated lens. Subsequently, I use the term cultural scaffolding to refer to adaptations of teachers practice that relied on a culturally situated lens to address a problem of practice. Here, teachers' cultural knowledge and commitments for teaching in racially isolated schools make up teachers' enactments of culturally responsiveness. Thus, the current study focuses on organizational elements in predominately African American schools influencing teachers' enactments of culturally responsive pedagogy.

In this chapter I outline my reasoning for investigating school level elements influencing teachers' practice in predominately African American schools. Following, in chapter two, I outline the frameworks I have adapted from school organizational theory for instructional effectiveness, and culturally responsive school leadership to better understand how schools

influence teachers' pedagogical practice. Then, chapter three is used to describe the research methods I used to investigate this phenomenon. Chapter four and five are used to present the findings from each case analysis. Finally, chapter six includes a discussion of the study's findings, study limitations, and implications for researchers, practitioners, and policy makers. I have developed the current project to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do schools, experiencing the demographic divide, use formal mechanisms to shape teachers' cultural knowledge base?
- 2) How does the informal social structure in schools, experiencing the demographic divide, influence teachers' commitments?

Background

Legally Denying Minorities from Going to School

This research begins with attempting to understand the role of past policies and practices in maintaining racial inequality in US public schools. In Gloria Ladson-Billings (2005) article, *From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools*, she argues that a focus on the racial academic achievement gap is misplaced. Her work suggests that racial inequality in schools can be better understood by looking at the historical, economic, sociopolitical and moral decisions that have created an education debt owed to historically marginalized groups, particularly African Americans. This section highlights major policy decisions made throughout our nation's history that aid in maintaining the learning opportunity gap. Specifically, this work highlights the legacy of educational inequities, relative to African Americans, present throughout the nation's history.

The history of policies related to the education of African Americans and other historically marginalized groups begins with denying access to public education. In the case of

African Americans, education was initially forbidden during the period of chattel slavery up until the civil war. Policies forbade enslaved Africans from becoming literate while also condemning anyone to teach them to read. After the civil war, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments to the constitution granted civil and political rights to former slaves and other African Americans. Following the 1865 proclamation, there was a substantial movement led by ex-slaves to develop an educational system that would appropriately defend and extend their emancipation. In other words, the goals of black education would include basic philosophies and subject matter relevant to African Americans that could be used to reorganize and govern their own lives. At the same time, southern school officials, northern industrial philanthropists, and some black educators supported the idea of education and social order. However, this conception was in direct contradiction to the aspirations of ex-slaves and their children. Black southerners expressed “assistance without control” (Anderson, 1988, p. 6). These contrasting ideologies resulted in a bitter national debate over the purposes of black education.

During the period of reconstruction, African Americans achieved significant political power in the south, which resulted in increasing higher educational institutions in service to African Americans and establishing schools for Black children throughout the south. For a brief time, Whites had less access to education than did southern Blacks. However, struggles to mobilize due to contradictory goals of schooling, resulted in loss of political and economic power, and ultimately the power over educational institutions specifically intended for these students. Since Blacks lacked economic and political power, white elites were in control of the structure and content of Black elementary, secondary, and college education for the first third of the twentieth century. Black youth were, then, pushed into a system of industrial education, which was one of the biggest efforts in *civilizing* ex-slaves. These organizations were referred to

as freedmen's schools. In this view, freedmen's schools were created with the purpose of maintaining a servant class (Anderson, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Williams, 2009). Yet, African Americans have continued in the quest to develop an educational system in accordance with their own needs and desires (Anderson, 1988). Following the reconstruction era, the redemption era involved the oppression of African Americans by southern Whites through revisions of state constitutions and the employment of Jim Crow laws. Jim Crow laws supported legal segregation of whites and blacks in all public spaces. Racist ideology fueled such policies by using *scientific* evidence to justify a view that Whites were biologically more evolved than African Americans. Therefore, the nation's commitment to freedom and equality did not extend to Blacks because they were considered to be less evolved human beings. While the legal battles between whites and blacks in northern and southern states is beyond the scope of my analysis, it is important to note ideological grounds that moved our schools from "separate but equal" to the integration of students.

Separate and Unequal

In 1896, the United States Supreme Court decided the influential case of Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) where an African American plaintiff brought an equal protection claim against the State of Louisiana. The plaintiff challenged a law that demanded railroads to provide separate cars for Blacks and Whites to "promote the comfort of passengers" (Plessy, p. 550). The Court maintained that the law was "within the competency of the state legislature in the exercise of their police power" (Plessy, p. 544). Here, the Court relied on the practice of school segregation in the North, where the civil rights of African Americans had been enforced the longest and most diligently, as evidence of the law's legitimacy (Collins & Roberts, 1859). The Court did not find that the law treated Blacks and Whites equally in substance; rather, the Court maintained that

both Blacks and Whites received the same protection of the law, seeing as both races were treated equally in form. In other words, Blacks were separated from Whites and Whites from Blacks. Thus, the doctrine of “separate but equal” was conceived, formalizing racial segregation until Brown was decided some 58 years later.

Following Plessy in the federal court cases leading up to Brown, the separate but equal doctrine was exclusively applied to matters of race in education. Supreme Court jurisprudence during this time primarily emphasized African Americans’ rights to substantially similar education. Three significant examples of the Court’s position were: *Missouri ex rel Gaines v. Canada*, *Sweatt v. Painter*, and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education*. In *Missouri* and *Sweatt*, the Court discovered the universities were unsuccessful in their attempts in delivering substantially equal education to African Americans in two ways. First, by requiring African American students to travel out of state to attend law school, and second, by forming an African American-only law school with insufficient facilities, faculty, and curriculum. Likewise, in *McLaurin*, the Court apprehended that once a state admits Blacks to an institution, the state could no longer segregate them from White students to “prohibit the intellectual commingling of students” (*McLaurin*, 1950, p. 641). *Missouri*, *Sweatt*, and *McLaurin* paved the way for the Court’s ultimate reproach of school segregation in *Brown v. Board of Topeka* case (Tate, Ladson-Billings, Grant, 2003; Williams, 2009). The Brown Court decided that it “must consider public education in the light of its full development and its present place in American life throughout the nation” {*Brown*, 1954, pp. 492-493} to establish if segregated schools actually deprived African Americans of the equal protection of the laws. In their investigation the Court cited the “feeling of inferiority” {*Brown*, 1954, p. 494}, and that community segregation, had created, in Black students, a feeling unlikely to ever be undone. The Court referred to persuasive

psychological evidence determining that state segregation laws denote inferiority and affect Black children's ability to learn properly. The Court stressed that the impact of segregation would only frustrate the educational development among Black students. Because of such evidence indicating negative consequences of segregation, the Court found segregated education could never be equal (Brown, 1954).

I outline these policies and court decisions to better situate the context in which US educational institutions are built. Some scholars apprehend that the goals of the *Brown* case have never been realized, given how many districts experience a re-segregation of schools. This history is significant to this study because it captures the perspective of educators who are currently experiencing this re-segregation of US public schools. Overall, this research finds this education debt owed to minority students and has major implications for how we prepare our teachers for work in African American schools.

Here, it is important to mention why I refer to African American and LatinX students as “racially minoritized.” Typically, education scholars have referred to these groups as racial minorities based on the research focused on the under representation of students of color enrolled in colleges and universities. At the same time, the enrollment of Black, LatinX, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native American students in college has steadily increased over the past fifty years (El-Khawas, 2003). The term “racially minoritized students” is informed by Benitez's (2010) use of the term “minoritized” to refer to the “process of student minoritization that reflects an understanding of racial minority status as socially constructed in specific social contexts” (p.131). In the past, researchers studying college students have made racial comparisons within their illustrations. These depictions typically showed white students as more successful and prepared for college than racially minoritized students (Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora,

2000) focusing on the habits and experiences of white students as normative (Stewart, 2013). These findings reflect a cultural deficit approach. Thus, it remains imperative that education scholars continue to construct an understanding of racially minoritized students that does not use a deficit approach to transform education policies and practices to ensure the school success of these students. For the sake of this research, I will use the terms: racially minoritized students, predominately racially minoritized schools, high minority schools, and predominately African American schools to refer to the schools under investigation, experiencing the demographic divide.

Critical education researchers have propelled the field in asking better questions about race and culture in schools. Today, there is consensus among scholars that effective teaching for racially minoritized students requires teachers to have some understanding of their students' cultural backgrounds. However, little attention is paid to the historical context of black education and its impact on the quality of pedagogy received by minoritized students today. Hence, the current research is used to uncover essential elements related to effective, culturally responsive approaches. The following section is used to discuss rapidly changing demographics as another major component in schools impacting the quality of instruction received racially minoritized youth.

Previous scholarship has referred to schools with large amounts of racially minoritized students as: urban schools (Payne, 2008), high minority schools (Peske & Haycock, 2006) and racially isolated schools (Powell, 1985). From here on out, I will use these terms synonymously to refer the schools under investigation. These terms refer to schools that student demographics consisting of predominately racially minoritized student bodies. In the following section, I

highlight the need to consider the dynamics created by both teacher and student demographics. This dynamic represents a cultural divide that stems from an overall demographic divide.

Demographic Divide

As the United States experiences its largest influx of immigrants, along with an increasing number of US-born ethnic minorities, the nations' institutions must be prepared to make the necessary adjustments to face the changing demographics of its citizens (Banks, 2001). While students of color make up approximately one third of the US school population, the US department of Commerce (1996) projects that by the year 2050 African-American, LatinX, and Asian American students will constitute close to 57% of all US students. Given the robust research surrounding educational reform, along with the racial and ethnic composition of Chicago, this research privileges data on urban districts like Chicago Public Schools (CPS) district and those within the greater Chicago area. CPS is the third largest school district in the United States, with more than 600 schools providing education to approximately 400,000 students. According to CPS (2019) school data, African American and LatinX students make up most of the district, with 35.9% of students identifying as African American, 46.6% as LatinX, and 10.8% as White. Gay and Howard (2000), have called this dynamic in schools a "demographic divide". For the remainder of this document, I, too, will refer to this dynamic as the demographic divide. This concept is aligned with the scholarship related to preparing teachers for multicultural education (Gay, 1993; Gay & Howard, 2000) which refers to the "growing cultural and social distance between students and teachers that is creating an alarming schism in the instructional process" (p. 96). Here, it remains important to remember that this distance certainly can occur between students and teachers of the same race. Scholarship on this issue highlights that, in addition to the racial disparities that contribute to the socio-cultural gaps

between students and teachers, these gaps are widened by factors such as generation, gender, social class, residence, educational levels and experiential background (Gay, 1993). Simply put, teachers live in different existential worlds and may not have similar points of view or frames of reference as their ethnically and culturally different students. This research finds that the demographic divide present within schools today has created an institutional environment where cultural mismatches are common place. Here, this research agrees that problems of practice benefit from the adoption of a cultural lens. Ultimately, this research is guided by the belief that addressing problems of practice in the context of the demographic divide is likely to yield more fruitful results if educators are willing and able to view them through a culturally situated lens.

Furthermore, the shift in ethnic demographics for public school student bodies has important implications for schools, teachers, and the communities they serve. Teachers must face the reality that they will continue to come into contact with students whose cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, and social class backgrounds differ from their own. Subsequently, schools will continue to become learning spaces where an increasingly homogenous teaching population, meaning, mostly White, female, and middle class, will come into contact with an increasing heterogenous population, meaning, primarily students of color, and from varying income backgrounds. With this, if schools are to meet the learning needs of today's diverse student population, school leaders and staff must work together to shape school environments that build on teachers' cultural knowledge and foster teachers' commitment to adapting their practice. Specifically, schools must be able to support teachers in constructing pedagogical practices that have relevance and meaning to students' social and cultural realities. The purpose of this research is to highlight the structures and processes geared toward meeting the needs of rapidly changing student bodies.

While student populations are becoming increasingly diverse, the nations' teaching force remains essentially homogenous (Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Ingersoll, 2015). In my attempts to understand how schools systems and supports are used to develop teacher' culturally responsive pedagogies, I found that the research is relatively scarce. Historically, education scholarship has been used to study effective teaching methods focusing on middle-class, advantaged students. In this way, the field is limited in revealing the social and cultural advantages that make their success possible (Ball, 2003). By examining systems used to support culturally responsive pedagogies, this work centers organizing practices impacting teachers in service to African American and LatinX students. In highlighting scholarship and practice on schools in service to predominately racially minoritized student bodies, this research aims to support the quality of instruction received by those who have historically benefitted the least from US public schools. Understanding how to support teachers' success among those who have, historically, benefitted the least from our educational institutions tells us more about what school variables might yield successful results (Lawless & Pelligrinow, 2007). Thus, my research is used to continue revealing important school level mechanisms, for achieving success for *all* students.

Emphasizing Organizational Practice in Racially Isolated Schools

Scholarship concerned with gaps in teacher quality highlights a systemic problem within US school institutions. With the knowledge that US students are lagging behind in national achievement tests when compared to other advanced industrial nations, national education policies have prioritized increasing student standardized test scores. Here, increasing students' achievement on standardized testing is seen as the means to maintaining the nations' goal of economic competitiveness (Lipman, 2004). In doing so, greater attention is paid to teachers' instructional practice as a way to meet the demands of national reform agendas. Accordingly,

attempts to address gaps in teacher quality have relied heavily on policies using teacher effectiveness data. The results revealed wide variation among teachers practice. The researchers concluded such huge variation in schools meant failure in schools (Ravitch, 2010). Subsequently, policy shifts toward standardization of teaching practice have been amplified. These changes serve to push teacher education away from culturally responsive teacher preparation and toward preparing teachers as technicians, used to raise students' standardized test scores (Sleeter, 2009; Zeichner, 2009). These developments have resulted in increased testing, accountability, and corporate intrusion in schools; they also necessitate such a countermovement, particularly in schools in service to minoritized groups. This research calls for a renewed understanding of teacher effectiveness, relying on data that suggest variation in classroom practice is not only useful, but is required for effective, culturally responsive teaching.

While this research inquiry is guided by the scholarship highlighting issues of teacher quality in high minority schools, it is important to remember that many urban schools are working within the context of the re-segregation of schools and ultimately, the demographic divide. The schools under investigation include student bodies that are completely racially minoritized combined with teacher demographics that mirror the demographics of the nation's teaching force. With the overall shift back to the re-segregation of schools, this research finds that teachers are faced with learning about general cultural differences between them and their students, along with the cultural nuances within racially minoritized groups. So, to best situate the school context, I refer to these organizations as racially isolated schools working within the demographic divide. Thus, I highlight research on major factors influencing enactments geared toward culturally responsive practices to guide my work within the context of the demographic divide.

Supporting Enactments of Pedagogy

Fortunately, greater attention is now being paid to teachers' capacity to meet the demands for working in k-12 schools. Given the persistence of the learning opportunity gap between white and racially minoritized groups, school reform efforts have increasingly turned to supportive practices for enhancing teachers' instructional capacity (Albers, 2008; Fasching-Varner & Dodo Seriki, 2012; Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006). It has become evident that teaching practice requires more than drilling students on content and managing classroom behaviors. It demands particular knowledge and skills (Shulman, 1986; Stockero, Rupnow, & Pascoe, 2017), and a moral obligation (Gresalfi & Cobb, 2006; Sockett, 2006) to advancing their practice in order to meet the needs of all students. Organizational theories used to improve instructional effectiveness have advanced the field by investigating the role of schools in structuring teacher learning opportunities (Jackson & Brueggman, 2009; Graham, 2007; Levine & Marcus, 2010) and fostering teachers' workplace commitments (Giovannelli, 2003; Ross & Gray, 2006; Nixon, Dam, Packard, 2006) when attempting to meet the learning needs of culturally diverse student bodies. With a greater understanding of the role that race and culture play in teaching and learning, enhancements to teachers' instructional capacity requires increased attention to school level mechanisms used to structure and shape teachers' pedagogy (Dee & Henkin, 2002; Melnick & Zeichner, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

Multicultural and critical education scholars have advanced the field by providing numerous research narratives and empirical data around the necessity to engage culture in the schools. Yet, data surrounding student academic achievement and learning opportunities suggests a larger systemic problem in conjunction with a type of "demographic divide" in

schools. The literature emphasizing the development of teachers in minoritized schools tends to over emphasize the challenges of teacher education programs and classroom climate dynamics. Scholarly discussions around how to better prepare prospective teachers for work in minoritized communities highlights empirical research: on the structure and nature of teachers' preservice experience, the lack of attracting and retaining minority teachers, and the need to develop teachers' attitudes and commitments in service to minoritized students. Scholarly discussions around classroom climate dynamics highlights: the effectiveness of culturally responsive teaching methods (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay, 2010), the challenges in conceptualizing and actualizing these types of frameworks (Young, 2010) and CRP as an opportunity for school districts to exemplify excellent teaching (Morrison, Robbins, Rose, 2003). At the same time, school organizational theorists emphasize the use of instructional supports and teacher learning opportunities for school-wide instructional improvements (Penuel et al., 2010; Lampert, Boerst, Graziani, 2011; Cohen, Raudenbush, Ball, 2003). A growing body of research in school leadership theory suggests culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL) is used to support teachers' culturally responsive teaching methods. Scholars reveal that culturally responsive leaders have the ability to create a school context and curriculum that responds effectively to the educational, social, political, and cultural needs of the students (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis 2014). While the research on CRSL outlines leadership behaviors used to foster school climates for developing effective teaching practice, there is very little discussion on school organizational conditions that might be used to support and sustain culturally responsive pedagogies.

Current scholarship encourages practioners to shift focus away from ways of doing to ways of being, which necessities the importance of schools in fostering appropriate teaching

dispositions and commitments (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Previous research has shown that in some cases, teachers practice and attitudes served to entrench discriminatory beliefs and practices (Lipman, 1997). However, education scholarship remains unclear on how school organizational practice influences teachers' attitudes and beliefs for enhancing their ability to be culturally responsive. In the past, schools were not considered to be learning spaces that expanded on teachers' knowledge and practice or challenge problematic attitudes (Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). Since, the field of education now recognizes teachers' pedagogy as a summation of knowledge (Rowan et al, 2001; Hill, Ball, Schilling, 2008), and the will to translate knowledge into their classroom practice (Human, 1985; Justi & Gilbet, 2002). With this in mind, my research is used to explore school level practices, set by leaders, intended to develop teachers' cultural knowledge and commitments for adopting their own culturally responsive pedagogies.

Study Aims

This research aimed to connect organizational theories for improving instructional effectiveness and scholarship surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy. I attempted to understand the role of schools in supporting teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting culturally responsive methods. Specifically, I hoped to uncover major influences on teachers' learning for developing a cultural knowledge base and the role of schools in shaping teachers' commitments for continuously improving and adapting to meet the needs of their students. To best understand schools influence on teachers' enactments of culturally responsive pedagogy, I looked at 1) formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and 2) the role of schools' informal social structure influencing teachers' commitments in predominately African American schools. Scholarship surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy is clear on the importance of

the practice, yet negligent around how schools might create and sustain these practices. Primarily, research on culturally responsive school leadership emphasizes the role of principals and other school leaders in supporting and developing teachers' culturally responsive methods (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016). Secondly, research on enhancing teachers' practice with diverse learners depicts a long-standing struggle for teacher educators and preparation programs in developing cultural knowledge and shaping the attitudes and beliefs required for effective teaching practice in multicultural settings (Ritchie, 2012; Gay & Howard, 2010; Wiggins & Follo, 1999). My work is geared toward understanding major factors in racially isolated schools influencing teachers' cultural knowledge and willingness to adopt responsive strategies.

Theoretical Framework

There is consensus across the field that effective instruction that leads to increases in student learning requires teachers to have specific knowledge, skills, and appropriate commitments (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2010). Effective teaching for African American students, and other minoritized groups requires a culturally responsive approach (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Irvine, 1990; Valenzuela, 1999). As schools attempt to improve the instructional quality received by racially minoritized students, researchers must take into account the process by which teachers acquire the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary for enacting culturally responsive pedagogies. School organizational theorists highlight the role of formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration, and informal social structures for supporting effective teaching practice across the building (Penuel., 2010). Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) has been recognized as one viable option for developing and sustaining teachers culturally responsive practice (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016). In this framework, leadership tasks involve developing teachers culturally responsive pedagogy (Ginsberg &

Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz, Brazil, & Scott, 2003), and fostering a culturally responsive school climate to support teachers' growth and development (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb-Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007). Yet, research is limited surrounding the extent to which school level variables influence teachers' knowledge and commitments necessary for engaging the practice.

My work draws on various subsections of education research, attempting to understand the role of schools in supporting teachers' practice, in service to racially minoritized students. These sections include literature on: culturally responsive pedagogies, organizational theories for instructional effectiveness, and theories underlining culturally responsive school leadership. The theories surrounding culturally responsive pedagogies highlight instructional strategies and teaching commitments of successful practitioners in service to African American students. Next, research related to school organizational theories for instructional effectiveness highlights formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and informal social structures used to improve school's instructional quality. Additionally, I summarize the research on culturally responsive school leadership. I have aligned these leadership behaviors to reflect school level factors influencing the necessary tools teachers' need to engage culturally responsive pedagogy.

Study Design

In order to best understand how schools might support effective, culturally responsive approaches, I employed qualitative research methods, using a replication case study design looking at two racially isolated schools within the context of the demographic divide. I conducted semi-structured interviews, observations, and a document analysis. I looked at school organizing practices in service to racially minoritized students over the course of one and a half semesters. The phenomenon of interests includes formal and informal structures used to shape

teachers' knowledge and foster a greater commitment to their work. First, I conducted an interview with the schools' principal to ensure that the school meets the selection criteria for my study. Meaning, both principal leaders acknowledged culturally responsive pedagogy as effective teaching practice for teachers in service to their specific population. Then, I interviewed teacher leaders to better understand how leadership, distributed throughout the school organization (Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2001) served to support teachers' culturally responsive approaches. Following this set of interviews with teacher leaders, I conducted observations and teacher interviews in an iterative process. I conducted observations of teacher team meetings. Lastly, I conducted a document analysis of the schools' curriculum, lesson plans, and meeting agendas. I combined these analyses to create a rich description of school level activities intended to shape teachers' practice for meeting the needs of racially minoritized students, as well as, teachers' experience of these instructional supports and how they understand it to shape their practice. In this way, I uncovered themes related to teachers culturally situated, instructional conversations. These conversations were organized based on topics that included the necessary components for enacting culturally responsive pedagogy, including teachers' cultural knowledge held, teaching commitments and classroom strategies promoted by the school. Interview and observation protocols can be found in the appendix.

Conclusion

School reform efforts and education policies, generally, overlook the importance of school level factors in shaping teachers' cultural knowledge and fostering commitments for working with cultural diversity. This study relied on empirical data suggesting that student learning increases when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Gay, 2001). Teachers practice that use these cultural and experiential filters are referred to as

culturally responsive pedagogies. Despite the aforementioned institutional and societal barriers that limit the quality of instruction received by minoritized students, school leaders are tasked with supporting teachers who possess a wide range of teaching commitments and varying degrees of cultural knowledge. With this, enhancing teachers' practice requires a close look at the norms and routines used to shape teachers' learning and workplace experiences.

As the nations' teaching force remains ethnically homogenous, supporting teachers' practice in racially minoritized classrooms becomes increasingly important. Although past research findings understood variation in teacher practice as a downfall for schools, this study assumed variation in teacher practice as potential for enhancing teachers' work in culturally diverse classrooms. Given the current limitations of teacher training programs in preparing educators for work with culturally diverse students bodies, practitioners and researchers must pay attention to how schools as organizations are supporting the work of teachers in *these* classrooms. This work calls for a renewed attention to how scholars understand teacher effectiveness, instructional capacity, and what it takes to support effective teaching practice in all classrooms. The following chapter is used to detail the literature reviewed for developing the theoretical framework used to guide my research questions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

There is consensus across the field that effective instruction that leads to increases in student learning requires teachers to have specific knowledge, skills, and appropriate dispositions (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2010). Effective teaching for African American students, and other racially minoritized groups requires a culturally responsive approach (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Irvine, 1990; Valenzuela, 1999). As schools attempt to improve the instructional quality received by racially minoritized students, researchers must take into account the process by which teachers acquire this knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for enacting culturally responsive pedagogies (CRP). School organizational theorists highlight the role of formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration, and informal social structures for supporting effective instruction, schoolwide. (Penuel., 2010). Additionally, education scholars are clear on the role of school principals in developing teachers' practice (Madglangobe & Gordon, 2012; Ginsberg & Wldodkowski, 2000), and creating productive learning climates to sustain these developments (Khalifa, 2005, 2010; Tillman, 2005). Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) is one theoretical tool that speaks to developing necessary conditions for CRP. (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016). In this framework, leadership tasks involve developing teachers culturally responsive pedagogy (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz, Brazil, & Scott, 2003), and fostering a culturally responsive school climate to support teachers' growth and development (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb-Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007).

Overall, I was very open to what could come out of this study. Since the conceptual gaps between school organizational theory and multicultural education have only been recently addressed, I felt limited in my theoretical tools for understanding how school conditions might lend themselves for such a dynamic approach, like culturally responsiveness. So, I began my

investigation with a more general understanding that school leaders develop formal and informal systems to meet the needs of their teaching staff, for improvements in student learning. I knew less about how teachers experienced the learning opportunities and ongoing instructional supports intended to enhance their practice, specifically within the context of the demographic divide. As the data emerged, I learned that teachers' collaborative conversations were significant in representing important information related to culturally responsiveness. In particular, these conversations highlight teachers' development of a cultural knowledge base and teaching commitments promoted at the school level. Given the contextual nature developed by the demographic divide, I refer to these conversations as culturally-situated, instructional conversations. Thus, I include a section on the importance of teachers' collaborative conversations to the theoretical works used to help me contextualize the practices in two high schools experiencing the demographic divide. The following sections are significant aspects of educational scholarship used to develop my research questions.

For the current study, school level variables have been narrowed to essential elements that are theoretically and empirically linked to teachers' pedagogical enactments. Pulling from research on school level structures for instructional improvement and culturally responsive pedagogy, I sought to uncover significant factors related to teachers' development of culturally responsive pedagogies. In particular, I aimed to highlight major factors intended to shape teachers' knowledge, and conditions for promoting teachers' commitments. Specifically, I looked at formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and the staff informal social structures for developing teachers practice. My goal was to connect two sectors of education scholarship for improving the instructional quality received by racially minoritized students. Unlike much of the scholarship surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy, this work adopts

more of an organizational perspective to uncover school level mechanisms influencing teachers' pedagogical enactments. And unlike much of the scholarship concerned with school wide instructional effectiveness, this work adopts more of a multicultural perspective positing CRP as effective practice within the context of the demographic divide.

My work drew on various subsections of education research, attempting to understand the role of schools in supporting teachers' practice, while working within the demographic divide. These sections include literature on: culturally responsive pedagogies, organizational factors for improving teaching and learning, and theories underlining culturally responsive school leadership. The theories surrounding culturally responsive pedagogies highlight instructional strategies and teaching commitments of successful practioners in service to African American students. Following, I review the literature on preparing teachers for work in multicultural settings which highlights the fields' progress in understanding the limitations of teacher education programs and key discussions on how to better prepare prospective teachers for their work with culturally and linguistically diverse student bodies. Next, research related to school organizational factors for improving teaching and learning highlights formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and informal social structures used to improve school's instructional quality. Lastly, I summarize the research on culturally responsive school leadership. I have aligned these leadership behaviors to reflect school level factors influencing teachers' pedagogy across the building. Ultimately, I merged my literary findings within school organizational and leadership theory with the literature on multicultural education. Here, my research inquiry attempted to build on the scholarship used to develop culturally responsive school leadership. With this in mind, I hope to continue the conversation related to school organizing practices

geared toward meeting the needs of *all* students, especially for those experiencing the demographic divide.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Scholars describe a type of “cultural mismatch” between students’ home-community and school culture. Among those in the field of multicultural education, there is consensus that effective teaching for African American students, and other racially minoritized groups requires a culturally responsive approach. Culturally responsive teaching involves using student’s cultural backgrounds as mediums for teaching them more effectively (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Lee, 1995; Smith-Maddox, 1998). This idea has been well documented within earlier scholarship used to develop viable teaching and learning environments for students of color. This phenomenon has been labeled in a variety of ways: (a) culturally appropriate (Au & Jordan, 1981); (b) culturally congruent (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981); (c) mitigating cultural discontinuity (Macias, 1987); (d) culturally responsive (Cazden & Legget, 1981; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Gay, 1999); (e) culturally compatible (Jordan, 1985; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987) and (f) culturally relevant (Ladison-Billings). For the purposes of this study, I rely on the research grounded in culturally relevant pedagogy, coined by Gloria Ladson-Billings in 1995. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) places emphasis on the needs of students from various cultures.

Ladson- Billings (1995) specifically defined culturally relevant pedagogy as:

A pedagogy of oppression not unlike critical pedagogy but specifically committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment. Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the current status quo of the social order.

CRP is a much sought-after framework used to teach African American students and those from other historically marginalized groups. It represents a combination of ideas and explanations

from a variety of scholars. Throughout this discussion, “culturally relevant” and “culturally responsive” refer to phenomena aligned with the aforementioned definition of *culturally relevant pedagogy*. Although this research is motivated by the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings on culturally relevant pedagogy; I rely on learning theories and other prominent multicultural education scholars to describe necessary instructional strategies and teaching dispositions. I refer to these set of practices and beliefs as *culturally responsive pedagogy*, following in the vein of educational leadership.

CRP is Highly Beneficial

There are qualitative and observational studies that present similar findings that African American students learn best in an environment where teachers’ pedagogical style is relational and personal, like an extended family (Boykin, 1983, 1994; Willis, 1992, 1998). In this way, teachers’ demonstrate high expectations for all their students. Teachers’ ability to demonstrate high expectations typically stem from accountability for self and others (Delpit, 1995; Hale-Benson, 1986; Hilliard, 1997, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2001; Murrell, 1993; Willis, 1995).

Academic Success

In her study of 8 successful teachers in service to African-American students, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995), summarizes significant themes related to teachers practice. These themes represent classroom level outcomes for teachers considered effective in their work with African American students. The research highlights three propositions of culturally relevant pedagogy. They include: “... produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who can demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 475). In her study, Ladson-Billings observed that culturally relevant pedagogues were able to help students performs at higher levels

when compared to other students in the district. In these classrooms, academic achievement was limited to standardized tests. While the nature of standardized achievement tests is contested in the field of education, the real-life ramifications of the scores received on these tests is undeniable. Teachers in her study felt that student academic success was one of their primary responsibilities.

Furthermore, other scholars have attempted to understand culturally responsive pedagogy and the extent to which it supports student learning and academic outcomes. In Colver and Tobbler's (2013) study on culturally responsive teaching in public speaking classrooms the researchers examined pedagogical techniques used to increase students learning opportunities. They concluded that culturally responsive methods help students learn and grow, and can support students in making important connections to their lives regardless of the subject (Colvin & Tobbler, 2013). Student learning and growth is supported when educators adapt their classroom strategies to meet the specific needs of their learners. In Hefflin's (2012) work on culturally responsive lessons using African American's children literature, she outlines the process of using pedagogy relevant to student's lives. In their attempts to increase student's learning opportunities, the teachers found that tailoring instruction to fit the textual, social, cultural, and personal lives of their students is largely about seeing pedagogy through the norms and practices of their students' lives. By tailoring classroom instructional strategies to students' specific context, teachers increase students' interest in class discussions and topics. Sampson and Garrison-Wade's (2010) conducted a study on an ethnically diverse high school in Colorado. The purpose of their study was to explore the preferences of African American children toward culturally relevant and non-culturally relevant lessons. These lessons were deemed relevant to students' culture and administered by a culturally responsive and caring teacher. Culturally

relevant lessons were rich in oral traditions, music, historical connections, and a structured culturally relevant field trip. Non-culturally relevant lessons were administered devoid of cultural referents, and utilized the existing curriculum guide. Their study results revealed statistically significant findings for African American children's preferences for culturally relevant lessons. By increasing student interest in class subjects, teachers support students in gaining additional meaning by building on students' cultural experiences. In this way, culturally responsive teachers emphasize "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) or cultural capital (Gordon, 1999; Lareau, 2001) developed in students' homes and communities, thus encouraging academic achievement.

Defining CRP: Instructional Strategies and Teaching Commitments

Culturally responsive pedagogy is multidimensional. The scholarship surrounding It encompasses curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments. While all of these aspects can be used to better understand culturally responsive pedagogy, I highlight two prominent features used to summarize teachers' pedagogical practice: classroom instructional strategies and teaching dispositions. Scholars concerned with improving teachers' pedagogical practice have commonly distinguished between teachers' need to have the *skill* and *will* for engaging effective teaching (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 2000). Culturally responsive instructional strategies, engages cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. A useful way to think about operationalizing these ideas in the act of teaching is matching instructional techniques to the learning styles of diverse students (Gay, 2000). I also refer to this as cultural scaffolding. Given the research on the consequences of cultural mismatches in the classroom and the continuation of the demographic divide in schools,

this research argues for an understanding of scaffolding through a culturally situated lens.

Subsequently, I use the term cultural scaffolding to refer to adaptations of teachers practice that relied on a culturally situated lens to address a problem of practice.

Culturally responsive teaching dispositions are considered the behavioral expressions of their personal and professional commitments. (Gay, 2002). It is contingent on a set of racial and cultural competencies. (Teel & Obidah, 2008). They involve teachers understanding of themselves, their students, and their overall commitments to changing their practice. Next, I define culturally responsive pedagogy by differentiating instructional methods and teaching dispositions based on effective methods and characteristics of those in service to racially minoritized students.

Culturally Responsive Instructional Strategies

Ladson-Billings (1995, 2006) offered CRP to serve as an important theoretical tool to analyze how instructional practices could be arranged in ways that could tap into a wide array of communicative and cognitive processes. Ladson-Billings' (1995) work highlights practitioners who were using a culturally centered approach in understanding and teaching students of color, as opposed to the cultural-deficit paradigm that was prevalent in educational research and practice at the time. Later, Gay (2010) advances CRP to describe characteristics of this approach to teaching:

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools, abstractions and lived sociocultural realities. (p. 29)
- It teaches students to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages.
- It uses a wide variety of instructional practices.

I rely heavily on Gay's (2002, 2010) research, and other scholars of multicultural education to describe these instructional methods. These sentiments have been echoed throughout the literature related to delivering effective, culturally responsive instruction. After a thorough review, I have summarized these ideas into two broad terms. The first instructional strategy I refer to as cultural scaffolding. Cultural scaffolding refers to the teaching methods used to deliver instruction. It requires teachers to "multiculturalize" their teaching; meaning teachers match instructional techniques to the learning styles of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Gay & Howard, 1999). The second instructional strategy I refer to as incorporation of multicultural content. Incorporation of multicultural content refers to infusing multicultural information, resources and materials in all subjects taught in schools. It requires teachers to develop rich repertoires of multicultural instructional examples to use in teaching students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Gay & Howard, 1999). Curriculum content is crucial to academic performance and is an essential component of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Dispositions

Scholars contend that responsive teaching methods must be accompanied by appropriate dispositions. Teaching dispositions refer to the conception's teachers have about themselves, their students and their work. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2009) calls dispositions "the values and commitments" that define teacher performance. The NCATE standards call for dispositions that are consistent with the idea of "fairness" and "the belief that all students can learn." The field has advanced in recognizing teachers' psychological state as a critical component for improving teachers' practice, we know

less about the role schools play in supporting appropriate teaching dispositions, and therefore teachers' personal commitments for work in culturally diverse school settings.

Culturally responsive teaching dispositions are considered the behavioral expressions of cultural diversity in learning and teachers' personal commitment to their work (Gay, 2002). These dispositions are recognized as the underlying ideological beliefs, assumptions and values of effective teachers in service to minoritized groups. They involve teachers understanding of their students, themselves, and "expressions of professional beliefs and emotional commitments that goes beyond the contractual obligation of caring for" (Day, 2004, p. 2) the students of which they are in service. I rely on Gay's (2000) comprehensive definition to describe teaching dispositions found within culturally responsive pedagogues. Culturally responsive teaching dispositions include:

seeing cultural differences as assets; creating caring learning communities where culturally different individuals and heritages are valued; using cultural knowledge of ethnically diverse cultures, families, and communities to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, and relationships with students; being change agents for social justice and academic equity; mediating power imbalances in classrooms based on race, culture, ethnicity, and class; and accepting cultural relevancy as endemic to educational effectiveness in all areas of learning for students from all ethnic groups (Gay, 2000, p. FIND).

To summarize, these dispositions summarize the various roles, responsibilities, and levels of commitments expressed by culturally responsive pedagogues. Others have referred to culturally responsive dispositions as: the ethic of caring, the ethic of personal accountability, conceptions of teaching practice, conceptions of teaching profession, conceptions of their students, expectations of students, teachers' conception of knowledge and conceptions of cultural diversity. Later, Love and Kruger (2005) went on to expand this work by developing a measure of teachers' culturally relevant beliefs in order to better understand the extent to which certain beliefs correlate with higher student achievement. The research results were consistent with prior

research studies concerned with teachers' ideological assumptions and improving students' achievement. Across subject area, teachers recognized for improving student learning: held high expectations for their students, expressed high levels of personal accountability for their students learning, and demonstrated high levels of care for students in and out of classroom. The research found that teachers' understanding of knowledge was not significantly correlated to student achievement. In contrast to previous studies (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Willis, 1995) teachers' who viewed their role as disseminators of knowledge and believed in drill and practice were deemed effective in increasing students' academic achievement (Love & Kruger, 2005). Here, this research finds that drill and practice can be useful when attempting to increase student tests scores, but has little effect on students long-term learning (Kohn, 2000; Graves, 2002).

I have summarized major themes related to teachers culturally responsive teaching dispositions as: teachers' conceptions of themselves, conceptions and expectations of students, and expressions of emotional commitments that translate into caring about their students. They are briefly summarized in the following sections.

Conceptions of Themselves

Scholarship concerned with the way teachers' see themselves relative to their practice can be summarized by two major ideas: teachers' level of self-awareness and their ability for self-reflectiveness (Garmen, 2004). In Garmen's (2005) research on changing preservice teachers' beliefs about diversity, he defines self-awareness and self-reflectiveness as "having an awareness of one's own beliefs and attitudes, as well as being willing and/ or able to think critically about them" (Garmen, 2005, p. 205). Similar to many teacher education programs, the research included a number of white students from very homogeneous backgrounds, and those with extremely limited prior experiences with individuals from different racial/cultural groups. The

research concluded that preservice teachers did not need to be exceptionally high in their level of awareness in order to be critical of their own bias. However, willingness and ability to look at oneself critically facilitated growth. Here, teachers' understanding of their own cultural heritage necessarily serves as a filter for how they understand their students' cultural background and extent to which they value students' cultural ways of knowing. The following section highlights the role of teachers' understanding of their students and the extent to which these ideas shape their classroom practice.

Conceptions of Students

Scholars agree that teachers' expectations of their students are linked to teaching behaviors and, ultimately student outcomes (Comfort, 1992; Good & Brophy, 1994; Gay, 2001; Gay & Howard, 2000). With this, negative and unfair expectations generate self-fulfilling prophecies (Good & Brophy, 1994). Researchers have found strong correlations among the educational quality students receive, their race class, and ethnicity, and teachers' attitudes toward them and expectations of them (Anyon, 1997; Gay, 2001; Grossman, 1995). In Jussim, Eccles, and Madon's (1996) study on teacher expectation and student outcomes, the research showed that teacher expectations predict student achievement mainly because they are accurate; however, these beliefs lead to small self-fulfilling prophecies and biases. They also found that teacher expectancy effects were more powerful for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and African-Americans. Scholarship has implicated teacher expectations as a significant perpetuator of school injustices and inequalities based on race, social class, and gender (Wineburg, 1987; Rosenthal & Jaconson, 1989). Today, scholars are clearer on the role of teacher expectations as guiding the practice and pedagogy that influence student learning and achievement (Jussim, Eccles, & Madon; Grossman, 1995; Anyon, 1997). Scholars of

multicultural education tend to agree that culturally responsive teaching requires high expectations for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2001, 2010; Irvine, 1990).

Understanding teacher expectations in predominately African American schools may help to uncover problematic beliefs as school leaders attempt to supporting culturally responsive methods.

Culturally Responsive Caring

Scholars have described caring as a characteristic that undergirds and explains many of the actions of dedicated and committed black teachers. In Toliver's (1993) work on effective teaching practices, she argues "Caring is the foundation of good teaching". She describes caring in three forms: 1) giving time to students outside of the classroom, 2) listening to students' problems; and 3) encouraging *problem* students to grow academically.

The concept of CRP as a mindset was introduced by Ladson-Billings (2006) and reinforced by Milner (2011), who stated that CRP is "more than a set of principles, ideas, or predetermined practices, the practice of CRP involves a state of being or mindset that permeates teachers' decision making and related practices" (p. 68). According to Gay (2000), caring puts "teachers in an ethical, emotional, and academic partnership with ethnically diverse students, a partnership that is anchored in respect, honor, integrity, resource sharing, and a deep belief in the possibility of transcendence" (p. 52). Thus, teaching to predominately African American students necessitates that teachers understand caring *in action*. Meaning, teachers demonstrate high expectations, while using innovative strategies to ensure academic success for racially minoritized students (Gay, 2000). Other scholars have referred to this dynamic as "Warm Demander Pedagogy" (Ware, 2006; Bondy & Ross, 2008; Ford & Sassi, 2014). This term often

describes” a tough-minded, no nonsense, structured and disciplined classroom environment for kids whom society had psychologically and physically abandoned” (Irvine & Fraser, p. 56).

Often times, teachers in high minority schools are required to attend to the learning disparities that have accrued as a result from residing within a historically underserved community. At the same, staff are required to develop rigorous instructional strategies to meet the demands of school level reforms. For this study, culturally responsive caring looks like a commitment to addressing gaps in students learning, while engaging rigorous instruction.

Challenges to Implementing Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The section is used to outline three important challenges related to schools’ implementation of effective teaching practices, particularly for those in service to predominately racially minoritized student bodies. These challenges refer to teachers’ understanding, knowledge and commitments. The work conducted on teachers’ understanding of CRP highlights culturally responsive teaching as largely misunderstood and frequently reduced to a set of fixed classroom strategies. The work conducted on teachers’ knowledge for CRP highlights the limitations of teacher education programs in equipping teachers with specific, cultural forms of knowledge that aid in translating pedagogical theories into actual classroom practices. The work conducted on teachers’ dispositions for CRP highlights challenges related to teachers’ commitment, and that there is a growing need for school learning context to foster equitable teaching practices while, at the same time, encouraging continuous improvement of classroom strategies. These challenges highlight a broader relationship between the education of teachers within teacher training programs and the socialization of teachers within their workplace organizations. They speak to an overall institutional dilemma that shapes the human resources present within the context of the demographic divide. Teachers’ capacities after preservice

training shapes school organizing practice and leadership behaviors intended to enhance teachers' understanding, knowledge and commitments for enacting a culturally responsive approach. I am arguing that addressing these challenges requires that scholarship concerned with enhancing teachers' culturally responsive pedagogies consider school organizing practices intended to shape teachers' knowledge and commitments. The following section describes these challenges in more detail.

Limitations of Teacher Understanding

Although teacher education programs provide readings and assignments that give students opportunities to consider and appreciate the usefulness of culturally responsive teaching, scholars consistently describe teacher candidates as lacking the ability to translate theory to pedagogy in their field experiences (Morrison, Robinson, & Rose, 2008). Scholars have concluded that culturally responsive teaching has been diminished to a fixed-set of superficial practices (Howard, 2003; Gay, 2002). Research concerned with the theory highlights this tension in summarizing problems within the variation of teachers intended culturally responsive practice. In Morrison, Robbins, and Rose's (2008) meta-analysis of 45 classroom-based research studies from 1995 to 2008, less than one third of the classroom teachers, in the studies they reviewed, utilized culturally responsive pedagogy as a way to promote academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness. Meanwhile, 42 of the 45 studies utilized the component of cultural competence for a variety of purposes, including using technology to create culturally responsive lessons (Duran, 1998) and studying African American students' perceptions of White physical education teachers' use of step dance to instruct in a culturally relevant manner (Hastie, Martin, & Buchanan, 2006). Even the researchers of the studies that Morrison et al. (2008) reviewed conceptualized culturally responsive pedagogy differently, with

more than half of them bearing no reference to the sociopolitical consciousness component of the theory. Morrison et al. (2008) found that one of the challenges to culturally responsive pedagogy was that the theory “ultimately clashes with the traditional ways in which education is carried out in our society, thus making it seem herculean to many teachers” (p. 444). With this, school leaders are tasked with organizing spaces where teachers’ knowledge gives way to a comprehensive view of CRP that allows teachers, then, to turn their knowledge into tangible acts in the classroom. Here, I am arguing that teachers’ workplace conditions within the context of the demographic divide, must be used to promote CRP, before school wide instructional improvements are realized.

Limitations of Teacher Knowledge

In taking from scholars of multicultural education, Banks et al. (2001) suggests, “If teachers are to increase learning opportunities for all students, they must become knowledgeable about the cultural backgrounds of their students” (p. 6). Research indicates that same knowledge should inform teachers’ pedagogical and curricular decisions in the classroom so disciplinary-based content knowledge is accessible to every student (Gay, 2000; Grant & Gillette, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Howard, 2003; Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000). Increasingly, multicultural education scholars urge teacher educators to assist pre-service teachers in developing a cultural diversity knowledge base. Here, this type of knowledge is referred to as: knowledge of cultural diversity, teachers’ knowledge of their own cultural identity, and knowledge of students’ cultural backgrounds.

Knowledge of Cultural Diversity.

There is a place for cultural diversity in every subject taught in schools. Furthermore, culturally responsive teaching deals as much with using multicultural instructional strategies

as it does with adding multicultural content to the curriculum. According to Gay (2002), misconceptions like these stems from the fact that many teachers do not know enough about the contributions that different ethnic groups have made to their subject areas and are unfamiliar with multicultural education. Incorporating cultural diversity into actual classroom practice requires knowledge surrounding the cultural characteristics and contributions of different ethnic groups (Hollins, King, & Hayman, 1994; King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997; Pai, 1990; Smith, 1998). In Gay's work on preparing culturally responsive teachers, she writes,

teachers need to know (a) which ethnic groups give priority to communal living and cooperative problem solving and how these preferences affect educational motivation, aspiration, and task performance; (b) how different ethnic groups' protocols of appropriate ways for children to interact with adults are exhibited in instructional settings; and (c) the implications of gender role socialization in different ethnic groups for implementing equity initiatives in classroom instruction" (p.107).

Culture comprises many things, some of which are more important for teachers to know than others because they have direct implications for teaching and learning. Among these are ethnic groups' cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns. This information constitutes essential components for the knowledge base of culturally responsive teaching. Some of the cultural characteristics and contributions of ethnic groups that teachers need to know are explained in greater detail by Gold, Grant, and Rivlin (1977); Shade (1989); Takaki (1993); Banks and Banks (1995); and Spring (1995). The knowledge that teachers need to have about cultural diversity goes beyond mere awareness of, respect for, and general recognition of the fact that ethnic groups have different values or express similar values in various ways. In this way, knowledge of cultural diversity shapes teachers' capacity for incorporating multicultural content and ability to match instructional strategies to students' personal learning styles. This research focused on the structures and conditions influencing teachers' knowledge for improving teaching and learning across academic domains.

Knowledge of Cultural Self

Additionally, scholars contend that a culturally responsive approach to educating students involves teachers developing a critical consciousness surrounding their own cultural socialization. Scholars contend teachers' cultural identity affects their attitudes and behaviors toward the cultures of other ethnic groups (Gay, 2001). In their study on preservice teacher beliefs surrounding teaching in culturally diverse settings, Gay and Howard (2000) assert that many European Americans claim they have no culture or ethnicity; they are simply "Americans." They assume that their norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors are universal givens, "just the way things are" (Gay & Howard, 2000, p. 8). This, of course, is not true. Scholars have referred to similar claims as "taken-for granted assumptions" (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). These assumptions prevent European American ethnicity and culture from being contested, and at the same time, automatically place other ethnic groups who do not subscribe to the same norms in lower-status rankings (Gay & Howard, 2000).

Even for racially minoritized teachers who share the same racial or ethnic background of their students, frequently differ in terms of class, local geographical and other social identities that result in culturally incongruent ways of knowing (Irvine, 1990). Unless teachers, of all racial and ethnic background, seriously analyze and change their cultural biases and ethnic prejudices (toward self and others) they are not likely to be very diligent and effective in helping students to do likewise (Gay & Howard, 2000). Once their self-awareness is apparent, teachers are better able to recognize different cultural elements and nuances in their students' behaviors and then use these insights to enhance their teaching skills (Gay, 2010). These mandates, to know self and others, apply to teachers of color as well as European-Americans. Many of them do not have adequate cultural knowledge of their diverse students. Accordingly, teachers find themselves in

similar situations, not understanding their cultures and how cultural shapes their instructional behaviors.

Knowledge of Students' Cultural Identity

For those concerned with pedagogical content knowledge and scaffolding instruction, knowledge of students' prior experiences and cultural backgrounds is central to effective teaching practice (Ishihara, 2004; Pawan, 2008). Taking from Howard (1999) "We can't teach what we don't know." In other words, teaching in culturally diverse settings requires explicit knowledge of cultural diversity. Meaning, explicit knowledge of cultural diversity is required in meeting the needs of ethnically diverse students. This knowledge requires knowledge of teachers own cultural identities and their students; along with incorporating multicultural content based on knowledge of students racial and ethnic identities (Hollins, King,& Hayman, 1994; King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997; Pai, 1990; Smith, 1998). Formal mechanisms for learning in minoritized schools must consider the types of specific, cultural forms of knowledge necessary for adopting and sustaining effective instruction. As previously stated, for the case of racially isolated schools' effective instruction requires a culturally responsive approach.

Here, it remains important to remember that the goals of this research do not center around observing culturally responsive practices. My assumption is that practices deemed culturally responsive are still being realized by practioners and researchers. With the exception of Gloria Ladson-Billing's (1995) foundational research on culturally relevant pedagogy, limited empirical evidence exist on what actually constitutes culturally responsive practices within and outside of the classroom. Thus, I referred to the development of teachers' cultural knowledge base as a prominent feature for enacting culturally responsive pedagogy. Here, this cultural knowledge base includes: teachers' knowledge of students; their own cultural identities and that

of their colleagues; and knowledge on multicultural content or culturally responsive curricular materials.

Limitations of Teachers' Commitments

In Firestone and Pennell's (1993) research on working conditions and teachers' commitment, they provide a comprehensive review of the various definitions of teacher commitment. They conclude that a common theme across the definitions is a psychological bond or identification of the individual with an object that takes on special meaning and importance (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Earlier research suggests that teachers may be committed to teaching, their school, or their students. Also, teachers' patterns of behavior tend to vary depending upon which commitments are stressed within their organization (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). Scholarship has found that what teachers are committed to can make a difference. For example, teachers who exhibit a commitment to their students may contribute to a warm, supportive climate, but lacks pedagogical skill necessary for ambitious instruction, while a teacher who is committed to teaching may have the opposite effect (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Here it is noteworthy, that culturally responsive teaching has been frequently misunderstood in research and practice as a type of "feel good" pedagogy that does not account for rigorous instruction (Howard, 1999; Gay, 2000). This research aligns with scholarship positing culturally responsive pedagogy as dynamic instructional practice and requires a commitment to students and continuously improving practice. Research highlights teachers' organizational commitment as a cornerstone for reaching organizational goals (Mowday, Porters & Steers, 2013; Reyes, 1990); I rely on these and scholarship grounded in multicultural education and theories concerned with culturally and linguistically diverse students. For culturally responsive teaching, scholars highlight the need to foster teacher commitment to a

social justice orientation and equitable practice (Theoharris, 2009; Wiggins & Follow, 1999; Dee & Henkin, 2002) and encouraging teachers to continuously improve their classroom strategies (Paris, 2012; Melnick & Zeichner, 1995; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). These ideas are further explained in the following section.

Fostering Commitment to a Social Justice Orientation

In addition to the limitations of teachers' cultural knowledge and lack of understanding related to the practical significance of CRP, scholars point to the need to foster teachers' commitment to work in culturally diverse settings (Wiggins & Follow, 1999). Scholarship concerned with teachers' commitment in culturally diverse settings is summarized using two broad conceptions for enhancing teachers' instructional practice. They include the need for teachers to a) adopt a social justice orientation and b) motivation to continuously improve their practice (Theoharris, 2009; Wiggins & Follow, 1999; Dee & Henkin, 2002). A social justice orientation is linked to culturally responsive caring dispositions, representing types of behavioral expressions related to equitable classroom strategies (Ware, 2006) and high expectations of students. Evidence suggests that racially minoritized students display better academic and classroom behavior when teachers display a caring disposition (Bondy & Ross, 2008). Scholars in this vein, show school organizations encouraging teachers to adopt a social justice orientation express a greater commitment to teaching tasks (Bass & Avolio, 1993) and higher expectations of students (Lezotte, 1993). Caring is a moral imperative, a social responsibility, and a pedagogical necessity. It requires that teachers use "knowledge and strategic thinking to decide how to act in the best interests of others . . . [and] binds individuals to their society, to their communities, and to each other" (Webb, Wilson, Corbett & Mordecai, 1993, pp. 33-34). To summarize, teachers' orientation for social justice work influences their ability to understand and

engage equitable, effective, culturally responsive instructional strategies and appropriate dispositions. When teachers adopt a social justice orientation, cultural knowledge is used to redesign teaching and learning; it involves students working with each other and with teachers as partners to improve their achievement. With this in mind, it is necessary to review the literature related to teachers' commitment to continuously improve their practice.

Fostering Commitment to Continuously Improving Practice

Across subfields in education, scholars agree that teachers must be committed to improving their practice (Paris, 2012; Melnick & Zeichner, 1995; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Given the growing racial and ethnic divide between public school teachers and students, relevant and responsive classroom practice requires teachers to be innovative and adapt to the changing demographics present within the nations' public schools (Ashton, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay & Howard, 2001). When in-service and pre-service teachers express a desire to engage in CRP, it is often articulated around a need for effective strategies to engage students across difference. Given that CRP's framework centers on high academic expectations, sociopolitical commitments, and cultural competence, teachers will struggle to enact culturally responsive approaches if they are taught to be culturally responsive "through orchestrated strategies; [CRP] is not something that one can be 'given'—rather it is dispositional, attitudinal, and political" (Dixson & Fasching-Varner, 2009, p. 121). CRP is unlikely to yield fruitful results if teachers are not encouraged to excel within the realities of their work. Empirical studies have shown that when teachers engage in CRP, they usually do it in spite of the systems that surround them (Kozleski et al., 2003). To bring about a true transformation of the current educational system, we need a better understanding of culturally responsive practices and their potential for improving student learning outcomes (Elmore, 2000). Old assumptions and practices must be

changed and schools reinvented (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000). Scholarship recommends school districts and university faculty to partner in professional development efforts by mentoring, supporting, and evaluating teachers' abilities to practice culturally responsive and differentiated instruction (Sobel, Taylor, & Anderson, 2003). School organizing practice must support teachers in transforming their knowledge and commitments for addressing all of their students' needs. Given significant changes in student demographics and the goals of CRP, it remains significant that teachers' workplace conditions motivate teachers' to continuously improve their practice. The following section relies on school organizational and leadership theory to better understand how schools influence teachers' pedagogical practice.

Organizational Supports for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

This research borrows from two prominent theories related to school organizing practices. First, I relied on institutional theory which views schools as organizations that generate conditions influencing teachers' practices. In viewing schools as an organization, there are basic assumptions highlighted through two key dimensions: dividing work and coordinating it thereafter (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Second, I relied on scholarship that argues organizational systems are created, maintained, changed and dissolved through communication (Nicotera, Clinkscales, & Walker, 2003; Lunenburg, 2011). Organizations are, then, identified as comprised of communicative relationships (Vornberg, 2010). In this way, organizations are what Nicotera (2003) calls:

culturally-suffused, living system of interconnected communicative relationships among a conglomerate of interdependent coalitions, composed themselves of interconnected communicative relationships and bound together by their homage to a common mission and dependence on a common resource base with multiple and often incompatible instrumental and interactive goals and objectives" (p.8)

The interdependent coalitions are made up of individuals with varying levels of autonomy who need to communicate with each other in order to construct their relationships and roles. These

roles and relationships coordinate their actions to accomplish job tasks required to meet their said goals and objectives. Here, I used these ideas to understand the conversations held in teacher teams. Further, viewing school organizing through communication allows me to better understand, the social practices employed by teachers in their daily work with other staff and students. In this way, school level mechanisms for instructional improvements looks at the interaction between structure and social practice. These daily interactions become major factors influencing staff instructional conversations.

With this, the role of the principal leader in disseminating leadership tasks becomes integral to understanding organizational practice in schools. At the same time, leadership tasks are understood to be distributed across school organizations in order to effectively meet school organizational goals (Spillane, Halverson, Diamond, 2007). Scholars point to the role of teacher leaders used to meet school improvement goals (Smylie, Conley, Marks, 2002). Thus, this study is used to look at the role of teacher leaders, across subject discipline and grade-level, to better understand the extent to which school supports, like the distribution of leadership tasks, might be used to support teachers' culturally responsive pedagogy. In particular, I intend to focus on school level conditions that impact teachers' knowledge and commitments in predominately African-American school organizations. Traditionally, explanations surrounding the enactment of culturally responsive pedagogy have focused on classroom level variables, like teacher-student relationships, teacher discipline practices, and elements related to classroom climate. Scholars also point to the need for leaders to foster a culturally responsive school climate to support teachers' growth and development (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb-Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007). Yet, research is limited surrounding the extent to which school level conditions influence teachers' capacity for culturally responsive pedagogy. This research

aims to connect two sectors of education scholarship for improving the instructional quality received by African American students. Unlike much of the scholarship surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy, this work adopts more of an organizational perspective to uncover school level supports influencing teachers' instructional strategies and teaching dispositions. Thus, this section draws on subsections of school organizational and educational leadership theory to better understand how schools influence teachers practice, in service to African American students. This research aligns with education scholarship that views leadership as an organizational quality. In this way, leadership

...flows through the networks of roles that comprise organizations. The medium of leadership and the currency of leadership lie in the personal resources of people. And leadership shapes the systems that produce patterns of interactions and the meanings that other participants attach to organizational events. (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 225)

Taking this view into account, school organizational practice is colored by the social nature of schools (Blase, 1985). In other words, taking a deep look at how schools are organized necessarily involves the ways in which staff are socialized to engage their daily tasks. Theories surrounding educational leadership have begun to incorporate a distributed perspective; contending that leadership practice is comprised of the interaction of school leaders, followers, and the situation (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2007). Since culturally responsive pedagogy has been cited throughout multicultural scholarship as an effective teaching strategy for African American students, an examination of organizational conditions tied to culturally responsive teaching pedagogy is crucial. In particular, I focus on the elements of teachers' practice most related to their pedagogical enactments that emerge through their collaborative efforts. In doing so, I highlight staff instructional conversations. Given the research on the overall impact of the demographic divide, this research argues that these conversations are necessarily culturally situated.

Researcher efforts to understand the possible impacts of teacher professional development for improving schools, has led researchers and policymakers to understanding the effectiveness of school level activities used to increase teacher quality and improve the quality of student learning (Opfer, Pedder, & Lavicza, 2011). A national study of teachers' professional development in England, recognizes the overwhelmingly multi-causal, multidimensional and multi-correlational quality of teacher learning and its impact on teaching practices. As Borko (2004) states,

For teachers, learning occurs in many different aspects of practice, including their classrooms, their school communities, and professional development courses or workshops. It can occur in a brief hallway conversation with a colleague, or after school when counseling a troubled child. To understand teacher learning, we must study it within these multiple contexts, taking into account both the individual teacher learner.

According to the OECD TALIS (2009) study, generally, teacher professional development is not meeting the needs of teachers in most countries. The TALIS study surveys important aspects of professional development; teacher beliefs, attitudes and practices; teacher appraisal and feedback; and school leadership (Peña-López, 2009). Further, there is research that states that a collaborative professional culture is a culmination of teachers' internal, external and collaborative orientation to their professional learning. In Strahan's (2003) study on elementary school teachers, he concluded that "data-directed dialogue," purposeful conversations, guided by formal assessment and informal observation, that connected the ways adults and students cared for each other and the provided energy to sustain their efforts.

For the purposes of this study, I rely on research positing teachers' are more equipped to deal with the day-to-day realities of working in a school when they feel supported and connected to their work and their students (Bogler & Somech, 2004). Previous scholarship has referred to this dynamic as school learning environment, learning context, professional learning community,

collaborative networks, working conditions, and workplace context (Penuel et al., 2010; Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Easton, 2008; Graham, 2007; Hord, 2009; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). In this way, school level practice is understood as generating the conditions used to structure and shape teachers' understanding, knowledge and commitments. Figure 1.1 is used to highlight these concepts and their relationship to one another. Ultimately, the aims of this study are to reveal the extent to which school conditions might be used to support teachers culturally responsive knowledge and commitments.

Theoretical Framework

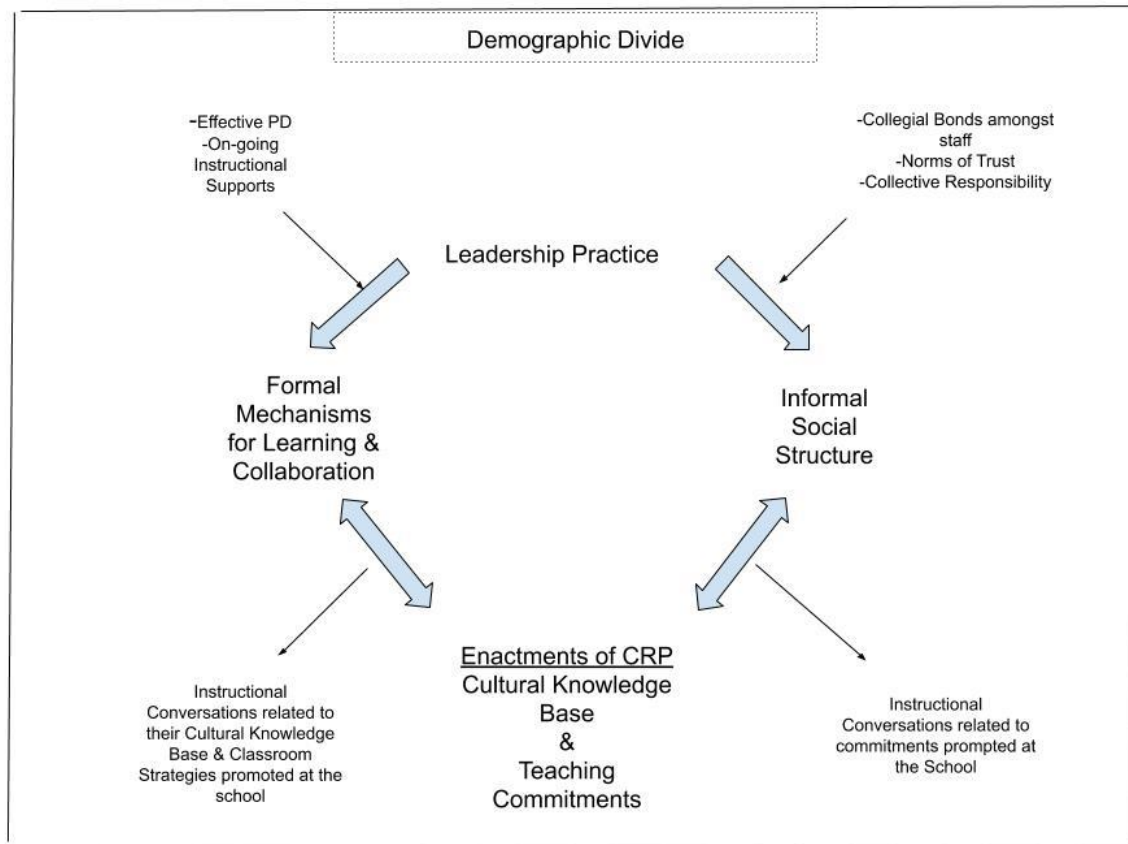


Figure 1.1

Starting at the top, school organizing practice takes place within a demographic divide, also known as a cultural divide, between teachers and racially minoritized students. Here, principal leaders are responsible for setting the organizational conditions used to support teachers' pedagogy in these predominately African-American and LatinX school contexts. At the same time, leadership tasks are distributed across the school, and functions to manage and support the day-to-day activities that make up teachers' working conditions. This research builds on empirical knowledge centering formal and informal aspects of school organizing practice that play significant and complementary roles in school wide instructional improvements. Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to

connect to resources (Penual et al., 2010). Informal social structure refers to human resources within a school building, that make up the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice about instructional matters (Penual et al., 2010). When you look at the alignment of formal and informal facets of schools experiencing the demographic divide, you find culturally-situated, instructional conversations. These conversations make way for understanding the nature and extent to which schools influence teachers' ability to enact culturally responsive pedagogies. To summarize, schools generate conditions used to support teachers' pedagogical enactments. In this way, teachers' pedagogical enactments for culturally responsiveness is a culmination of their cultural knowledge base and commitments to adapting their practice in ways that lend to equity-oriented practices in the classroom. In the following sections, I conceptualize school level factors influencing teachers' pedagogy as formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and informal social structures.

Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration

The research in this section is used to highlight formal mechanisms within schools, influencing teachers understanding of their practice and commitments to their work. Scholars point to effective professional development activities and on-going instructional supports for school wide instructional improvements (Louis, Kruse, & Bryke, 1995). Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to connect to resources (Bidwell & Yasumoto, 1999; Penual et al., 2010). Structural conditions are used help teachers take risks intended to improve practice (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), and develop a shared commitment to organizational goals (Louis, 2007). Schools may exhibit structural differences surrounding formal aspects of their specific organization, and these variations are found to influence actual patterns of giving advice about instructional matters (Penual et al., 2010).

Formal mechanisms of school organization have been referred to as the formal social structure of teaching and learning within school organizations. These may include: distribution of formal leadership tasks (Spillane, 2005); professional development activities (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Lee, Hart, Cuevas, & Enders, 2004), and instructional supports, like grade level teams (Penual et al, 2010; Brown & Crippen, 2014); and cross-grade vertical teams (Penual et al, 2010; Lee & Luykx, 2005). According to McLaughlin (1993) schools are “a formal organization” and a “social and psychological setting in which teachers construct a sense of practice, of professional efficacy, and of professional community” (p. 99). While the literature is saturated with recommendations on effective professional development activities, this study is used to explore more common school level practices that lend themselves to teachers’ pedagogy. Thus, I intend to observe school level activities that generally have to do with instruction. This can include formal professional developments or weekly instructional team meetings, across subject discipline and grade level. The literature highlights the importance and the combination of teachers professional learning and collaborative practice for shaping teachers’ knowledge and enhancing their workplace commitments (Gusky, 2002). In the following section I review empirical findings surrounding effective professional development and on-going supports intended to support effective teaching practice.

Importance of Effective PD and On-going Supports

Research has shown that different characteristics of professional development have a positive effect on teachers’ learning, specifically, teachers’ self-reported increases in knowledge and skills that lead to positive changes in their classroom practice (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001). Scholars typically agree that the kind of teacher learning that leads to improvement in teacher effectiveness focuses on instruction and students’ outcomes in teachers’

specific schools. Donnelly and Argyle (2011) found that professional development focused on nature of subject specific activities resulted in teachers increasing the implementation of those instructional practices in their classrooms while deepening teachers' content knowledge. In their research on developing teachers' instructional strategies, Archibald, Coggshall, Croft and Goe (2011) characterized several key features of high-quality professional development. First, the goals of professional development programs should be aligned with the goals of the school as well as state and district standards, so that instructional and evaluative expectations are clear. Second, professional development should focus on core content and model teaching strategies to improve delivery of instructional practices. Lastly, professional development allows for collaboration among teachers, as well as continuous feedback through formative teacher evaluation (Archibald et al., 2011). Other scholars contend, professional development should concentrate on opportunities for collegial inquiry, help, and feedback; and connect teachers to external expertise while respecting their discretion and creativity (Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996; Lieberman, 1995; Little, 1994). With this, I highlight the use of grade-level teams and cross-grade vertical, subject-disciplinary teams, as on-going instructional supports (Saunders, Goldenberg, & Gallimore, 2009). This study agrees that individual teacher learning would be enhanced if professional development were more consistent with these points. But, professional development is more likely to improve instructional strategies received by African American students when teachers' learning opportunities center classroom strategies deemed effective for their specific student population. Again, for African American students, effective classroom strategies necessitate culturally responsive methods. To summarize, professional development helps to strengthen schools' collaborative work culture (Newmann, King, Youngs, 2000). Teachers 'collaborative work culture involves both formal and informal

learning spaces. The following section is used to describe the influence of schools' informal social structures on teachers' practice.

Informal social structure

This work is motivated by the need to understand the dimensions of the school setting that are most influential in shaping the ways teachers think about their practice and what they do in the classroom. In my quest to better understand how scholars have described teacher learning opportunities outside of formal professional development programs, I struggled to find research directly related to school level factors and culturally responsive methods. Yet, multicultural scholarship is fairly clear on the significance of teachers' collective learning and responsibility when attempting to adopt and sustain responsive teaching methods (Wood, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). At the same time, school organizational theorists highlight teacher collaboration for subject and grade level teams as a crucial component when attempting to pursue school wide instructional improvements (Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Harris, 2001). In their work surrounding teachers work, learning, and innovation, Brown (1991), suggest significant learning and innovation is generated in the informal communities of practice (1991). In a study on beginning teachers, researchers found that expansive learning environments are created through teachers' personal networks within the school (Fox, Wilson, Deaney, 2010). I refer to these interactions as informal social structure. The interactions between teachers' work environment and individual cognitive and psychological states are complex in nature, and redesigning schools to establish these conditions is a difficult task. The process of establishing conditions to promote staff learning itself should be regarded as a process of learning, in which the persistence of organizational forms and processes will be prominently present (Penual et al 2010).

Informal social structure refers to human resources within a school building, that make up the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice about instructional matters (Penual et al., 2010). Informal social structures provide opportunities within schools to enhance teachers learning and understanding of their practice and foster a greater commitment to their students. In doing so, scholars have identified aspects of informal social structures that support teachers practice. Informal social structure may be used to facilitate: collegial bonds amongst teaching staff, norms of trust, and collective responsibility.

Collegial Bonds among Staff

Sparks (2000, 2004), and other scholars (e.g., Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2007; City et al., 2009; DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Hord & Sommers, 2008), argued that effective faculty and staff cooperation is an essential resource for schools organizational practice intended to enhance teachers learning and development. Sparks et al. (2004) found that learning occurs through collaboration across school contexts, regardless of the different statuses of the adults. Overall, schools' instructional capacity depends greatly on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the faculty and staff, and their ongoing learning and professional growth (Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton, and Luppescu, 2006). In this way, school wide instructional improvements require a social structure that supports teachers in capitalizing on the human resources in their given context. And while the skills of individual teachers remain significant, scholars highlight a school-based professional community focused on developing instructional capacity across the school for improving teaching and learning. There is consensus across subfields in education, that partnership and cooperation among teachers provides the social resources needed to address the challenges involved in improving student learning (Sebring et al., 2006; Little, 2012; Louis, 2007; King, 2002; Temperley & Alton-Lee, 2008). Researchers have ascribed various benefits to

teacher collaboration, among them student achievement in inner-city schools, teacher morale in times of stress, support for innovation, and an easing of the “reality shock” visited on beginning teachers (Rosenholtz, 1989; Nias, Southworth, 1993) At the same time, Little (2012) warns against assumptions that link increased collegial contact to improvement-oriented change. Collegial bonds amongst staff are instruments for promoting change and conserving the present. The work of adult actors, in turn, results in the conditions that directly affect student learning; i.e. school learning climate and ambitious instruction (Little, 2012). Cross, Borgatti, and Parker (2001) refer to these staff interactions as “advice networks”. These informal mechanisms become important resources for individual and team problem solving and innovation. In doing so, they help individuals reframe problems, provide solutions to problems, and validate and legitimate interpretations of problems (Cross, Borgatti, and Parker, 2001). To better understand how schools might support teachers culturally responsive pedagogies, I hope to explore the extent to which collegial bonds amongst staff, operating within the demographic divide, impact teachers’ instructional strategies and teaching dispositions.

Norms of Trust

Similarly, relational trust fosters the necessary social exchanges among school professionals as they learn from one another. When teachers have authentic engagements with their colleagues, meaning then talk honestly about what works and what is challenging, they risk exposing their own ignorance and making themselves vulnerable (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Scholars concerned with relational trust among staff, in schools, find that, without trust, genuine conversations are unlikely to occur (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kruse, Louis, Bryk, 1994). While research on the school conditions and teacher dispositions point to the need for school staff to feel good about their work environment and colleagues (Pajares, 1992; Ross & Gray, 2006);

relational trust entails much more than just making school staff feel good about their work environment and colleagues (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Workshops, retreats, or forms of sensitivity training are all activities that can help staff build trust. However, schools build relational trust in day-to-day social exchanges (Louis, 2007). I rely on Louis (2007) work on trust in schools, to define norms of trust. Norms of trust is defined as confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship, or other sound principle, of another person or group. Trust grows through exchanges in which actions validate staff expectations of one another (Loius, 2007). Through their words and actions, school staff show their sense of their obligations toward others, and others discern these intentions (Payne & Clark, 2003). Scholars contend simple interactions, if successful, can enhance collective capacities for more complex subsequent actions (Hargreaves, 2002). In this respect, increasing trust and deepening organizational change support each other (Honig & Hatch, 2004; Sherer & Spillane, 2011). As mentioned earlier, I hope to explore the extent to which collegial bonds amongst faculty are used to support teachers practice. With this, an exploration of norms of trust, for staff working within the demographic divide, may yield results regarding the quality of staff interactions influencing teachers practice.

Collective Responsibility

Schools where most teachers take responsibility for learning are environments that are both more effective and more equitable (Lee & Smith, 1996). Empirical evidence highlight student academic achievement gains are significantly higher in schools where teachers' have amounts of collective responsibility for students' academic success or failure rather than blaming students for their own failure (Lee & Smith, 1996). Within the field of education, scholars often associate discussions of teacher expectations with teacher responsibility. In short, evidence supporting the impact of teacher expectations on student learning is convincing. Students fulfill

their teachers' prophecies, performing up to, or down to, the projections and standards held for them (Firestone and Rosenblum 1988; Newmann, 1981). This has significant implications for teachers in service to minoritized youth. Empirical evidence suggests that teachers' perceptions of low-income and African American students' academic capacity are lower than those they hold for middle- and upper income white students (Farkas, 2003). In this way, teachers' low expectations reduce students' academic self-image; this can cause students to exert less effort in school, and lead teachers to give certain students less challenging coursework (Farkas, Grobe, Sheehan & Shuan, 1990; Rist, 1970). In Diamond, Radolph & Spillane's (2004) work, they argue that teachers' sense of responsibility for student learning is connected with their beliefs about students' academic abilities through a set of organizationally embedded expectations.

Teachers' everyday interactions include evaluations of students that accumulate and give direction to the stream of beliefs in a school setting (Diamond, Randolph, & Spillane, 2004). Thus, when belief and practice bend toward lower expectations, a decreased sense of responsibility for students follows (Diamond, Randolph & Spillane, 2004). Scholars highlight the role of school leaders in providing counteractive forces for low teacher expectations, that in turn, influences teacher sense of responsibility. While teachers' expectations and their impact on students are associated with broader social forces, scholars are clear that school leaders can support teachers in raising their expectations of students, by shaping the extent to which teachers feel responsible for their students' learning (Drago-Severson, 2012). For the case of African American schools, effective teaching requires culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally responsive pedagogy involves high expectations for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995, Gay, 2000; Howard, 2003; Irvine, 1990). Therefore, I hope to reveal the extent to which schools might

support culturally responsive pedagogies by exploring teachers' collective responsibility in predominately African American schools.

Some scholars contend that improving teaching and student learning has less to do with structural changes in schools than with changes in what occurs within those structures (Smylie & Hart, 1999). In this way, formal mechanisms and informal social structures are recognized as opportunities for, as well as impediments to, teaching and learning. Still, changing structures is not synonymous with changing teachers' beliefs, habits, knowledge and skills that support teachers' instructional practice. In Little's (2012) research on restructuring high schools she saw that in their preoccupation with structural aspects of reform (e.g. resources, time and authority), school staff drew attention away from the underlying conditions of teaching and learning that would be required to make the new structure effective. Thus, there is an increased amount of attention within education scholarship paid to social factors that nurture productive teaching and learning. This conception of schools is supported by research positing that aligning these formal mechanisms with the informal social structure of school staff creates greater opportunities to improve instruction (Penuel et al., 2010).

Here, it is important to highlight the need to better understand the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice related to teachers' cultural knowledge base and teaching commitments for working within the demographic divide. By understanding the actual patterns of advice given and received surrounding CRP enactments we might be able to glean how teachers use their time together to assess and address problems of practice using a cultural lens.

Instructional Conversations

Previously scholars have referred to this dynamic as: teachers' collaborative conversations (MacPherson, 2010; Louie, 2016), teacher talk (Leonard & Leonard, 2003) and

collegial conversations (Horn, 2012). In particular, scholarship used to highlight teachers' collaborative conversations have used this idea to fuel their work on educating staff around culture. For instance, MacPherson's (2010) work on teachers' collaborative conversations was used to highlight what the field could learn about intercultural teacher education, by looking at the conversations held by preservice, in-service, and university teachers. As the data emerged, she began to look at their conversations to better understand their decision making when engaging intercultural education. She concluded that this model was useful for understanding teachers' enactments for intercultural education. As well, in Horn's (2012) work on math teachers' collegial conversations for ambitious practice, he explains how his work became centered around "episodes of pedagogical reasoning" (EPRs). EPRs are moments during teachers' conversations with one another where teachers address issues and questions related to their teaching practice. He uses the example that, an EPR could be a simple statement, like "I am not using this sheet; it bores the students." His work is used to develop a model for productive collegial conversations to further teachers' professional learning opportunities. This study agrees with the research conducted with Horn's math teachers, that teachers' talk about importance classroom events with multiple teachers, and multiple times a day. In doing so, they interpret and reinterpret these events, and sometimes link them to other instances of practice (Horn, 2012). This study uses these frameworks to better understand teachers' group work for assessing and addressing cultural problems of practice. Additionally, in Leonard and Leonard's (2003) work in 45 North Louisiana schools, they looked at teachers' talk related to policy and school practice. Their findings revealed that teachers talk about a range of topics including: school culture, district and school level policy, professional development policies and practices, and the need for

a caring and trusting environment, and the need for a diversity of professional opinions (Leonard and Leonard's, 2003).

As mentioned earlier, school organizational conditions are set by the principle leader and leadership tasks are distributed throughout the organization to instructional teacher leaders (Spillane, 2012). Hence, this study conceptualizes the alignment of formal and informal mechanisms as a process influenced by teachers' collective knowledge, skills, and dispositions. To date, culturally responsive school leadership is the closest model within the field of education that speaks to the ways in which culturally responsive pedagogy is fostered and supported at the school level. The following section is used to describe the theoretical and empirical foundations of culturally responsive pedagogical skills and school leadership. The leadership behaviors implicated within the model are equated to the formal and informal aspects of schools intended to improve teachers' instructional practice.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Skills

Pedagogical skills often refer to teachers' ability to translate knowledge into their instructional practice. By looking at organizational elements related to teachers' culturally responsive pedagogy, this study centers teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting this approach. Stated clearly, teachers' knowledge refers to teachers' general knowledge of cultural diversity, teachers' knowledge of their own cultural identity, and teachers' knowledge of students cultural backgrounded. Teachers' commitment refers to behavioral expressions of attempting to continuously improve their practice, along with adopting and sustaining a social justice orientation. These elements are understood to be major elements necessary for enacting a culturally responsive approach.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership

The research discussed in this section highlights work surrounding the way school organizational practices are used to develop teachers' culturally responsive pedagogies. When attempting to understand how school organizational practices influence teachers' cultural responsiveness, scholars describe the behaviors of Culturally Responsive School Leaders. This section relies on Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) to describe school level attempts to develop teachers culturally responsive teaching methods and commitments. First, I provide a brief overview of the theoretical and empirical evidence suggesting a strong need for CRSL in racially minoritized schools, specifically in African American school contexts. Following, I describe four behavioral characteristics present in Culturally Responsive School Leadership. Next, I highlight the scholarship surrounding the role of the school leader in developing teachers practice. Specifically, I rely on studies used to investigate leadership behaviors when attempting to grow and develop teachers as culturally responsive pedagogues. Then, I highlight the scholarship surrounding the role of the school leaders in fostering a culturally responsive school environment. Specifically, I rely on scholarship used to uncover leadership practices that might aid in promoting a productive learning climate, emphasizing inclusion.

Defining Culturally Responsive School Leadership

Similar to culturally responsive pedagogy, education scholars have attempted to merge current understandings of culture and leadership practice. Thus, scholars have described the domains of culturally responsive school leadership in a variety of ways. For example, scholars use culturally relevant (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Fraire & Brooks, 2015); culturally proficient (Lindsey, Robbins & Terrell, 2003); cross cultural leadership (Grisham & Walker, 2008; Smith & Kritsonis, 2006; House, Wright, Aditya, 1997; Frost & Walker, 2007) and culturally

responsive (Khalifa, 2013; Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). I rely on the term culturally responsive school leadership for two reasons. First, *culturally responsive* is often used in the literature, when describing this work, and is most consistent with terms used within educational leadership studies (Johnson, 2006; Merchant, Garza, & Ramalho, 2013; Webb-Johnson, 2006). Next, the word *responsive* depicts a significant action-based aspect of the term. In this way, culturally responsive is *relevant* in this context (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016).

Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) is said to influence the school context and addresses the cultural needs of the students, parents, and teachers. Additionally, culturally responsive leaders are tasked with fostering an inclusive school climate for minoritized students, especially for those marginalized within most school contexts (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016). In this way, CRSL is one multifaceted approach used to better understand school organizational supports for teachers' culturally responsive teaching practice. In 2002, Villegas and Lucas conducted a study on prospective teachers. They developed an educational continuum to better understand where these preservice teachers might fall along the spectrum. This idea was presented in three dichotomous frames; including: social dyconsciousness—social consciousness, deficit perspective—affirming perspective, educator as technician—educator as change agent. While this framework is considered useful in determining dispositions within a school, this study is used to highlight school organizational practice used to support school staff. With this, I rely on scholarship used to highlight particular leadership behaviors that drive the mechanisms for school-wide improvements.

Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis (2016) conducted a literature review to synthesize empirical findings emphasizing the central role of the principal in school reform, which is used to examine CRSL. In doing so, these authors provide a framework consisting of four major strands of CRSL.

These strands represent four salient behaviors of culturally responsive school leaders. These behaviors include: critically self-reflects on leadership practice; develops culturally responsive teachers; promotes culturally responsive/inclusive school environment; and engages students, parents, and indigenous contexts. These leadership behaviors are considered the mechanism for driving school level change (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Scholars have done well in describing specific leadership behaviors and characteristics that influence instruction at the school level. We know less about how these behaviors impact the daily lives of teachers. While school level efforts may well be intended to support teachers in improving their practice and commitments to their work, there is a need to further describe these supports related to their abilities and commitments surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy. Hence, my study is used to investigate how leaders engage said behaviors to foster a culturally responsive/inclusive environment and develop teachers' culturally responsive practice. As a guiding framework, I use these leadership behaviors to better understand the roles and responsibilities of the principal leader and teacher leaders in adopting and sustaining effective teaching practice in predominately African-American school organizations.

Critically Self-Reflects on Leadership Behaviors

Culturally responsive school leaders critically reflect on their practice. The ability of school leaders to critically self-reflect about their preconceptions and their practice is essential to both transformative (Cooper, 2009; Shields, 2010) and social justice (Bogotch, 2002; Brown, 2004; Larson & Murtadha, 2002; Theoharis, 2009) leadership. Critical reflection, which is also important to culturally responsive leadership, is foundational and actually precedes any actions in leadership. This type of reflection is represented through behavioral expressions of commitments to continuous learning of cultural knowledge and contexts (Gardiner & Enomoto,

2006). These leaders display a critical consciousness of their practice in and out school (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Johnson, 2006). In their study surrounding equity audits and school leadership practice, Skrla and her colleagues (2004); found that leaders in their study used school data and important indicants to measure in ways that decreased inequities within a school (Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004). Additionally, scholars highlight ways in which leadership working in culturally diverse settings use shared leadership practices to partner with parents and community members to measure cultural responsiveness in their school (Ishimaru, 2013; Smyth, 2006).

Engages Students, Parents, and Indigenous Contexts

Relatedly, culturally responsive school leaders attempt to develop meaningful, positive relationships with the community surrounding the school (Garner & Enomoto, 2006; Johnson, 2006; Walker, 2001). In other studies of culture-specific leadership styles, scholars find that these leaders identified themselves as servant leaders who serve as public intellectuals and other significant roles within their school community (Alston, 2005; Gooden, 2005; Johnson, 2006). In this way, school leaders pinpoint overlapping spaces for school and community (Cooper, 2009; Ishimaru, 2013; Khalifa, 2013). Lastly, leaders concerned with culture and equity consider themselves to be advocates and tend to serve as social activist for community-based issues in both the school and the surrounding neighborhood community (Capper, Hafner, & Keyes, 2002; Gooden, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Khalifa, 2012).

Develops Culturally Responsive Teachers

Culturally responsive school leadership aims to develop culturally responsive teachers (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). In doing so, formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are geared toward developing teacher capacities for culturally responsive pedagogy

(Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz, Brazil, & Scott, 2003); they conduct collaborative walkthroughs (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012); they create culturally responsive professional development opportunities (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz et al., 2003) and they use school data to see cultural gaps in achievement, discipline, enrichment, and remedial services (Skrla et al., 2004). While the CRSL framework emphasizes leadership behaviors intended to support culturally responsive pedagogy, I have adapted this aspect of my framework to represent formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration impacting teachers culturally responsive pedagogies. For this study, school leaders are responsible for setting the conditions geared toward developing teachers practice; and these conditions involve formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration intended to enhance teachers practice. In predominately African American schools, formal mechanisms are considered effective when used to support teachers' culturally responsive instructional practices and appropriate dispositions.

Promotes Culturally Responsive/Inclusive School Environment

Culturally responsive school leadership promotes a culturally responsive/inclusive environment. (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). In doing so, informal social structures are used to support teachers in accepting local identities (Khalifa, 2013); enhance collegial bonds amongst staff (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012); create opportunities for teacher leaders to model culturally responsiveness in their interactions (Khalifa, 2011; Tillman, 2005); and promote a vision for inclusive instruction and behavioral practices (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb- Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007). While the CRSL framework emphasizes leadership behaviors intended to promote a culturally responsive/inclusive environment, I have adapted this aspect of my framework to represent informal social structures impacting teachers culturally responsive pedagogies. For this study, school leaders are responsible for promoting a school

climate that enhances teachers' commitments to their practice and their students. In predominately African American schools, informal social structures are considered effective when used to support teachers' culturally responsive instructional practices and appropriate dispositions.

Conclusion

To summarize, schools generate conditions used to support teachers' knowledge base and teaching commitments. Principal leaders are responsible for setting the organizational conditions used to support teachers learning and attitudes. At the same time, leadership tasks are distributed across the school, and functions to manage and support the day-to-day activities that make up teachers' working conditions. Scholars point to the need for leaders to foster a culturally responsive school climate to support teachers' growth and development (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb-Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007). Yet, research is limited surrounding the extent to which school level activities are used to promote or hinder teachers' capacity for culturally responsive pedagogy. Unlike much of the scholarship surrounding culturally responsive pedagogy, this work adopts more of an organizational perspective to uncover the extent to which school level mechanisms might be used to support teachers' culturally responsive knowledge and commitments. This research builds on past research findings that formal and informal aspects of school organizing practice play significant and complementary roles in school wide instructional improvements. Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to connect to resources. They include: effective professional development activities and ongoing instructional supports, like grade level teams and cross-grade, vertical teams. Informal social structure refers to human resources within a school building, that make up the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice about

instructional matters. They involve: collegial bonds amongst staff, norms of trust and collective responsibility. Culturally responsive school leadership is one theoretical tool intended to structure and shape teachers practice for culturally responsive pedagogy. I have adapted this framework to represent significant factors influencing schools' instructional quality. In this way, instructional quality signifies teachers' capacity to engage culturally responsive methods. Ultimately, I sought to investigate the extent to which formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration and informal social structures, operating within the demographic divide, influence teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting culturally responsive pedagogy. In the following chapter, I detail my study design and proposed research questions.

Chapter Three: Methods

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design of my study, along with the methods I employed to collect and analyze my data. This chapter is divided into five subsections: purpose of the study, research design, data collection and procedures, data analysis, and study limitations. First, I revisit the purpose of this study and the research questions. Next, I detail my research design, followed by an outline of the data collection and procedures to describe the process I used to build two cases of school organizations. After, the data analysis section is used to review the criteria for interpreting my findings. Finally, I discuss the limitations of my research design.

Purpose of the Study

For educators in service to racially minoritized youth, empirical evidence suggests effective teaching encompasses a cultural knowledge base and the will to adapt classroom instructional strategies based on this knowledge. At the same time, the literature recommends supporting effective teaching practice by creating staff learning opportunities and fostering a learning context used to enhance teachers' knowledge and commitments to their work (Penuel et al, 2010). With this, this research argues that supporting effective pedagogy in schools experiencing the demographic divide necessitates staff learning opportunities geared toward developing a cultural knowledge base and a learning context that fosters teachers' commitment to continuously improving their practice for work with racially minoritized youth.

In order to best understand how schools might support teaching practices for racially minoritized students, I employed qualitative methods, using a replication case study design to investigate two schools that have predominately racially minoritized student bodies. I conducted semi-structured interviews, observations, and a document review. I collected the data over one

and a half semesters. I developed each case with an understanding that the school organizational context includes both student demographics and teacher demographics. The phenomenon of interests included staff experience of professional learning opportunities, teacher team meetings, and their experience related to the social nature of their work. After looking at these variables, I organized the data by looking at the ways in which these experiences represented cultural knowledge and teaching commitments fostered at the school level.

Prioritizing the learning needs of racially minoritized student bodies students means paying closer attention to the institutional and organizational practices influencing the quality of the services they receive. I intended to explain the influence of school level mechanisms on teachers practice related to enactments culturally responsiveness, by asking the following research questions:

- 1) How do schools, experiencing the demographic divide, use formal mechanisms to shape teachers' cultural knowledge base?
- 2) How does the informal social structure in schools, experiencing the demographic divide, influence teachers' commitments?

There is limited empirical evidence linking essential aspects of organizational structure to teachers' skills required for engaging culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). Studies on teachers' ability to engage CRP after their preservice training highlights the need to support teachers in developing a cultural knowledge base, along with need to foster teachers' commitment to equitable practice and to continuously improving their practice. In looking at two schools with predominately racially minoritized students, I sought to explore the relationship between organizational structures intended to supports teachers' knowledge and the types of commitments promoted by the schools' informal social structure.

Qualitative approaches to research allow scholars to be intimately involved with their work in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). By using qualitative research methods, I was able to better understand school level elements, within the context of the demographic divide, that influence the way teachers talk about and engage students' cultural characteristics for teaching them more effectively (Gay, 2000). By conducting fieldwork in a natural environment, I am able to provide a rich description of the formal and informal mechanisms interacting within each school. (Merriam, 1998).

As discussed in the theoretical framework, culturally responsive pedagogy is a dynamic approach that encompasses instructional strategies and teaching dispositions that are empirically tied to increases in academic achievement, for all students, particularly African-American students. This research aligns with the work of other education scholars in search of equitable school practices that lend themselves to enhancing the instruction received by *all* students. In doing so, this study prioritizes the needs of African American students, who represent one group of students in which schools do a great disservice.

Research Design

Goals

This research aimed to uncover the influence of formal and informal mechanisms that are intended to shape teachers' pedagogical enactments. In particular, I was interested in those qualities most related to their abilities to be culturally responsive. I used a replication case study design to examine and analyze two schools in service to predominately racially minoritized student bodies (Yin, 2013). The goals of my research are two-fold: 1) To uncover teachers experience of formal and informal mechanisms at their school. 2) To uncover the aspects of their experience related to a cultural knowledge base and willingness to adapt their practice based on

this knowledge. By looking at the role of schools influencing teachers' pedagogical enactments in these settings, I sought to understand how teachers' workplace context might be used to support essential elements for enacting culturally responsiveness.

Replication, Multiple Case Study Design

Case study research is one approach to conducting qualitative research. To address my study's research questions, I followed a replication case study design. It has been described as being useful to gain an in-depth understanding of a case (Cresswell, 1994). Case study research involves the study of a case within a real-life contemporary context or study (Yin, 2009). A case study design is likely to yield desired outcomes of this research because it supports defining a specific "real life" case to represent an abstraction. For the current study, two schools operating within the demographic divide where the majority of teachers experience a cultural divide from their students represents two "real-life" cases where culturally responsiveness is needed in order to be effective. In the following paragraph, I briefly describe the rationale for a school organization as my unit of analysis.

Unit of Analysis: Schools as Organizations.

For case study inquiry, the unit of analysis is significant to the research questions, and overall analysis of the research. Schools are often conceptualized as organizational entities dealing with unforeseen events within a social context, within a highly bureaucratic institution (Orton & Weick, 1990; Rowan, 1990). I have chosen to look at two school organizations in service to racially minoritized youth, with a predominately African-American student population. I will detail the findings from each school in the following chapter. The first school I discussed in my findings chapter is referred to as Wells High School (WHS); the second school is referred

to as Cooper High School (CHS). They are located in two different cities, outside of a major urban city in the Midwestern region of the county.

The criteria for my study entailed that school organizations: consist of 65% or more students who identify as Black, African, or African-American; meet or be at least one standard deviation below, their state average for Freshman-on-track data (87%); meet or be at least one standard deviation below the state average for Graduations Rates (87%), or meet African American sub-group state averages (79%); meet or be at least one-standard deviation below the state average for post-secondary enrollment rates (70%). After, I developed a list of schools that met these criteria. Following, I relied on purposeful sampling methods to narrow my search to schools where the principal leaders recognized culturally responsive pedagogy as a useful and necessary practice for teachers at their school.

The rationale for investigating schools with predominately racially minoritized student bodies was aimed at uncovering school organizing practices in places where culturally responsiveness is needed the most, working under the assumption that culturally responsiveness is a necessary approach for those working within the demographic divide. At the same time, I sought out schools that had experienced some type of academic success without the explicit adoption of culturally responsive strategies. Here, I wanted to study a school that had enough school organizational capacity to meet the minimum standards of achieving well on state wide achievement measures. In this way, I had hoped to study schools that were not majorly or obviously suffering from other external forces like being severely under-resourced, or problems that stem from unstable principal leadership. Lastly, my rationale for choosing schools where principal leaders recognized the necessity and importance of CRP is based on empirical evidence highlighting that while successful teachers of racially minoritized students may not refer to their

practice as culturally responsive (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2002), school leaders are tasked with identifying these practices within their school (Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016) while providing organizational supports for increasing teachers' responsive strategies (Lampert, Boerst, Graziani, 2011).

Setting: Schools within Suburban Districts

Ultimately, I sought to build a case surrounding “common” conditions among predominately racially minoritized schools. I selected two, predominately African American, public school organizations, in the Midwestern region of the country. My decision to look at schools outside of a major city, is based on the rapidly changing demographics in large urban cities. In the initial phases of my research, this urban city's public school district contained multiple racially isolated schools. Meaning, the average African-American high school student, in this Midwestern city, was more likely to attend a school with mainly other African American students, with little to no racial diversity. While this is still partially the case today, the increase in neighborhood school closings, and an increase in charter school expansion have resulted in an increase of African-American student enrollment in the surrounding suburban districts. Thus, this investigation was conducted in suburban communities outside of a major urban district, in the Midwestern region of the country. By investigating the organizing practices intended to shape teaching and learning in majority African-American schools, this study capitalizes on the theoretical links between culturally responsive approaches and African-American students. In other words, looking at the extent to which school structures develop teachers' skills, and foster productive learning environments in these spaces helps to uncover essential supports for effective pedagogy, in the wake of rapidly changing student demographics.

Population: Racially Minoritized Schools with Predominately African-American membership

Transformative and social justice frameworks shows some promise for schools in service to culturally and ethnically diverse student bodies (Brown, 2004; Theoharris, 2007). Teachers and administrators are awakening to the reality that not all students embody white, middle-class values, experiences, and cultural norms. There seems to be agreement on many fronts that teachers need better models, practices, and frameworks for teaching students from a multitude of backgrounds, especially if the students represent cultures and social classes that are different from the teacher's (Sato & Linsmire, 2009). This is leading schools and districts to seek professional development experiences for teachers to help them grapple with yet another form of diversity in their classrooms.

Accordingly, this study employed purposeful sampling methods (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Cresswell (1994) suggest researchers should consider selecting a case that is most promising or useful. To better understand how schools might develop teachers' knowledge and commitments for supporting culturally responsive approaches, I examined two school organizations with predominately African-American membership, within the presence of the demographic divide detailed as detailed in the background chapter. With this, ideas and practices used to support African American learners, should also be considering the culturally unique needs of LatinX youth, and every other cultural and sub-cultural group represented at the school. Leaders and teachers at each school discussed how their ideas for creating a culturally responsive, inclusive curriculum are beginning to think about how to include the identities of their LatinX student population. While the demographic selection criteria only included the data for African American students, it is noteworthy that both schools have significant and growing

populations of LatinX students. This research understands that knowing how schools influence teachers practice with these students is also advantageous for teaching us about how to promote enactments of culturally responsive. For the purpose of this research, these schools necessitate a learning context used to foster culturally responsive approaches in order to provide effective teaching practice. Below is a chart that summarizes the demographic and academic selection criteria met from both school organizations in this study.

WHS			CHS		
African American Membership:	78.7%		African American Membership:	64%	
Freshman-on-track	61%		Freshman-on-track	64%	
Graduation Rate	85%		Graduation Rate	95%	
Post-Secondary Enrollment	54%-12 months	58%-16 months	Post-Secondary Enrollment	56%-12 months	60%- 16 months

Figure 1.2

Data Collection and Procedures

Overview of Data Collection

The replication case study model entailed collecting and analyzing data at two predominately African American high schools. First, I developed a list of all the schools in the surrounding area that met the demographic and academic criteria for my study. Then, I conducted an interview with the school principal to ensure that the school met the ideological criteria for my study. Meaning, school leadership acknowledges culturally responsive pedagogy as effective teaching practice for teachers in service to their specific population, in this case, African-American and LatinX students. This interview was also used to gather data on systems and structures used to develop teachers' pedagogies. My overall goal was to uncover the intention behind school organizational structures used to shape teachers' practice for meeting the needs of their racially minoritized students. Additionally, my interactions with the principle

leader was used to guide my recruitment for selecting division leaders and teacher leaders to interview.

Following the initial interview with the school principal, I interviewed division leaders and teacher leaders to better understand how leadership, distributed throughout the school organization (Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2001) serves as a support for teachers' pedagogical enactments. By interviewing division leaders and teacher leaders, this research is in line with scholarship that points to the ways in which leadership tasks are undertaken collectively, and is a crucial component to instructional effectiveness and innovation (Hord, 2009; Crowther, Ferguson, and Hann, 2009; Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2001). Thus, I talked to various types of school leaders to better understand how school organizing practices structure and shape teachers learning context for developing and improving their pedagogy.

Following this set of interviews with division leaders and teacher leaders, I conducted observations and teacher interviews in an iterative process. I conducted observations of school level activities geared toward instruction, including teacher team meetings. Following each observation, I interviewed teachers that attended the meeting. My aim was to probe about findings from the meeting. Here, my study design allowed me to corroborate my observation findings with transcripts from interview respondents. This analysis of teachers combined with teacher leader, division leader, and principal leader data is used to create a comprehensive depiction of the intentions behind school level activities and how instructional supports are received from the teachers. In this way, I am able to uncover themes related to school level attempts at developing teachers' cultural knowledge and fostering greater commitments to effectively changing their practice. Lastly, I conducted a document analysis of the schools'

curriculum, lesson plans, and meeting agendas. The figure below is used to summarize each step for collecting the data. Interview and observation protocols can be found in the appendix.

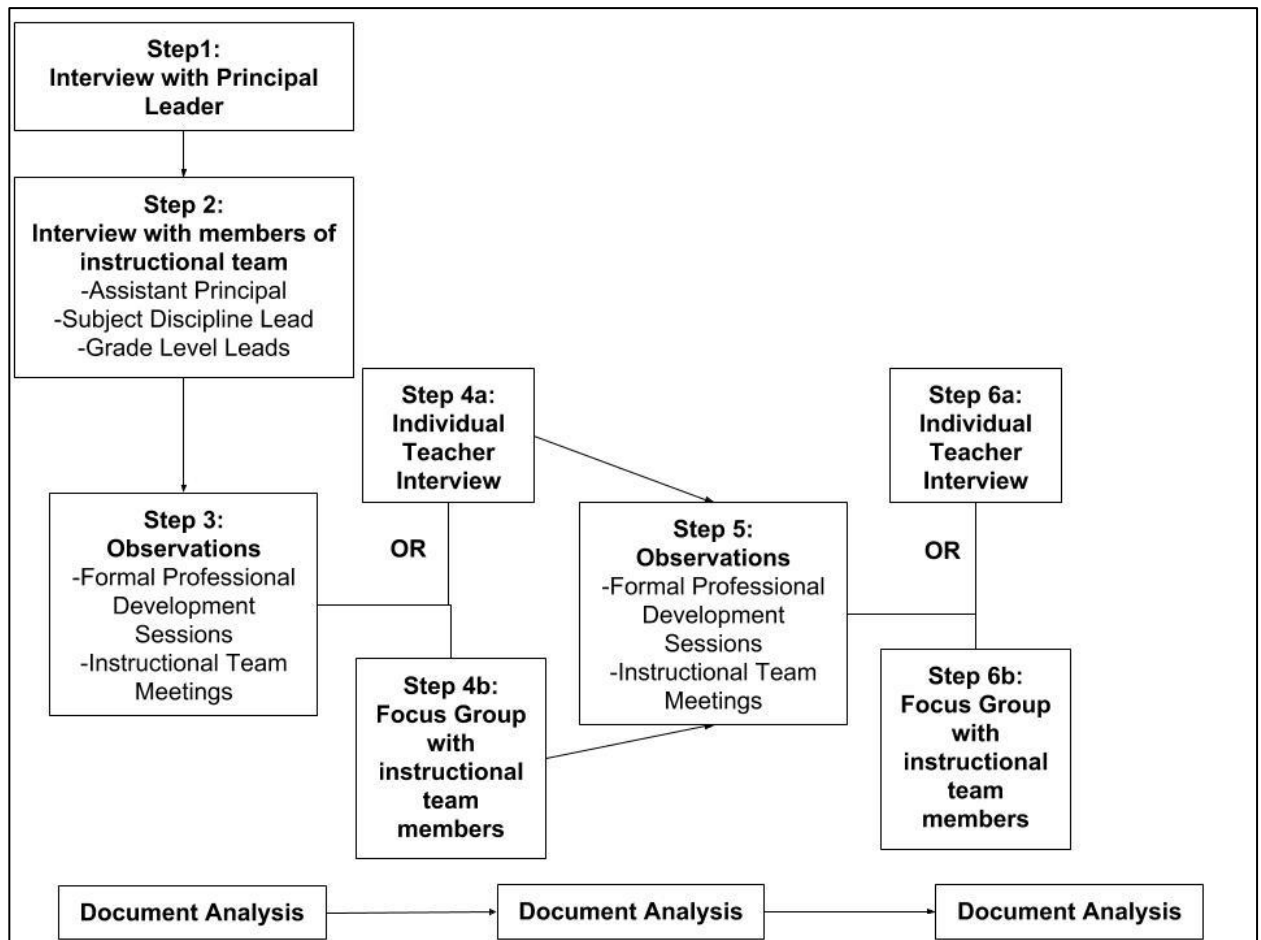


Figure 1.3

Interviews with Administrative Leaders: Principals and AP's for Instruction

Interviews were conducted with the principal leader at each school, to ensure that these schools also met the ideological selection criteria for my study. Meaning, school leadership acknowledged culturally responsive pedagogy as effective teaching practice for teachers in service to their specific population, in this case, African-American and LatinX students. As

mentioned previously, principal leader interviews were used to gather data on systems and structures created to maintain and enhance the schools' instructional quality. More specifically, this interview protocol (found in Appendix D) asked questions surrounding the schools' mission and values that drive teaching and learning, and the extent to which culturally responsive approaches are prioritized. As outlined in the previous chapter, leaders are responsible for structuring teacher learning opportunities and fostering a learning context used to further teachers' commitments for school wide instructional improvements (Marks & Printy, 2003; Penual et. Al., 2010; Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). I used a semi-structured interview protocol to guide data collection based on the proposed theoretical framework. To summarize, principal leader interview data showed the training, educational background, and experience of the principal leader with administrative experience working with African American and LatinX students, along with their current understanding of the demographic divide on their capacity to be culturally responsive. Further, I inquired about their goals for promoting effective teaching practices and how they navigate these goals combined with district demands. As well, I probed about how they understand staff relationships across the building and structures in place to promote greater learning opportunities for their staff. Ultimately, I aimed to uncover the intentions behind school organizational structures used to shape teachers' practice for meeting the needs of African American students.

I interviewed the assistant principals for instruction at both schools. My goal was to speak to another administrator who could tell me about the intentions behind the structures used to shape teachers' practice in the building. I learned that the AP for instruction is largely responsible for organizing and managing instruction for the entire school. They delegate tasks to division leaders based on directives from the district and the schools' administrative team.

Interview data revealed how well the principal leader's vision for instruction was received. Further, I inquired about the extent to which culturally responsive teaching practices could be found in the building, were represented in their formal professional development sessions, and encouraged during departmental level meetings. Then, I asked about how they understood staff relationships around the building.

Interviews with Division Leaders and Teacher Leaders

I interviewed division leaders and teacher leaders at each school organization. For WHS, division leadership was an administrative position, while at CHS, division leadership was a teacher leadership position. I was not aware of this difference until I interviewed the assistant principal for instruction at each school. I interviewed two division leaders at both schools. For WHS, I interview division leaders within the English department and the Social Studies department. For CHS, I interviewed division leaders from the English department and the Math department. Much of these interviews focused on their training and work experience with racially minoritized students, how they manage district and school level initiatives, the extent to which CRP is prioritized in the building, and if it can be located in the building. I also took time to ask about the extent to which they encourage their staff to be culturally responsive, where their knowledge of students' culture comes from, what types of classroom strategies are promoted at the school, and the extent to which these strategies are deemed culturally responsive. Here, my aim was to provide a description of the goals and values underlining school level instructional supports.

Further, I conducted interviews with teacher leaders to understand the daily instructional activities involved in teachers' collaborative practice. In these interviews, I learned about how teachers' share knowledge about the students, district level and school level initiatives. I also

learned how they experience professional development activities and the extent to which these activities support teachers with incorporating multicultural resources. By interviewing teacher leaders in different subject disciplines, I was able to explore the extent to which the nature of subject content shapes the types of instructional supports provided to teachers across academic domains. Scholarship suggests information networks and school staff advice are heavily influenced by subject discipline content (Spillane, 2005; Spillane & Hopkins, 2013). In these interviews, I probed about the role of test pressures and changes to the curriculum, and the extent to which these aspects might influence their teaching practice. These probes were used to investigate the ways in which school level practices might support effective teaching in spite of policy pressures to standardized curriculum. By interviewing teacher leaders in different grade levels, I aimed to understand the extent to which schools influence instructional supports based on students' social and academic development. In practice, teachers in lower grades are preparing students for the following grade. Teachers in service to higher grade students are preparing them for life after high school, for instance, college and career readiness. I probed on how schools might support these teachers given the differences in instructional goals. This data also highlighted the process through which leaders assess and address problems of practice. In particular, I was interested in how they incorporated a cultural lens to address problems of practice. Here, I aimed to uncover the mechanisms in which staff learning contributes to student learning in these racially minoritized schools (Hord, 2009).

Interviews with Teachers

Interviews with teachers were used to uncover how school level supports are received for staff working within the demographic divide. Unlike the goals outlined in the leadership interviews, interviews with teachers were used to point to their experience related to formal

mechanisms for learning and collaboration, along with descriptions of the schools' informal social infrastructure. This approach is aligned with research that espouses the use of structured learning activities for improving teachers' understanding and enactments of culturally responsive teaching (Brown & Crippen, 2016). As mentioned in the section on teacher leaders, scholarship recommends using more sophisticated constructions of teaching that take grade level and subject matter into account when supporting various dimensions of teaching (Spillane, 2005; Spillane & Hopkins, 2013). Hence, I interviewed teachers across grade level and subject discipline.

Additionally, interview data was also used to ascertain how teachers experience collaborative activities with their colleagues who were novice, mid-career, or veteran teachers. Previous research highlights that teachers in different points in their career seek different types of learning opportunities (Kyndt et al, 2016). Certain attributes of the school learning context shapes how teachers use knowledge provided to them (Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2002). There is an increasing amount of research on the importance of strong culturally responsive, inclusive learning environments for enhancing teachers' growth and commitment for optimal student outcomes (Little, 2012; Mark & Printy, 2003). Relatedly, scholars suggest shared responsibility for student learning helps to sustain instructional improvements (Little, 2012; Meier, 1992). Thus, observation analysis was used to guide my conversation with teachers surrounding discussions and activities that lend themselves toward teachers culturally responsive pedagogy. Ultimately, the data revealed that schools influence teachers' enactments of CRP through their collaborative routines. With this, I highlight the use of teachers' collaborative conversations to represent how these schools influenced aspects related to enactments of CRP. These findings are detailed in the following chapter used to describe my findings. I organized themes related to

developing teachers' cultural knowledge and fostering greater commitments for those working within the context of the demographic.

The demographic divide (Gay & Howard, 2000) is highly visible at WHS and CHS, with approximately 70% of the students identifying as Black, and a 25% of the students as LatinX. Furthermore, interview data, from WHS, showed a growing American Indian population, the school report card shows this population at .4%. As well, each school had a teaching staff that consisted of predominately white women. I highlight these statistics because the demographic divide is a significant contextual factor that represents a potential opportunity for investigating culturally responsive practices at various levels of the school organization. In the following sections I provide a table including the demographic, educational background, and years of experience for each participant at each school.

WHS Staff

Position	Race, Gender	Education	Department & Grades taught	Years of experience		
Principal Leader	Black, Male	BA, MA, Doctoral Candidate		Administration: 15	WHS: 10	
Assistant Principal of Instruction	White, Female	BA: Speech & English MA: Educational Technology		WHS: 14 years		
Division Leader	White, Female	BA MA: Curriculum & Development	Math & Business	Teaching: 13	Administration: 3	
Teacher Leader	White, Female	BA: Math MA: Math	Math 9	Teacher: 8		Total: 8
Division Leader	White, Male	BA: Education- History, min: Political Science MA: Educational Administration	Social Studies & Fine Arts	Total: 19		
Teacher Leader	White, Male	BA: Business Administration Career Change- Airline	Economics 10 Honors Econ 11 Global Issues 12	Total: 6		
Teacher	White, Male	BA: Education	US History 9 Econ 10	Total: 2 years		
IB Coordinator	White, Male	BA: Education MA: Educational Administration	(2) IB courses	Total: 15	Leadership: 12	
MTSS Coordinator	LatinX, Female	BA: Education- Spanish MA: Reading Specialist Endorsements: ESL, Special Education, Technology	ESL English IB Spanish	Total: 13	WHS: 9	Leadership: 6

The sample represented at Wells highlights a highly educated group of educators with substantial teaching experience. I interviewed one teacher who self-identified as a “career changer”. There was only one teacher who would be considered a novice to the field, with only two years of teaching experience, outside of his student teaching experience. In almost all cases, these staff teaching experience, prior to their time at WHS, occurred either within the Wells district, within a neighboring district, or within a school district with similar staff and student demographics. As schools attempt to enhance teachers’ cultural responsiveness, it remains important to address teachers’ knowledge and commitments for enacting CRP as practitioners who have been working within the growing demographic divide observed in urban public school systems. In this way, teachers’ ideas and commitments to effective work in racially minoritized schools is necessarily impacted by their own social identity and prior teaching experience. The following table provides the demographic, educational background, and years of experience for each participant at CHS.

CHS Staff

Position	Race, Gender	Education	Department & Grades taught	Years of experience	
Principal Leader	Black, Male	BA, MA, PhD		Total: 21	CHS: 16
Assistant Principal of Instruction	White, Female	BA: Social Science MA (1): Educational Leadership MA (2): Educational Technology ESL certified		Administration: 4 years	
Division Leader	White, Female	BA MA: Curriculum & Development	English 10 Honors English 10 Honors English 11	Teaching: 24	Leadership: 1
Teacher	White, Female	BA: English MA: Teacher Leadership	Honors English 10 Honors English 12	Teacher: 21	
Teacher	White, Female	BA: English -ESL endorsement	Honors English 9	Total: 14**	
Division Leader	White, Female	BA	Math	Total: 31	Leadership: 8
Teacher	LatinX, Male	BA: Math MA: Bilingual Education	Math 10 ESL Math 10 -one class outside building	Total: 6**	CHS: 5

Teacher	Black, Female	BA: Sociology MA: Special Education	Math 10 SPED Math 10	Total: 14 years	
Teacher	White, Female	BA: Math MA: Math	Math 10	Total: 7.5	CHS: 6

** :indicates that this person is graduated from high school in this school district
 Total: indicates the number of years in the teaching profession
 Administration: indicates the number of years in an administrative role at CHS
 Leadership: indicates the number of years this in a teacher leadership position at CHS
 CHS: indicates the number of years working at this school organization

Similar to the staff at WHS, this sample represents a highly educated group of educators.

Teachers with the least amount of formal education experience have the most amount of professional experience. I interviewed two teachers who self-identified as not being “formally trained” to teach, and one out-of-field teacher. Two teachers reported graduating from the Cooper Township district. By interviewing the educators described in the chart above, I intend to present a cohesive narrative surrounding school level mechanisms used to structure and develop teachers’ practice.

Observations

I conducted direct observations of two teacher team meetings at each school organization. To be clear, I did not intend to observe professional development sessions or instructional team meetings with explicit objectives for furthering teachers’ culturally responsive pedagogy. Rather, I sought to investigate the ways in which routines for learning and collaboration might aid in developing teachers’ cultural knowledge base and fostering a commitment to adapting their practice for enhancing the quality of instruction received by their racially minoritized student bodies. During these meetings, I learned that teacher leaders and division leaders buffer messages surrounding school level and district level initiatives. These meetings are highly collaborative in that they focus on supporting teachers in making decisions about content for lesson plans, organizational strategies for final exams, student placement into advanced or remedial classes, and updates on pacing. All meetings captured varied types of collegial bonds

represented amongst the staff. My analysis paid close attention to the conversations held in these meetings and how they might relate to the critical components of teachers' enactments of CRP.

Documents

Lastly, I conducted a document analysis of the schools' curriculum map, lesson plans, meeting agendas, and the school website. This analysis was used to further corroborate my findings on formal and informal mechanisms influencing teachers' enactments for CRP. I collected meeting agendas from instructional team meetings, tools and resources provided at professional development sessions, the schools' curriculum map, curriculum design for at least two different subjects, and lesson plans from two teacher interview participants. Meeting agendas yielded results about school level practices used to structure teachers' work responsibilities in African American schools. Tools and resources provided during in-service development yielded results on school-wide attempts to improve teachers' practice. These were also useful for understanding the ways school leaders make sense of the current problems of practice in these racially minoritized schools. Lastly, in my review of the schools' curriculum map and specific lesson plans, I was able to uncover how school leaders influence teachers to organize learning in these contexts.

Data Analysis

I used an embedded, holistic case study analysis to summarize significant data points. As other researchers who have explored the interplay of the formal organization of schools and informal processes of collaboration have done, I conducted an analysis that provides qualitative descriptions of how teachers constructed their school contexts (e.g., Westheimer, 1998). A crucial element to embedded, holistic analysis is that complex questions feature "a community", and reflects activities in the social environment (Yin, 1994), looking closely at specific aspects of the

case (Yin, 2013). Additionally, a holistic case study method looks at the entire case, providing a detailed description of each case (Stake, 1995). The case emerges through the details the researcher provides, regarding the history of the case, the chronology of events, or a day-by-day summary of the activities and events of the case (Cresswell, 1994). For my holistic analysis, this case is built through rich descriptions on the activities and events used to organize teachers work, and how teachers make sense of these activities. In the following section I outline my plan for the within case analysis.

Within Case Analysis

The current study sought to investigate features of the school learning context that aid in the developing teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting CRP. I built these cases by observing school level activities and events used to shape teachers collaborative work and classroom instruction. (Cresswell, 1994). My data consists of interview transcripts, observation field notes, and various instructional documents and meeting agendas. First, I conducted a within case analysis, looking at each school separately. For this within case analysis, I used an explanation- building analytic strategy. Qualitative methodologists have referred to explanation- building as a type of pattern-matching strategy (Yin, 1994). For cases using an explanation building strategy, researchers engage an iterative process that, usually begins with a theoretical proposition (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). For the current study, I rely on theoretical statements grounded in school organizational theory that conceptualizes teachers as the instructional core of school, and that school leaders adopt systems and processes used to support teachers' instructional efforts. Specifically, I have adapted Penual's (2010) model of aligning formal and informal mechanism for school wide instructional improvements. I examined the data looking for themes based on major and minor concepts of my theoretical framework, as

described in the previous chapter. These themes were categorized into codes using an iterative process. I identified a preset of codes based on my theoretical framework. Additionally, I used a grounded theory approach to look for unanticipated themes. By using a preset of codes alongside a grounded theory approach, this study was flexible in gathering data pertaining to my research interests as well as uncovering major aspects that are not accounted for within my theoretical framework and study propositions. The codebook used to guide this analysis is provided in Appendix F.

Cross-case Analysis

Following, I conducted a cross-case analysis making comparisons across these two school organizations. I employed a pattern-matching and grounded theory approach. Pattern-matching has been considered one of the most desirable strategies for analysis (Trochim, 1989). In order to find major patterns across schools, I displayed the data results from each case side-by-side, looking for major themes based on a codebook created from theoretical linkages and examples as displayed by empirical evidence. A grounded theory approach helped to shed a light on the literary gaps detailed in my theoretical framework. I extended theories of organizational change to include school conditions aimed at supporting culturally responsive pedagogy. To date, there are limited empirical sources for understanding how schools adapt their supports to meet the learning needs of culturally diverse student bodies. The data from this study can be used to build on organizational models concerned with equity and developing culturally responsive pedagogies. After coding observation field notes and interview transcripts I teased out themes from the initial codes. At the same time, I employed a memo strategy to highlight major contradictions or limitations within my initial coding framework. The use of memos also aided in

recording questions and limitations that influenced any study conclusions (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Following, I matched the codes to check for similarities and differences.

Quality Test

While the rigor of case study quality is debated within the field, I tested the quality of the current study by used a member checking strategy. In previous qualitative designs, researchers have reviewed their analysis with their research participants to make sure that their interpretation of data matches with their participant's intentions. In doing so, the research takes a transcribed interview that has been coded for major themes and concepts based on their theoretical framework and asks study participants if the analysis actually represents the sentiments of the participant. This strategy was used following the first round of data analysis. I developed codes based on major themes using qualitative analysis software; specifically, Atlas.ti.

Limitations

My initial aim for this study, was to look at the relationship of school level mechanisms on the aspects of teachers practice that are connected to their capacity for enacting CRP. In doing so, I relied on the theoretical contributions of those writing about school wide instructional effectiveness, culturally responsive pedagogy and school leadership. With this, I realized that school leadership practice was an important element to my research questions; but I was most interested in teachers work together in developing ideas and practices centered around culturally responsiveness. So, I explored the concepts of my study and was able to gather a rich description of how teachers experience these school level mechanisms, but this study is limited in revealing the actual impact of these mechanisms on their capacity to be culturally responsive.

Additionally, the research design was developed to begin by investigating leadership practices. Due to the constraints of time and resources, the study was limited in gathering diverse

perspectives of the schools instructional teaching staff. Many of the participants in this study are teacher leaders, which to some degree, represents a sample of educators who are probably more committed to the organization given their increased involvement in school decisions (Hulpia, Devos & Van Keer, 2009). Here, the study is limited in uncovering more of the perspectives of teachers. At the same time, this study contributes the perspectives of administrative, department level, and teacher leaders across two departments and two similar looking districts. The data is useful in capturing the intentions behind professional development programs, along with the goals behind facilitating teacher team meetings. However, this study is used to suggest future research look at the perspectives of teachers centering their experience on the extent to which their workplace environment encourages culturally responsive practices.

Further, this study recognizes that Penuel's (2010) work on the alignment of formal and informal practices for school wide instructional effectiveness is linked, theoretically, to the scholarship on teachers' collaborative inquiry. The work on teachers' collaborative inquiry related to topics surrounding race and culture in schools, is understood to be related to the work on teachers' collaborative talk for intercultural education (MacPherson, 2010). Thus, the literary findings at the start of this study is limited in capturing the results detailed on culturally situated, instructional conversations. These findings are detailed in the following chapter.

Lastly, the field of education is clear on the role of parental environment and other factors related to a schools' outside community context that influence school life. Scholars point to the need to look at the role of policy used to influence school stakeholders. While these topics are outside of the scope of my study, my grounded theory approach did explore alternative explanations for major influences on teachers practice.

Conclusion

Similar to others writing about the role of organizational practice on instructional quality, this study is designed to look at the alignment of school supports for meeting the schools intended goals. Today, school organizations struggle to close the ever-present learning opportunity gap. This study can be used to uncover essential elements related to teachers practice in African-American schools. While schools in service to racially minoritized youth may not claim to adopt a culturally responsive framework, ideally, they will promote those elements most closely tied to effective teaching practice. As mentioned throughout this document, effective teaching for racially minoritized groups necessarily involves a culturally responsive approach. My overall goal is to build a case to better explain how staff might work together to support the teaching and learning process as schools attempt their quest toward more equitable student learning opportunities.

Chapter Four: Wells High School

In the next two chapters, I will detail the discoveries found in each case separately.

These findings are used to develop a theoretical framework for understanding how schools experiencing the demographic divide might develop the conditions for staff to have culturally-situated, instructional conversations for enhancing teachers' ability to be culturally responsive. These conversations can be used to understand how school level mechanisms influence teachers' cultural knowledge base and foster their teaching commitments. The demographic divide has significant consequences for schools looking to increase student learning opportunities through culturally responsive teaching methods. This study is aligned with the work of multicultural education scholarship pointing to the need to adhere to cultural differences as potential resources for school level change. With this, I attempt to build on the work of practitioners who are concerned with lessening the learning opportunity gap by enacting responsive and relevant strategies within the context of standards-based reform. In order to investigate this phenomenon, I relied on frameworks guided by organizational theory (Penuel et al., 2010; Khalifa, Gooden, Davis, 2016) and culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson- Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Paris, 2012). In doing so, I was able to uncover professional learning opportunities and teacher team strategies related to cultural knowledge and responsive dispositions amongst staff at two schools in service to predominately racially minoritized student bodies, experiencing the demographic divide. These opportunities and strategies were highlighted through the instructional conversations held at various levels of the schools. Many of these conversations highlight the collaborative inquiry conducted by staff across the organization. Ultimately, the findings represented in this chapter are intended to answer my primary research questions, which are:

- 1) How do schools, experiencing the demographic divide, use formal mechanisms to shape teachers' cultural knowledge base?
- 2) How does the informal social structure in schools, experiencing the demographic divide, influence teachers' commitments?

I begin each case outlining the district context and leadership decisions that make up the school level mechanisms of interest. Then, I detail the findings related to teachers experience of formal mechanisms and teachers' understanding of their schools' informal social structure. Following, I describe instructional conversations that seem to be influenced by specific facets of the organizations. Finally, I conclude each case with a summary on the major influences related to teachers 'knowledge and dispositions for enacting CRP, in the context of the demographic divide.

Wells High School

Wells High School (WHS) was founded in the late nineteenth century, and is located in a suburban community outside of a major urban city in the Midwest. The school is part of a district that includes two other high schools that are not included in this study. These other two schools service families within two neighboring communities near WHS. Today, the school is led under the direction of a seasoned educator, who I refer to as, Mr. Blackwell. The school serves a little less than 2000 students. Today, Wells Township district has approximately 387 full time teaching staff. According to the Midwestern State report card (2018), a little over 80% of the teachers in the district declined to report their ethnicity and the reported numbers indicate that 5% of the teaching staff is white, 10% African American, and 1.3% identified as LatinX. However, interview and observational data show that the overwhelming majority of teaching staff are white.

The demographic divide (Gay & Howard, 2000) is highly visible at WHS, with a little over 70% of the students identifying as Black, and a little less than 25% of the students as LatinX. Furthermore, while interview data showed a growing American Indian population, the school report card shows this population at .4%. I highlight these statistics because the demographic divide is a significant contextual factor that represents a potential opportunity for culturally responsive practices at various levels of the school organization.

In the following sections I present my findings on WHS leadership and staff in hopes of underlining the extent to which culture can be used as a resource when attempting to address a long-lasting learning opportunity gap experienced by students in racially isolated school contexts. I begin with a brief summary on district initiatives used to facilitate learning and development for a school experiencing the urban demographic divide.

District Control

The assistant principal for instruction (AP) described the WHS school district as having “a lot of dysfunction that’s happened over the years” and “a lot of political issues.” A few months before I began my data collection at WHS, the district hired a new superintendent, who is described as “still learning...and trying to navigate what to fix and how to fix it.” Since starting, he has requested that administrative leaders work with outside consulting firms to support the alignment of teachers practices across schools within the district. Thus, teacher leaders are tasked with reworking their curriculums “course by course” and to digitalize their curriculum from last year. From there, teacher leaders are also required to work with consultants to make sure that they are aligning their curriculum with district goals. The districts aim is to make sure that all of the curriculum is cohesive from “top to bottom.”, across all of the schools. Generally, the AP highlighted that WHS administration and staff have prioritized “building a better working

relationship with the district office and trying to get support... in order to support students in succeeding.” For WHS, this means administrative leaders communicating the needs of the school clearly to the new superintendent.

The data revealed that staff learning opportunities are heavily influenced by the district. Given this study’s focus on significant school level factors influencing teachers’ practice, my investigation prioritizes how staff experience learning opportunities and collaborative meeting spaces for those working within the demographic divide. In my interview with Mr. Blackwell, he stated that the district assumes a lot of responsibility for curriculum and instruction, which includes professional development (PD) sessions. The WHS district has developed instructional initiatives implemented as “professional development mandates.” These professional mandates structure the course of teachers learning for the semester. These mandates include trainings that adhere to state policies, like trauma informed practices, which are discussed in detail later on in the chapter; and trainings for educational technology resources, like mastery connect.

At WHS, PDs are the main way that the district controls teacher learning. For district led PD, they implemented district institute days, meaning a full day of professional learning for WHS is dedicated to district level initiatives. According to the school principal, “[they] supposedly have a *building institute day*”, however the superintendent will use WHS building level PD days to implement teacher trainings for district level goals. For example, the WHS district adopted ALICE, which is “a form of school response” for enhancing school safety. While, the superintendent does admit to taking over staff learning opportunities, during these times, he will tell Mr. Blackwell, “I know it's a building institute day but, we have some district initiatives that we have to take care of.” Mr. Blackwell highlighted in the interview that he would rather the superintendent be honest about how the initiatives are supposed to work, positing

“don't say it's a building institute day and it's not a building institute day. Don't call it that, right. Call it what it is.” Mr. Blackwell goes on to say that when PD days are left to him, he is able to engage more trainings on cultural responsiveness. He highlighted, “Now, had that been my day, we can get presentations from my people on culturally relevant teaching.” Ultimately, the data revealed that the district reserves the right to inform much of the PD days allotted to schools in the WHS district.

The data also revealed that district initiatives have different influences on different departments within the school. For example, at WHS, there are “a plethora” of initiatives shaping teachers practice in the math department. In my interview with their division leader, I learned that their role is used attempt to lessen the impact of the changes to teachers’ tasks by creating coherent themes that allow staff to easily understand changes to their teaching tasks. In my interview with the math division leader, she stated;

“You can see the plethora of initiatives that we have up there. So, between things that come from the state, that come from district office, that come from all those things, I try really hard to take those and pull them all together into some sort of common theme, so when they get to the teachers, it's not as rough of an impact. That makes it better for them to implement things to their students.”

(Math Dept. Example at WHS)

Noteworthy, is that some of these initiatives actually focus on topics related to culturally responsiveness. For example, there is an initiative called AVID, which involves a district collaboration with the Math Vision Project (MVP). AVID aims to support teachers in “leveraging their student’s backgrounds and experiences to master content.” In doing so, they work with teachers to explore their guide to creating a culturally relevant classroom. AVID explicitly addresses the demographic divide between students and staff in many urban schools. Their overall goal is to provide training for teachers to help them “better and more authentically

connect with their students.” Rather than seek to change *what* is taught, they seek to change *how* content is delivered. Overall, district initiatives seem to prioritize meeting state wide standards, but show a concern for culturally responsive teaching by hiring outside agencies that focus on expanding teachers cultural knowledge base, fostering a commitment to equitable classroom strategies and increasing opportunities for “culturally diverse” student bodies.

Ever since the “big transition of Common Core”, WHS district receives professional development and coaching resources from the district. District leaders report that this transition has had a big impact on classroom instruction for math practices. Changes in classroom instruction came from directives created by the Metro City Math Initiative (MCMI). This initiative involves schools from the surrounding suburbs of the city. It was created to meet the demands of their state common core policies. After the initiative was adopted, WHS district created school improvement goals to ensure these demands were met. In doing so, they hired district personnel to organize PDs and instructional coaching. PDs are facilitated by district personnel, while coaches from a neighboring university are hired as consultants to work with division leaders and their staff.

In my document analysis of this policy, I learned that MCMI’s main goal is to support schools, in service to low-income students, meet improvement goals related to the states common core policy. In doing so, they intend to collaborate with diverse stakeholders on structures, policies, and culture that lead to sustainable improvement, and help districts achieve results for their students through five big ideas. These ideas attempt to focus on every aspect of the school organization, including: student learning and formative assessments, teacher capacity and content knowledge, formal mechanisms for teacher learning and collaboration, staff informal social structure, and school-district goal alignment. Overall, the data revealed that district goals

for math education are geared toward meeting new state-wide math standards that focus on supporting students in developing applied math skills. With this, staff are being encouraged to deliver math in ways that are likely different from when they learned math. Further details related to these findings are explored in a later section used to outline instructional teaching tasks. Overall, this research finds that states and districts are increasingly becoming aware that teachers pedagogical enactments can be enhanced through greater learning opportunities and instructional supports.

District Summary

Ultimately, the district has its own agenda for shaping pedagogical practice in these schools. The data revealed that there is some recognition of the need to address the demographic divide through culturally responsiveness. However, the majority of the districts support does not explicitly prioritize supporting teachers in better understanding how cultural facets impact their ability to be effective in the classroom. At the same time, these PDs and initiatives are useful in creating the space for more culturally-situated conversations. I am arguing that these conversations are an untapped resource and could be used to further staff understanding and use of effective, culturally responsive approaches.

While district influence is significant in shaping teacher learning opportunities, the primary focus of this study surrounds school level mechanisms used to shape teachers' practice. In the following sections, I present findings used to describe school level mechanisms used to structure and shape teachers' enactments of pedagogy. First, I begin by presenting my analysis on leadership practices used to develop these school level structures.

Leadership Moves

This section details the leadership practices used to govern what teachers learn and how they collaborate. Much of this section highlights the attitudes and intentions of the school's principal leader. In doing so, I was able to uncover the extent to which leadership tasks are distributed throughout the school building using formal and informal mechanisms. A central theme of my analysis on leadership practice at WHS is that leadership is not only disbursed throughout the building, but it is a behavior that is promoted to a) address issues that might not be visible to administrative leaders, and b) to make staff, regardless of their formal title, feel responsible for assessing and addressing problems of practice. Ultimately, these findings are used to build a coherent case for how schools might develop strategies for promoting culturally responsiveness among teaching staff working within the demographic divide.

Principal Leader

Mr. Blackwell has spent all of his 15 years as an administrator in service to the WHS district. As an administrator, he spent five years as an academic counselor at a neighboring school in the district, and 10 years as the school principal at WHS. He is an African-American male in his mid-forties, and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program for education at another university in the Midwest. He earned his undergraduate, masters' degree, and administrative license from universities in the Midwest. In addition to his academic achievements, he also credits his 23 years in the Marine corps for preparing him for leadership positions in the school. Historically, WHS has served working class communities of color. He calls himself a servant leader and is known for his close ties to the schools' surrounding community.

I begin my analysis of Mr. Blackwell by highlighting how he responds to two major aspects influencing staff learning and development for culturally responsiveness, within this racially isolated school context. The data revealed that standards-based reform and the

demographic divide significantly shape teachers' practice, and highlights an increased need for cultural responsiveness. Here, addressing standards-based reforms means reshaping WHS school narrative, and addressing the demographic divide means creating a workplace context where culturally-situated, instructional conversations leads to improvement in student outcomes.

Reversing the Narrative

According to Mr. Blackwell, state and district standards have made WHS look like “a failure” by requiring “unrealistic expectations.” Effective leadership, for him, can only happen once they understand the political and cultural context in which educators operate on a daily basis. By this, he means, school leaders must understand the pressures of accountability that teachers are under. He noted that ever since the inception of No Child Left Behind, schools like WHS have been labeled by policy makers and school stakeholders as a failure. He says the reason for this is because this policy uses unrealistic benchmarks, set by people who are not educators in service to their student population. Without dismissing the importance of meeting the requirements for these reforms, he is clear on the importance of reversing the negative and unproductive images that are painted by policymakers surrounding the limitations of teacher quality and practice for those in service to historically underserved communities.

Further, he refers to district aligned state standards as “mainstream mandates.” For him, these mandates do not focus the necessity of what is needed at the school-level, which for him is culturally responsive approaches. In his interview he stated that the district is “still chasing the regular mainstream mandates.” This entails a narrow focus on raising math and reading scores. But, he encourages his staff to think about what is “relevant” and “needed” at WHS specifically. For him, “deprogramming” teachers' mindsets surrounding the narrative of school failure presented by standardized measures is high priority. This means pointing out the beliefs of

“mainstream society” that looks to “play the blame game where teachers are under attack for everything that's going wrong in the profession of education.” So, over the last few years he has promoted ideologies that are outside of these narratives and encouraged staff “not to define” themselves” by these standards.

In order to meet the demands of standards-based reforms, Mr. Blackwell does not limit his goals to those of the district. Rather, he reported that he combines these demands with the needs presented by his school community. In this way, he prioritizes curriculum that is relevant to his students and training that supports staff in meeting students learning needs. This means being intentional about bringing up the importance of culture within curriculum and practice, and dealing with feelings of uncertainty or efficacy within a mainly white teaching staff. Ultimately, reversing the schools’ narrative is used to support staff in redefining what is considered effective.

Working within the Demographic Divide

For Mr. Blackwell, working within the demographic divide means recognizing the cultural communities represented by the student body, and equipping teachers with the necessary cultural knowledge and teaching dispositions for quality teaching and learning in this context. Since the district is mostly concerned with meeting the demands of state standards, Mr. Blackwell considers it his job to prioritize the “actual” needs of his student body. In doing so, he must consider the needs of the staff in order for “quality teaching and learning to occur.” With this, he relies on culturally responsive approaches to develop staff instructional capacity. He highlighted in his interview;

As I sit here, smack dab in the middle of [suburban city] and understand the communities that my children come into this building with, then I understand the sort of needs of the staff that to have to be met in order for them to even be able to focus on teaching and learning at high levels at that, right? ...So, I see these other practices, these other concepts as important, like culturally responsiveness, where the district again has another lens that they get at.

Still, culturally responsiveness, for him, would only work when staff understand the benefits of the practice in the same ways he understands them. Therefore, when developing teacher buy-in for culturally responsive teaching he must know and attend to the demographics of his staff.

Here, he must consider the racial identity of his staff. He says

I guess you always have to be aware of right? One of the leadership principles is to know your people. And so in knowing your people, will a staff of 75, 78% white teachers embrace culturally responsiveness holistically?

He believes that embracing CRP means supporting teachers in understanding that a cultural lens is required in order to be effective in their school context. He also believes that teachers can develop these relevant and responsive strategies, as they learn to become advocates for the communities represented in their classrooms. He also believes that effective practice can ensue when teachers adopt a mindset that understands the “social injustices” experienced by members in their students’ communities. He states,

But, if we make teachers understand that most of our student deficiencies are derived from social injustices, right. Just in their communities alone and guess what? Just addressing those issues alone, advocating for those issues alone, will help you in your classroom ultimately... What you're being asked to do is teach students who may seem deficit from being denied certain things, socially and academically, over the years.

This principal leader was very clear about promoting a social justice orientation amongst his teaching staff as a way to enhance teachers’ classroom practice. Interview data revealed that this principal leader explicitly promotes a social justice orientation among staff through school wide, team meeting and individual conversations. He also relies on other administrative, division, and teacher leaders to promote social justice ideologies and practices to teaching teams. Specifically, he talked about shaping administrators and division leaders into little versions of himself. In this way, they too, can create leadership platforms and spread his vision for social justice and culturally responsiveness. This data is further detailed in a later section on distributing culturally responsive school leadership. For WHS, promoting teacher advocacy for social justice

necessarily implies collaborative inquiry surrounding culturally-situated instructional conversations.

It remains important that cultural differences between staff and students are not just about racial differences. The AP for instruction echoed Mr. Blackwell's vision for creating more culturally responsiveness within the curriculum. She, too, discussed the demographic divide present among staff and students, while mentioning socioeconomic status as another cultural difference that divides students and staff. Often times, African American and LatinX staff, who teach within these racially isolated environments context, do not share the same socioeconomic background of their students. Therefore, it is imperative that training on culturally responsiveness meet the unique needs of these teachers as well. She says

We don't necessarily have that diverse of a teaching staff, so we're trying to work with that. You know, there's two sides of it. There's the diversity of our teachers in their race, and there's a diversity, or lack of diversity, of our teachers in their personal socioeconomic status. So even if we have ... You know, our majority of students are African American. Some of our African American teachers aren't creating those relationships with students, because they are from a different socioeconomic background.

By recognizing these particular cultural differences amongst staff and students, WHS aims to address more specific, cultural learning needs of their staff in order to support teachers to enact culturally responsiveness. In doing so, WHS administrative leaders are becoming increasingly aware of the nuances inherent within the demographic divide. Thus, a greater focus on staff cultural identity and diversity remains a concern when attempting to increase student engagement and developing "relevant" curriculum. Since CRP is still a fairly recent practice adopted by staff in urban districts, much of what is going to be effective has yet to be created. Accordingly, learning what works requires trying different strategies and attempting to do this requires change. Mr. Blackwell tells his staff

You have to change the way you're teaching to understanding that your instruction is to be applied to the cultural lens of the audience that you teach, which has all these black kids and all Hispanic kids. But how do you do that kind of thing without freaking them out? You have to be surgical about how you insert that without disrupting the culture of what you're doing.

Several staff, across departments, mentioned the success of their English department in adopting more culturally responsive curriculum. When I asked Mr. Blackwell about where I might find CRP in the building, he also highlighted the English department. He said, "Now I'll tell you also that our English department has just moved into exploring a culturally relevant curriculum." Staff in the English department collaborated on course content that included lessons and books that focuses on authors that represent the cultural identities of their students. Since WHS has a large population of African-American and LatinX students, they intentionally used literary works from authors who represented these racial identities. While the English department has made strides, Mr. Blackwell is clear that WHS is still in the process of developing a culture and supportive systems for CRP. In the following section, I highlight significant data related to principal leadership decisions for slowly building CRP.

Building CRP Slowly

Mr. Blackwell was very clear about his plan to "slowly build CRP from the ground up." He aims to do this "the right way" by "surgically implementing it." Here, he promotes a culturally responsive school culture through his "high spirited" conversations with staff during general faculty meetings. His aim is to get teachers "fired up" so that his "message really resonates with the staff." He holds them at "the highest regards" while talking to them "from a critical perspective." For him, laying a strong foundation for culturally responsiveness begins with reversing the school narrative and attending to the demographic divide. While laying this foundation he engages three explicit practices that are intended to slowly build CRP. They

include: linking CRP to positive school outcomes, developing a culturally responsive teaching committee, and distributing tasks for culturally responsive school leadership.

Linking CRP to Positive Outcomes.

This principal leader uses data to promote the usefulness of culturally responsive approaches. Here, he shines a light on the work of teachers who have been successful in their classroom practice for other staff to see. He aims is to show “culturally relevant pedagogy as more dynamic” than what staff may have previously believed. He uses data and classroom outcomes to highlight the practice as “more student involvement, less discipline, and higher attendance.” So, he spends a lot his school wide discussions on highlighting “things that students are doing great at” while also “giving all the credit to the teachers.”

He noted that since he has been intentional about reversing the schools’ narrative and highlighting those with successful classroom outcomes, WHS has started to experience, what he refers to as “pockets of success.”. For example, WHS has experienced an increase in student tests scores along with an increase in their overall state-wide summative destination status. More specifically, SAT and ACT scores have risen, IB diplomas have increased, and their report card status has improved from a level 1, lowest performing school, to a level 2, Commendable School. Here, being classified as a commendable school means there are no groups at the school considered to be underperforming. He noted, “...that’s a lot to celebrate.”

Culturally Responsive Teaching Committee.

Mr. Blackwell has created a culturally responsive teaching committee in order to slowly build CRP and develop teacher buy-in. This committee is comprised of a group of teacher leaders who he has identified as culturally responsive pedagogues. Simply put, these staff are academically successful with the students in their class and they have exhibited a commitment to

social justice. He believes that relying on these staff will lend toward building culturally responsiveness because his staff are the ones “actually in the trenches, doing the work.” For WHS, this means that there are white staff and black staff, making the effort to adopt culturally responsive practices. He recognizes that race issues can be emotionally difficult to work through and that staff may benefit from working on their cultural problems of practice with a staff member who is of the same race as them. For instance, he provided an example about a white female that seemed to feel more comfortable working with another white female teacher when working out problems of practice that obviously require a cultural lens. When this staff member approached this person, who was on the culturally responsive teaching committee. He told the staff that their job on the committee is to use their racial identity as a resource to help teachers to better understand the benefits and use of the practice. In this way, Mr. Blackwell uses culture as a resource for developing culturally responsiveness among staff. In doing so, he prioritizes the cultural needs of his staff for developing teachers enactments culturally responsiveness.

Distributing Culturally Responsive School Leadership.

Mr. Blackwell uses leaders in formal positions and informal leaders to support his vision for slowly building CRP. Mr. Blackwell recognizes that his job, particularly within this school context is no small undertaking. In order to lead effectively, he must rely on his staff to help assess and address problems of practice. Relying on staff, here, means recognizing all staff members as a potential resource for problem solving and goal attainment. In this way, he pushes staff with formal leadership titles to “think deeper” about problems of practice. At the same time, he has developed a more informal space, used to provide “leadership platforms” for staff to collectively address problems that might not be visible to those in formal leadership positions.

First, by recognizing that culturally responsive teaching requires innovation and adaptive teaching practices, he encourages staff in formal leadership positions to support their teaching teams in adapting their practices in order to effectively meet the learning needs of the WHS student body. He typically asks leaders to think about what they are doing to help teachers to understand their practice in a different way. He pushes them to think about ways of modeling effective strategies instead of just telling them, “no, do it this way.” He urges leaders to think about what they are doing to help teachers understand and enact different ways of teaching. He stated that he uses his division leaders and CCT’s, because he believes that these small groups can create and obtain necessary information for addressing social injustices. This information includes: “strategies, practices, paradigms, and classroom regiments.”

Second, he has developed a space for leadership platforms to address issues that might not be highly visible to administrative leaders. These leadership platforms are informal systems that allow teachers to develop their own initiatives based on school wide issues. He refers to this as “[school mascot] pride.” For him, having pride in their school organization means “teachers step up and do the work” in order to address inherent gaps in the school. Initially, Mr. Blackwell would bring in teachers to ask them how they understood and would address school-wide problems. Since being intentional about creating leadership platforms, now, staff come to him about better ways to improve practice. For example, during the current academic school year, staff have proposed strategies for addressing student behavior, and improving attendance and grading strategies. Findings related to the development of leadership platforms are discussed further in the section written on informal social structures for staff sense of collective responsibility.

Ultimately, Mr. Blackwell has prioritized culturally responsive practices through paying attention to the cultural identities of his staff and creating teacher buy-in. The strategies mentioned above are intended to build CRP from the ground-up, before he plans to promote CRP school-wide. In doing so, the school has experienced “pockets of success” including culturally responsive practices observed in some of his teachers, and along with an increase in state standardized measures. Finally, the data revealed that the principal leader relies on formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration, along with the informal social structure to promote his vision for expanding cultural responsiveness. The following section details significant school level strategies that lend toward teachers’ cultural knowledge and teaching commitments for adopting responsive practices.

Organizational Structures

This section is used to highlight findings that show how organizational structures, existing within the demographic divide, are designed to: 1) structure teachers’ learning for developing a cultural knowledge base and 2) fostering a workplace that encourages teachers to adopt effective practices. Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to connect to resources (Bidwell & Yasumoto, 1999; Penual et al., 2010). Structural conditions are used help teachers take risks intended to improve practice (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), and develop a shared commitment to organizational goals (Louis, 2007). Here, I highlight staff perceptions of these formal and informal conditions. In doing so, the data is used to highlight the significance of staff culturally-situated, instructional conversations. These conversations are used to unveil schools influence on teachers’ knowledge and commitments related to CRP.

Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration

For this study, leadership tasks, teaching teams, and professional development (PD) sessions are considered formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration. Here, leadership tasks represent instructional leadership decisions that may derive from the principal leader, but are the responsibility of division leaders or teacher leaders. Teaching teams refers to department level meetings for math and social studies, along with core course teams within each department. Professional development refers to formal PD sessions that teachers attend at their school. These meetings are facilitated by district liaisons, the AP for instruction, and teacher leaders in formal and informal leadership positions. Since the central aim of this study is to investigate major influences on teachers' enactments of CRP, this section is used to describe formal structures used to shape teachers' classroom practice. I focus on significant strategies used to influence teachers' cultural knowledge and dispositions.

Leadership Tasks

In this school, the division leader is an administrative role designed to facilitate the learning and collaboration within the schools' core course teams. Division leaders are department heads who work with teacher leaders in facilitating the roles, responsibilities and tone of core course teaching teams. As administrators, they are the primary source of instructional support for teachers within their respective department.

Mr. Blackwell is clear on his plan for promoting his vision for the school, in using the role of division leadership and instructional support staff to guide other staff. At the time of data collection, he was in the process of "still trying to make them little [versions of himself] in terms of their leadership guide." This means he is intentional about supporting division leaders in how they guide teachers and situations, because his goal is for them to also build leadership

platforms. They also collaborate on setting standards for themselves and their teams. These staff are “accountable for instructional work” and “providing learning opportunities for their teachers.” He pushes them to focus inquiry concerning pedagogical supports for staff. He encourages leaders to think about what is being done to address the teachers’ needs and what are they doing to help teachers understand different ways of teaching. Ultimately, division leaders are in place to promote Mr. Blackwell’s vision. In this case, leaders are used to promote a vision surrounding culturally responsiveness. The following details how this vision is realized within professional learning opportunities, and ongoing instructional supports like departments and teaching teams.

Professional Development

Generally, staff discussed the necessity of PDs that attend to both the demographics of the students and fit with teachers’ personality for those in service to that demographic. The MTSS coordinator gave an example about a PD that she “had an issue with.” Overall, she described the district as being far removed from the classroom, and borrows from models that might not serve their particular student demographic. Multiple staff describe PDs as “50/50”, meaning 50% of the time they feel like what they were “learning is useful.”

Overall, the staff described PDs as shaping teachers’ instructional conversations by introducing new discourse. Often times, the discourse was related to the knowledge and dispositions required for culturally responsiveness. For example, participants did mention PD opportunities that supported their conversations on the necessity of understanding students home life, while encouraging a willingness to adapt instruction based on that knowledge. Though, with the exception of demonstration classroom, few learning opportunities explicitly mentioned culturally responsiveness as its goal. One member of the staff referred to the new terminology as

these “much sexier terms”. Facilitators test out new theories and teachers report feeling like “guinea pigs” in the process. For example, instead of saying “rigor” new PD sessions will call this term “depth of learning” instead. The data revealed that there are specific PDs related to culturally responsiveness, trauma informed practices, and overall student engagement. A summary of these learning opportunities is described in the following sections.

Institute Day for Culturally Responsive Materials

At the beginning of the school year, WHS holds teacher training for new and returning teachers, referred to as institute days. For the current academic year, one of the institute days was dedicated to supporting staff in developing culturally responsive curriculum and materials. Several staff described this school level PD that occurred at the beginning of the school year. Division leaders were tasked with developing sessions for each of their teaching teams. For staff in the history department, division leaders facilitated a session on “four different exercises that were culturally specific to African Americans and LatinX students. The session focused on strategies for their specific student demographics and then teachers were encouraged to “cater them to their specific subject area.” They highlighted how to use “knowledge culturally” and “knowledge of the community” surrounding WHS. These findings are discussed further in the section written on culturally-situated instructional conversations surrounding pedagogy and outside, culturally responsive resources.

PD on Demonstration Classroom

Demonstration classrooms are one PD opportunity used to promote culturally responsive classroom strategies and dispositions. After deciding on a plan for “building CRP from the ground”, Mr. Blackwell sent a group of five teachers to a conference on culturally relevant teaching in Baltimore. The conference took place in the Spring of 2018 and they attended a

workshop led by Gloria Ladson-Billings. Following the conference those staff worked with Mr. Blackwell to put together a curriculum for their demonstration classrooms. Mr. Blackwell intends to coordinate these CRP PDs for the next year or two before promoting these types of strategies at the whole school level. These CRP PDs are referred to as Demonstration Classrooms. This PD experience is used to simulate a culturally responsive lesson in practice, facilitated by a teacher leader known to enact culturally responsive pedagogy. Demonstration classrooms comes directly from Mr. Blackwell. He posits “And so my staff is going to gain an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally relevant instruction through this demonstration classroom.”

For the building level PD committee, Mr. Blackwell has tasked these individuals in thinking deeper about “What does culturally responsive pedagogy look like?” From there, teacher leaders have developed lessons to demonstrate culturally responsive lessons centered around specific academic skills for students across content area. The AP for instruction corroborates these sentiments highlighting that teacher leaders identified as “experts” in culturally responsive teaching are selected to model lessons for demonstration classroom.

The AP for instruction explained the structure of PDs for demonstration classroom as a set of sessions coordinated for the fall and spring semester. The sessions occur during school time and teachers attend on their “release period.” Each set contains 9 different sessions for staff to choose from. They are optional and teachers can sign-up for different sessions throughout the year. Some topics include culturally responsive lessons on brain-based instruction and quantum learning. Staff described it as “just like being in a classroom.” Sometimes, teachers will also demonstrate strategies after school for an hour, if colleagues are interested. Additionally, staff

demonstrate to their colleagues as if they were the student. Throughout, each strategy focuses on culturally responsive ways for teaching students' academic skills.

WHS staff presented conflicting narratives on the extent to which school staff are taking advantage of the demonstration classroom opportunity. Some staff reported that those “who really need it don’t go.” At the same time however, the AP highlighted that “People utilize them pretty well.” The data revealed ways that this training promotes enactments of CRP. For instance, staff recognize Demonstration Classroom as a tool for fostering staff perspectives around a social justice orientation. It is also described as a low-stress avenue for teachers, specifically younger teachers, to ask questions.

PD on Trauma Informed Practice

PDs on trauma informed practices are also another way to support staff in thinking critically about their students' home life. Here, critical inquiry on students' home life, lends to necessary cultural knowledge. In response to “Senate Bill 100” the WHS district office is working with the school to engage more trauma sensitive practices. The bill was created to address the causes and consequences of the school-to-prison pipeline. The primary aim of this policy is to minimize exclusionary discipline practices like out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, while developing alternatives to suspensions. Accordingly, the school has been working with the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) team, partnered with a private college in the Midwest. All of the school staff were required to attend this training and begin with a quiz, which focused on family background questions. Staff reported that the quiz focused on asking questions around, “if you were abused at home, or if one of your parents was an alcoholic, or if you came from a single parent household”. Following the quiz, the teachers received a number based on their responses. Then, teachers were encouraged to “think about what students are

going through, and what their number might be, and how [they] could respond to a student who didn't have a home to go to last night and didn't get their homework done because they don't have a home and couldn't get it done". Generally, they promoted teacher inquiry how to incorporate knowledge of students' home life into their classroom practice in order to build better relationships with their students.

The data revealed that these PDs focused on promoting teachers' developing a caring disposition. Staff discussed attending trainings on trauma-informed practices, which focused on strategies for socio-emotional learning. As outlined in my theoretical framework, teacher caring is observed in the CRP literature as a common attribute of teachers enacting culturally responsiveness. The IB coordinator discussed attending multiple PDs that prioritized socioemotional teaching strategies that centered on the bases of care. In these sessions, teachers were encouraged to consider students home life and personal characteristics that influence their behavior. Ultimately the sessions were geared toward the "discipline component of [their] work and how teachers are understanding of what students are coming to us with." The IB coordinator went on further to note the schools' explicit goal of "decreasing the number of out of school suspensions." Staff reported that these trainings seemed to support staff in adjusting their discipline policies to help address students' behavior.

Additionally, the data revealed that PDs on trauma informed practices promoted teachers' use of cultural knowledge in team meetings. For instance, staff discussed having common language for addressing student behavioral issues. Staff also talked about ways they helped their colleagues to think about their students' home life before implementing discipline practices. A teacher leader from the social studies department described the trauma informed classroom training as "phenomenal because it really puts things in perspective." Staff discussed the types of

issues “kids have at home” and strategies for the classroom if a student has a “trauma induced response.” These findings are discussed further in the section written on culturally-situated instructional conversations surrounding students and their home life.

PD for Increasing Students’ Engagement

PDs for increasing student engagement represent the rest of the formal PDs described by WHS staff. These PDs include content on teaching strategies for supporting students with deep, critical inquiry, while attending to students’ interests. Staff across departments mentioned attending formal PD sessions on Document Based Questioning (DBQ). PD sessions on DBQ’s were used to support teachers in extending their lesson plans to include history and recent examples for enhancing student skills. Since, staff discussed using their meeting times to look at curriculum content and “finding ways to make it relevant.” The data revealed that this training had a significant impact on teachers’ collaborative inquiry and lesson planning. Staff reported using strategies from this training to develop lessons for critical inquiry across classes within the social studies department. These findings are discussed further in the section written on culturally-situated instructional conversations surrounding pedagogy for enhancing rigor.

It is worth noting that, staff also mentioned that PDs on project based learning and small learning communities seem to be ways that the school is promoting culturally responsive approaches. Other PDs include topics around educational software like Mastery Connect and Power School. Staff described trainings on educational technology as “happening a lot, since technology changes so quickly.

Ongoing Instructional Supports

The data on ongoing instructional supports revealed: that the formal structure has been recently adapted to enhance instructional supports across departments, and that WHS relies on

external partners to work with teaching teams to enhance pedagogical strategies. Teaching teams at WHS are called core course teams (CCT's) and refer to teacher teams comprised of staff who teach the same academic content. These teams are divided by either grade level and/or content area within each department. Data collected at WHS included staff from the math and social studies department. This includes observations of the 9th grade team, which was comprised of teachers only in service to freshman students. While the other observation included staff, who teach economics to students across grade level. Interview and data analysis revealed that the meetings are used to talk about aligning their class schedule with the curriculum and to make sure staff are in the same sequence. Teachers were described as “having the freedom to be able to teach how they want”. However, the district has developed uniform assessments for midterm and final exams. These teams are tasked with: making sure the requirements for these assessments are met, analyzing student performance on assessments, and planning lessons based on the results of those assessments.

Ultimately, CCT's are described as operating like a professional learning community (PLC) where a formal space is provided to develop the informal social structure of staff. The data revealed that these teacher team meetings happen twice a week, sometimes occur during their common planning period, and work under a common lesson plan. Division leaders rely on teacher leaders to share innovative ideas and to promote new practices that seem effective for teaching their content area. These spaces are described as the time for teams to share information in the context of just their course, in order to make the information “relevant.” CCT's are the biggest platform for developing core teaching teams.

The data revealed that teachers within the math department find that the curriculum is really scripted and is described as a kind of barrier to culturally responsive approaches. Staff

described not really knowing how to develop a culturally responsive curriculum for math classes. For those belonging to teams within the social studies department, staff described really enjoying the flexibility of their curriculum so that they make enact more culturally responsive approaches. One of the social studies teacher leaders talked at length about how he encourages those in his CCT to prioritize the use of cultural lens in their classroom practice. Overall, the data shows cultural responsiveness is more understood and increasingly present within English and social studies departments, compared to math and science departments.

Staff Committees for CRP

The data revealed two ongoing instructional supports intended to support staff in developing culturally responsive classroom strategies and dispositions. These ongoing supports take the shape of staff committees. These committees are made up of staff with formal leadership titles and informal teacher leaders. They include the culturally responsive teaching committee and the resilience committee.

The culturally responsive teaching committee is comprised of one administrative leader and various teacher leaders. These staff are people who display a commitment to Mr. Blackwell's vision for slowly building CRP. Staff identify from different cultural backgrounds, and teach different subject areas. They are tasked with working together to developing CRP PDs, bring back best practices for teaching racially minoritized students, and reading books intended to enhance their knowledge of cultural responsiveness in the classroom. They aim to provide their colleagues with "bits and pieces" of information that is supposed to "help me teachers more responsive to the diversity of students sitting in from of them." This school level support is observed as one intentional way for schools to support cultural responsiveness across classrooms.

The resilience committee is a formal mechanism for teacher collaboration used to enhance teachers culturally-situated, instructional conversations. In alignment with the districts and schools' improvement goals for enhancing teachers' capacity for work in service to this historically underserved community, WHS has implemented a resilience committee that helps to develop teachers' practice for attending to students' social and emotional learning needs. This committee works with the ACES team mentioned above. According to the MTSS coordinator, this committee is intended to help teachers "get to know the [students] mental being" and this is the "biggest initiative" with the MTSS team this year. The MTSS coordinator summarizes just how this committee is used as a space where staff engage and support each other in navigating through culturally-situated, instructional conversations. She notes:

So, I think one of the best things ever is the other things we're doing with ACES, which is the resilience committee. So, it's basically getting to know the child's mental being. And knowing what the child is going through at home is going to affect them. And unfortunately, I think we do have teachers that are here because of the job. But you have to love it to be here. You have to love it, because these kids are needy. ...And a lot of it is us talking about realizing what these kids go home to. And some of these teachers, they don't understand. They ask kids "Why can't you come to 1st period?" And some of us need to tell them, it's because they had to drop their siblings off at school. And they don't get that. They'll be like "Or what do you mean he can't stay after school?" And again, we have to tell them "No, he has to go home and open the door for his little sister." So, it's like, a space where we can talk and support people being aware, which is what Aces basically is. And we have a committee, which I'm on it, resilience. Which is basically again, honoring all the kids for what they do, not just because I'm a straight-A student.

Ultimately, formal structures used to guide teachers work with their students and each other are observed as opportunities to enhance staff collective cultural knowledge. They also serve as spaces for staff to motivate one another to adopt more productive perspectives and tools for thinking more critically about their practice within a racially isolated school context. This study observed internal and external resources for enhancing staff enactments of CRP. These resources come in the shape of human resources that hold the types of cultural knowledge needed to be

skillful, and the types of workplace commitments to adapt and innovate for the benefit of their culturally, unique students.

It remains important that these formal structures are viewed as the space for staff to think about how to be effective within the context of the demographic divide. Overall, these data highlight the intentions of the principal leader and other staff personnel for fostering a workplace environment conducive to culturally responsiveness within a racially isolated school context. In this way, staff relationships and beliefs about student abilities and academic expectations remain significant for addressing problems that arise due to cultural incongruence. This incongruence has much to do with how staff think about their workplace environment. The following is intended to capture how teachers work with one another and how their collaboration influences their pedagogical practice.

Informal Social Structure

Education scholars have made strides in exposing the ramifications surrounding the isolation of teachers practice. With this knowledge the field has paid more attention to understanding and developing structures used to enhance teachers' collaborative practice. This research understands teachers' instructional tasks as comprised of both individual and collaborative responsibilities. For this study, I was mainly concerned with the extent to which teachers' work with one another influenced their knowledge and attitudes related to culturally responsive pedagogies. In doing so, I was able to capture: the extent to which staff rely on another, the nature of advice networks, and staff beliefs and expectations of their work with racially minoritized youth. As aligned with my theoretical framework, I refer to these dynamics, respectively, as: norms of trust, collegial bonds amongst staff, and collective responsibility. Since norms of trust and collegial bonds are often cited as two markers of school informal social

structures that lend to enhancing teachers' pedagogical practice, I relied on these concepts to make sense of how staff relationships influence teachers' pedagogy. Also, as aligned with findings concerned with multicultural education, I focus on staff sense of collective responsibility given its significance to school level attempts for adopting and sustaining culturally responsive methods (Wood, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Norms of Trust

The term norms of trust refer to the confidence in or reliance on another person or group. Generally, administrators described that forming deep levels of trust can be challenging since the time in team meetings is limited and, typically, is not used to discuss things beyond the immediate demands of the curriculum. The schedule for most teachers at this school includes five fifty-minute class periods, a twenty-minute lunch period and another fifty-minute planning period. The AP stated in her interview that it is likely that teachers do not have time to "engage in real conversations that go beyond the immediate need of the curriculum or pleasantries. While issues with time might only occur for some teaching times, addressing problems of practice using a cultural lens is likely to require more time and space before staff can begin to address issues related to the demographic divide that require a cultural lens. With this, I was able to capture staff reliance on and confidence in their colleagues.

Reliance On

The data revealed that formal structures like teams used to provide support services and teams within departments rely on one another to improve student outcomes. This year at WHS administrative leaders are pushing staff to engage in "a lot more collaborative support" and "working together." Staff are described as very collaborative in CCT's, and in other teams like teaching committees and other academic programs like IB.

The MTSS coordinator is tasked with providing support services and leading the resilience team for improvements in student performance. These teams help target the individual needs of lower performing students. According to the MTSS coordinator, her job is to put interventions in place to support student outcomes. Sometimes, she is tasked with figuring out if a student is not being successful because teachers' instructional practice or if the student needs an individualized education plan (IEP). In order to do this, she needs to rely on other staff to help her assess student issues. Depending on the situation, she needs to sit down with the parent, the counselor, the dean of students, school social worker, and behavioral specialist who also serves as the dean for restorative justice. She highlights that sometimes students have "so much stuff other heavy stuff in their life." So, it remains imperative that she rely on the assessment of parents and other support staff before putting an intervention in place. After having met these individuals, she creates a "plan of success" for the student, while relying on other staff to assess and address the students' situation. Over the last few years, she was the only person in charge of developing plans of success for students. Since the creation of the MTSS/resilience team, she relies on other staff to implement the best interventions for each student under their care.

Additionally, staff within the math department and social studies department described being heavily reliant on members of their teaching teams. Interview and observational data showed that in the math department staff plan together and equally contribute to the common lesson plan. They recently started engaging in "peer observations" so that staff can identify best practices across classrooms within their department. Staff expressed that they "plan pretty much everything together." For this, staff have decided to stick to their scripted curriculum to figure out what strategies work best, and from there, in the following year, they will tailor the lessons to fit their pedagogical styles. Further, interview and observational data showed that staff in the

social studies team are encouraged to rely on one another. Staff expressed that having the CCT's be small teaching teams seems to "support teacher collaboration" which feels "very purposeful" to staff. One staff member described the meetings as "very positive", "very inclusive, and that staff are respectful of one another. Team members rely heavily on one another while using their common curriculum while supporting others and sharing ideas about how to deliver content. Further some staff expressed that working at WHS is very different from working at other schools because of the high synergy that is created by the principal leader and other staff concerned with equity and justice.

It is worth noting that staff reliance on one another was also represented when teacher leaders "pick out people" to help them carry out an initiative. As mentioned earlier, staff committees are formed by teachers who wish to further support WHS in addressing enduring problems of practice. These teachers form teams outside of their primary instructional team and they "create their own instructional paradigm." In doing so, they work with people who can help them realize their mission, and have some kind of buy-in to the groups intended goals. The principal leader supports these initiatives and informal teams highlighting that he sees the "fruit of their labor when students are being successful." The development of teaching committee's highlights both confidence in and reliance on colleagues for assessing and addressing problems of practice.

Confidence In

Interview data revealed that staff described being confident in: the capacity of their teaching team, the intentions of administrative leader, professional values of colleagues, and the availability of colleagues. Staff expressed feeling confident in the capacity of their teaching team when their colleagues pick up the slack when someone else is out sick and generally, when

someone cannot make it to class. The division leader in the math department expressed being confident that teachers will step up if a someone cannot make it to school at the last minute, and sometimes, this helps her avoid needing to request a substitute teacher. She describes this as a level of trust because it is important for her to know that staff will do what is best for students and the school's overall organizational capacity. As well, staff described feeling confident that their colleagues and leaders have availability to provide support. Interview data showed several staff who mentioned that "having an open door policy" is one way schools enact norms of trust. Staff understand norms of trust to mean that colleagues are open with one another about sharing their teaching strategies and having others observe their practice. Staff expressed that they trust each other when they feel understood and comfortable having someone watch their teaching practice, and vice versa. They also expressed that norms of trust are limited in places where staff are "freaked out" by having others observe their practice. Teachers should so not feel threatened by having others observe their practice.

Staff described high levels of trust between instructional teaching staff and administrative leaders. Teachers expressed that administrative leaders feel confident that teachers are doing the best they can. One of the teacher leaders in the math department simply stated, "I do feel like we have a lot of trust in this building. When I talk to teachers from other buildings it's a lot different between the administration." He went on further to say that administrative leaders do not conduct classroom drop-ins on a daily because leaders "trust that teachers are doing what [they] need to do." Staff expressed that administrative leaders do trust them and value them as teachers. Also, staff expressed that teachers trust administration to support them. At the same time, the data revealed that there are some issues with the role of division leadership. Administrators and teachers have noted that the role of division leaders does create some conflict amongst staff.

While the role of division leaders is to primarily act as an instructional support, problems may arise if teachers already worry that they may be poorly evaluated. The MTSS coordinator noted that “people are very iffy again, because they are administrators. They do evaluate you.”

Teachers generally expressed support from division leaders, but mainly relied on members of their teaching team for help.

Staff described feeling confident in the professional values of their colleagues. Interview data revealed that staff believe that their colleagues are working at WHS “for the right reasons.” In particular, in my conversation with the IB coordinator on cultural clashes and racial tension at the school, he let me know that he has not experienced “anything racial between the staff” and that the vast majority of teachers at WHS are teaching at the school for the right reasons. He has not heard anyone ever say things like “that white teacher is here making money and going back to the suburbs, or a different suburb.” He believes that most teachers also recognize that staff are teaching at the school because they genuinely want to help the students at WHS.

Erosions of Trust

Erosions of trust are present when people are seeking promotions and friends become superiors; and when staff have concerns about teachers’ capacity for work within their racially isolated school context. Trust erodes when staff feel that their colleagues want a promotion. The MTSS coordinator noted that she has trust issues with people who “will do whatever it takes to move up.” Further, trust issues arise when teaching staff “move up to a higher position” and roles and responsibilities change. Staff expressed that their closeness to a colleague has been compromised when someone was transitioning from a teacher leader position to an administrator position. The AP for instruction highlighted in her interview that it was a difficult transition when she received her promotion from being an English teacher “especially in a place where

[she] worked before.” She talked about how everyone was treating her as a close colleague, but after her promotion to AP she became their superior, which was “an interesting shift.” In situations where a team member is promoted to administration, staff have expressed their erosion of trust by saying, “You better not tell her nothing, because she's gonna go tell them”, referring to the other administrative leaders. As well, staff described that trust issues are further heightened during union contract negotiations.

Furthermore, teacher leaders expressed concerns about teacher quality and some staff ability to be effective in WHS, and other “urban” schools, due to the amount of teacher turnover and the need of younger staff to adjust their practice based on what students’ prior content knowledge. During my interview with one of the teacher leaders in the social studies department he discussed issues with teacher turnover in racially isolated high schools, like WHS. He points out that staff sometimes discuss that they are not confident that the job is a good fit for some teachers, and that they are not confident that some teachers will stay at WHS, or in the field of teaching once they realize how hard teaching in racially isolated schools can be. For example, within the social studies department, new hires come into the school expecting that they will teach a social studies class, but then they are assigned to teaching an economics course, because the school is short on economic teachers. He notes that these staff are often less prepared to deliver this content. Coupled with this, these teachers struggle even more to fix their classroom management issues, which is described as the result of not knowing students’ culture. For this teacher leader, his personal, professional goals are to assist his team in being able to deliver instruction in a relevant way. For him, he prioritizes making sure that teachers are engaging in “good teaching on the basic level.” This teacher leader expressed that his reliance on staff is enhanced when he is confident that they are able to do good work in the classroom.

Additionally, it can be difficult to trust newer teachers who do not seem to have good classroom management strategies. Younger teachers are viewed as having a hard time in the classroom. Here, one can trust that a younger teacher will try, but that might not be able to trust that a younger teacher has a strong capacity to be effective. Staff expressed that classroom management is the hardest task for beginning teachers. One common issue is that they really want the students to sit and be quiet. However, students love to interact and have fun. Beginning teachers sometimes lack the understanding that they have “to learn something about their students to gain their trust.” This leader recognizes that some staff tend to “over control the student population” and this is a problem for teaching practice.

Overall, the data surrounding staff norms of trust revealed teachers on the same teaching team rely on one another because certain tasks require that staff work together and to gather student information. Also, teachers are confident that their colleagues will show up for them in their absence. They believe that administrative leaders have good intentions underlining their practice. Staff also expressed being confident in their colleagues who share the same professional values. Further, staff lack confidence when teachers seem to prioritize individual professional ambitions over relationships with colleagues, and when they witness their colleagues struggle in their work with students.

Collegial Bonds Amongst Staff

Collegial bonds amongst staff refer staff interactions that act as “advice networks.” This informal mechanism serves as a resource for individual and team problem solving and innovation (Cross, Borgatto, & Parker, 2001). Generally, staff expressed a positive relationship between administrative leaders and teams, and positive relationships between teachers. Staff discussed variations of relationships between teachers and division leaders. At WHS, collegial

bonds were observed amongst staff who: communicated frequently, shared ideas, and expressed similar ideas about the goals of their curriculum.

Frequent Communication

Teams are considered close when they are frequently in contact with their colleagues. For example, staff discussed the closeness of the geometry team because they are always in contact. Also, the 9th grade team is considered close. The 9th grade team is known, school-wide, as being comprised of the strongest teachers, and being frequently in contact. Since these teachers are tasked addressing learning gaps from elementary school to high school, they are considered to have the hardest job, and are offered systematic supports like “common planning periods” to enhance their collaborative inquiry and work. These staff are described as some of the “strongest go-getters.” People in these teams meet with each other multiple times a day.

Further, staff described social activities and time spent outside of school is used to promote collegial bonds amongst staff. One of the math teacher leaders’ highlights that their department is “pretty tight” and that members of this department have “all been friends for a long time.” This teacher leader is also the social chair and is tasked with making sure staff have an opportunity to get together for the holidays. As well, staff in the social studies department described relationships among teaching teams as “good relationships because [they] communicate via email or in person about what the expectations are, about what we're looking for, what some of the feedback is.” Ultimately, frequent communication was found to be a significant factor in staff perceptions of their collegial bonds.

Sharing ideas

Teams are considered close when staff express that they are comfortable sharing ideas with members of their team. The division leader for social studies highlights that their

department has “pretty good relationships because they’re sharing ideas all the time.” Generally, staff described having great, close relationships with others in their CCT’s. Within, the math department staff described getting along pretty well. While some teachers “cluster together better than others” overall they have good professional relationships. The division leader for math posits that she also has great relationships with her teacher leaders, positing that they have never missed a task she asked them to do. Further, multiple staff expressed that they have high levels of respect for one another, which supports meeting spaces to be an “open forum where everyone feels comfortable expressing their opinions.” One of the teacher leaders gives an example of how these bonds do lead to staff feeling comfortable with one another to share best practices and provide solutions to problems. Staff do rely on one another and use effective strategies observed by their colleagues. She stated,

It was one type of problem in our module where they had to do percent increase and decrease. We also have enrichment, which is like we have each other's students in a supplement math class. So, I have students from my other team members later in the day, and I notice this one particular teacher, his students, the way there were doing it was really making sense to them, and it was by far better than how the other students were doing. So, he got up, and just on the chalkboard taught us all how he taught it. And then we put the notes in the Common Curriculum so that next year we have that. So, that happens a lot. And we all feel comfortable with each other, because we've known each other for a long time, so no one feels uncomfortable being like, "How did you teach this?"

Overall, staff at WHS expressed feeling close to members within their CCT’s. This closeness is represented by frequent communication, similar curricular goals and feeling comfortable to express opinions about teaching strategies.

Similar Curricular goals

Teams are considered close when staff express similar curricular goals. Staff understand strong collegial bonds to mean that teachers have a strong collective vision and because of this collective sense they consider facets of the school or their team outside of their individual

classroom. Staff expressed that they do not just support their students', they support the entire team for the good of their students. The division leader for social studies highlights that their "relationships are good, because [they've] never not been on the same page."

Collective Responsibility

Teachers everyday interactions include formal and informal evaluations of students that accumulate and give direction to the stream of beliefs in a school organization (Diamond, Randolph, & Spillane, 2004). Generally, staff described particular school level structures used to enhance staff responsibility for student learning. These structures include: the creation of leadership platforms and the development of teacher committees. The data on staff sense of collective responsibility shows that: staff have varying expectations for students' academic engagement; and the principal leader uses data to increase staff academic expectations for students.

Increasing Responsibility for Student Outcomes

For WHS, collective responsibility means increasing staff sense of responsibility for student outcomes. The data revealed that staff were supported by the principal leader in developing committees to address student behavior and academic achievement. Mr. Blackwell creates space for teachers to act as informal leaders to support the development of students' academic abilities. His overall goal is to support teachers in feeling responsible for student learning. He highlights,

Well, the creation of leadership platforms is to make people responsible for the different initiatives in the building. That's how people buy into the school community. You become a stakeholder in the school community once you own something...I have for example, a teacher who said, "You know what [Mr. Blackwell] I got about 50 kids that I know who are failing classes in English. I want to take these kids, me and another teacher, we've been talking about this and we want to do this and we want to look and try and improve their grades and their discipline through this program, can you support us on

this?" Yeah, I'll support us on this. I'll support you on this. And so that's what it means to provide leadership platforms... for people to come forward. Staff are also given the authority to create teams to help them address school wide problems and gaps in students learning needs. In doing so, he makes staff feel responsible for addressing the issues they have directly observed. For example, the MTSS team, which is also referred to as the resilience committee, along with the SAT preparation committee, are two groups of teachers that are responsible for promoting high expectations for staff. The MTSS committee is more so responsible for supporting staff in their discipline practices and socio-emotional learning strategies. The SAT committee is responsible for supporting staff in promoting high expectations on standardized achievement tests. Mr. Blackwell says that these teams came about because staff members, who he has a direct relationship with, came to him and said "I want to take this on, and I got the people to do it with." From there, staff members "pick their people out" and attempt to execute their initiatives. In this case, these initiatives took the form of teaching committees. The data revealed that there are also committees for restorative justice, math skills, and reading skills. Generally, staff reported frequently working with other support staff, administrative leaders and teachers across departments to support students' varied learning needs.

Influencing Academic Expectations

At the same time, the AP for instruction spoke to differences in academic expectations for students. Staff expectations can lie along a spectrum of beliefs. On one far end, some staff seem to be really concerned with student content knowledge, like dates of significant historical events. On the other far, more productive end, staff make sure students display transferrable skills, like asking critical questions about news media. She recognizes that some staff teach the subject in which they majored in college, so this may be the reason why they are very passionate about the curriculum they teach. However, effective practice at WHS entails supporting students'

transferrable skills. She highlighted, "...some of our teaching staff, just from what I've observed, hasn't really ... Can't let go of the fact that the content isn't the most important thing." For these staff, she pushes them to thinking about questions like:

Are we talking about the news? Are we talking about social justice? Are we talking about what's happening in the world? Are we talking about how that can apply to what you're doing rather than did they learn this one multiplication fact?

Overall, I observed staff at WHS as having high academic expectations for student learning and a strong sense of responsibility for enhancing the learning environment experienced by their students. Interview data revealed that there is tension between having high expectations and enhancing rigor. Staff expressed this tension as a consequence for working with a students' who come from under-resourced schools and communities.

Further, the data revealed that the principal leader uses data to influence staff expectations of students and themselves. His goal is to allow them to see the possibilities created "with effort." At the time of the interview, staff had yet to receive the news of their increase in their summative designation status. This type of accomplishment is believed to enhance staff sense of efficacy for even more improvements. Mr. Blackwell is clear that the school's increase in culturally responsiveness and enhanced state-wide status is a result of leadership efforts for engaging a more "humanistic paradigm."

So once that hits the ears of the staff, again we'll be able to do anything and everything we want with them now because they believe that anything is possible now. If you're going from a failing school once recognized by the government, now they're telling you that you're a commendable and within that commendable there are schools in the district that are not that. But yet, we're supposed to be the worst school. But yet we're the commendable school. So it goes to show that anything is possible with effort. It's just that we as leaders you know, we have to understand that paradigm, you know. That humanistic paradigm of motivating and moving people.

Generally, results from student data are used to promote staff sense of responsibility for student learning and high expectations. For example, during my time at WHS, I learned that division

leaders were in the process of working with CCT's to organize discussions on "how to use formative assessments to inform their instruction." Ultimately, the data revealed that staff feelings of responsibility for student learning are linked to their behavioral expressions of care. In other words, staff expressed being motivated to support their students because they see themselves as capable of helping. For example, staff work with their colleagues to provide students with the necessary supports for raising tests scores, turning in homework, and post-secondary applications.

Ultimately, while working within the context of the demographic divide, WHS leaders are working to develop systems and supports for meeting the diverse learning needs of their students. In doing so, they rely on formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration to foster an informal social system that pushes teachers to work together to figure out best practices. Here, school leaders distribute culturally responsive and instructional leadership tasks to improve instruction received by their specific student population. In doing so, teachers are placed in teams and required to attend PD sessions to enhance their cultural knowledge and understanding of equitable teaching strategies. The data revealed that both formal and informal mechanisms seem to drive teachers' instructional conversations. In particular, schools are encouraging teachers to have more instructional conversations using a cultural lens. By encouraging teachers to use a cultural lens for assessing and addressing problems of practice, teachers' workplace dynamics seems to impact teachers' knowledge and understanding of culturally responsiveness. The following section is used to detail findings around staff culturally-situated, instructional conversations.

Instructional Conversations

Consistent with my theoretical framework, these conversations do center around knowledge, commitments, and classroom strategies related to culturally responsive pedagogy. The themes that developed from these conversations include a range of topics that relate to the demographic divide, school organizational capacity, and staff instructional capacity for enacting CRP. The data has been organized into three major categories. They include instructional conversations that I refer to as: CRP knowledge, CRP commitments, and classroom strategies. The section on CRP knowledge highlights conversations that relate to staff and students. CRP knowledge of staff represents: recognition of teachers' who hold cultural knowledge and those who do not; opportunities for staff to recognize their own personal privilege; recognition of differences that separate students beyond race; and teacher fit for work in racially isolated schools and willingness to teach cultural history courses. CRP knowledge of students focused on staff knowledge of students' culture, and how cultural knowledge is used to support discipline practices, behavior policies, and the unique needs of their students from immigrant families. The section on CRP commitments focuses discussions on the ideas and practices promoted within at WHS for enhancing the schools' capacity. This includes discussions on: fostering commitments to addressing learning gaps and commitments to enhancing rigor. The section on classroom strategies highlights the explicit tools promoted at WHS to enhance teachers' instructional practice. I highlight the approaches currently promoted at WHS to better understand how schools attempt to shape teachers' practice in racially isolated school environments. They include discussions on: engaging student-centered approaches, and prioritizing culture in the curriculum.

CRP Knowledge-Staff

Conversations surrounding WHS staff include discussions related to the various components of the demographic divide. The data has been divided into four themes, detailed in the section below. They include conversations that focus on: lacking cultural knowledge, realizing personal privilege, realizing various components of the demographic divide, and issues with teacher assignment to cultural history courses.

Lacking Cultural Knowledge

Staff conversations on the demographic divide center around the types of teachers who hold cultural knowledge and are able to incorporate that knowledge in their classroom practice and those who are described as “not understanding the culture as much.” Here, the data revealed that lacking cultural knowledge is shown during discussions where teachers are blaming the student for things happening in their home life, blaming the parents for lack of exposure to certain leisurely activities, and seeming “disconnected” from the students lived experiences.

Staff discussed in their interviews about times where their colleagues have blamed their students for things happening in their home life. One of the participants talked about a discussion held during a team meeting where she expresses to her colleagues about the importance of “understanding what’s going on with a kid personally” in order to not “blame the kid” for their home life situation. Further, staff confirmed that these conversations have also been prompted by their work with the ACES team.

Staff discussed in their interviews about times where their colleagues have blamed parents. In my interview with the MTSS coordinator, she highlighted that she had just had a conversation earlier that day about working with students from underserved communities. In a staff meeting one teacher complained that the students find the museum field trips to be boring. And another teacher commented, "That's because as a parent you should've read to them."

In these instances, staff will explain to their colleagues about the certain economic and social inequalities that could have prevented parents from engaging their children in certain activities. The MTSS coordinator explains that, "You have to understand, everybody doesn't have the money to bring their kid to a museum. Everybody doesn't have the resources to go." And he responded by asking, "Well, what about our free days?" And then she informs him that "Everybody doesn't know when free days are. And you also have to understand parents try to take their kid to where they can afford, and what their interest is. If their interest is, I want to go to Disney on Ice, I'm gonna take my kid there." Here, the MTSS coordinator is explaining to another staff member some of the nuances related to the families they serve. This staff member is imparting some of her cultural knowledge with her team. These conversations are one-way staff support one another in gaining cultural knowledge so that they can move beyond blaming the parents.

Some teachers are described as "disconnected" when they do not have a cultural understanding of their students. This disconnection happens when teachers exhibit assumptions that stem from experiences within their own childhood, without a clear understanding of the culture of their students. The MTSS coordinator noted that she believes some staff "don't understand the culture of [their] kids", and that their thinking is limited to the experiences of their own childhood, she highlighted "they want it to be like their childhood."

Helping teachers gain cultural knowledge that improves their classroom practice requires a cultural lens. And in doing so, staff describe the necessity of "brutal honesty" and "candid conversations". When talking to one of the social studies teacher leaders he mentioned a conversation he had with a member of the social studies team about "being a good teacher" at WHS. One of his main goals for supporting his team is to give guidance to "teachers who don't

understand the culture as much”. There have been times where teacher leaders talk with division leaders about the importance of teacher fit. He highlighted the importance of cultural knowledge in order to be effective in schools like WHS. He says,

So I tend to be brutally honest when I have side conversations or conversations with teachers in team meetings...I won't beat around the bush. There's certain types of teachers that can teach at this school. Honestly, I said this is not for everybody. And even some of our staff would say, if you can teach it in this high school, you can teach anywhere. And I kind of get what she's saying because you have to adapt in a way.

Teachers working in predominately racially minoritized schools do not need to be the same race as their students to be effective. Yet, it remains important that staff, of all races, have the skill and will to adapt their practices based on the specific needs of their students.

Effectively gathering and interpreting students' needs requires a cultural lens. The “types of teachers that can teach at” WHS are those who can use their cultural knowledge to adapt their classroom practice with students and collaborative practice with staff. Another teacher leader goes on further to discuss the importance of openness and honesty with staff from various racial groups,

So I think candid conversation with all staff is necessary...and I don't care if it's candid with African American teachers, with white teachers with, young teachers, guy teachers or girl teachers.... I think there is... in a way it's just there's a certain kind of way to be at a school like this. I'm not saying it's harder or easier, I'm just saying that you need to be a certain kind of person in order to be effective.

Again, here I observe the demographic divide means more than the racial differences between staff and students. It also centers an overall cultural divide between teachers and students. This cultural divide is observed as becoming clearer to teachers and their colleagues. Overall, the data highlights that these culturally-situated, instructional conversations can be used to unveil the limitations of teachers' cultural knowledge base.

Realizing Personal Privilege

Further, staff gain cultural knowledge of the themselves when they learn more about their own privilege. The MTSS coordinator told me about a conversation she was having with one of the AP geography teachers about a class activity he created on immigration. The class focused on why people decide to immigrate to the US. She found the outcomes of his class discussion “mind-blowing” pointing to the personal narrative’s students shared surrounding how their families got to the United States. After talking to this teacher about what happened in this class, she and the geography teacher began to talk about their privilege as US citizens. She highlighted, “But I never really understood how I was that person who grew up with white privilege. I never really understood, why do immigrants come here?” She referred to the conversation as “eye opening.” After this conversation, she noted that the practice was needed school-wide, given the maintenance of their white teaching staff and growing LatinX student population. The LatinX student population has increased from 8% to 30%, over the last couple of years. However, staff express that “everybody is not culturally sensitive to things that are said or things that are done.”

Realizing Nuances of the Demographic Divide

Staff use meeting times with colleagues to talk about race versus socio-economic differences within the demographic divide. The IB coordinator explains it well,

I think that cultural understanding of, that there are racial differences among between staff and students. But that doesn’t even matter I don’t think as much. There can be an African American teacher that, culturally, is very similar to the students, but, socioeconomically and culturally, I think we could probably do a better job of understanding them and how this plays into the system. Like I said to them earlier, I think we have great relationships with our students because I think teachers are caring people generally. But I think in this building especially. But to understand that the cultural differences I think we could definitely do more around that for sure.

Interview data revealed that teachers at WHS are aware that the demographic divide is a cultural divide between staff and students. This type of cultural divide includes factors that move beyond

race. These differences are found to have a greater impact on teachers who are working to be effective in their racially isolated school context.

Issues with Teacher Assignment to Cultural History Courses

Staff conversations have focused on the demographic divide due to student complaints surrounding teacher assignment to a cultural history course. One staff member discussed how WHS has an African-American teacher for their African American History class, but the Latin American history class is taught by a white woman, and “the kids complained about it.” In her conversations with another staff member, she learned that this teacher “was going around and telling people ‘I don’t want to teach that class’.” After this, she said she “understood why the students were really upset.” Following the complaints, no one ever followed up or directly addressed this issue.

Generally, the data revealed that school level mechanisms influence teachers’ knowledge and dispositions for enacting CRP through their culturally-situated, instructional conversations. These conversations are happening during formal meeting times and are enhanced through their informal conversations with one another. Overall, the data revealed that instructional conversations related to teachers’ cultural knowledge center around: those who do and do not hold necessary cultural knowledge, gaining a greater understanding cultural identity by recognizing their own personal privilege, a deeper understanding of the layers involved in the demographic divide, and the race of teachers assigned to lead cultural history courses.

CRP Knowledge-Students

Culturally-situated, instructional conversations surrounding WHS students include discussions related to various components of students’ home life. Generally, WHS informal social structure creates the conditions for staff to share cultural knowledge and promote the use

of cultural knowledge when making decisions in the classroom. One teacher leader synthesizes the school culture encouraging staff to discuss and consider students home life situations. He highlights,

So, I think, uh, they do a really good job with the culture, in my eyes. Um, I think we talk a lot as teachers just like in the hallway together at school in meetings and stuff about kids and their situations at home. And I think we decompress the most with each other on ways to reach kids, and understanding like what's going on and why they're at where they're at. And I think that helps us out too. So, I think we all understand it and know that we need to be doing it, but some teachers are better at that than others. But I think we know that we need to address it on a daily basis. And I think that's promoted through meetings and PDs and stuff like that. That's why you always will send us emails and things like that are things that happen in the community and all that.

Even when students know that teachers “respect and love them”, it remains important that teachers have an understanding of students’ home life so they can recognize when students “just can’t cope.” Overall, understanding the importance of knowing students’ home life and culture seemed to be common knowledge for some staff, and more challenging to incorporate for other staff.

Students Home Life

Generally, staff at WHS used instructional meeting times and time in between classes to share cultural knowledge surrounding student home life. The data revealed that staff discuss students home life to: caution colleagues to rely on cultural knowledge before administering punitive measures, discuss the need to relate academic content to students’ home life, and discuss supports for students of immigrant families and status. District led PDs held on trauma informed teacher practice is observed as supporting the use of cultural knowledge in teachers’ evaluation of students. The principal leader intends to foster a school environment where staff can act as informal leaders in addressing problems of practice.

Cultural Knowledge and Student Discipline

Staff discuss using knowledge of students' home life to enhance their discretion for punitive practices. In my interview with a teacher leader from the social studies department, he talked about a conversation that took place in a weekly teacher team meeting, where he encouraged a teacher to gather more information about a students' home life before punishing them for excessive lateness. He warned him that "And a lot of times it's because of mom and dad or whoever can't get them to school and this reason and that reason, and they're fighting their own families and now we're panelizing them for something that they can't control." He suggests gathering information about students' home life by "pulling that kid aside" and "talking to them" while also letting them know "you care about them and their attendance in your class." Here, I observed a teacher leader taking time promote discretionary practices that are more responsive to students' home life. Overall, interview data revealed that staff are having one-on-one conversations with their colleagues about how to be more effective in their practice by incorporating cultural knowledge of students.

Cultural Knowledge and the School Environment

Staff have conversations on students' home life to develop protocols to meet the needs of their students. For instance, in my interview with the school's IB coordinator, he referred to effective strategies for meeting students' needs during harsh weather conditions. He said that when he thinks about being responsive to students needs he looks "at it more culturally than racially." He described a scenario that occurred a couple of years ago, before WHS had air conditioning. Prior to this scenario there was a policy that stated, if the weather was too hot outside, staff and students were allowed to leave early. During this time, he talked with his colleagues at a school wide meeting about the practice of releasing students early due to a lack of AC. He shared that the school was a safe place for students, especially in the summer time, and

that the school is a place where some students get most of their meals, and that the students likely do not have air conditioning at home. So, he announced his opposition to the policy, highlighting that sending students home because the temperature is too high, is not an effective strategy. At the time, “some staff were very offended by” his oppositions. And others felt like he was right. He believes that over the last five years, WHS has focused a lot more on understanding students home life, including “cultural and socioeconomic conditions” encompassed by the demographic divide.

After a conversation with the Dean of Students, staff talked about students’ home life and cultural dynamics associated with living in a historically underserved community. The IB coordinator went on to say, “And I remember Dean saying things like, kids would get sent out or get written up for not having a pencil. Well, a pencil is probably 27th on the list of things that were important this morning.” Here, I observe staff having conversations about students’ home life so that school level structures are responsive to the needs of the students. Further, being culturally responsive means attending to specific needs of communities of low socioeconomic status. For schools like WHS, working within communities that have been historically underserved, staff discuss their home life in order to be culturally responsive.

Supports and Protocols for Immigrant students

Staff conversations about students’ home life have increased with their growing LatinX student body, and with the recently heightened political attention related to immigration policies. Staff conversations in the English language learners (ELL) department have focused on the demographic divide to make sure staff receive supports for working with students “who are Dreamers.” The MTSS coordinator notes that “many of [WHS] kids are here on visas or seeking asylum.” And staff are encouraged by administrative and teacher leaders to be “very open with

the kids.” They have experienced working with students who parents have been deported, so these staff are more frequently, than in previous years, in communication about how to make the school “a very safe environment for them.” Interview data revealed that these conversations are happening in school wide meetings, teacher team meetings, and one-on-one conversations.

CRP Commitments

Conversations on CRP and staff knowledge gaps highlights the limitations of the curriculum, departmental attempts for addressing CRP, addressing failure rates and enhancing rigor.

Limitations of Curriculum

Instructional conversations on the culturally responsive curriculum highlight limitations of the curriculum through differences amongst teachers. These differences are based on those who have “embraced” using a cultural lens in their teaching practice and those who have not. The division leader in the social studies department talked about conversations she has facilitated within her department. She recognizes that “the teachers have to understand culturally responsiveness and have to embrace it.” For her, doing this means “adjusting certain things within the curriculum.” This also means attending to the specific demographics of their student population. Given the high proportion of Black and LatinX students, they have created courses on African history and Latin American History. She highlights WHS has “a growing Indian American population” and “that something that [staff] need to visit.” She credits the school having hired “a foreign graduate this is part of that Indian American population.” For those who embrace using a cultural lens, their classroom practice shows high student engagement. For those who have not embraced using a cultural lens, leaders realize the limitations of the current curriculum, with low student engagement and student complaints about courses. Division leaders

and teacher leaders were clear about the differences in practice amongst teachers who can make cultural connections in their lessons, and those who do not. Leaders highlight the limitations of the curriculum along with lack of teachers' cultural knowledge of students when attempting to understand the pedagogical problems exhibited by WHS staff.

Further, division leaders find it more useful for teachers to talk to one another about what works in their classrooms. The data revealed division leaders encourage staff to share additional resources to enhance instruction. Additional classroom resources are shared at department meetings from division leaders and at CCT meetings. When division leaders conduct informal evaluations they also use that time to share "extra resources" with teachers to enhance their lessons. If the division leader identifies a practice that seems useful, they encourage staff to share those strategies in their CCT meetings. In this way, division leaders find it more useful when staff talk to each other. They highlighted it is better for staff to "come in and share...instead of [them] saying Hey everybody, here's these things." Now, it is the teacher saying, "Here's something that I used with my students. Here's how you can use it."

Within Departments.

Many of the conversations held in the math department are centered around the major changes to the curriculum and curriculum for additional math courses, like their new social justice statistics course. According to the math division leader, staff instructional conversations on multicultural content in math courses was promoted by staff attendance at the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics. At this conference, staff discussed CRP and social justice in math. The conference highlighted culturally relevant activities, specific to math.

For the social studies team, staff reported that students tend to do well in their junior and senior year when they are allowed to take elective courses like Afro-American studies and Latin

American studies. Staff reported that students are more interested in these topics and do well in these classes because they have a choice in what they are learning. For US history and Global History, students are required to take these courses, so staff use their meeting times to discuss “finding ways to make it relevant.” Overall, the data revealed that each department encourages teacher teams to slowly build CRP, as aligned with the vision proposed by the principal leader.

Commitments to Addressing Failure Rates

Staff are encouraged to explore standards-based grading as a way to address their failure rates. According to Mr. Blackwell, the district is “looking to go to standards-based grading to change [their] current grading standards.” The purpose of this is to alter grading structures as a way “reduce the amount of failures that [they’ve] been having.” This “initiative started in this school four years ago.” With this, teachers’ instructional conversations about standardizing their grading practice, is identified as directly linked to the districts’ decision to use the new grading system to address the failure rate. These sentiments were echoed by the AP for instruction. She gave an example, highlighting that the move towards standards-based grading happened “Because we have some teachers that are giving 100 points for a kid bringing a Kleenex.” They have begun to think deeper about grades. Conversations with staff have recently centered around questions like “what does an A mean?” She noted that staff have come to a consensus that “an A from one teacher is totally different from an A from that teacher.” Thus, conversations with staff are now focused on “what are you trying to have the student do? And did they do it or not? And they do it consistently?” She goes on further to say that addressing failure rates also means attending to “a kind of best practice in grading.”

Staff also discuss ways to address failure rates by offering students a placement in the supplemental courses offered to those who score below the state average on SAT tests. Students

who attend a supplemental class attend a second period of a core class instead of an elective course. These supplemental classes are taught by another member of the teaching team. For instance, students in the math supplemental course have a second math class focused on numeracy skills, organization, and goal-setting. The class is intended to support the students in “leveling up” their content knowledge, while also addressing “deeper issues” or “soft-skills” like monitoring your progress toward academic goals.

Commitments to Enhancing Rigor

Conversations surrounding enhancing rigor are culturally situated because they focus on critical inquiry for teaching cultural history and recent cultural phenomenon. According to a teacher leader in the social studies department, staff are increasingly concerned with supporting student skills for “actually analyzing documents.” These documents are used to not only involve “documents in history” but to center around more recent debates surrounding culture, like “professional sports players compelled to kneel during the national anthem.” These types of instructional conversations are described as providing teaching teams with “the motivation to find culturally relevant materials for students.” One teacher highlights that staff conversations after this training focused on “not only being culturally responsive” but “it’s also relevant to the time period right now.” With this, staff have observed that “kids do pretty well in those courses.” For him, he encourages staff to engage culturally responsive and relevant strategies across the curriculum as a way to increase student engagement and enhance the rigor of their classes.

Enhancing rigor also means preparing students for the SAT. Throughout the school year, the AP for instruction works with teacher leaders and teachers from each grade separately. In these meetings, staff discuss what students are succeeding at and what students are struggling with. She pushes staff to rely on what the data is showing them, and then to create tangible steps

for improving instruction, given their data analysis. From there, staff can prioritize what concepts they need to revisit, along with the academic skills in which they need to improve.

After going over student performance, staff engage collaborative inquiry focusing teachers practice that could be used to enhance student learning opportunities given the capacity of their specific students. She asks division leaders and teaching teams, about how they are crafting their questions to mimic the difficulty of an SAT question, rather than just creating random multiple-choice questions. The division leader from the social studies department also spoke about this activity surrounding SAT preparations and teacher collaboration on inquiry used to mimic the tests.

Attempting to enhance rigor at WHS, has meant that staff often talk about ways to take instructional risks for improvements in practice and innovation, along with ways to promote an environment where students are taking academic risks. Since, the school has divided the physical location of teachers' classrooms by department, staff have found that their colleagues are more inclined to take academic risks. The social studies division leader highlights that staff really enjoy having the building being broken into departments. Given the staffs focus on trying to get students to take more academic risks, they too, have had to engage in innovating new practices and content in order to meet students learning needs required for enhancing rigor. As well, enhancing rigor also refers to times when teacher leaders use instructional meeting times to promote "high expectations" for students, with "continuous support." This means "popping into classrooms" to help teachers figure out systems like Mastery Connect. Overall, culturally responsive practice and knowledge gaps has to do with filling teacher knowledge gaps in service of filling student knowledge gaps. Teachers require cultural knowledge of students to be effective, especially for working within the demographic divide.. The following is used to

discussion staff culturally-situated, instructional conversations centered around classroom strategies promoted throughout WHS.

Classroom Strategies

Culturally-situated conversations on classroom strategies include discussion on: engaging student-centered approaches, and prioritizing culture in the classroom.

Engaging Student-Centered Approaches

WHS has a major initiative focused on student ownership. Staff received a training during one of their institute days devoted to implementing strategies for student ownership in the classroom. Division leaders were also tasked with following up on these strategies during department meetings throughout the year. A teacher leader from the social studies department reported being introduced to a really big initiative focused on “more student-centered stuff... and bigger focus on student advocacy.” Staff reported using meeting times to talk about classrooms strategies that help students “reflect and goal set.” This involves talking about how to incorporate different kinds of student performance trackers, so they can keep track of their own progress.

As well, the division leader for the math discussed a PD conducted by an instructional coach, who works with an external organization hired to help WHS meet target goals set by the district. This person provided a PD to math teachers on student ownership and resources for conceptualizing student ownership within their pedagogical practice.

Prioritizing Culture in the Classroom

Staff used their teacher training on DBQ’s to collaborate on creating a culturally responsive and time relevant, critical question. Observational data includes staff from the social studies department in a meeting discussing their next critical question to enact a skills unit for their history courses. The data revealed that staff were able to develop a question that was

culturally responsive for their students. This lesson was developed using the knowledge from a formal PD session and the collective understanding of the teaching team. My interview with the division leader who was present for that meeting explained their team uses DBQ's for many of the lesson plans. So, since staff can use any document in history, they were really "motivated to find culturally relevant material for students." The teachers really wanted the students to answer a controversial question, instead of "just finding a random DBQ that included African American or LatinX history." So, the teachers just made up one. One of the questions was about "professional sports players being compelled to stand for the national anthem." He stated that the lesson was "not only culturally relevant, but it is also relevant to the time period, now." This includes just one of the ways, this department has prioritized culture in the curriculum. He stated that the staff have been working together to implement these types of culturally relevant strategies across the curriculum.

At WHS, focusing cultural knowledge "doesn't mean that the other stuff is eliminated." The division leader for social studies further notes "it just means there is more of a focus on culture, to show that people are not absent from history, not in books, or in certain periods. Division leaders are tasked with enhancing course curriculum and have noticed that some classes need to be "a little more" culturally responsive. Highlighting that he should probably "encourage teachers more" and make cultural responsiveness more of "a priority". For instance, WHS has a "global history course" that is intended to engage students' in "controversial topics in the world and the lack of awareness of what the truths are about global society and different races, different religions, everything like that." However, that course is "lacking" and he talks to his teachers about the limitations of the curriculum because he believes that "it's something people need to be aware about" since they are in service to a "diverse population" and he does not want the

classrooms under his supervision to “end up in a position where some of the stereotypes are proceeding over getting to know other people.” Thus, he works with staff so that they “can do a little bit better job of” being culturally responsive. He notes that it is not that they “were not doing it.” Staff just “need to keep going” while continuing to figure out how to appropriately attend to the cultural diversity present within their school community.

Staff also talked about highlighting students’ culture in the school during cultural holidays throughout the year. For example, Mr. Blackwell took a bunch of his LatinX students to a conference and they came back and put up a “Dreamers Welcome” banner in the school. Additionally, he has developed school wide assemblies for students to celebrate their LatinX heritage and Black History month. During these times, he talks about the similarities between African-American and LatinX culture and how students have a right to “fear what is happening in the world right now.” He talks to staff about how the culture of whiteness has been used to erase the history of racial minorities. The MTSS coordinator notes he makes comments like “The white people erased us before”, and in these meetings white teachers “get offended, people have gotten mad, and they get up and leave.” For her, a LatinX female teacher, she understands that Mr. Blackwell “is not doing it to be offensive, but he’s doing it because it’s the truth of what’s happening in our world.”

Ultimately, WHS attempted to influence teachers’ enactments of CRP by developing the conditions for staff to have culturally-situated instructional conversations. Formal mechanisms for staff learning and collaboration shape these conversations through PD content and through tasks and responsibilities of teaching teams. The schools’ informal social structure shapes these conversations through collective ideas on student performance and academic expectations, through communication and collaborative inquiry, and by relying on other colleagues. These

mechanisms are developed and fostered by decisions made by district, administrative, and teacher leaders. The data revealed that staff used their instructional meeting times to have culturally-situated, instructional conversations. The findings highlight culturally-situated conversations occurred amongst teaching staff within various teaching teams, formal professional development sessions, and individual and school-wide conversations with administrative leaders.

Chapter Five: Cooper High School

In this chapter, I will detail the discoveries found in the second case. Similar to chapter 4, I begin by outlining the district context and leadership decisions that make up the formal school level mechanisms for learning and collaboration and the informal social structure. Then, I detail culturally-situated, instructional conversations that seem to be influenced by specific school level mechanisms. Finally, I conclude each case with a summary on the major influences related to teachers' knowledge and dispositions for enacting CRP, within the context of this demographic divide.

Cooper High School

Cooper High School is located in a suburban community outside of a major urban city in the Midwest. The school was also founded in the late nineteenth century. Due to the schools' close proximity to the iron belt of the Midwest, it has traditionally served generations of working-class families. Today, the school serves approximately 1400 students from two neighboring communities and is led under the direction of seasoned educator, who I refer to as, Dr. Anderson. The Cooper Township district reported that 80.7% of the teaching staff has earned a Master's degrees or higher, while 18.7% hold Bachelors' degrees. CHS has done well in retaining its teachers with a retention rate of 89%, which is similar to the district's generally high average at 90.6%, and slightly higher than the state average of 85.2%. Currently, the district has a total of 191 full time teaching staff. CHS employs 18 teachers who are former graduates of this school (Illinois State Report Card, 2018). The following section is used to describe significant factors influencing staff learning, collaboration and teaching practice at CHS.

Context of School Organizing

CHS District

The data revealed that major factors influencing staff learning and work context include the current demands of the new superintendent. I begin by describing these demands. Next, I highlight the ways that teachers begrudgingly engage in the district's initiatives. Following, I highlight the data on teacher learning opportunities for enacting culturally responsiveness. Specifically, the data shows that PDs are somewhat useful and that there was a district training day designated for developing culturally responsiveness.

The new superintendent and the district is in charge of setting goals for teachers practice. In CHS school district, the new superintendent is clear on having certain "instructional absolutes". Instructional absolutes are ways to organize classroom agendas, relying on an acronym called "BEEP", which stands for "Beginning Engagement Ending Practice". This strategy focuses on directions for how teachers "start up class" along with a "closure" and structured time "for student reflection at the end of class". Instructional absolutes are supposed to happen "in every class, every day, and in every content area." Instructional absolutes are described as taking focus away from engaging "more culturally responsive lessons." Teachers described being frustrated when they have to change their practice to meet district mandates that have little to do with the core elements of deep learning.

Lacking Buy-in to District's Vision

Further, division leaders expressed lack of buy-in to the vision set by the new superintendent. The division leader for the English department talked extensively in her interview on the emphasis, this year in particular, on instructional absolutes as a frustration in teaching. She says, "It's like, it's just not that big of a deal. Put your objective on the board, have a bell ringer, close it in some kind of way, and let kids talk to each other at some point". She further expressed her frustration by talking about the repetitive nature, positing "And, it's the

same crap we've been doing, what we've always taught: we have to be upbeat, beginning, engaging, ending. Whatever, you know it's all the same crap we've been getting for years.”

Overall, interview data revealed the “BEEP model” is encouraged across departments and a strong emphasis on the elements of the model do not seem helpful for addressing any enduring problems of practice.

Fostering a commitment to continuously improving practice entails addressing current problems of practice. Instead of addressing these, administrative leaders tend to make sure mandates are met, which makes improvement goals feel “very box-checky.” When administrators attempt to adhere to district policy, it can feel like “box checking” for teachers, instead of engaging authentic work that lends to student learning and “solving problems of practice”, which is what “matters”. The division leader for English had an idea about ways to advance students reading and writing skills, and this idea was overshadowed by administrative priorities for promoting student inquiry. This division leader expressed feeling “very frustrated” by the way district level initiatives are “pushed by admin”.

District Influence over Teacher Learning

The math division leader is clear that teacher learning opportunities has “good things going on.” At the same time, these opportunities are described as a “good thing”, when staff are “open and willing to look at what’s going on in these meetings and in their classroom if they’re really reflective.” These trainings provide information on “important things” along with “good models of things that staff can model in their own classrooms after” the session has ended.

Overall, interview data showed that leaders understand the effectiveness of PD as heavily reliant on teacher willingness to learn and time in reflection.

Introducing Cultural Sensitivity

Generally, staff discussed being culturally aware because of their own personal background. The data revealed that teachers considered themselves “culturally sensitive” when they grew up in a racially diverse neighborhood community. In particular, one English teacher describes her own neighborhood community as “a diverse area”, which she credits for “knowing how to be culturally sensitive, and what to say and what not to say.” She notes that CHS “did a really nice job at the beginning of the year before school began of going through the importance of cultural difference.” The session centered around the ways that lack of cultural knowledge “could harm the students and teachers don’t realize it because their cultures are so different.” They discussed the need to “understand what students experience as their life is not what teachers experience as their life” and that staff must “be sensitive to that.” This was a district level training including staff from all three high schools together. Ultimately, district decisions are one major factor influencing staff learning and development for enacting CRP. The following sections are used to describe how leaders and staff develop and maintain formal and informal structures influencing teachers’ knowledge and commitments in this racially isolated school context.

Leadership Moves

Principal Leader

Dr. Anderson has been a school principal for a total of 21 years. Prior to becoming a principal at CHS, he had a brief tenure as the principal leader at a neighboring high school in the district. Dr. Anderson has been working at CHS as the principal for 16 years. He earned his undergraduate degree from a university in the southeast region of the country, and acquired his Masters and Doctoral degrees from universities in the Midwest. He is the first African-American

principal since the inception of CHS. The Cooper Township district residential demographics have changed drastically since he began working in the district. Dr. Anderson describes the challenges associated with these demographic changes while accepting a position as the first black principal in service to this school community. He explains

So, over the years, I mean, this is a changing community. [It's] less changing now than it was when I came in. It was obviously the level of white flight that was taking place throughout [the country] and becoming the first African American principal period was significant. And the community was changing. It was the white community and people were doing what they've done many instances...then black people moved in with Latino folk and we tried to provide opportunities. So, throughout my first few years we were really kind of dealing with the dynamics of that and what that meant to the community. So, our teaching staff, was about 100 percent white, maybe two black people and two Latino people.

Here, I would like to reiterate that school organizing in these racially isolated school context necessarily involves enacting CRP. In this case, enacting CRP means having cultural knowledge of the community in which staff are in service and a social justice orientation represented by the will to develop equitable classroom strategies. Studying the practices employed in schools like CHS allows the field to better understand the major elements involved in solving one enduring problem represented in public education, the learning opportunity gap experienced by racially minoritized students, while working within the demographic divide. Leaders like Dr. Anderson have been working under the demographic divide for their entire tenure as principals. The field has much to learn about the opportunities and challenges posed to leaders and staff who are striving to meet the demands of standardization but require the skills for culturally responsiveness.

For Dr. Anderson, he aims to build a healthy school climate through communication on a daily basis and by having an open-door policy. He prioritizes being “visible” in order to “address the needs” of his staff. It is important that he is talking to individuals rather it be in big groups or

individually through skype sessions. He also attends faculty Fridays which is a school level attempt to address specific needs of staff. Faculty Fridays are a drop-in opportunity that happens at 8am on Fridays in order for staff to bring their concerns to administration. He highlights, these sessions are “where we could kind of address the needs of the community going on.” The data revealed that this time is underused but available for staff who choose to come.

Limited CRP

In my interview with Dr. Anderson about his plans to promote teachers’ commitment to equity and social justice, he was clear that they are limited in developing any school wide attempts, but there are definitely activities at the student level that involve social justice projects. He does not believe they do a good job of identifying or developing a course of action for addressing issues of equity. This year, administration has started asking questions around equity and diversity issues. For instance, they have noticed that some of the honors classes have all girls in the classroom. To address this, they have created advanced placements courses with all males to support some of the boys achieving greater academic success. However, he does not believe his school does a good job of looking at issues of equity for the whole school building.

When I asked the assistant principal (AP) for instruction about where culturally responsiveness could be found in the building, she mentioned that there was a teacher located right upstairs from where our meeting was taking place, who teaches an 11th grade government class. She went on to say that she could see glimpses of culturally responsiveness throughout the building. For instance, she thinks about their sociology teacher and their American diversity teacher, who are right next door to each other. She believes that these teachers being next to each other helps support their enactments of culturally responsiveness. Generally, the data revealed that staff do attempt to support each other for engaging CRP lessons. At the same time, CRP

lessons are not formally promoted beyond basic trainings and recognition of cultural holidays. These surface level attempts are described in the following section.

Beginning to Acknowledge Student Culture

CHS conducts school wide events to support the diversity of their student population, including sexual orientation, racial, and cultural identities. My interview with the division leader for math was the day after their LatinX Heritage assembly. This event was held on the last day of LatinX Heritage month. Throughout this month, every member of the school was required to attend school assemblies that were led by students and centered around topics concerning Latin Heritage. I learned that these event focused on significant contributions from LatinX culture. The school conducts a similar event during Black History month, focusing on significant contributions from African Americans. Staff described the event as a way to foster respect for variations in culture for staff and students. Also, CHS has different cultural groups that meet monthly, after school. They have also started a student group for the LGBTQ community.

Further, CHS conducted a training at the beginning of the year focused on basic cultural differences. However, several staff described the training as seemingly having nothing to do with instruction. Staff expressed that this training was tied to their work with the adverse childhood experiences (ACES) team, who focuses more on social, emotional components of instruction. Similar to WHS, CHS' work with ACES helps teachers understand more about the community in which their students reside, and how their experiences in this community have shaped who they are in the classroom. Overall, staff expressed that trainings focused on instructional techniques, which are rarely adopted using a cultural lens. The division leader for the Math department explained that over the years, cultural problems of practice have been framed as situational rather than enduring factors that have to do with the demographic divide. For instance, problems of

practice might center things like the confidence of girls in math classes. She highlights that “some people understand, and some people don’t understand” the value of cultural knowledge. She does not know if this knowledge should be called “cultural”, but the knowledge they need in order to be effective “needs to focus on the differences between where staff versus students grew up.”

An English teacher also described a training in her interview and noted that CHS did a really nice job at the beginning of the year of conducting a session that centered on the importance of understanding different cultures. The session centered around the ways that lack of cultural knowledge could harm the students and how teachers’ might not realize this because their cultures are so different from that of the students they serve. They discussed the need to understand what students experience as their life is not what teachers experience is their life and that staff must be sensitive to that. This was a district level training including staff from all three high schools together. Overall, the data revealed that the district is aware and attempting to addressing issues posed by the demographic divide by implementing district wide trainings on cultural sensitivity. CHS attempts to align with the district goals for cultural awareness by organizing assemblies for cultural and ethnic holidays.

Goals for Teachers’ Practice

Dr. Anderson explained that the schools’ current problem of practice is concerned with teacher-student interactions. The week prior to our conversation, CHS implemented a whole day of training focused on: how teachers are interacting with students, how students are interacting with the content, and how students are interacting with other students. This year, CHS teacher trainings are grounded in the idea that learning takes place at a deeper level when classrooms include student voice. With this, CHS has created a plan to talk about implementation to ensure

high levels of student interaction and voice. Right now, in CHS classrooms the principal leader observes a lot of teacher voice, and you see students engaged with content and this is deemed “not enough.” He wants teachers promoting more student voice because “true learning takes place when they learn from each other.” He describes promoting student voice as an ongoing process. While CHS does not intentionally focus on enhancing culturally responsiveness or fostering equitable classroom strategies explicitly, they are attempting to build classroom learning environments that center the students’ voice, and this is believed to lend toward equity.

Unions & Instructional Supports

The union poses a conflict to this schools’ ongoing instructional supports because adding professional learning opportunities impacts staff working conditions, and unions are organized to keep teachers’ working conditions stable. Changes to teachers working conditions, is considered a possible grievance. CHS attempted to implement “Faculty Fridays” where teachers could come in on Friday mornings and bring in their current problems of practice. However, requiring this meeting was against union policy. So, now administrators hold this meeting, but since the meetings are optional, multiple staff noted that faculty rarely show up.

CHS aculty Fridays are considered an untapped resource. Staff expressed that, this year, the AP “did not offer many school wide PDs “because it turned out so bad” in the previous years. During the 8am faculty Friday meetings, she would prepare a presentation on a particular topic telling teachers “we can do 20 minute PD at this time on this.” But when the time came she would “sit in a room by herself and wait for people.” Since then, she tries to come up with opportunities where they can offer professional development on a more regular basis and she also “pulls resources.” Overall, the data reveals that formalized structures during the course of the school day are the preferred space for addressing everyday problems of practice. The

following section is used to take a closer look at how leaders and staff use their working time together.

Organizational Structure

This section is used to describe formal and informal mechanisms shaping teachers' pedagogical enactments within their racially isolated school context. The data revealed that teachers' everyday practice is shaped by the limitations of the schools' overall capacity. The division leader for English speaks to her frustration of needing to hire teachers. But since student enrollment numbers are dropping, and school budgets are based on per pupil spending, she cannot hire an elective teacher. Even though they need to hire another Spanish teacher, CHS still has core teachers who do not have five full classes, so the department remains reluctant to hire more staff. Here, teachers' may be asked to change their role assignment. One resolution is to hire a part time Spanish teacher. This person may be split between two buildings. Here, I highlight staff feelings about the schools' overall capacity because it influences their everyday working context. The following section focuses how this work context impacts staff learning and work with one another.

Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration

Leaders structure teachers' professional learning communities so that they are spaces where teachers can solve problems of practice and collaborate. Learning opportunities are offered through formal professional development sessions and teaching teams. For CHS, the data revealed staff attending embedded, school-level PD sessions, external PD sessions, and teacher team meetings. School-level, embedded PD sessions are spaces where practioners meet every week with different teaching teams. These meetings take place every Wednesday. Students get out of school early this day to accommodate these ongoing learning opportunities for staff. The

first Wednesday of the month is reserved for content collaborations. The second Wednesday is reserved for cross content collaborations. For example, staff from the math department will meet with staff from the science department. The third Wednesday of the month is reserved for content collaboration; these meetings focus on “school improvement to attempt the schools’ worthy target goals.” In doing so, teachers bring in things like student writing samples. These meetings also focus on goals and visions for departments within the school. The fourth Wednesday is reserved for cross-district collaboration among departments in both high schools, meaning teachers in the math department at CHS meet with teachers in the math department working at a neighboring high school within the district.

Leadership Tasks

Implementing a vision for the school learning environment is carried out through teams appointed by school leaders. Similar to the distribution of leadership tasks at WHS, CHS administrators create teams to help carry out the schools’ vision for a productive learning environment. These sentiments are represented in my interview with a math teacher who states, “We do have a culture and climate committee, which is made of like I think five teachers from the school and they get together and they plan different events for the school, you know, pep rallies and spirit week and that kind of stuff.”

At CHS, division leaders are not administrators, however, their role is very important for distributing and managing instructional tasks. Division leaders conduct formative teaching evaluations, model instructional absolutes, conduct cross-discipline observations, and serve as the collective voice for their department. When asking about the role division leaders play at CHS, the division leader for English says that “the job is to be a teacher leader”. She is tasked with meeting with everybody in her department, and to collect data. Teachers reported

appreciating this support, she posits “most people are at least willing, and a few are pretty happy about it I think.” In her meetings she tells teachers that she is “here for two reasons...I want to find out where you are at, what kind of issues you have, things that you're concerned about. And I also want to look at the curriculum and how we can make it better, and make your teaching better”. The role of division leaders is also used to “model instructional absolutes”. The division leader for math posits that “they should be doing that in the meetings that they run.” Also, division leaders are tasked with performing division leader walkthroughs, which are conducted with another person outside of the discipline. For example, “[division leader for English] will do her walkthroughs with someone from the math classes so that they can see what's going on in English”. Additionally, this English leader also has the opportunity to conduct walkthroughs as the division leaders from other departments. For instance, she may go on a walkthrough with the science team to see what and how things, practices, are put in place in science. While teachers may not agree, the division leader is responsible for communicating the departments collective ideas. Within the English department there is a lot of controversy about AP classes, content, and grading. And this can bring about controversy within teaching teams; when talking about some of her work with another English teacher, she highlights “I don't think she and I are really on the same page, but I also need to be her voice. A major aspect of the role division leaders play involves being the voice for the department.

Overall, the distribution of leadership tasks works well at CHS for developing cross-departmental collaborations, but there was no explicit mention of developing systems or rewards for enactments of culturally responsiveness. Division leaders were clear about their own visions for the department, but had little to say about how they might, explicitly go about encouraging culturally responsiveness. Interview and observational data revealed that leaders and staff share

knowledge of students and their culture, but few explicit mentions about incorporating a cultural lens into their practice or adopting a social justice orientation.

Conflict within the role of division leadership

Staff reported two conflicts within the role of division leaders. First, division leaders may be reluctant to give feedback, and second, they expressed frustration with the structure of their departments. According to the AP for instruction, CHS has division leaders in place to help with conducting formative classroom observations in order to provide feedback. At the same time, division leaders may be reluctant to address ineffective teachers, she highlights, “They will help if needed and if we ask, but often times DL’s do not take it upon themselves to help people who are struggling.” According the AP, the role of the division leader at CHS is described as “tough because they are a part of the union”, and with this, they “kind of try to stay away from wearing any part of an admin hat.” At the same time, division leaders may not understand why certain content areas are grouped in particular departments. When I asked the division leader for English about the formal structure of their departments, she says,

I have English teachers...the Spanish teachers and the French teacher. And why is it called world language? Who knows. But it also makes my department almost twice as big as the other ones. Special ED is very big, special ED has like fifteen teams. Everybody else has about eight or nine. So, it kind of annoys me.”

Generally, the data revealed that division leaders, at times, describe challenges when trying to keep track of everything happening with their teaching teams. Further, division leaders at this school describe not being aware of when teachers are planning meetings. Some teams are described as only meeting when they need to. Also, staff described that it is hard time to schedule department meetings because people are busy. The most common meeting is the core course team. When asked about other core course meetings this division responded, “Probably

somebody else would answer that differently, because there's probably instructional team things in place that I don't know about.”

Ultimately, the data on teacher teams shows high variation across departments and core course teams. Division leaders described challenges posed with the current structure of teacher teams. While some teams are described as running smoothly, the data surrounding the organizational capacity of teaching teams for CRP is insignificant. The importance of school organizational capacity for the promotion of culturally responsiveness is further reviewed in the following, discussion chapter.

Professional Development

Formal PD sessions at the school level are organized by the assistant principal of instruction. Sessions are facilitated by administrators, division leaders, and teacher leaders with particular expertise. Dr. Anderson highlights that CHS administrators lead many of the PD sessions and that administrators, typically, decide on the types of trainings staff should engage and then teachers pick what they would like to work on based on their interests and availability. The AP for instruction notes, “We set the table and then we let them pick from the table, if you will, to see what things were related to the areas they think are important”. Division leaders are tasked with bringing PD topics to their teaching teams to decide on which topics they will review over the course of that semester, based on staff interest and learning needs. She notes “the division leaders lead that process [for gathering information from staff] and most of the time it starts from a discussion held in teacher team meetings. While CHS does offer systemic PD, it is not required that teachers attend. Overall, much of PDs are geared toward having teachers focus on increasing student voice in their classrooms.

The assistant principal finds PD sessions more effective if she does not tell teachers how they should teach. Rather she attempts to show teachers how to teach. One staff member gave her positive feedback, positing "I like how you always model it". For example, the AP for instruction models instructional absolutes, highlighting "Typically I include a bell ringer", and then there "is a schedule on some topics we cover." Their inquiry focuses on questions like: How do teachers assess their students on something? And what are the tasks involved for formal assessments. These ongoing PD sessions are intended to get people thinking and talking.

Generally, staff expressed that PDs are more useful and when they are led by their colleagues because they tend to be more directly related to the needs staff and student needs. This is a big change from the PDs implemented in previous years when CHS worked with education consultants and other outside agencies. When I probed about what could have prompted these changes, staff responded that they believed it was because of the direction of the new superintendent.

Institute Day on Cultural Bias.

Generally, interview data revealed that CHS is pushing teachers to pay more attention to the role of culture in classrooms than they have in the past. As mentioned previously, staff reported attending a district-led professional development at the beginning of the semester concerning cultural bias. The training focused on acknowledging the extent to which we all are working through cultural biases. In my discussion with the division leader for math, she described the implicit bias training as "a basic training on understanding the importance of recognizing cultural differences. She went on further to say that the training did not speak about classroom strategies, rather, it focused on "more social, emotional kind of things," including a discussion on the how the surrounding school community shapes students' experiences and the

way they behave in the classroom.” They also took time to discuss the extent to which faculty experiences in schools differed from those of their students.

The AP for instruction also mentioned an implicit bias training during institute day. The training was intended for every teacher in the school. Their goal was to provide teachers with an opportunity to focus on ideas and practices underlining culturally responsiveness. The AP for instruction noted that she does not know how CHS might further develop culturally responsive training to have an impact on teachers’ everyday practice.

PD on Trauma-Informed Practices.

In my discussion with the division leader for math on school level attempts for fostering teachers’ commitments to students, she described CHS’ partnership with the ACES program. Staff reported that the ACES program focused on how to meet students’ individual needs, while taking a more social justice approach. She goes on further to explain that generally, social justice is pushed within the country, and CHS seems to be following this push. For example, the department has a subscription to a national magazine called Math Teacher, which focuses on strategies for engaging trauma informed practices and enacting social justice in the classroom. She believes that the country is becoming more and more aware of social injustices, and that this influences discussions amongst staff to think about ways to fight for people who cannot fight for themselves. She described these conversations around trauma informed practices as “all around us, it’s just not here in the building.” She believes that staff just “see these things differently, which results in different ways of adopting these approaches.” Overall, staff reported different experiences of these on-going trainings. Some reported that the information was redundant and some reported that they felt like the training was worthwhile.

PDs for Increasing Student Engagement

PDs for increasing student engagement represent the rest of the formal PDs described by WHS staff. These PDs include content on student-centered strategies for deeper inquiry and techniques for increasing student voice in the classroom. Staff within the English department and the math department described attending these types of PDs on student voice. For instance, a teacher from the English department described a “really good” training on the Danielson Model. This model focuses instructional strategies to engage students in deeper learning. Staff expressed that this training supported the way that they word their questions. The Danielson model prioritizes strategies for equity, high expectations, cultural competence, meeting the needs of all learners, and student responsibility for their own learning. As well, one of the math teachers’ discussed attending a training on Question Formulation Technique, which is used to support instructional strategies for enhancing student curiosity and engagement specifically for teachers’ of diverse learners.

Further, one of the division leaders for math let me know that teachers in her department received training from external programs like the Kangan institute and the Creating Student-owned Strategies (CRISS) Program. The Kangan institute provides a range of teacher trainings geared toward classroom grouping strategies for improving student learning. CHS staff reported receiving their training on cooperative learning. The CRISS training focuses on teacher trainings for implementing student-centered strategies on safety protocols for managing students and staff during times of an emergency or violent threat.

This study recognizes that these PD trainings that focus on student-centered strategies, specifically in the context of the demographic divide, necessarily involve conversations around the inevitable cultural divide that exists between staff and students. While there are no PD trainings that explicitly notes culturally responsiveness as the goal, I observe from interview data

that PDs in, these school context, encourage conversations around race and culture. At the same time, these conversations tend to be about the students' culture. Staff expressed the need to create the need to have a different, and safe space, to talk about the ways in which teachers' cultural identity and awareness, influences practice at the school. Generally, interview data revealed that some content of CHS PD is geared toward the specific needs of racially minoritized students. And in this way, CHS is beginning develop formal mechanisms for supporting teachers' enactments of CRP.

Limitations of PD

Staff reported that their professional experiences within the district and at the school level have generally gotten better. At the same time, staff reported that all of the sessions they attend are not effective or useful. However, they do not expect for PD presentations to “hit the ball out of the park every time.”

The AP for instruction described implementing PDs that focus on culturally responsive strategies, however, the school does not give teachers “enough time” to reflect on what they learn. She says, “It's not something that is revisited frequently enough or discussed. There aren't enough opportunities for discussion and really reinforcement of concepts, specifically for culturally responsiveness.” She posits that CHS could “do a better job” by providing teachers with more time to reflect on what they have learned. However, one of the main drivers for this limitation is that CHS leaders “don't have a clear vision of what a successful culturally responsive PD could look like”.

It is also important to mention that one of the math teachers, who also teaches special education courses, discussed a need for PD that supports knowledge of changes to special education law and reform. She highlights that staff do not have enough information on how state

and federal laws are changing and its overall impact on staff role and job tasks. She noted that she has not learned about policy changes since her time in college. Some of these changes have a major influence on student placement, which ultimately impacts her classroom practice.

Limitations for CRP in PD

Both, the principal leader and the assistant principal, expressed that they lack a clear vision for how to get their teachers to be culturally responsive, however cultural responsiveness is a goal for their models of PD. Meaning, they hoped that the PDs might equip their teachers with the types of tools needed to be culturally responsive. The data did not reveal what types of tools they think are necessary for CRP. At the same time, I was able to capture the intended goals of PD, the types of PD implemented, and teachers experience of these PDs. Further, the AP, specifically, admitted that administrators struggle promoting culturally responsive PDs for their teachers. Ultimately, the AP expressed that staff development could be enhanced at CHS if teachers were given more time to reflect in order to be able to assess, understand, and attempt to solve cultural problems of practice.

On-going Instructional Supports

The data for on-going instructional supports was collected to highlight formal mechanisms for teachers' collaborative practices. Here, I highlight how common planning time and teacher team meetings are experienced amongst staff at CHS. Overall, the data revealed that these spaces can be used to build teachers collaborative inquiry and knowledge sharing for more culturally responsiveness.

Common Planning Time

Common planning time is a protected space for teachers to meet in their content area groups. According to one of the English teachers, if there is ever an issue, teachers can all meet

during second period, to discuss and resolve this issue. At the same time, staff expressed that common planning period is only formalized for 9th grade teaching teams. According to the division leader for English, all freshman teachers in the same content area group have the same period off. So, division leaders are likely to use this time to meet with their 9th grade teachers. Further, staff expressed that some teachers get lucky and have the same period off as some of the members of their teaching team. One of the 10th grade math teachers just so happens to have the same time off as her co-teacher, so they sometimes use this space to talk and collaborate. However, “there's no common planning period for everyone who teaches Algebra II.” Generally, staff expressed that CHS has recently done better at trying to give teachers time to collaborate by developing staff schedules to include common planning periods.

Due to teachers’ workload and unclear expectations for staff collaboration, the AP describes staff as not using the time embedded in their schedule to collaborate. Staff are asked to report to CHS at 8 o'clock, and the first class starts at 8:25. When staff mention that they do not have time to get together, administrators do push and encourage them to meet before class. However, according to the AP for instruction she does not think a lot of people are using this time. Simultaneously, there are teaching teams like the honors English 10 teachers who meet on the weekends, communicate frequently through text, and meet outside of work. For staff at CHS, the AP believes that collaboration is definitely an area they could do better in. The AP for instruction is the person who builds the master schedule, however, she is not sure if common plans are exactly the answer to enhancing collaboration. A problem still remains, even with common plan, she expressed, that leaders are still grappling with expectations for collaboration, posing questions like: What is the expectation? And are they supposed to be doing this every day? She goes on further to talk about the amount of other tasks teachers need to complete. She

highlighted, “They have other things to be doing on their plan too.” Generally, teachers’ individual tasks are understood as taking priority over time needed to collaborate.

Teacher Teams

The data revealed that the majority of teachers’ collaboration is structured by various teaching teams. For this analysis, I focused on department level teams, and grade level teams. Department level teams are comprised of teachers across grade and across content who fall under the same division. Divisions include subject domains that have been grouped together based on content areas that focus on similar skills and content. For example, teachers who belong to math teaching teams are under the mathematics division, which includes staff who teach geometry, algebra, statistics, etc. Grade level teams refer to staff who teach under the same division and students from the same grade. These teams are also referred to as core course teams. With the exception of ninth and twelfth teachers, staff rarely meet with all teachers of the same grade. CHS attempts to provide additional supports to students entering high school by providing staff with common planning periods and time outside of school hours to collaborate. The freshman house is known for having some of “the strongest teachers.”

English Department

The team that participated in this study, from the English department, is described as a “super tight team.” At CHS, this means they collaborate to scaffold across grades. A teacher who teaches juniors might tell the senior teacher that they are not going to get to cover a significant topic, like the Declaration of Independence by the end of the year. So now, the senior teacher can make sure she includes it somewhere in her lessons at the beginning of the year. Being a super tight team also means providing students with a wide variety of text based on everyone’s suggestion about what is important to teach. It also means that their classrooms are typically

going at the same pace. Also, if a teacher decides to add something into their weekly lesson plans, members of the team will also add it into their weekly lesson plan.

Observational data highlighted instructional conversations focus on pacing and anecdotal data on new instructional materials. For the core course English teams, staff read the same books, although pacing and assignments are different.” And at the same time, staff described the team as “completely collaborative 100% of the time” particularly for materials. Teachers are given discretion to choose which materials, suggested at the meetings, they would like to use in their classroom. Teachers have room to experiment, and are encouraged to share how the lesson played out in their class.

Math Department

Meetings for math teams are intended to make sure staff are going through lessons at a similar pace, while making sure that teachers are presenting the same content and giving the same assessments. Staff expressed that they use their meetings times to “touch base.” They ask things like “What are your kids doing? How did they do with this assignment? What did you do to help them? Why did your kids get it so much faster than mine?”

Observational data highlighted that instructional conversations focused on the logistics for aligning their final exam with that of the other two high schools in the district. The division leader had recently met with a district liaison to discuss how to align their assessment with their other division leaders. During the meeting, staff spent much of their discussion on what to do for their enrichment courses. Enrichment courses are a supplemental course given to students who score below the average score on the state standardized achievement tests. Many of their students are assigned enrichment courses. These courses are taught by another member of the teaching team.

Generally, staff describe less hierarchy in core course teams. Within course teams, staff teach the same grade level and same content area. For CHS, the role of division leaders is considered a teacher leader who facilitates these core course meetings, provides informal evaluations and instructional supports. The division leader noted that her staff uses meeting times to discuss things like pacing, students' response to course content, and strategies for moving efficiently through the curriculum. Their meetings were described as an open dialogue. Division leaders may point out which teachers need to speed up and which teachers need to slow down their pacing. They are also tasked with sending messages and directives from administration and district leaders. Often times, administrators are not present at these meetings. At the same time, multiple staff described CHS as not having a lot of vertical alignment. Administration has recognized that lack of vertical alignment, but it remains "one of those things that always kind of gets pushed to the back burner".

I present the findings on teacher team meetings to highlight a potential opportunity for schools to support teachers' enactment of CRP. On-going instructional supports could include time and space for teachers to share cultural knowledge and inspire commitments to adopt responsive practices. The data highlights time for open dialogues, exchanging ideas about best practices, experimenting with new classroom strategies. And all of these things could be used to enhance student learning opportunities if staff are encouraged to adopt a cultural lens. The following is used to discuss the relationships that staff build with one another with their time together.

Informal Social Structure

While most relationships seem to be positive amongst CHS staff, the AP revealed that “a couple things have happened recently that have started to divide the staff a little bit.” Based on recent events, she has felt like staff “were united against [administration] at times.

The staff culture at CHS has a history of conflict. When the AP for instruction was a teacher, she felt like the staff culture was “bad”, she goes on further to say staff displayed an “us versus them” mentality. She really liked working with other teaching staff, highlighting, I always loved my teacher people. I made a lot of good friends”. Now, in her “11th year at [CHS]”, and throughout her time here, “this idea of this us versus them was really propagated”. This is represented when she describes a typical conversation with her husband who is a teacher at CHS and serves on the “Union Executive Board”. She explained how her husband transfers information from administration to the teaching staff, in order to buffer administrative messaging, he has said to her ““If there's a problem, we'll go talk to them.” Here, I observe a type of division amongst the staff that weakens collegial bonds amongst staff. This type of division takes away from the necessary features of school climate needed to assess and address hard things like cultural problems of practice.

Norms of Trust

Generally, norms of trusts at CHS speaks to the extent that staff rely on one another and facets of staff workplace that can erode trusts. The data revealed several important aspects on staff collaborative routines. First, the school culture has developed into a place where staff may not ask administrative leaders for help. At the same time, staff are more reliant on those they are close to, like members of their core teaching teams or co-teachers. Secondly, overall mistrust of school administration erodes trust amongst the staff. These dynamics are viewed as linked to the

schools' overall capacity, which inevitably impacts the conditions necessary for developing CRP.

Reliance On

Staff may not rely on administrative leaders or division leaders for help, even though they are struggling. Staff described some teachers as reluctant to ask administrative leaders for help, given the inherent hierarchy in schools. This AP has been in her administrative role as assistant principal for instruction for four years, and no one staff member has come to her and said that they are having an issue in their classroom.” She points to the “culture of the school” which is comprised of “people who are very scared of showing weakness.” CHS adopted the role of division leaders to help address problems of practice. However, she describes division leaders as “reluctant to push themselves on people”, meaning “often times [division leaders] do not take it upon themselves to help people who are struggling.”

Relying on one another means “picking up the slack” for other staff. One way of building trust is over time through daily interactions. Here, norms of trust are observed because this division leader has “some stuff going on at home” and another teacher is really carrying her workload. She expressed really appreciating this teacher for “picking up [her] slack” and this represents “trust” amongst the teaching team, because the division leader would do the same for her.

Also, staff expressed not really relying on other staff to help solve problems of practice, and consider themselves to be more “independent” use personal connections with other staff to solve problems of practice. These connections are developed by having been hired around the same time and teaching in the same content area. When I asked one of the math teachers to describe any additional instructional supports he wish he had, he responded that he is “very

independent”, so if he does not know something he just “figures it out”, or he may simply “try something else”, and if that does not work, he would “ask someone who [he] is fairly close to.” He mentions another teacher “who [he] came in with” and this teacher “teaches the same classes pretty much every year” and he considers himself to have “gotten pretty close [with her] in the sense where [he] can text [her] and be like “how did you teach this?” or “what are you doing today”. He relies on a teacher who he came in with and teaches the same thing.

Staff rely heavily on those who they co-teach with in the classroom. Teachers trusts co-teachers to correct them on instructional mistakes they have made. Another math teacher describes being able to rely on her co-teacher to apply the content knowledge she falls short on. She says:

So, her and I work together every single day for two periods a day. So, I learned a lot during that class as far as content. Because just like yesterday, I made a mistake. And I'm not a trained math teacher, I'm a special ed teacher. So honestly, with the Algebra II that I'm teaching the kids, as long as I'm smarter than the kids on it, I'm good. But if I make a mistake or if I don't know something, I always go to her and I ask her, like yesterday I made a mistake and told the kids how to do the problem wrong and she corrected me and she kind of felt some kind of way about correcting me and I was like, no, correct me. Cause I don't want to tell them how to do it incorrectly. I mean, but that comes with you owning your position. I'm a special ed teacher. I'm not a math teacher. So we have two different roles and we're supposed to come together and use our different expertise to help the kids.

Here, I observe teachers being more reliant on their co-teaching staff. These teachers share students and work closely together and have more opportunities to collaborate, share knowledge, and build a professional bond in service to their specific students. In this way, collaborative routines can help build trust over time.

Further, staff rely on other staff for cultural knowledge that lends to scaffolding that uses a cultural lens. This teacher describes a cultural mismatch that played out during her class, and

her co-teacher, who is African American, was able to help her out in identifying this mismatch, and enhancing the lesson.

Researcher: So I'm wondering if you are able to identify any culturally responsive math in the building. And if you are where could I find that?

DL_Math_CHS: That's very interesting. I'm not sure if this is what you're talking about but this is what I'm getting from your question. So tell me if I'm wrong. I co-teach with an African American teacher. Now she has given me such a different perspective on things that if I was not teamed with her I don't think I would ever have a conversation, we would never get to a point where we would have the conversations that we have had because of us teaming. Things like and it's not necessarily math it's just every-day things. We talk about... I'll put a triangle up on the board and I'll say okay this is a Greek letter do you know what Greek letter this is. And kids don't know and I'm like, "Come on! The tri-delts! And they're like, I mean nobody knows tri-delts! And I didn't even know that that was a white thing. Which is weird. I go, Oh! "You don't know that one." So she'll come out with a more historically black one. What's it called?

Researcher: Yeah, Delta sigma theta.

DL_Math_CHS: Yeah exactly you know...Or I have a hard time and this is really I don't know. I have a hard time with people not standing for the pledge. I mean it's just a thing I guess I look at it as more of to me the flag is not the president it stands for our freedom and the fact that there are military people that people are dying for us to keep our freedoms. And that's to me what it represents. And so of course for the longest time I thought that's what it represented for everybody. To find out when you talk about different ideas and obviously with the current administration, politically things have been a little bit more shaky. Yet there has been more of a push kids don't stand up. It gets to be I just think we're losing respect for things and the more we lose respect for things in this country the more we're losing respect for each other. So it just all gets jumbled up. So sometimes I feel like I am given information that I didn't know and it makes me go oh really I didn't think about it that way. But there are also times that I feel like oh you wouldn't understand. There was an incident last year where it was January and it was black history month. I think January or February?

Researcher: February.

DL_Math_CHS: February okay. Sorry. Well I'm just thinking January 'cause I think Martin Luther King day is in January...Okay so all of the sudden we catch wind of there is a bunch of black teachers who are getting these t-shirts. It's like well you just felt. We never had a bunch of white teachers say okay we're just gonna get these. It's almost reverse prejudice but not. It's a cultural thing that I think there are cultural barriers amongst the staff that I don't know how to break them down. Because it's like the 14 year old parties. The girls are on this side the boys are on this side. The people who are maybe the LatinX people are together so it's like that groupie kind of thing which is weird. So I don't know if I'm really answering your question...So the way I have thankfully experienced things is how closely I work with this one teacher...And had I not had that I probably would not be as more open-minded...Like oh there's other ways people can think about this. Or there's other you know. I've always known my upbringing is not necessarily the upbringing of everybody else...Yet I don't know how different it is. You

know what I mean...Because if your only perspective is this and you go oh well you know I know there's kids that didn't get to do this or do that. But it's a whole nother world that as a white teacher I have no idea you know?

Here, cultural knowledge is used to engage cultural scaffolding. Cultural scaffolding is similar to the more traditional way that scholars have understood scaffolding, in that it requires using a variety of techniques to move students to greater understanding of subject content. Thus, cultural scaffolding allows for knowledge of students' cultural identity to inform the technique used to enhance student understanding. This is a very brief example of how cultural knowledge can be shared within a co-teaching team and used in a high school math course.

I used this entire quotation to, first, highlight an example of how teachers' collaborative practice can be used to further a necessary, and culturally relevant tool. Then, I would like to highlight the teachers comments about their differences in perspective between her and her students in regards to standing for the national anthem. Here, I observe a type of cultural divide between this white teacher and her African American students. Briefly, the nation has experienced even more political polarization. This political polarization is thought to be the result of things like extreme feelings surrounding the Donald Trump administration and political protests like the one started by Colin Kaepernick. Kaepernick is a NFL player who started the trend of kneeling during the national anthem as a type of symbol, and silent protest used to recognize racial injustice throughout our nation's highlight. With this, this teacher highlights teachers' building closer professional and personal bonds with those who are of the same racial background. Ultimately, I highlight this interview to expose the importance of norms of trust, teachers culturally-situated, instructional conversations, and the cultural divide present within these school contexts. The influence of informal mechanisms on teachers' collaborative conversations related to culture are further discussed in the following chapter.

It is worth noting that trust is promoted when staff have previously worked with school leaders. When I asked one of the English teachers about her relationship with administrative leaders at the school, she responded, “Personally, I have a good relationship with all four of them.” At the same time, this teacher worked with the principal leader at a previous school, and because of this, she considers herself to “have a little bit of allegiance to him when other people don’t.” The principal leader is “somebody [she] respected both in that building and here.”

Erosions of Trust

Trust erodes when teachers are not confident in the decisions made by administrative leaders. Stark changes to the curriculum can erode progress in teaching teams, especially when changes are not discussed and agreed upon with the teaching staff. One of the English teachers talks about an initiative that was implemented and only decided by administration. While school level goals center around “collaboration” she highlights “there was no discussion ahead of time” before administration decided to go forward with the program. She describes this event as eroding trust at CHS because all the teachers agreed that this initiative “was a bad idea.” It felt like a “bomb dropped” because there was “no discussion.” She goes on further to say,

So, I think sometimes those types of things erode the strength of that team, because one of them will make a decision and the other one has to defend it, even though it wasn't that person's decision.

Here, I understand erosion of trust between administrative leaders and school staff as detracting from school features that are necessary for promoting teachers’ enactments of CRP.

Staff describe a generally mistrust between teachers and administrative leaders. This teacher is open about the mistrust between teaching staff and leadership She notes:

And we all know where it came from, we all know who has to defend, and that erodes that trust in the administrative team. I would say collectively, throughout the building, there has been an erosion of trust in the administrative team. This has been one of those years that, again, last year, this year, probably the lowest morale in the 11 years I've been

here. Some of them having to do with true curricular or administrative planning, some of them having to do with issues that have happened with staff that were handled in a way that the majority of people would have said, “Oh, my gosh. I can't believe you're doing that.” So there's been a kind of dual level drop in trust of the administrative team this year.

This overall mistrust takes away from aspects of school climate that are necessary for assessing and addressing cultural problems of practice.

Collegial Bonds amongst Staff

Generally, collegial bonds amongst staff speaks to the nature of professional bonds exhibited amongst staff at CHS. The data revealed several important aspects about professional bonds. First, staff report good and bad experiences within their teaching teams. And, professional bonds are based on personal connections with staff they seem to have things in common with. Second, staff communicative patterns vary; teams that frequently collaborate seem to communicate more often. Third, professional bonds are used to develop a space where teachers can share ideas. Sharing ideas seems more useful when staff share the same students.

Variations in Relationships

While staff describe variations in the quality of relationships between teachers and administration, generally, staff described that they do trust the intentions of school leaders, even if they do not agree with their methods. When I asked one of the math teachers to describe relationships between teachers and administration he responded, “that question kind of depends who you ask.” However, he has “nothing but positive things to say” and he has “never had any issues with administration” and he really “believes their best intentions”. And given “the profession that [they’re] in... it’s all about the kids”. In other words, as long as a teachers’ actions do not “adversely affect the kids” then he is “cool with it... and pretty laid back and an easy-going guy.” He describes his work relationships as having “no personal or professional

issues with any of the administration.” He feels like the “majority of the school feels this way”. Here, I observed teachers who have positive relationships with leaders, are more likely to be satisfied with school climate. Developing a climate where staff experience positive bonds seems to help create the necessary conditions for addressing and assessing cultural problems of practice.

Further, divisions amongst staff can negatively impact how others view their colleagues. While one of the English teachers described her relationship with administrators as “really good”, she is aware of very negative experiences that other staff have had with administration, highlighting “I’ve heard horror stories.” Some of these stories serve to shape how she views her colleagues; she notes, “I look at some people differently because of what I’ve heard, but I’ve never had an issue, and I think it’s because I don’t cause any waves.” She also recognizes this dynamic and discusses how she does her job, and is involved with the school through coaching, and possibly credits this as the reason for why she gets along with administration. She goes on further to say, “And I do what I’m supposed to do. And I love working here.” Here, I observe division amongst staff as negatively impacting teachers’ work place. This negative impact is understood as taking away from staff capacity to engage difficult tasks like assessing and addressing cultural problems of practice.

Staff expressed that their collegial bonds are influenced by the staff demographics in the school. One of the math teachers’ who is a black female in her late 20s refers to some of the cliques at her job, saying

They’re all white guys in their late thirties, early forties, and they all live in Indiana. They all like to do the same thing, you know what I mean? Or they’re the black people who hang around each other and they all like to do the same thing or they have something in common. It’s more of like who you have a personal connection with. Okay. And if you think about it, who are you having these personal connections with? With other people who are like minded. So are you really having really big discussions with different

opinions, you know what I mean? Or talking about different points of views over drinks? Probably not, because you're off, and you're 42 and you all live in Indiana and you all make \$100,000 a year, you know what I mean? So.

Here, I observe a division amongst staff based on race, and social class. These differences could be used to promote understanding of cross- cultural dynamics in and outside the workplace.

However, when these differences serve to create division amongst staff and this division goes largely unnoticed, this can hinder staff closeness or willingness to break down cultural barriers in the workplace. Here, this division takes away from collegial bonds and ultimately an opportunity for teachers to advance their multicultural practice.

Varying Communication Patterns

The data revealed variations in synergy among department teams. According to the assistant principal, these department level meetings look different “depending on the division leader”. For positive group dynamics, she describes “There would be a couple that would focus the entire time talking about teaching and learning no matter what was on the agenda. They would cover, disseminate information, but the focus would be really rich conversations about teaching and learning.” These teams also spend their time “sharing artifacts” of exemplary student work. Here, she describes teams within the science department as “very collaborative by nature and super focused” is led by a “division leader who’s fantastic”. For negative group dynamics she described some teaching teams as having “have a hard time getting through even the sharing of information because there would be a lot of complaints and criticisms.” When I probed further about whether these complaints had to do with “negative group dynamics” or “the content itself”, she responded that “A lot of it has to do with the group dynamics. Then, some of it might be the content itself, [and] not feeling as valued as others.” Here, I observe teaching

teams as influenced by the style of the division leader facilitating meetings, and varying communication patterns amongst teaching teams and across departments.

Sharing Ideas

Staff expressed their wish for time to “truly collaborate.” The division leader for English describes it as a real sadness that she has so much on her plate, and that staff collaboration is better for the students. When teachers collaborate, they are able to deliver instruction grounded “in each other’s strengths.”

One of the English teachers describes her department as pretty comfortable with asking each other for help. At CHS, the English department also includes teaching teams for speech. This English teacher gives an example of the types of instructional conversations she may have with one of her colleagues who teaches speech. The speech teacher may say “Do you have a good idea for this?” Like, “I’m looking for a movie to go with this,” or, “Can you help me brainstorm this,” or, “This didn’t go well. You know this kid, like, what could I have done differently?”

Staff expressed that they develop better ideas and feel more supported by their colleagues when they share the same students. And when teachers are assigned the same group of students, teachers described being “able to do some really cool stuff.” The administration recently broke up their honors teaching team. This was an unfortunate change because these teachers had most of the same kids, and it was helpful to be in a team where teachers could share student information. When administrative leaders decided to break up the honors teams, it affected those who taught an honors course, for geometry, US history, English, and chemistry. Staff expressed that working in these teams were really beneficial because they had almost every one of the same

kids. While teachers are still using their meeting times to share ideas, staff described having less opportunities to discuss strategies directly related to the needs of individual students.

Ultimately, I understood collegial bonds amongst staff represents opportunities to detract from or support staff enactments of CRP. Specifically, division amongst staff could be used to detract from CRP. Using a cultural lens necessitates staff feeling comfortable enough to discuss difficult issues, like cultural problems of practice. A division amongst staff can make it difficult for individuals to share their pedagogical shortcomings. The data did not show that anything was being done to address this division. Also, the communicative patterns of teaching teams that are described as productive and highly collaborative is understood to be a potential benefit for school organizational capacity. While the data did not speak to how these social practices emerged, knowing that they exist in this space highlights an opportunity for leaders to encourage these type of best practices across teams. Further, professional bonds support teachers in sharing ideas. This is understood to be a potential opportunity to support staff enactments of CRP. Here, sharing ideas about culturally responsive lessons and materials remains a significant way that staff informal social structure can be used to promote enactments of CRP.

Collective Responsibility

Generally, collective responsibility at CHS speaks to how teachers within teams approach their work. The data revealed several important aspects of teachers' collaborative time together. First, staff may limit their collaboration in favor of completing their individual task assignments. Second, staff agree on the goals of their strategies, but often use different approaches to achieve said goals. Third, their academic expectations are strongly tied to addressing the teaching gaps experienced by their students.

Avoiding Responsibility

Staff sense of responsibility is based on how they see their role and the role of other school staff. For staff who do not hold administrative roles, they may see a problem and look to administrative leaders to address the problem. The AP for instruction highlights, “Well, you have teachers who are like, “I’m not getting involved in it. I’m not admin. That’s your problem to fix it.” There are also staff who work under a different ideology, finding everyone responsible for the wellbeing of their students. She highlights, “Then, you do have teachers who on the flip side are like, “You’re hurting our kids.” She says there are not many staff at CHS “who are strong enough to really step up against it and say like, ‘We need to do better. You need to do better.’” For this leader, she understands this problem as derived from “the culture of the school.” School culture is described as the “blame game” where staff are often concerned with “Who’s fault is it?” If it is possible to “blame the admin or the students first, [they’ll] go there before the teachers, even if you don’t know the situation.”

As well, this AP for instruction feels that staff at CHS are working under a premise that says, “protect the teacher at all costs no matter what.” With this, staff are “not giving the benefit of the doubt like admin or students are.” If issues arise within the school, teachers might put the responsibility on administrative leaders, saying “The admin handled it wrong” or “the students” are the problem.

Further, avoiding responsibility also refers to collaborative tasks. Some staff talk about how they have too much on their plates for deep collaboration. Having too much to do as a teacher takes away from deep collaboration. Interview data revealed that lacking deep collaboration is a shortcoming for students learning experiences. When talking to one of the English division leaders she highlighted this issue, saying:

but that's like to me a real sadness of having so much on my plate, because, in fact, I'm gonna go talk to [AP for instruction] about seeing if somebody else will do Honors 10 next semester. Which I've never done anything like that, but I just can't handle it. But it's too bad because if we were truly collaborating the writing would be better for her kids, but the reading would be better for mine, cause that's her strength and that's my strength. So that's normally what would happen, but that's just not happening this year.

Again, individual tasks are understood as getting away from collaborative tasks, which seem useful for strengthening students learning experiences.

Similar Goals, Different Approach

Staff expressed that effective teaching teams do not mess around and they use their time wisely. These teams are comprised of teachers who want to do a good job and are aiming toward a common goal. Staff that have been working together for a while describe having a stronger sense of collective responsibility for students learning. These teams describe that they are able to perform tasks quickly and they share curricular goals. The division leader for English summarizes these sentiments in her interview, stating “We can do things really quickly because we've all been teaching a long time. We've all put in a lot of work, we're pretty similar, we have pretty similar standards, and our approach is not necessarily always similar.”

Academic Expectations

Teachers' discussed having clear expectations of students that are set in a context of needing to “bridge the gaps that the kids come in with.” Teachers goals for students are centered around getting students “out the door on a solid footing... it's not equal footing”, but she called it “solid footing.” Teachers intend to use students' motivation for academic achievement as a “base” to build on. Most commonly, students who plan to go to college are seen as more motivated to learn. For students who lack motivation to achieve academically, teachers have to choose what to use to help students in their classroom. Ultimately, teachers want to help their students develop basic skills like “clear communication.” Here, the data revealed that supporting

students with “clear communication” as a way to bridge learning gaps, necessarily involves culturally responsiveness. Ultimately, I observe that teachers have ideas about how to develop a sense of collective responsibility for teachers’ CRP enactments, but school organizational supports are needed before staff can move forward in solving cultural problems of practice.

Ultimately, I understood that teachers’ individual tasks and collaborative tasks could be used to further enactments of CRP. However, there is no formalized system to support CRP for teachers’ everyday practice. Also, staff variation in practice is seen as a missed opportunity for supporting CRP. These variations could be categorized based on their strengths with this student population. Building on these strengths could be one mechanism for uncovering the breath of CRP. Further, establishing academic expectations based on student learning gaps could be used to enhance student learning opportunities when coupled with a culturally responsive lens that promotes high expectations alongside addressing learning gaps. Here, understanding staff collective responsibility remains important to understanding how schools’ leaders and staff influence each other to be more culturally responsive.

Ultimately, I understood that teachers’ use of human resources within their workplace has large consequences for the schools’ organization capacity. As shown above, staff reliance on one another can be used to support cultural scaffolding and cultural knowledge use. This support is shown as a bridge to help increase students understanding of academic content. Further, erosions of trust are enhanced when there are rifts between administrative leaders and teachers. Successfully implementing a vision requires staff to buy in to the methods adopted. The data revealed that staff have had negative responses to decisions made by school leaders and this create disgruntled feelings related to tasks assigned. Overall, the data highlighted many facets of

the staff informal social structure that could be used to support or detract from CRP and the necessary conditions for effective teaching.

Similar to WHS, CHS attempted to influence teachers' enactments of CRP by developing the conditions for staff to have culturally-situated instructional conversations. While administrative and teacher leaders at CHS admitted that they were struggling to understand how they might encourage teachers to be culturally responsive, they have developed systems and supports that could be used to influence teachers' cultural knowledge, dispositions, and culturally responsive strategies. For instance, CHS offered a cultural bias training, and PDs on trauma-informed practices and equitable classroom strategies. These learning opportunities were noted amongst staff as helping them to begin thinking about the role of culture in their practice. At the same time, the schools' informal social structure shapes teachers' instructional conversations through collective ideas on student performance and academic expectations, through communication and collaborative inquiry, and by relying on other colleagues. The data revealed that staff used their time for collaborative inquiry to have culturally-situated, instructional conversations. The findings highlight culturally-situated, instructional conversations occurred amongst teaching staff within various teaching teams, co-teaching teams, and formal professional development sessions. The following section is used to detail the data surrounding staff use and experience of culturally-situated instructional conversations.

Instructional Conversations

Consistent with my theoretical framework, these conversations do center around knowledge, commitments, and classroom strategies related to culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally situated conversations for CRP knowledge have been divided into two broad categories, including: cultural knowledge related to staff, and cultural knowledge related to

students. Cultural knowledge related to staff are understood to be some of the ramifications of the demographic divide, including discussions on: staff who lack cultural knowledge, and staff from the community who hold cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge related to students include where this knowledge is gained and shared. Cultural knowledge of students is gained in the classrooms, and this knowledge is shared in teacher team meetings, in co-teaching teams, and in one-on-one conversations among staff. Culturally-situated conversations for CRP commitments include discussion on: the limitations of the curriculum, commitments to students, addressing the learning opportunity gap, commitments to change, and personal commitments to CRP. Culturally-situated conversations on classroom strategies include discussions on: inherent variation of teachers practice, the influence of school reform on teachers practice, engaging activities based on students' interests, the necessity of change, and the varied space for CRP across departments.

Conversations on CRP Knowledge- Staff

Cultural knowledge related to staff are understood to be some of the ramifications of the demographic divide, including discussion on: staff who lack cultural knowledge and staff from the community who hold cultural knowledge.

Lacking Cultural Knowledge

Staff described talking to each other about the way some CHS staff interact with students' "based on their own experiences", and they "don't really understand where kids are coming from and their grades are suffering because of that." For instance, teachers' see students on their phone all the time in class, and will assume that since the students have a working phone, they also have a working data plan. However, some teachers don't understand that some of these students on their phone do not have a data plan or wifi at home so they are using the

phone in class because the school has wifi. Teachers will make “assumptions about how students function outside of school, based on their own experience”. With this, this math teacher will have to “break it down” to her colleagues. For instance, when her co-teacher was complaining about a student who was not turning in their homework, she had to ask her colleague,

Well, did you know that his mom died around the same time last year? Do you know that he is now living with his father and so it's a completely different environment, you know? Do you know anything about this kid as a whole person or are you just paying attention to his behavior? Like why is he not doing the work? Have you stopped to ask him why he's not doing it? Do you know if when he goes home, if he has, uh, an environment where he can do his homework?

She goes on further to explain that teachers’ assume that because they “can afford to pay the cable bill and keep the Wifi on then they can give homework that is computer based.” These ideas are observed to be problematic and used to maintain inequity in the classroom.

Relying on your own personal struggles or cultural identity is not enough to help teachers understand what their students are going through. Teachers need training for learning their students home lives and dealing with their home life in school and the classroom.

This black teacher speaks to understanding her student’s experiences related to financial insecurity, but recognizes that her own experience is not enough to fully understand her students home life. She highlights that she, too, did not have any money when she was in college and that she had to “figure it out.” And at the same time, she also had family support and had a good high school education and upbringing. Here, she recognizes the cultural divide that exists, between herself and the students, even though she is black. She goes on further to say that, hiring teachers of color is helpful. But, there is still more that needs to be done other than just hiring more black teachers. But even teachers who come from racially minoritized backgrounds, need to be trained on how to deal with issues that CHS students are facing because teachers may not be familiar

with those life circumstances. These sentiments were echoed across leaders and teachers included in the study.

And with this, teachers need to be trained on how to form good relationships with students and the importance of relationships with students who have these experiences. Staff expressed the need for more trainings like the one on cultural bias held at the beginning of the year. One of the math teachers explains that hiring teachers of color for work with their specific student population is important, however that is not enough to enhance student academic achievement. She notes that “just because you are a black teacher does not mean that you’re going to have better outcomes with black students.” For attempting school achievement, “it just can’t be more black teachers.” She says,

We need more black teachers, but then we need to also be taught how to be more culturally responsive to the students... I’m black, but I did not grow up like a lot of the students. And if I’m not willing to try to understand where they’re coming from, then I’ll need to get off my high horse and figure it out.

Here, I observed teachers proclaiming a need for more culturally responsive training focused on supporting the specific needs of teaching staff. As well, hiring teachers of color does not suffice for the amount of training and resources required for effective, culturally responsive practices.

Holders of Knowledge Come from the Community

Teachers’ expressed that they observed teachers who grew up in communities with racially minoritized people as culturally sensitive. In my interview with one of the English teachers, she described her own neighborhood community as a diverse area, which she credits for knowing how to be culturally sensitive, and what to say and what not to say.

Staff who are from the community consider themselves knowledgeable about students’ life experiences. This math teacher describes growing up within a neighborhood community similar to the one in which he works. He highlights that the student population is very similar to

the population” he experienced. He describes “dealing with the same stuff” like high poverty levels” and being around a lot of African American and LatinX students. In this way, he feels like he gets these kids a lot more because no one has to tell him about students’ home life; he “lived it” and he knows what they are talking about. He believes that there is no PD that can show him how to understand students experience, and in this way, he has “kind of an advantage” teaching at CHS. Overall, interview data revealed that staff experienced themselves and their colleagues, who identify as being from the school community, as adept at building strong relationships with students.

Conversations on CRP Knowledge- Students

Cultural knowledge related to students include where this knowledge is gained and shared. Cultural knowledge of students is gained in the classrooms, and this knowledge is shared in teacher team meetings, in co-teaching teams, and in one-on-one conversations among staff.

Gained in the classroom

Staff expressed using generic student inventory forms to get to know them and their learning style, along with relying on their co-teachers to learn about students. The content of the inventory supported understanding intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for students in their class.

Staff discuss student home life and the context of their neighborhood community, to better understand significant factors that lead to gaps in their learning. Teachers’ have learned that students at CHS experience disruption in their learning due to instances of switching schools. This issue came up during meetings in the math department surrounding their discussions of why students have never been taught certain necessary math concepts. With this, a lot of kids are not confident, so teachers have to constantly boost their confidence. This dynamic applies to many of her students regardless of their academic status. One of the math teachers

noted that if I were to attend her third period class I would not know the students from the special education track from the students in the general education track. In other words, the general education students look and function just like the students in the special education track. She would not describe her second period like this. Ultimately, some students are “a little bit more needy, so it just depends on the needs of the kid.” She uses “the needs of the kid” to determine “how [she] is going to teach with care.” She teaches all her students “the same content”. For addressing students’ learning gaps, she “walks them through a little bit more step by step” showing them “what to do.” Generally, staff reported learning things about their students learning needs from their classroom interactions.

Shared in Meetings

Leaders have to create a safe space for staff to discuss issues of race, culture, and social justice. This math teacher suggests “round table discussion” where teachers can “talk about [race and culture] issues and brainstorm solutions” on how to deal with these issues at their particular school.

Staff expressed that they engage conversations about cultural problems of practice “informally”, meaning in one-on-one conversations or in core course team meetings. They also expressed the desire to have time set aside to talk to each other openly about race, culture, and social justice. I learned that teachers do discuss issues of race and culture in their content collaboration meetings that happen twice a month. However, staff expressed that these conversations tend to center “issues with students’ behavior” instead of issues with teachers’ pedagogical approach that stem from a lack of cultural awareness. One of the math teachers noted in her interview that she believes CHS problems of practice has to do with their lack of culturally responsiveness. She believes that when staff conversations focus on being “culturally

unbiased... white people get clammed up when they hear that” and proclaiming that they are “not biased.” She describes these staff as always putting up “defense mechanisms” attempting to argue that they are “not racist.” Ultimately, she believes that CHS needs to develop a school environment where conversations around race and culture are “more meaningful.” Here, I observe that the time set aside to talk about problems of practice exist, yet the space is insufficient for being able to meaningfully discuss problems of practice using a cultural lens.

Shared in Co-Teaching Teams

Teachers learn a lot about their students from smaller, co-teaching teams. Teachers’ spend time talking about their students with co-teachers. In these conversations, holders of cultural knowledge encourage their colleagues to incorporate information about the students’ home life as to make more informed decisions for their interactions with students. During my interview with a math teacher from a co-teaching team she highlights my understanding of cultural problems of practice. By highlighting staff instructional conversations on students, I was able to capture another condition in which school structure is used to support a teacher in being responsive to students using knowledge of students’ ‘home life.

I have, I've tried. I mean, as my role as a special-ed teacher, I'm also the kid's case managers. Okay. So then, um, like I talked to a lot of the different teachers. And so she would tell about this one kid not turning in his work, you know. She kept saying, he just won't turn it. He won't do anything. And I would ask her like, well did you know that his mom died around the same time last year? Do you know that he is now living with his father and so it's a completely different environment, you know? Do you know anything about this kid as a whole person or are you just paying attention to his behavior? Like why is he not doing the work? Have you stopped to ask him why he's not doing it? Do you know if, when he goes home, if he has an environment where he can do his homework? You know, a lot of teachers make assumptions on how kids function outside of school based off of their own experiences. If I can afford to pay the cable bill and keep the Wi-Fi on, then yeah, I give homework. That's, you know, computer based. They're always on their phone. Yeah, they're on their phone because they're using the school Wi-Fi, they don't have a data plan, you know what I mean? So like giving kids homework that is Internet based and not in making the assumption that they have the Internet at home. You're doing that based off of your own experience. You're not really

understanding where your kids are coming from and their grades are suffering because of that.

In this scenario, this special education teacher (black female woman) is referring to student information that could be used by her co-teacher to support effective practice with a student who recently lost a parent. She also summarizes how lack of cultural knowledge influences teachers' perceptions of students, and that this perception influences their evaluation of students.

Ultimately, I highlight this example to represent how problems of practice within the demographic divide are “more than just problems of practice.” They are problems that stem from a general lack of cultural awareness of students. At the same time, schools are made up of individual teachers, leaders, and sometimes small teams, that hold cultural knowledge and understand the need to adapt and are willing to adapt. And schools are made up of those struggling to understand the diverse learning needs of their students, and are not able and/or willing to change their practices, while blaming the student or other contextual factors outside of themselves.

Shared in One-on-One Conversations

Staff learn more about their students with the help of support staff. One of the English teachers expressed being intentional when looking at student's IEP's and talking with their case managers. The case managers email teachers all the time. Their conversations focus on students' strengths and their needs. This teacher is comfortable talking to case managers about her students, noting that she has no problem emailing anyone asking for information or ideas or talking to someone for ideas on a particular student, or telling them to go chit chat with this kid and see “what's up”. She says that communicating with support staff is never a problem and that everybody works “hand in hand”. It's worth noting that staff talk to one another about how to support their ELL students. Overall, staff everyday interactions include one-on-one

conversations about students. This information is important to understanding the significance of teachers' everyday interactions with one another in supporting each other for addressing the learning gaps experienced by students in racially isolated schools, and for enhancing the learning experience for all their students.

Ultimately, school level mechanisms create the conditions in which knowledge of students is received and shared. These conditions include formal meeting spaces, staff working networks, and collegial bonds.

Conversations on CRP Commitments

Culturally-situated conversations for CRP dispositions include discussion on: commitments to inclusive material, enhancing commitments to students, commitments to addressing the learning opportunity gap, varied commitments to change, and personal commitments to CRP.

Commitments to Inclusive material

Teachers within the English department have been discussing better ways to be inclusive of all the racially minoritized identities represented at CHS, within their curriculum. The division leader for English is clear that CHS English department has "highly prioritized" building their curriculum to meet the needs of their African American students, but are still limited in the amount of LatinX reading material they assign, in order to be responsive to those students' cultural identities. She noted that "Latino students are underrepresented throughout the curriculum, but it is "pretty Heavy on African-American literature". She believes this is the case for "not just the literature" but also in "the climate of the school", which "makes sense because African-Americans are the majority of the school" while there is "a sizable number of Latino students and the population is rising." Although the department has recognized a lack of

representation of LatinX literature in the curriculum, they “haven’t really done a lot about it.” Staff “had a whole conversation” about the increase in LatinX students “a couple of years ago” but this English teacher noted that not clear on the conclusions or next steps for addressing this issue. There were some students who approached one of the teachers about not being represented in the curriculum and out of that grew their LatinX heritage assembly.

The division leader for English describes her department as having much more cultural diversity in what is being taught now than what there used to be. She believes that the curriculum is a “little heavy on Jim Crow” and “African-American literature”, noting that this material “can be damaging in its own way to kids, but absolutely necessary.” This is the main topic of discussion within their senior level African American literature class, this class also has “quite a bit done on slave narratives.” Generally, the curriculum is “a little bit more black empowerment” which focuses a lot on the Harlem renaissance, Richard Wright, and works from James Baldwin. They do engage more “classic” stories, like *The Scarlett letter* and *Romeo & Juliet*. She would like to see more variations of culturally responsive literature, but she’s “not worried about that”, because the department is doing a curriculum rewrite soon.

Enhancing Commitments to Students

Within the math department, the division leaders conducted a book study with teachers that focused on developing commitments to their students and their practice. The division for the math department said that it was used helped “put a different emphasis on what you do and how you feel about your classroom.” She says that implementing these types of things took years before teachers were open enough to engage this type of collaborative inquiry. This year, she believes that the department is strong and shows great commitment to their students.

At the same time, a teacher from the math department expressed a desire to support her colleagues in thinking deeper about their students' lives. However, she does not believe the current formal spaces are enough to do that. She highlighted

So, yes, we were slaves then what's next? Yeah. The police probably will shoot you quicker than they will a white kid, but what's next? You know what I mean? Like, what are we going to do about that? What are you going to do about it in the classroom? Are you going to push students to take advantage of their education and try to do better for themselves? You know, so that kind of, um, dialogue teacher to teacher is basically, it's not formally existing.

Overall, the data pointed to formal meeting times as providing a space where teachers can share culturally responsive materials. However, staff experience highlights that these meeting spaces are limited in promoting staff to discuss how issues of race and culture might be influencing their practice. Specifically, staff responses on time spent in meetings highlighted: either time was too limited to deeply engage matters of race and cultural mismatch, or that the time allotted only allows for pleasantries and logistical instructional matters; that other staff get offended when their colleagues refer to race and culture as a reason for why a problem exists, or that team meetings are simply not the space to have dialogues about how race or cultural background influences their relationships with students, which, in turn, influences students' learning opportunities and academic success. While staff reported required attendance to the cultural bias training, the data did not reveal that there was any formalized time, following the training, for staff to reflect on their learning.

Commitments to Addressing the Learning Opportunity Gap

Teachers' at CHS describe conflicts between the need to provide rigorous classroom instruction and adhering to student failure rates. One of the English teachers describes this as "caught in this trap." The trap involves "being rigorous in the classroom but then offering credit recovery" for students who failed core academic classes. In the past, CHS had a lot of fail safes,

which is not considered a bad thing, but it is also not supporting rigor. For example, there are students who come into their senior level English courses who have never written a research paper. This is possible because the student failed the semester in which the research paper was assigned. Then, the student took summer school, where they did not write a research paper. One of the English teachers further explains, that it took her a while to realize how many people kind of cracked their way through the system, but were still able to graduate on time. For instance, she expects her students to turn in a works cited page, highlighting her strategy that she will not even grade your paper unless you turn in a works cited page. When she questioned a student, who did not turn in her reference list, she responded that she skips that part every year because she does not know how to do it.

It is worth noting that an English teacher describes the time I spent collecting data at the school as “a really bad year for them.” This year, the English 12 team is experiencing “a particularly high failure rate in” their senior level courses. When she discussed this issue with the principal leader, they both said they “don’t know what happened to this group.” They have had more seniors fail their English course this year, “more than ever before.”

Staff talked to their colleagues about being more aware of the demographic divide when they observe the differences between what their children are learning and assigned in their classes versus what they are tasked with teaching and assigning to their class. For instance, one of the teachers from the English department describes a huge disparity between her own kids who are in high school and the students at CHS. For instance, the students in her senior class are reading “The Outliers” by Malcolm Gladwell, which is what her kids were assigned for their seventh grade summer reading. She explains further, that the students at CHS are not keeping up with their peers in less diverse, wealthier neighborhoods. Here, she recognizes that the learning

expectations for her kids are not as high for the students at CHS. Noting that CHS “needs to ante up” student learning expectations, “without alienating kids.”

Here, leaders and teaching are observed working at a school where the majority of the teachers are white and almost all of the students are of color. Interview data revealed that staff express the need to hire teachers of color as one way to address the demographic divide, and that representation is important given the student population in which they are of service. And at the same time, teachers need to evolve. Discussions on hiring teachers of color was described as creating “some resent amongst white teachers”. Although, one division leader describes her feelings about hiring teachers of color as “not really giving a shit about that frankly.” Her primary concern with staff development “in the [CHS] district”, is that the focus “not really looking at bettering teacher who are in the district.” The CHS district has “more white teachers” which is “obviously an historical problem.” Since her time working the CHS district, the staff is “much more diversified.” However, she struggles to understand why the district does not recruit more from qualified teaching programs with more diverse teaching candidates.

Varied Commitments to Change

The data highlighted that effective practice at CHS requires a willingness to adapt. Staff discussed the fact that not all teachers are willing to adapt in order to be effective. Some staff described the different approaches they need to take in order to meet students varied learning needs. Staff recognize their colleagues who focus on their authority as a teacher, are usually the same teachers who are unwilling to change. A leader in the math department described CHS as having a “50/50 ratio” of teachers “who are willing to adapt” and teachers who are not willing. They noted:

So, there are different approaches that you can take, but I think some people get stuck in, I'm the teacher, I have the authority, I have information to give you. You need to sit and

do this, this, and this. And if you don't, then I don't know what to do for you. And they don't know how to change. I would say in my department, honestly, I would say there is about a 50/50 ratio of people who are willing to change. In the school, there are just some... Really, you have to adapt.

Division leaders discussed, at length, about the fact that some teachers are reluctant to change.

Some of these teachers come from other schools in the district, and have complained by saying “Well I didn’t have to do that at [the other school].” Leaders observe that these staff are often reluctant to engage more student-centered approaches, highlighting that they have difficulty engaging classroom strategies “where they need to give up control” to the students. Over the years, the math department has been trying to engage more student-centered approaches, and some teachers do experiment with different groupings and more teamwork activities in their class, but others are more opposed.

Teachers who are willing to change sometimes ask students for their input on how they should adapt their practice. In order to better meet the needs of students, after noticing a strategy is not working, one of the math teachers notes that she may explicitly ask a student “what can I do different for you? Because this is not working.” She makes it clear to students what “is not going to change.” For instance, she is “not going to allow [students] to come in and not do work” and students will “not be disrespectful.” She may also probe to see what type of issue the student is having. She asks things like “am I covering too much?” or “is it my tone?” She has learned that she has to be “a little bit more open to change yourself first, because it makes a difference” in student learning outcomes. During this part of the conversation she referred to an example of a student who currently had a “C”, which was a positive thing because this math course “is hard” for this student and others. This student “is earning his C.” She credits the student’s academic improvement as a result of having a conversation with “his guidance counselor” about how she should adapt her teaching style to meet the needs of this particular student. She asks if she should

engage “tough love” or “mommy love, like coddling” or a “you’re the best, you can do this pep talk” or if it is best to “just ignore the behavior.” Overall, the data revealed that some teachers go to great lengths to figure out how to reach certain students, and these teachers can and do serve as great sources of support for promoting the types of knowledge and inquiry required for enacting culturally responsiveness.

Division leaders have conversations with staff who seem “stuck” and need to adapt their current teaching strategies. Staff expressed, in great detail, how ineffective teaching methods come from teachers who are unwilling to change what they are doing in the classroom. These teachers are “stuck”. They may deliver content well, but when faced with a challenge they may lack motivation to change. The division leader for the English department highlights a teacher who switched from teaching one of the English courses to teaching speech now. She described the class as a really good fit for him because he is very motivational, and also, “the kids really need that.” While his instructional practice for “teaching writing” is limited, the students “really need somebody like him” to inspire them when “making decisions in their life.” During the previous school year, the division leader for English noticed his was “stuck”, meaning he was struggling to “teach content”, and they decided together to switch him to teaching speech class. In this way, the division leader was attempting to “capitalize on his strengths.” Here, this leader prioritizes instructional fit to “get people unstuck by focusing on getting them excited about what [she knows] they are good at.” Although, due to decreases in student enrollment teacher role assignment may change.

Necessity of Change

She goes on to let me know that she has a “very veteran department” meaning there “are very few people who haven’t been teaching for more than 10 years.” She described this as “a

good thing and a bad thing.” She is faced with the reality that they have a few people in the department who are “stuck” and can “be a little bit more difficult to turn around and they’re probably not going to leave.” Here is one example of how the human resources in the school influence the instructional quality received by students in racially isolated schools. This schools, especially, need to be staff with teachers who are willing to adapt their practice to meet the varied learning needs of their students. The goals of CRP remain centered around instructional quality for racially minoritized students. So, for this study, the features of school organizational capacity that impact teacher performance necessarily has to do with CRP.

In my discussion with the AP, she highlighted that adapting teaching practice is something teachers have to do every year. She went on further to explain that teachers always have to change what they are doing, whether they’re at the same school and especially if they’re at a different school. She noted that “having a different group of students each year, requires change in practice.” She tells her staff that what works for one group does not necessarily work for the other group of students.

Personal Commitments to CRP

Staff talk to one another about the fact that some teachers are not “culturally responsive.” For some teachers, being culturally responsive is personal to them, meaning they have a personal commitment to being responsive to their students learning needs. For this math teacher, she understands being responsive as being committed to understanding your students and changing your practice to be more effective with such understanding. She stated in her interview that

Being culturally responsive...since it's such a personal thing for every teacher, to me it seems like it's something that's really personal. I don't know if everyone has taken it to heart and are making changes or kind of evaluating how they deal with the kids and thinking about how culturally responsive they are. I think that it's something that's in the back of a lot of people's minds. Like, “Oh yeah, that matters.” But then they don't do anything to make the change that they need to make. You know, they're not trying to

change. And I think a lot of teachers have problems with changing and they have a problem with admitting that a lot of the issues that you may be having with your students starts with making the change to be culturally responsive.

Staff expressed that their instructional practice is driven by their cultural identity and personal philosophy. One of the teachers in the math department explains how “as a black woman in this country the pledge means nothing to [her].” She highlighted in her interview that the pledge of allegiance “is just something she’s been taught to do since she was in kindergarten. She stated, “It doesn't mean a doggone thing to me because I know that it's not true. It means nothing in this world that I live in.” During our discussion she mentioned instances where students would not stand for the pledge and her, white, co-teacher took it as being offensive. But for her, she does not care if students stand for the pledge or not, because that it not her “thing”. In this scenario, the white co-teacher would make the kids stand for the pledge. She further explained that she understands these type of classroom decisions as guided by personal beliefs and feelings that you have as a teacher and how you relate to the kids. For her, understanding teaching practice in this way requires, “honesty” with yourself and students. Additionally, she has observed that, “some of the kids don’t respond to her [co-teacher] well, where they respond to [her] better.” She is aware of this dynamic, but is conscious not to undermine her co-teacher’s authority.

Unfortunately, for this class, this white co-teacher, seemingly does not really understand why the students do not respond to her well. But she says that, in this case, “some things coming from a white woman...cuts the kids harder.” Generally, interview data revealed that staff believe that students have different responses to teachers based on the race of the teacher. Noteworthy to this research, is that I was able to capture these sentiments expressed from the white co-teacher, which is detailed in the previously noted vignette in my section on norms of trust. A discussion

on the potential opportunities for co-teaching teams to promote enactments of CRP is highlighted in the following chapter.

Further, teachers' who expressed enacting CRP use the cultural knowledge of their students to assess their behavior. In doing so, they recognize patterns of cultural behavior exhibited by certain student groups. In my discussion with a math teacher, who is a black woman, in her mid-thirties, she talked about how she adapts her teaching style and interactions by assessing student behavior using a cultural lens and then adapting her strategy based on that knowledge. She says:

I mean, I'm black, and most of these kids are black, but I have Latino students too. So I mean we're loud, you know, I know the little colloquialisms that the kids say. I know this my little [black] kid in the class is going to say "periodt" after I say everything and I'm okay with that. You know what I mean? Because he's just being Sassy. Like I get it. He's going to call everybody "friend". He's hyped up, you know, he's there for the drama. I get it. But that doesn't make him disrespectful... he's happy. I also know that there are some Latino girls in the class that are easily intimidated by overly outward behaviors and actions. And you can't speak to them too strongly... don't raise your voice. You know, they, they respond poorly to that. So like when I talk to them, it has to be a little bit more toned down.

This teacher was clear in her interview that she uses this cultural knowledge to guide her interactions while also taking the time to get to know these students individually.

Sometimes, staff who enact culturally responsive, effective strategies are deviating from the curriculum. Administrative leaders do talk with staff about the limitations of the curriculum. Leaders encourage staff to engage cultural projects that move beyond the standards of the curriculum. The AP for instruction noted that because of their curriculum, sometimes those teachers who are the most culturally responsive are deviating from the curriculum. For example, they had a teacher last year, who is no longer at CHS, she would assign special class projects during LatinX Heritage month and Black History month. These projects and activities were not in anywhere in their curriculum. She stated in her interview, that when it comes to culturally

responsiveness, “I don’t think our curriculum allows for it, which is really a shame.” She thinks that there are a couple other teachers who are enacting culturally responsive pedagogies, who stick out. Here, it is important to remember that these schools were selected on the criteria that principal leaders agree that culturally responsive approaches are a necessary component of effective teaching practice for the context of the school in which they are of service. A discussion on how future research could be used to understand the relationship between school practice and enactments of CRP is highlighted in the following chapter.

Overall, the data revealed several significant themes about the way school level features influence commitments at CHS. First, teacher teams within the English department exhibit a commitment to developing curriculum that is more inclusive of the cultures represented by their students. Teacher teams within the math department have engaged activities like book study’s as a way to renew and enhance teachers’ commitments to the students they serve. Generally, staff show a commitment to addressing student learning gaps, while also struggling to figure out how to merge these strategies with strategies for rigorous learning. Also, staff reported the necessity of having a willingness to change, yet they do not experience all their colleagues as having the necessary will to change in order to be effective. Those who are effective use cultural knowledge to bridge learning gaps. Lastly, staff express their choice to be culturally responsive as a personal commitment for how they want to engage their teaching practice. Concurrently, leaders send messages to staff about moving beyond the curriculum to be more responsive. Ultimately, teacher teams are one school level mechanism that could be used to promote enactments of CRP.

Conversations on Classroom Strategies

Culturally-situated conversations on classroom strategies include discussions on: inherent variation of teachers practice, the influence of school reform on teachers practice, engaging

culture in the curriculum, engaging activities based on students' interests, the necessity of change, and the space for CRP across departments.

Inherent Variation in Practice

Staff expressed that teachers practice inevitably varies. This can be frustrating for teachers when they are told to enact the same or similar practice. One of the English division leaders describes an instructional task given around SAT preparation that spoke to this frustration. Staff were given a task to complete based on their content area groups that targeted a “specific standard” that needed to be addressed based on their content area and last year SAT student data. Staff were supposed to create a lesson geared toward the standard and come back and share classroom outcomes based on that data. She highlights, “The problem is you want five people to do the same thing, maybe two of them are doing the same thing. The rest of them are like “oh I didn't have that paper at the time” or “something came up all of a sudden.” Here, I observe the expectation of standard practice as getting in the way of what is actually needed for quality teaching and learning to occur. Staff expressed taking significant amounts of time during formal meetings to discuss pacing and logistics for making sure they did the same things. Staff described teams as “tight” for those who frequently implemented the same lessons. At the same time, staff described inherent variability across teams and departments. When instructional tasks do not take these variations into account, staff described getting distracted by miniscule details instead of focusing on things more closely related to student learning. For this study, variation in teaching practice could be used to support enactments of CRP, by looking at teachers practice in racially isolated schools through a strengths-based perspective. By looking at the things teachers do well in racially isolated spaces, schools are in a better position to identify effective techniques specific to racially minoritized students.

Influence of Reforms on Teachers Practice

The data revealed that reforms had a different impact on teachers and teaching teams, based on their department. First, I present data on the English department. Then, I present data on the math department.

Within the English department, staff expressed that some of the tasks required of teachers seem to take away the time needed to think and reflect on better practices. For example, the division leader for English highlighted that there is no reason for her to type out her lesson plans. Also, there are some teachers who do not even write their lesson plans and they are still really good teachers. Overall, staff expressed frustrations over the administrative tasks of their jobs, because it takes away valuable time that could be used to reflect on their practice. She says

And there's a lot of stuff like that and so then what happens is stuff that to me really does matter, like thinking time, there's no thinking time. Because you can't check how well I'm really planning. You can look at my plans, you can make sure I turned in my midterm, you can make sure that I turned in my reflection on my data to inform instruction. You can check that I did all the bullshit. But the real thinking time is not happening.

With this, when schools adhere to reforms, the logistics can take a toll on teachers. She went on further to say that “all the reform that happens is on teachers.” For example, there has been a push to engage more strategies to support student’s socio-emotional learning. This was seemingly the job of guidance counselors, and now teachers have to prioritize this type of inquiry. While this study understands socio-emotional learning strategies as lending themselves to culturally responsiveness, some staff highlighted this push as another set of tasks added to an already long list of things to do. The division leader stated “There's no breathing room. The difference between when I started teaching to when I teach now, is literally the number of things I have to do.” Generally, staff talk with one another about the need “to take some stuff off people’s plates.”

Further, staff expressed the standardization of practice as “box-checking” and that reforms do not account for or appreciate teachers’ strengths. She highlighted a discussion that took place in one of their meetings, where staff talked about this dynamic. She stated:

It's like we are all box checking. And it doesn't leave a lot of room for thinking. And it doesn't leave a lot of room for diversity of teaching and thinking...Which to me is the most important thing. It's like they are like, "How come out kids aren't getting the same thing in every class? "Because we are different people. You should certainly be getting more of something in one class. For sure my strength as a teacher, is writing. I am trying to help other people be better writing teachers. And then the person I'm doing Honors 10 with, she's really good at discussion of reading and so that's helping me. Are we teaching exactly the same? Of course not. We are not robots. You know. And it's silly to think... But it doesn't matter how many times you say that. She's like "Well yeah but..." Then there's always well just give her your stuff.

She went on further to discuss how the AP for instruction pushes them to enact their instructional absolutes because they are considered best practices. Here, I am witnessing an ideological divide between division leaders and teacher leaders, compared to that of administrative leaders. Staff in the classroom seem to be able to celebrate the diversity of their teaching practices, focusing on the benefits of their inherent differences. Staff outside the classroom, seem to be trying to address gaps in learning by standardizing practices using what they know to be generally effective.

Further, one of the English teachers highlighted that making changes to the curriculum can be a challenge. If the curriculum were to undergo any changes, staff would have to make sure these changes are implemented with their sister school in the district. For example, when new materials are being introduced, staff have to make sure to purchase enough materials for the other school. Also, if these changes impact the content assessed on the final exam, both schools, also, have to adapt their exam in the same way. This is understood as a condition that could detract from CRP. Schools should incorporate systems where adaptations to meet students varied learning needs is rewarded rather than being met by rules around standardization.

Additionally, the influence on reform looks different for those in the math department. To align with the current CHS reform policies, the math department has changed its curriculum so that teachers are engaging students in deeper thought in math classes. In previous years, math classes centered around things like the quadratic formula and then doing 20 problems. Now that technology has advanced and students can just put the quadratic formula into their handheld calculator, teachers are encouraged to focus class discussions on what the class can do with that answer. Teachers are encouraged to raise questions around how can students expand their thinking and look at things differently. Adopting this approach is described as hard because teachers are used to more traditional ways of approaching math instruction. Instead of just assigning 20 problems and telling students to just go and do them”, reform initiatives are promoting staff to get the students thinking, participate, and make them feel comfortable. Staff reported that they talk to each other about how making these curricular changes takes a lot of time. Now, the math department is using resources that are very student centered and focused on higher level questioning. Currently, staff and leaders are tasked with changing curriculum and classroom strategies to engage more of the applications of math. The need to engage student centered approaches with racially minoritized students coupled with requirements to focus on the application of math concepts with racially minoritized students, necessitates culturally responsiveness. Further, this necessity is heightened within the context of the demographic divide. Here, I am arguing that staff are inevitably relying on more culturally-situated instructional conversations to increase student engagement and application of mathematical concepts.

To summarize, the data revealed that reforms influence departments at CHS differently. English teachers reported feeling overwhelmed by the logistics required by the change, and

feeling stifled by policies used to standardize their practice. Math teachers reported feeling overwhelmed by the amount changes inherent within the new teaching methods promoted. While these changes do, theoretically, relate to CRP; staff understand them to be just another set of things to do.

Engaging Culture in the Classroom

Staff work together and independently when looking for culturally responsive material to add to the curriculum. One of the CHS staff members' conducts school wide events for African-American History month, and this English teacher describes how she contributes by bringing him different poems by both Harlem renaissance poets, and more current poets. With a steady increase of LatinX students, the department has added some LatinX short stories. Generally, teachers described finding culturally responsive resources by researching on their own, watching 60 minutes and reading magazines.

As well, one of the teachers in the English department let me know that there is a lot of multicultural content provided in the literary criticisms course, which is a senior level course. Sophomore English classes cover multicultural content toward the end of the year. There is content focused on the history of Native Americans, but these works are primarily written by white authors. She expressed that there is not enough representation of LatinX authors.

At the same time, one of the teachers in the English department discussed how she collaborated with another teacher in the district to adapt their course material to "incorporate things that they enjoy reading about and where they can see themselves in the characters." She says that staff have gotten together to talk about the fact that students are not really connecting to the curriculum developed for their world literature class. The students did seem to connect a little bit with Shakespeare. For this teacher, in particular, she tries to connect her lessons with stories

that are happening today, and may appear on the news. Further, her team collaborated on a course unit focused on the civil rights movement during Black history month. They focused on historical figures like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcom X, and events surrounding Chicago's housing crisis. Lastly, she was supposed to collaborate with another teacher overseas, so that the students could have exposure with students from her class. But this event never came to fruition.

Additionally, a change was recently implemented in the English department. This change was prompted by a strategy used by one of the US History teachers, who conducted a classroom project during LatinX Heritage month. The project used Nearpod, which is a classroom tool used to engage students in interactive lessons. The content focused on LatinX immigrants' transition into US history, and how it feels to be a marginalized group in US society. One of the English teachers helped set up their Nearpod lesson. They have developed the content over the last two years.

According to another English teacher, sCHS is doing much better with their ESL programs. However, she noted that there are still a lot about changes to be made. For instance, staff expressed not being sure on how to modify their classes for ESL students. This means that teachers are still working on thinking about better ways to differentiate instruction for these ELL students. While staff, generally expressed, that their departments are in the process of considering the unique needs of LatinX and immigrant student,s their conversations on the topic are much more fruitful than in previous years. Overall, the school engages an immersive model for their ESL students. This means that students are not pulled out of English only classes, instead they have an ESL class used to support their work in other classes. Typically, staff will pair ELL students with another student who can help them with the language provided in the lesson and assignments.

As well, staff talk about students' reactions to multicultural content in their classes. Staff express to each other that students complain when so much of their content relies mainly on white authors. As well, they complain when their content mainly relies on African- American authors. One English teacher highlighted,

A lot of times you'll talk to the kids and they're like, "Why do we have to read another book about black people? That's all we ever read. So, we don't get to African American authors until we get to more current times, you know, the Harlem Renaissance and then we do Richard Wright's Native Son. So, they get old white guys, and they're like, "Why do we have to read all these things by old white guys?" I'm like, "Because we're getting there. We're getting there."

With this, staff talk to each other about how to engage multicultural content with issues that are relevant to their students age. For example, one of the teachers from the English department talked about a meeting where staff got together to pull in multicultural literature, and they use this resource to engage a class activity to push students thinking on the maintenance of the status-quo. This teacher highlighted that they "pulled in things to talk about the difference between different ethnic groups that go to college and their success rate." They also focused on questions like "how does your name impact your future." This teacher highlighted that they ended the meeting wanting students to have "a reality moment of society's perception of different people, including themselves... since they'll soon be full member of society."

Prioritizing culture in the classroom also refers to language. The division leader for the English department highlighted that staff have talked about "pushing language in a different way." This means offering advanced placement Spanish literature to students who are of LatinX descent. They also refer to these students as "heritage kids.". The goal of this advanced placement Spanish course is to support their LatinX students in receiving an advanced placement credit while learning more formal writing techniques so these students can advance in their bi-literacy.

To summarize, prioritizing culture in the classroom means: researching individually and collectively to find culturally responsive materials, attempting to represent students' cultural heritage within the curriculum, engaging critical inquiry about societal outcomes for different cultural groups, and adopting systems to advance the academic success of linguistically diverse students.

Engaging Student Interests

Staff do talk to one another about how to adapt their practices to be conducive to students' interests, strengths, and learning styles. Staff talk to their colleagues about different groupings. Teachers in the English department discussed grouping students together that can help each other. They know that the majority of their students are visual and kinesthetic learners, so the teachers collaborated on a "gallery walk" that was intended to get students out of their chair, walking around, and creating art.

Staff talk to their colleagues about enacting approaches to engage their student interests, and they do so aiming to address the learning opportunity gap experienced by their student population. The division leader for English stated

I do a lot with young adult literature. As you can see, I have many of the books in my classroom. It's really important to me. I do that pretty consistently. Part of the reason I do that, I think, is because our kids are mostly reading below grade levels, so to me this is a really good way to increase a love of reading and to increase then their poor reading scores. I'm not really looking at the scores, I'm looking at the love of reading, but it will obviously do both.

Staff expressed that they talk to their colleagues about what their students are interested in because they really "want the kids to enjoy what they're doing" in their classroom. One of the teachers describes her motivation to adapt her practice because she wants the students to like the class. When teachers always assign tasks that students dislike they are just going to shut down. She adapts her practice to be more enjoyable for students, and to be centered around student

interests, because “if they don’t like you, they’re not going to learn from you.” Teachers have to show that they, too, are interested in classroom content or else students are not going to pull anything from it. For this English teacher, she explains that her class is not about remembering actual content presented in the stories, rather “learning how to read, comprehend, develop critical thinking.” And since they can do that with any story, she says, “ why not pull stories they like.” This teacher has learned to engage students in material that they seem to enjoy in order to increase student learning. Here, this practice is observed as an enactment of CRP. Ultimately, this study understands that strategies used for engaging student interests within a racially isolated school could be a type of CRP enactment. Generally, staff reported being encouraged to pursue projects on subjects where students expressed high interest.

Space for CRP

Generally, staff, across departments reported that there is a lot more freedom to engage CRP in the English curriculum than in the math curriculum. Within English classes, it is easier to engage various methods to meet the various learning needs of the students. One teacher in the math department says, that in his English class there is a lot more freedom in strategies he could use. For example, in his English class he has been discussing topics that come up in books like “The Devils Highway” which centers injustices that happen to immigrants when they decide to cross the border. Classroom discussions based on the book allows for the class talk about how they feel when they talk about injustices related to immigration and status. During this class, students talked about how these injustices have affected them and their family. Teachers expressed that focusing this type of content and having these classroom discussions are a result of being able to take a lot more liberties in that class. Further, in his English class he can assign different essays, he can choose the materials he thinks is best for teaching certain skills, he can

assign different books, and they can watch movies. Even when teaching his bilingual math class, he finds that the structure of the content can only change so much. For instance, when writing a word problem he can change the content used to describe a problem, like they can talk about *juevos rancheros* and *tamales* instead of hamburgers and hotdogs, but otherwise he feels like he “doesn’t get any kind of freedom to choose or create” his own lesson for math classes. He says that it is not that he would get in trouble. He feels like he “can’t veer off too far” in order to enact more culturally responsive material, since it “would just require a lot more work.” He says the word problems in the books “suck”. So, even when they’re “still doing systems,” he will take the time to make up his own word problems that are “a little bit more culturally responsive to the kids [he has].”

In my discussion with a math teacher about what has been used to foster a greater commitment to a social justice orientation he credits his time in his teacher training program at a university in the Midwest for being the “biggest influence on learning about social justice in the classroom.” He highlights that a “social justice orientation is always a good idea”, but he is not always sure how to implement these ideas in his math classes.

Ultimately, staff described three significant factors related to CRP. First, the standardization of practice is a set of policies that ignores the inherent diversity of teachers’ practice and ignores the strengths that are fundamental to the variations on their practice. Second, reforms influence teachers differently based on the content they teach. Third, CHS is engaging culture by adapting the curriculum to include the cultural heritage of all their racially minoritized students, engaging topics related to racially minoritized students, and creating systems to support the academic success of linguistically diverse students. Fourth, staff are intentional about engaging students’ interests as a way to address the learning gap experienced by racially

minoritized students. And lastly, staff across departments, believe that there is space within the English department to engage more culturally responsive approaches.

To conclude, leaders develop school level mechanisms to support staff opportunities to learn and collaborate. These learning opportunities are geared toward enhancing staff cultural knowledge through PDs on cultural bias, trauma informed practices, and equitable classroom strategies. Teacher team meetings are spaces where staff share best practices and resources for multicultural content. Staff professional bonds create a space where teachers can support one another in solving problems of practice using a cultural lens. With this, schools influence teachers' enactments of CRP by creating the conditions for staff to have culturally-situated, instructional conversations. In the context of the demographic divide, staff instructional conversations, are not just "instructional conversations" they are necessarily culturally-situated conversations. These culturally-situated discussions center around students' home life, staff willingness and ability to enact culturally responsiveness, and teaching strategies as directed by the school and district policies, along with strategies promoted amongst teams as best practice. Overall, this study finds that formal and informal elements of school organizing practices has much to do with the essential ingredients for enacting CRP. These ingredients include how schools shape teachers' cultural knowledge and commitments to changing their practice.

Chapter Six: Discussion

In this research study, I described and explored school level mechanisms in racially isolated school contexts, and the extent to which these conditions influenced teachers' enactments of culturally responsive pedagogies. The study focused on administrative leaders, teacher leaders, and teachers working within the context of the demographic divide. Two research questions guided my inquiry related to the concepts in this study. They include:

- 1) How do schools, experiencing the demographic divide, use formal mechanisms to shape teachers' cultural knowledge base?
- 2) How does the informal social structure in schools, experiencing the demographic divide, influence teachers' commitments?

This chapter will provide a summary of the findings, while presenting answers to the two research questions above. This discussion is guided by my theoretical framework which relies on school organizational theories that highlight school wide instructional effectiveness is achieved by supporting the alignment of formal and informal mechanisms of teachers' workplace environment. As well, this framework understands culturally responsive pedagogies (CRP) as effective instruction when working with racially minoritized students. To develop my understanding about the influence of school level mechanisms on teachers' instructional practice, I began by describing the context of school organizing and then explored the leadership practices that shape formal mechanisms for teachers learning and collaboration and staff informal social structure. Then, I looked at how these factors influenced teachers' instructional practice for enacting CRP. The data revealed that school level mechanisms influencing teachers' enactments of CRP can be understood by looking at culturally-situated, instructional conversations. Following, I identified common themes which emerged from administrators, teacher leaders, and

teachers' experiences to best understand the how these culturally-situated, instructional conversations relate to teachers' cultural knowledge base and teaching commitments.

This chapter is organized into three main sections. First, I discuss my findings related to research questions one, then question two, and finally end with implications for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners. Throughout each section, I reference participant's experiences and explore the relationships and nuances of each concept in the theoretical framework guiding this study. I have provided a chart in Appendix G used to summarize these similarities and differences. Some of the answers to the research questions align well with the literature on the importance of teachers' workplace and the necessity of culturally responsive pedagogies. However, exploring and describing the relationship between school level mechanisms and teachers' pedagogical enactments, in the context of racially isolated schools, offers a new perspective on the interaction between these concepts.

Exploring Research Question 1

- 1) How do schools, experiencing the demographic divide, use formal mechanisms to shape teachers' cultural knowledge base?

Discussion

The mechanisms used to structure and shape teachers' learning slightly varied for each school. District and school leaders share power in determining the types of learning opportunities that teachers engage. These findings highlight the intentions and goals underlining PD sessions, along with teachers' experience of these learning opportunities. While teachers discussed their experiences of learning opportunities, in great detail, the findings do not speak to which sessions translated in to knowledge use in the classroom. Fortunately, the data shows a myriad of instructional conversations that point to how they experience school level mechanisms along

with their descriptions of teachers' cultural knowledge base and messages used to foster particular teaching commitments and classroom strategies. The research suggests that conceptualizing these conversations as culturally-situated can help scholars and practioners begin to understand how schools influence the quality of instruction received by racially minoritized students. Overall, these narratives show that supports for teachers' instructional capacity are necessary but insufficient conditions for promoting teachers' knowledge and commitments for enacting culturally responsiveness. The following is a summary of district and school level variables intended to shape teachers' pedagogy in these racially isolated school contexts.

District Decisions, School Characteristics & Leadership Moves

For this study, the school organizing context includes: district leadership decisions, school characteristics related to CRP, and the leadership moves made by school leaders. For district decisions, both schools reported a significant amount of district control of teachers' learning opportunities. Both districts have explicitly recognized cultural responsiveness as an effective strategy for teachers' in service to their specific student populations. For school characteristics related to CRP, both schools are working within the demographic divide, which entails a predominately white teaching staff, coupled with a majority racially minoritized student population. Both schools inhad approximately 2/3 of their student population identify as African-American students and a little less than of third identified as being of LatinX descent. Both schools have no underperforming student groups, a graduation rate greater than 64%, and a school performance rating that is not in the top 10% of schools statewide. Finally, leadership moves varied significantly. I highlight these differences in the following paragraph.

Both principal leaders have a significant amount of school leadership experience. Dr. Anderson has been the principal of CHS for 16 years, while Mr. Blackwell has been the principal

at WHS for 10 years. Both principals are black males with advanced degrees in education. Both principals reported having close ties to the surrounding school community. The major differences in the leadership moves implemented between these two principals centers their vision for teachers practice. Dr. Anderson, the principal leader for CHS, is clear on the schools' vision to increase student voice and engagement in every classroom. Since his experience working within the demographic divide does points to a need for CHS to engage strategies for culturally responsiveness, he has encouraged leaders around the building to incorporate more school wide events for celebrating the cultural diversity of CHS students. Many of the teaching strategies promoted at CHS are center around techniques that can be considered best practice, but almost none of them explicitly refer to culturally responsiveness as a central aim. At the same time, the teaching strategies can be used in conjunction with culturally responsive strategies.

Mr. Blackwell, the principal leader of WHS, is clear on his vision to “slowly build CRP”, while gaining teacher buy-in by learning about the usefulness of culturally responsive strategies through optional, on-going trainings offered through demonstration classrooms. I highlight WHS as an exemplary school for developing a CRP PD and using human resources to address the consequences of the demographic divide. Mr. Blackwell's vision not only includes this formal learning opportunity, but he also uses the schools' informal social structure to promote CRP. He relies on other administrative leaders and teacher leaders to enhance the school capacity and distribute culturally responsive leadership tasks. First, his creation of leadership platforms is an informal system that allows staff in any role to build a team and address anything they see as a problem. These teams address a range of problems, from drops in attendance to persistent student failure rates in particular courses. Further, there are a group of teachers this year that make up the culturally responsive teaching committee. This team is made up of white and non-white teachers

across departments. It is noteworthy that Mr. Blackwell relies on teachers from this committee to assist in addressing problems of practice that benefit from a cultural lens. This could mean having a white teacher work with another white teacher for understanding the challenges they encounter when trying to build relationships with students. This group is tasked with addressing cycles of inquiry surrounding how to best promote culturally responsiveness along with the logistics and goals for the demonstration classroom sessions. The following summarizes the nuances within each school for distributing instructional leadership tasks.

WHS and CHS differed in how the distribution of instructional leadership impacted staff experience related to instructional quality. For WHS, the division leadership role is an administrative position intended to provide supports within a particular department. Here, division leaders and other administrative leaders work together to appoint teacher leaders to facilitate core course teams (CCT). Mr. Blackwell was clear on his intent for hiring staff who exhibit significant content knowledge, a social justice orientation, and those who have bought into his vision. CCT leaders and division leaders within the English and Social Studies department reported strong, positive relationships with their teaching staff.

For CHS, the role of division leadership is a teacher leadership position. Staff reported that this creates conflict when leaders are asked to wear a more “administrative hat”, like evaluating teachers’ classroom practice. Here, division leaders reported that they offer one-on-one meetings to teachers to ask about what staff need help with, but are unable to provide additional supports given the amount of ongoing tasks they need to complete.

Ultimately, this study finds that the role of division leadership is an untapped resource in these two schools experiencing the demographic divide. While I credit WHS for developing a role entirely dedicated to assessing and addressing pedagogical problems, and Mr. Blackwell for

intending to fill the position with staff who exhibit a social justice orientation, these leaders were still consumed with how to combine teachers' tasks for meeting the mandates required by whole school reforms. Education literatures finds that leadership roles solely dedicated to enhancing instructional supports can yield to increases in student learning outcomes (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2009). However, when the majority of the role is only used to meet school-based reform efforts which narrowly focuses on increasing students' tests scores, opportunities to support teachers' enactments of CRP gets "pushed to the backburner." It remains important to remember that the division leadership role was developed in place of the districts' area instructional leaders. Area instructional leaders were just division leaders who were in service to all the high schools in the district. Overall, the data reveals that school policies at the district and school level attempts to incorporate CRP on the surface by providing trainings and suggesting that school leaders and teachers engage culture. But division leader reports show that the majority of their tasks and responsibilities are geared toward meeting the goals of standardized, school-based reforms.

Even though the data is insufficient in linking these mechanisms to teachers' enactments of CRP, this study can be used to guide the future directions of research aimed at understanding how school instructional capacity influences on CRP in these contexts. The following is a summary of the findings on formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration. I focus on the learning opportunities that could be used to promote a cultural knowledge base.

Structure Teachers' Learning

I found that formal mechanisms for staff learning and collaboration, with the context of the demographic divide, can be used to shape teachers' learning for developing a cultural knowledge base. These opportunities are intended to enhance teachers' pedagogies by furthering their knowledge base of academic content, increase their repertoire of classroom strategies, and

foster to commitments to continuously improving their practice. For this study, I wanted to know how these formal mechanisms contributed to their cultural knowledge base. As aligned with my theoretical framework, a cultural knowledge base provides a foundation for the cultural knowledge required for enacting culturally responsiveness. I learned that districts and schools working within these racially isolated contexts have begun implementing learning opportunities that intended to enhance teachers' cultural knowledge base. I learned how these schools influenced teachers practice by diving into their culturally-situated, instructional conversations.

Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration

Both schools implemented professional learning opportunities that related to teachers' cultural knowledge and teaching commitments. These include: a cultural bias training, on-going trainings on trauma informed practices, and one-off trainings focused on teaching strategies for enhancing student engagement. Overall, the data showed that schools in these contexts are engaging professional learning opportunities that are intended to enhance teachers' practice. In doing so, staff are presented with the opportunity to talk about how the things they learn relate to the particular students that they teach. These discussions are seen as a gateway for staff to discuss the types of content and activities that seem to resonate with their students. Here, when staff talk about things that resonate with students they are likely to engage culturally-situated, instructional conversations. Overall, there was only one training that was explicitly referred to as a CRP PD; WHS' demonstration classroom. Otherwise, staff trainings either explicitly engaged culture but only on a surface level; or they did not mention culture at all. At the same time, staff discussed being presented with the opportunity to address the limited cultural knowledge represented by their colleagues. Staff expressed varying sense of responsibility for addressing the limited cultural knowledge of represented by their colleagues. But administrative leaders and

teachers seemed very sure about those who were using cultural knowledge to inform their practice and those who were not.

This research finds that partnerships with organizations, like ACES, and trainings on things like trauma-informed practices is one way schools attempt to enhance teachers' cultural knowledge base and teaching commitments, for working within the demographic divide. Leaders and staff at both schools were clear that some teachers have limited experiences working with students from underserved communities. Implementing opportunities for teachers to think critically about students' behavior is seen as an opportunity to develop teachers' cultural knowledge base. In this way, trauma-informed practices could be used to support teachers understanding of how their students home life experiences influences their interactions with students in the classroom.

Largely, the majority of PDs at both schools focused on enhancing teachers' strategies for increasing student engagement. This includes PDs on supporting students with deep, critical inquiry, cooperative learning strategies, increasing student voice, developing classrooms as small learning communities, and ways to implement project-based learning. Staff at both schools reported positive, neutral, and negative experiences with these trainings. This study finds that PDs for increasing student engagement that are implemented within a racially isolated school context where the demographic divide is highly visible, are necessarily culturally-situated. Increasing student engagement has much to do with the quality of interactions between the student and the teacher. Given the literature on the limitations of the instructional quality received by racially minoritized students, coupled with the demographic divide, schools should pay more attention to how demographics influence teachers' interactions with students, one another, and multicultural content.

For ongoing instructional supports, I investigated teacher teams across grade level and department. For both schools, the data revealed that schools are much more capable of understanding and adopting culturally responsive practices within English departments. Generally, staff have a harder time fusing CRP with math instruction. Those who are deemed culturally responsive pedagogues by their colleagues are spread all across the building. Teaching teams use meetings times to share cultural knowledge and culturally responsive materials. Team meeting times are insufficient for addressing problems of practice using a cultural lens. At the same time, staff have used their professional bonds to address problems of practice using a cultural lens. These findings are outlined in the section on staff informal social structure.

The data does not speak to what leadership moves and school level mechanisms caused what conversations. Thus, the field could benefit from more research on the relationship between particular school level mechanisms and types of culturally situated, instructional conversations.

Ultimately, formal mechanisms in these two schools are incredibly important for teachers' collaborative inquiry, if schools are to enhance their culturally responsive approaches. At the same time, PDs and time in teacher team meetings is not sufficient for developing the workplace conditions required for teachers to dig deeper into how cultural division or the demographic divide impacts their ability to be effective in the classroom.

Lessons Learned from Instructional Conversations

Consistent with my theoretical framework, these conversations do center around knowledge, commitments, and classroom strategies related to culturally responsive pedagogy. The themes that developed from these conversations include a range of topics that relate to the demographic divide, school organizational capacity, and staff instructional capacity for enacting CRP. The data has been organized into three major categories. They include instructional

conversations that I refer to as: CRP knowledge, CRP commitments, and classroom strategies. The data on CRP knowledge reveals conversations related to students and staff. The conversations on CRP commitments and classroom strategies highlights the pedagogical strategies promoted at the school level related to CRP.

For conversations related to students, staff share knowledge of students frequently during passing times, team meetings and professional development sessions. From CHS, I learned that those who are from the surrounding school community are labeled as holders of necessary cultural knowledge. For conversations related to staff, I learned from WHS staff that teachers' can learn more about their cultural identity and personal privilege while on the job. The findings from both schools shows that teacher team meetings are a necessary but insufficient condition for helping teachers solve problems of practice using a cultural lens. While staff at WHS expressed taking some time during team meetings to share cultural knowledge with their colleagues, staff still expressed that their colleagues limited experience interacting with racially minoritized communities shaped their interactions with students. Ultimately, I found that teachers used cultural knowledge to support their colleagues work with students. Most often, staff encouraged their colleagues to: think deeper about root causes to students' classroom performance; to use students home life information before adopting punitive measures; to avoid attempting to understand students' experiences based on their own experiences; and to incorporate materials centered on students' cultural heritage to make lessons more meaningful.

As well, for WHS, cultural knowledge was discussed when developing creating supports and protocols for students from immigrant families and for protocols during harsh weather conditions. I also learned that teacher assignment to cultural history courses can create issues when staff do not have cultural ties to the course content, and when they express a lack of desire

for teaching the course. Ultimately, staff recognized that there are teachers in their school who do not understand the cultural dynamics of the surrounding school community or lack a cultural understanding of the students they serve. Also, staff at both schools recognize that cultural divides also exist between same-race teachers. In these instances, staff expressed that training on culturally responsiveness is needed for teachers of all races.

Exploring Research Question 2

2. How does the informal social structure in schools, experiencing the demographic divide, influence teachers' commitments?

Informal Social Structure

This research question was motivated by the need to understand how staff relationships with one another could be used as a support for culturally responsiveness. Interview and observational data revealed that formal structures, like collaborative meeting times provided the time and space for staff: to develop collegial bonds amongst staff, to gain a sense of their collective responsibility for students learning, and to develop norms of trust. The findings showed that the extent to which these dynamics are used to increase teachers' cultural knowledge and further teaching commitments for CRP is largely influenced by the personal teaching philosophies of team members and their collaborative routines with one another.

To better understand how staff informal social structure influenced teachers' pedagogical practice, I needed probe about staff ideologies and collaborative routines. The data speaks to the nature of staff working relationships and highlights potential spaces where CRP can be promoted. The following section summarizes the findings related to norms of trust, collegial bonds amongst staff, and staff sense of collective responsibility. I highlight these facets of school informal social structure to unearth the potential of staff collaborative routines for increasing

staff cultural knowledge and enhancing their teaching commitments, within a racially isolated school space.

Norms of Trust

Looking at norms or trust amongst teaching teams and with administrative leaders is useful for understanding how schools might support collaborative inquiry for culturally responsiveness. This data highlights the extent to which staff rely on another and are confident in their colleagues' teaching abilities within two racially isolated schools. Staff at both schools are more reliant on their colleagues within their teaching teams. Staff reported that these people make up their most significant advice network. While staff at both schools reported that they know administrators are available to serve as instructional supports, they most often rely on their teaching team members. Since the start of this research, there has been a growing body of scholarship concerned with teaching teams collaborating on culturally responsive lessons (Askew, Beverly & Jay; 2012). Since the field is moving toward more collaborative approaches for improving individual classrooms, this study finds that reliance and confidence in teachers' abilities remains crucial for building teaching team capacity.

For staff at WHS, they reported relying on support staff, like the school case manager or social workers, to help meet students' unique, individual needs. They also reported trusting administrative leaders' intentions, and in turn trusted the intentions of their colleagues. Further, staff expressed issues trusting the work of those who are new to the profession and have problems with classroom management, and those who do not seem to understand the cultural and home-life background of their students. Overall, I found that trust erodes when teachers lack confidence in their colleague's abilities.

For staff at CHS, administrative leaders and teachers at CHS reported that staff seem apprehensive in relying on administrators for help. Further, administrative leaders reported feeling like teaching staff hold an “us versus them” mentality. Staff reported several incidents that served to create rifts between administrative leaders and teachers. Additionally, staff at CHS felt like the school adopted initiatives that teachers had not bought into, and that this lack of buy-in created resentment amongst teachers when they needed to engage tasks under these initiatives. For instance, the initiative for increasing student ownership requires teachers to administer a weekly student reflection. Staff reported not wanting to engage these tasks because they did not see the point. Several staff at CHS also reported that they do not have issues with administrative leaders because they “do not cause problems.” Overall, the data revealed issues with trust amongst administrative leaders and staff at CHS. These issues with administrative leaders were expressed as creating division amongst staff. This division certainly speaks to a negative experience of their colleagues at CHS. This research finds that quality of teachers’ experience in the workplace can influence their commitments to their practice (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990). With this, schools can foster teachers’ commitments by developing a workplace where teachers’ feel supported and have positive working relationships with their colleagues.

Further, this research highlights the work of a co-teaching team in supporting in-the-moment culturally responsiveness, which I referred to as cultural scaffolding. Interview data captured the responses from both members of a math co-teaching team. During one class period, a black teacher was able to support a white teacher in making a math reference using a culturally responsive example. During this class, the white co-teacher was trying to help students understand the use of the “delta” sign in their math problem. Then, the white teacher referenced an example of the delta sign used in college level Greek organizations. She highlighted the tri-

delts. At the time, none of the students seemed to resonate with this example. So, the black co-teacher mentioned a historically black Greek letter organization, called delta sigma theta. Then, the students seemed to understand the reference, some noting family members who belonged to the organization. Both co-teachers reported in their interview that this type of bridging of knowledge or cultural scaffolding regularly occurs in their classroom and is an added benefit of their co-teaching relationship. The white co-teacher credits the black co-teacher for supporting their classroom instruction with culturally relevant examples. The black co-teachers reported that she frequently notices when the other teacher makes a reference that “goes over their heads.” At the same time, she expressed being able to rely on one another to fill the gaps of their instruction. This research finds that teachers can use each other to support cultural scaffolding. Overall, understanding the extent to which teachers rely on another and are confident in their colleagues’ abilities points to human resources for culturally responsiveness. Here, human resources make up the schools’ informal social structure which should be used to promote this type of knowledge bridging, especially in racially isolated school contexts.

Collegial Bonds Amongst Staff

This study finds teachers’ professional bonds as an untapped resource for assessing and addressing cultural problems of practice. For both schools, teachers communicate frequently for pacing updates and tracking student behavior. When they communicate about student behavior this is understood as a chance for teachers to exchange ideas about how to best meet their students’ needs. Often times, these discussions are culturally-situated because they refer to students’ home life among teachers who are noticeably experiencing a cultural divide between their students. Staff communicate about how to make lessons engaging and share multicultural resources. Often times, these discussions are culturally-situated because they refer to

multicultural materials centered around students' cultural heritage and background for making lessons more interesting. This type of resource and knowledge sharing is also recognized untapped resource for promoting teachers' enactments of CRP.

Staff at both schools reported that they have strong collegial bonds with teachers within and outside of their teaching teams and departments. They also reported that they frequently communicate and share ideas with colleagues whom they share collegial bonds. Collegial bonds varied across teaching teams at both schools. Generally, staff at WHS varied in how close they were, individually, with their colleagues. Still, even if they were not close with someone they typically had a positive experience with them. Staff at CHS also expressed that their individual bonds varied, but that some of the teaching staff had negative experiences with other teachers or administrative leaders. During my time collecting data at CHS, staff expressed an incident between a teacher and a student that involved a "race issue." Hearing of this incident prompted me to probe about racial issues amongst staff. Several participants confirmed that while there were "no racial issues between the staff" teacher cliques are formed based on "common interests" which typically meant same race and similar socioeconomic status. At the same time, cliques among teachers was not discussed as promoting or detracting from professional bonds developed within teacher teams.

Collective Responsibility

The data on staff sense of collective responsibility, for both schools, point to a range of teacher ideologies within and across teaching teams. For example, staff at both schools, had teachers who expressed being focused on enhancing students love for learning, or pushing students to think critically about societal issues, or increasing their academic content knowledge for improved tests scores. Both AP's for instruction, highlighted staff who push their students to

think critically about society as being culturally responsive and adept at connecting with students. Noteworthy is one teacher leader at WHS who reported explicitly reiterating, to his teaching team, that they should prioritize lessons that were responsive to the cultural identities of the students in their specific class.

For WHS, Mr. Blackwell and the staff expressed a clear vision for improving student outcomes through the creation of leadership platforms. Administrative leaders and staff expressed feeling responsible for addressing things they say saw as problems. For CHS, staff reported that sometimes their colleagues “play the blame game” by blaming parents or the surrounding neighborhood community for a students’ behavior. As well, staff reported colleagues who might avoid responsibility for school outcomes, while “pointing the finger” at different departments.

Ultimately, this study finds that collaborative routines are embedded within the role of being a teacher. If schools continue to engage initiatives that require teacher collaboration, then, I recommend that schools find a way to make staff time together, in these racially isolated contexts, more useful for advancing the knowledge and commitments required for effective, culturally responsive pedagogies.

Fostering Teachers Commitments

Both schools attempted to enhance organizational capacity by fostering teachers’ commitment to addressing learning caps. As well, administrative leaders and teachers in both schools expressed gaps in the school curriculum. While staff at WHS expressed more of a push to incorporate a social justice orientation and the use of a cultural lens for solving problems of practice, staff at both schools reported the contradictions in the messages concerning addressing

failure rates and enhancing rigorous instruction. At the same time, this research finds that teacher willingness to adapt is an essential ingredient for effective, culturally responsive practice.

For WHS, staff talked about an overall push to lessen failure rates by implementing practices like standards-based grading. Staff expressed struggling to understand how to address failure rates and attend to learning gaps while also enhancing rigor. Noteworthy are school level structures that are developed to addressing student learning gaps for improvements in students' standardized test scores. WHS has developed enrichment courses for students who have previously scored below average on standardized achievement tests. This means that teachers who teach core subjects, like math and English, are assigned a class which contains a group of students who are also taught by one of their colleagues on their teaching team. Staff reported that teaching these classes supported their collaborative efforts with their colleagues because they had more opportunities to interact with the same students. Overall, staff reported being encouraged to experiment and share back with their team about how new lessons played out in their classroom.

For CHS, interview data also highlighted the enduring dilemma of addressing learning gaps while attempting to enhance rigor. Staff reported struggling to know what this looks like in practice. CHS leaders expressed pushing staff to have a greater commitment to their students when the conducted a book study. Overall, CHS staff reported that improvements to the schools' instructional capacity is limited because of staff who are unwilling to adapt their teaching methods to meet the specific needs of their students. Staff reported that only some of their colleagues have the will to adapt, while others just make excuses for students' academic performance. Further, staff in both schools reported that sharing the same students supported their collaborative efforts since the strategies and resources shared were tailored to fit the needs of the specific students in their class.

Space for CRP with Classroom Strategies

The findings related to the explicit classroom strategies promoted within each school highlight a worthwhile starting point for developing staff instructional capacity for enacting CRP. Both schools promoted student-centered approaches through ongoing PDs, mainly derived from the district level.

For WHS, student centered approaches involved promoting strategies for student advocacy centered around deepening their engagement with academic content and tracking their academic progress. The data revealed that there is space for teachers to engage culturally responsive materials while adopting the approaches promoted at WHS. For example, staff mentioned implementing strategies they learned at trainings that focused on document based questioning that highlighted current issues impacting African-Americans. Strategies like these have been found to support teachers' efforts for implementing culturally responsive lessons. Ultimately, staff reported an overall push from leaders at the school to engage culture in the classroom. Interview data revealed that the push for engaging culture in their classroom does not mean that other strategies are diminished. Rather, the push to incorporate culturally responsiveness supports students' engagement in classroom lessons; and increased student engagement means improvements in student learning outcomes.

For CHS, student-centered approaches involved increasing student engagement in the classroom while enhancing student-to-student interactions and student voice. I learned from CHS staff that teachers experience the inherent variation in their classroom practice as their strengths. At the same time, school-based reforms prioritize standardization of teaching practice. Staff expressed that they experience the policies used to standardized their practice as taking time away from the necessary reflection and collaboration involved in developing rigorous lessons.

To conclude, this study finds teachers working within the demographic divide and the context of standardized school-based reforms experience particular dilemmas when attempting to improve student learning outcomes. First, administrative leaders and teachers recognize the limitations of cultural knowledge held by staff, and how these limitations get in the way of their work with students. For some, staff might share their cultural knowledge to push their colleagues thinking. For others, they might see cultural problems of practice and not feel it is their responsibility to say something to their colleague or they might not know what to say.

Further, when schools attempt to foster teachers' commitments to their students or to social justice, while working within the demographic divide, they support teachers' commitments to CRP. With this, school leaders that support teachers to be advocates of the underserved communities in which their students come from, support teachers adopting a social justice orientation and general willingness to adapt their practice to meet students' needs. When teachers spend time within the communities in which they serve, they can begin to learn about the actual similarities and differences between their personal experiences and that of their students.

Additionally, the demographic divide entails the cultural divisions between teachers and students of the same race. Having a same race teacher does not eradicate potential cultural mismatches in the classroom. At the same time, teachers who are from the surrounding school community hold valuable cultural knowledge and are considered an untapped human resource. Formal mechanisms for staff learning and collaboration highlight an already-existing space that could be used to further multicultural resource sharing, teachers' cultural knowledge, and cultural scaffolding during lessons. Staff informal social structure highlights an already-existing

space that could be used to support staff in adapting their practice and learning what is actually a best practice within their racially isolated school context.

Study Limitations

This study was limited in showing exactly which school level mechanisms directly influenced particular culturally-situated, instructional conversations. I learned that PD opportunities and time spent in teacher team meetings supported staff in adopting shared language for problems of practice. However, the data does not show which PD sessions or which teacher team meetings influenced particular culturally-situated, instructional conversations. Also, the data does not show anything outside of teachers' personal commitments to enacting CRP as the reason for why they enact CRP. Staff reported adopting a cultural lens and prioritizing culture within the curriculum as a directive from school leaders, but they mainly expressed their personal philosophies on teaching as the reason they attempt to be culturally responsive. Also, the majority of interview participants held some type of leadership position at the school. This limits the research to staff who: have some experience working and being effective with racially minoritized students; and those who have shown a commitment to teaching with racially isolated school settings. Additionally, due to time and resource constraints there were no focus group sessions offered to teaching teams. I recommend future research that is tailored toward understanding teachers' collaborative inquiry and routines for engaging and sharing multicultural resources.

Research Implications

When I began this study, I wanted to know how education scholars understood effective teaching strategies for racially minoritized students. I found consensus among scholars concerned with multicultural education that culturally responsive and relevant teaching shows

promise. Then, I became curious how those concerned with school organization discussed mechanisms that could be used to support the tenants of culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies. At the time, research inquiry around this topic was fairly scarce. I did, however, use the work of Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis (2016) for conceptualizing school leaders within these school contexts; along with the work of Paris (2012) for incorporating a more progressive philosophical stance that is also tied to the foundations of the culturally relevant pedagogy. Ultimately, I learned that the field of school organizational leadership and multicultural education need to be in conversation.

I focused on formal mechanisms to learn about teachers' learning and collaborative routines. I focused on school informal socials structure to learn about the quality of staff working relationships. School organizational research shows that these things are significant factors for influencing a school capacity for instructional effectiveness. So, I merged these ideas with the literature on culturally responsive and relevant teaching. This literature highlights the necessity of understanding teachers' pedagogical practice by looking at the knowledge they have and the commitments they hold. With all of this mind, I developed a study to look at formal and informal mechanisms in racially isolated schools, given the significance of these variables for achieving school wide instructional effectiveness.

It remains important to remember that the aim of this study was not to highlight what culturally responsive practices look like in these settings. Given the scarcity of the research in this vein, this study cannot assume that culturally responsiveness is happening just because it is needed. I focus the practices of those working within racially isolated contexts because these spaces are often confronted with the ramifications of the demographic divide. In other words, these are the schools that, arguably, require culturally responsive methods the most. Further,

these schools are made up of individuals who have experience working in the demographic divide, even before scholars have labeled it as such. While the effectiveness of their practice is not under investigation, I was purposeful in selecting schools that were not failing in any areas of achievement according to their state school report card. Thus, this research is used to highlight the concerted efforts of school leaders and staff who working to address teaching and learning inequities within the context of the demographic divide coupled with standardizing reforms.

In highlighting their experiences, I attempted to show how school structures impact teachers' knowledge and commitments. The data revealed staff instructional conversations is a useful way for understanding the types of cultural knowledge shared, where it is shared, and with whom. Also, staff instructional conversations are useful for looking at ideologies used to support teachers' commitments for improving school instructional capacity, along with factors that limit schools' instructional capacity. Additionally, staff instructional conversations are useful for looking at the actual techniques promoted throughout the school, which speak to teachers' instructional capacity for enacting CRP. Many of these strategies are noted in the literature as lending to CRP. As well, they are useful for unearthing aspects that detract from teachers' instructional capacity and ability to engage more culturally responsive methods.

For Practitioners

Based on the findings of this research, I suggest that schools working within the demographic divide develop a clear vision for effective practice in service to their student population. With this, school leaders have to encourage teachers to adopt a cultural lens when addressing issues they see in their classroom. Solving cultural problems of practice means recognizing that cultural division is getting in the way of teaching practice. Staff not only need trainings on cultural bias and how to implement culturally responsive lessons, but they also need

time to reflect so that they can understand how a cultural lens might benefit their practice. Also, leaders in this context benefit from developing systems that encourage change and adaptation to teachers practice. Currently, schools create challenges when they adopt initiatives that serve to standardize teachers practice. At the moment, the field is not clear on many of the strategies that could be deemed effective, culturally responsive pedagogies. This means that educators must be willing and have the space to innovate if we are to learn what works best in these settings.

Additionally, schools in these contexts must take advantage of staff roles and responsibilities for enhancing schools' instructional capacity. So, as schools adopt roles like administrative division leaders, the research finds room for growth within this role as schools dive deeply into addressing school conundrums, like addressing serious learning gaps while engaging rigorous instruction.

Overall, if lessons are not relevant and responsive to students learning needs, specifically in the context of the demographic divide, then increasing student engagement becomes more of a challenge. This study suggests looking at a lack of student engagement as a mismatch between teachers practice and students learning needs. Previously, scholarship points to teacher scaffolding for addressing instructional gaps. But, this research points to cultural scaffolding for addressing instructional gaps, particularly for those working within the demographic divide. In other words, schools could benefit from understanding enduring problems of practice using a cultural lens.

Ultimately, developing a culturally responsive school context where matters of race and culture are regularly discussed supports staff using a cultural lens to address problems of practice. In other words, schools benefit when teachers feel comfortable saying "I do not know how to reach this student" or "I feel uncomfortable as a white person, teaching a Latin American

history course to a predominately LatinX class.” Lastly, while this study is used to align with the research on culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies as effective practice for those in service to racially minoritized youth, I do not believe staff ideologies or practices need to be labeled as such in order for effective practice to occur. I would consider some of the participants in this study to be culturally responsive pedagogues, but what mattered most was the cultural knowledge they held and shared and the commitments they showed to increasing learning opportunities for their students.

For Researchers and Policy Makers: Moving Beyond Organizational Supports for “Effective” Instruction

The scholarship on organizational leadership and pedagogical practice has done much for our understanding of what it takes for students to receive effective instruction. At the same time, high quality teaching and effective practice in school contexts where the majority of the teachers are white and the majority of the students are black and brown necessarily involves cultural responsiveness. Things like students centered practices and trauma informed practices are considered useful for improving teachers’ interactions with students from underserved communities. And when these strategies are attempted within racially isolated school contexts staff are forced to think deeper about the types of cultural knowledge and commitments necessary for increasing their specific students learning opportunities. Ultimately, racially isolated school contexts serve as a great opportunity for understanding how schools might start to develop systems and supports for effective, culturally responsive strategies.

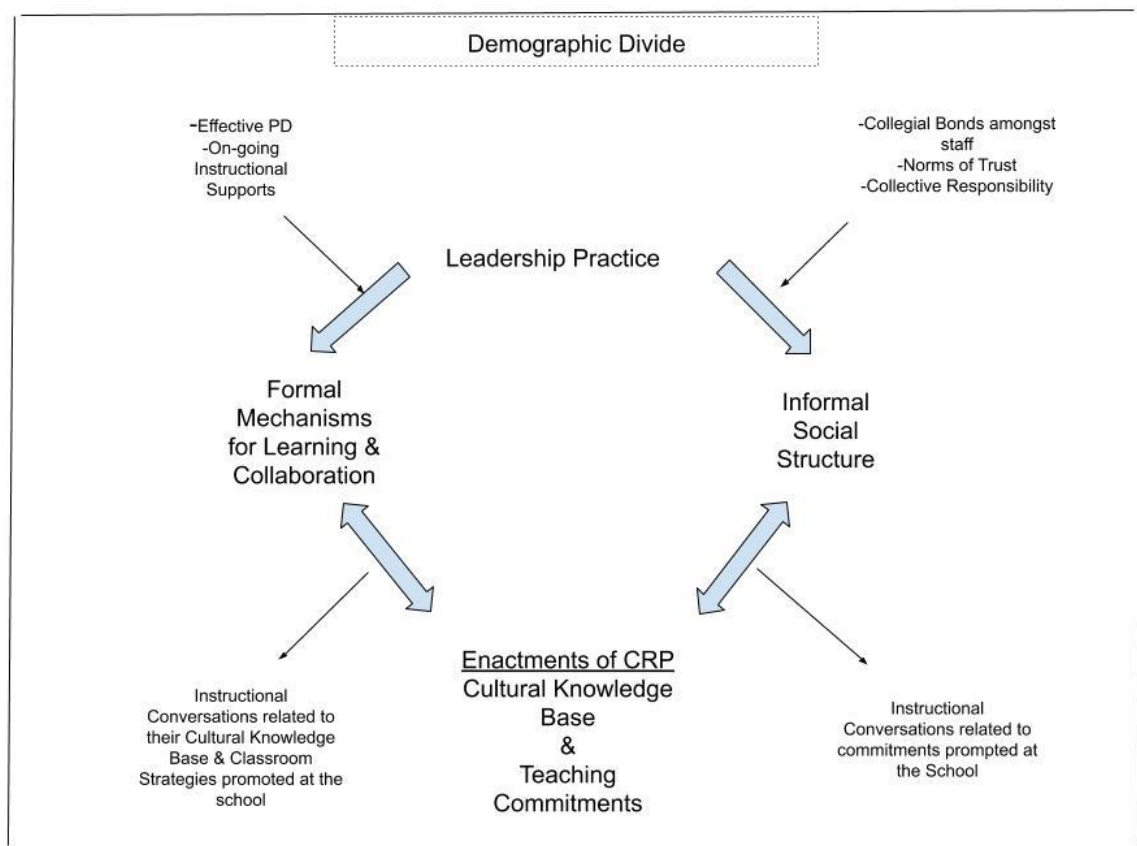
Following in the vein of Gloria Ladson-Billing’s idea of CRP as “more than just good teaching”, this work highlights the need to discover school level mechanisms that can be more than just effective leadership strategies, more than effective PD, and more than tight teaching

teams. I recommend research inquiry that can be used to expose leadership strategies that develop culturally responsive learning opportunities and social justice dispositions. I recommend research inquiry that can be used to expose PDs that provide cultural knowledge for teachers to present academic content, and PDs that inspire a willingness to incorporate new cultural knowledge and solve problems of practice using a cultural lens. I recommend research inquiry used to expose teaching teams enacting collective responsibility through high expectations of students, while collaborating to address learning gaps through inquiry on how to best meet students' needs. Also, given that reform models are pushing teachers to standardize their practice through common lesson plans, common assessments, and standardized grading techniques, their needs to be more of a focus on the benefits surrounding the inherent variability of teachers practice.

Overall, this study agrees with the framework developed by Penual (2010) and his colleagues concerning the need for an alignment of formal and informal mechanisms in order to see school-wide instructional improvements. Before the data was collected, I believed I would come closer to understanding how formal and informal mechanism impacted teachers' individual practice. Specifically, I attempted to find how PDs and time spent with colleagues influenced their cultural knowledge and commitments to CRP. Now, I realized that school level research must focus on the extent to which the alignment of certain mechanisms can be used to move staff collaborative inquiry to include the necessary knowledge for high quality teaching and learning in racially isolated school contexts. Again, scholars have come so far in figuring out effective pedagogical strategies, organizational elements that lend to those strategies, and the type of leadership needed for effective change. But, I am arguing that these things must explicitly be used to address the demographic divide by supporting the conditions that lend toward culturally

responsive knowledge and commitments. For this study, school level mechanism influence teachers' enactments of CRP by developing the conditions for staff to have these culturally-situated instructional conversations.

Appendix A



Appendix B: Selection Criteria

WHS			CHS		
African American Membership:	78.7%		African American Membership:	64%	
Freshman-on-track	61%		Freshman-on-track	64%	
Graduation Rate	85%		Graduation Rate	95%	
Post-Secondary Enrollment	54%-12 months	58%-16 months	Post-Secondary Enrollment	56%-12 months	60%- 16 months

Appendix C: Data Collection Chart

Reconciliation of Concepts and Data Collection					
	Instruments				
	Leader Interview	Teacher Leader Interview	Teacher Interview	Observations	Document Review
Concept or Variable					
Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration - Effective PD	Q8-Q12	Q8-Q12	Q12-Q16	2 grade level 2 subject level Job Embedded PD	Meeting Agendas
Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration - On-going Instructional Supports	Q8-Q12	Q8-Q12	Q12-Q16	X	X
Informal Social Structure - Collegial Bonds Amongst Staff	Q14-Q18	Q14-Q18	Q7-Q11	X	X
Informal Social Structure - Norms of Trust	Q14-Q18	Q14-Q18	Q7-Q11	X	X
Informal Social Structure - Collective Responsibility	Q14-Q18	Q14-Q18	Q7-Q11	X	X
Operationalized Variables:					
CRP Knowledge	Q11a, Q12a	Q11a, Q12a	Q12, Q13		Q2a
CRP Commitments	Q11b, Q12b	Q11b, Q12b	Q14		Q2a

Appendix D: Leader Interview Protocol

Part I. Prior Leadership Background and Training

1. Can you briefly describe your leadership education and training experience?
2. What school did you attend?
3. How long have you been a school administrator?
4. What is your current position at _____?
5. How would you describe your leadership style?
6. How are leadership tasks distributed around your school?
 - a. How do you go about determining who acquires a teacher leader position?
 - b. What are the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders at your school?
7. Can you briefly describe your relationship with teacher leaders?

Part II: Formal Mechanisms Learning and Collaboration

8. What practices are employed to enhance teacher learning?
 - a. How is this practice used to shape teachers' knowledge of students?
9. What practices are employed to enhance teacher collaboration?
 - a. How is this practice used to shape teachers' knowledge of students?
10. Can you describe routines intended to solve problems of practice?
 - a. How often do you encourage collaboration with other staff for instructional activities?
11. If I were to attend an instructional team meeting, what should I expect to see?
 - a. Are these meetings intended to enhance teachers' knowledge of students? If so, how? Or in what way?
 - b. Are these meetings intended to foster teachers' commitment to social justice? If so, how? Or in what way?
12. If I were to attend a professional development at your school, what should I expect to see?
 - a. Are these meetings intended to enhance teachers' knowledge of students? If so, how? Or in what way?
 - b. Are these meetings intended to foster teachers' commitment to social justice? If so, how? Or in what way?

Identifying Culturally Responsive Approaches

13. Would you say that you are able to identify culturally responsive teaching in this building?
 - a. Where would I be able to find the effective, culturally responsive approaches in your school?

Part III: School Social Infrastructure and Fostering Teachers' Commitment

14. Can you describe the schools' core values?
 - a. How are these values promoted throughout the school?
15. How would you describe collegial bonds among staff in your school?
 - a. What systems or processes are in place to promote collegial bonds among faculty?
16. How would you describe trust among staff in your school?
 - a. What systems or processes are in place to promote norms of trust among staff?
17. How would you describe your staffs' sense of collective responsibility?

- a. What systems or processes are in place to promote collective responsibility at your school?

Appendix D: Teacher Leader Interview Protocol

Part I. Prior Leadership Background and Training

1. Can you briefly describe your teacher education and training experience?
2. What school did you attend?
3. How long have you been a school administrator/teacher leader at this school?
4. What is your current position at _____?
5. How would you describe your leadership style?
6. How are leadership tasks distributed around your school?
 - a. How do you go about determining who acquires a teacher leader position?
 - b. What are the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders at your school?
7. Can you briefly describe your relationship with teacher leaders?

Part II: Formal Mechanisms Learning and Collaboration

8. What practices are employed to enhance teacher learning?
 - a. How is this practice used to shape teachers' knowledge of students?
9. What practices are employed to enhance teacher collaboration?
 - a. How is this practice used to shape teachers' knowledge of students?
10. Can you describe routines intended to solve problems of practice?
 - b. How often do you encourage collaboration with other staff for instructional activities?
11. If I were to attend an instructional team meeting, what should I expect to see?
 - a. Are these meetings intended to enhance teachers' knowledge of students? If so, how? Or in what way?
 - b. Are these meetings intended to foster teachers' commitment to social justice? If so, how? Or in what way?
12. If I were to attend a professional development at your school, what should I expect to see?
 - a. Are these meetings intended to enhance teachers' knowledge of students? If so, how? Or in what way?
 - b. Are these meetings intended to foster teachers' commitment to social justice? If so, how? Or in what way?

Identifying Culturally Responsive Approaches

13. Would you say that you are able to identify culturally responsive teaching in this building?
 - a. Where would I be able to find the effective, culturally responsive approaches in your school?

Part III: School Social Infrastructure and Fostering Teachers' Commitment

14. Can you describe the schools' core values?
 - a. How are these values promoted throughout the school?
15. How would you describe collegial bonds among staff in your school?
 - a. What systems or processes are in place to promote collegial bonds among faculty?
16. How would you describe trust among staff in your school?
 - a. What systems or processes are in place to promote norms of trust among staff?

17. How would you describe your staffs' sense of collective responsibility?
 - a. What systems or processes are in place to promote collective responsibility at your school?
 - b.

Teacher Interview Protocol

Part I. Prior Teaching Background and Training

1. Can you briefly describe your teacher education experience?
2. What school did you attend?
3. How long have you been teaching?
4. What is your current position at _____? What subject do you teach? Are you a member of the leadership team? How long have you been in that position?

Part II: Effective Teaching practice for African American students

5. How do you think about differentiating instruction for your students?
6. How do you go about incorporating multicultural content into your lesson plans and classroom instruction?

Part III: Informal Social Structure: These next questions are used to gain greater insight into your workplace relationships and instructional collaborative efforts.

7. Can you describe the schools' core values? How are these values promoted throughout the school?
8. How would you describe your relationship with school leadership?
 - a. In what ways have they supported your instructional practice?
 - b. Are there any supports that you have not received that may be useful to you now?
9. Can you describe routines intended to solve problems of practice?
 - a. How often do you collaborate with other staff for instructional activities?
10. How do you determine and address student learning needs?
 - a. Can you describe supports received and/or needed when determining student learning needs?
11. Can you tell me about a time when you helped a colleague with a problem of practice?
 - a. Can you describe instances where you received help from another colleague when attempting to solve a problem of practice?

Part IV: Formal Mechanisms for Learning and Collaboration: These next questions used to gain greater insight into how you experience professional development opportunities at your school.

12. Briefly describe the most influential professional development activities that have been most influential to your practice.
13. Can you tell me about how professional development activities that have helped shaped the content of your classroom instruction?
14. Can you describe how professional development activities may have shaped your thoughts regarding students? The nature of teaching?
15. How useful is the time allocated for instructional meeting times? How could the time be used more wisely? Is there enough time and resources allocated to professional learning and development?
16. How are professional development activities used to support collaboration amongst teachers within similar grade levels? Similar subjects?

Observation Protocol

School Name:			
Meeting Date:			
Meeting Time:	Start:	End:	
Meeting Type: (Circle One)	PD	Instructional Team Meeting	Other:
Facilitator Name(s):			
Number of Participants:			
Meeting Objectives:			
Objectives Covered:			

Notes for guided observation:

- 1) Describe aspects of the meeting that supported teachers' cultural knowledge
 - Which aspects of the meeting provided teachers with the knowledge of students' cultural background?
 - Which aspects of the meeting provided teachers with the knowledge of cultural diversity?
 - Which aspects of the meeting provided teachers with an opportunity to reflect, examine their own cultural identity?
- 2) Describe aspects of the meeting that supported teachers' collective responsibility, relational trust, and/or types of collegial bonds.
 - What aspect of the meeting provided teachers with the opportunity to reflect, examine their practice, and learn from and with their peers?
- 3) Describe the participant compositions.
 - What grade levels were presented?
 - What content areas were represented?
 - What types of job roles are represented?
- 4) Describe the ways in the structure, tools, and protocols support and/or limit the implementation of intended activities.
 - What aspects of the meeting presented significant modifications, additions, or omissions to the agenda?
- 5) List any questions, wonderings, or ideas for follow up related to teachers' learning context.
 - What aspects of the meeting were different (based on prior conversations with staff) from what you were expecting?

Appendix E: Table of Participants-WHS

WHS Staff

Position	Race, Gender	Education	Department & Grades taught	Years of experience		
Principal Leader	Black, Male	BA, MA, Doctoral Candidate		Administration: 15	WHS: 10	
Assistant Principal of Instruction	White, Female	BA: Speech & English MA: Educational Technology		WHS: 14 years		
Division Leader	White, Female	BA MA: Curriculum & Development	Math & Business	Teaching: 13	Administration: 3	
Teacher Leader	White, Female	BA: Math MA: Math	Math 9	Teacher: 8		Total: 8
Division Leader	White, Male	BA: Education- History, min: Political Science MA: Educational Administration	Social Studies & Fine Arts	Total: 19		
Teacher Leader	White, Male	BA: Business Administration Career Change- Airline	Economics 10 Honors Econ 11 Global Issues 12	Total: 6		
Teacher	White, Male	BA: Education	US History 9 Econ 10	Total: 2 years		
IB Coordinator	White, Male	BA: Education MA: Educational Administration	(2) IB courses	Total: 15	Leadership: 12	
MTSS Coordinator	Hispanic, Female	BA: Education- Spanish MA: Reading Specialist Endorsements: ESL, Special Education, Technology	ESL English IB Spanish	Total: 13	WHS: 9	Leadership: 6

Appendix E: Table of Participants-CHS

CHS Staff

Position	Race, Gender	Education	Department & Grades taught	Years of experience	
Principal Leader	Black, Male	BA, MA, PhD		Total: 21	CHS: 16
Assistant Principal of Instruction	White, Female	BA: Social Science MA (1): Educational Leadership MA (2): Educational Technology ESL certified		Administration: 4 years	
Division Leader	White, Female	BA MA: Curriculum & Development	English 10 Honors English 10 Honors English 11	Teaching: 24	Leadership: 1
Teacher	White, Female	BA: English MA: Teacher Leadership	Honors English 10 Honors English 12	Teacher: 21	
Teacher	White, Female	BA: English -ESL endorsement	Honors English 9	Total: 14**	
Division Leader	White, Female	BA	Math	Total: 31	Leadership: 8
Teacher	Hispanic, Male	BA: Math MA: Bilingual Education	Math 10 ESL Math 10 -one class outside building	Total: 6**	CHS: 5
Teacher	Black, Female	BA: Sociology MA: Special Education	Math 10 SPED Math 10	Total: 14 years	
Teacher	White, Female	BA: Math MA: Math	Math 10	Total: 7.5	CHS: 6

** :indicates that this person is a graduated from high school in this school district

Total: indicates the number of years in the teaching profession

Administration: indicates the number of years in an administrative role at CHS

Leadership: indicates the number of years this in a teacher leadership position at CHS

CHS: indicates the number of years working at this school organization

Appendix F: Codebook

Code	Descriptor	Notes
SC-Leader Educational Training and Background	When principal, assistant principal, or school administrator mentions their undergraduate, graduate, and professional education and training experience.	
SC-Teacher Education Training and Background	When teacher participants mentions their undergraduate, graduate, and professional education and training experience.	
SC-Time in Profession	When participant mentions how long they have been in the teaching profession.	-New Teachers -Veteran Teachers
SC-Time in Position	What, When participant mentions how long they have held that position at their school organization.	-New to position -Experience in position
SC-Time in School Organization	When participant mentions how long they have worked at their school organization.	-New to school -Experience at school
SC- Demographics	Staff- Mentions changes or influence of staff social identity.	
	Students- Mentions changes or influence of student social identity.	
SC- Hiring	Mentions when and or how someone was hired and its influence on schools, teams, or individual practice.	
SC- Change	School Staff/Teams—Whole school changes that emerge from policy (formal) and informal (climate/culture/and other unintended consequences from formal policies)	
	Individuals- Mainly referring to teachers or leaders who have experienced a shift in role and or responsibilities.	
SC-School Narrative	Mainly refers to the narrative of the school, changes to the school narrative, and labeling aspects of the school-wide culture.	-Family Dynamic -School Narrative (Combating school narrative/ creating new measures of success) -Changes to School Culture
Family: Policy & Politics (Context)		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
PP-External	Mentions federal, state, and district level policies, initiatives, and mandates, and their influence on staff moral or classroom practice.	-Essa -Common Core -District/Local Level -District Technical Support
PP-Internal	Mentions building/school level initiatives and policies, and/or their influence on staff moral or classroom practice.	-Teachers Unions

PP- School District collaboration	Mentions collaborations within schools and educators in the same district.	Competition within the district
PP-Mainstream Policy and Practice	Refers to policy as mainstream or deviated from mainstream practice.	

Family: Goals, Vision & Values (Context)		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
GVV-Student Learning Goals	Refers to the ideas and practices related to what students should be learning	-Rigorous Instruction -Culture/Race/Language -Relevant Examples
GVV-Student Behavior Goals	Refers to the ideas and practices for school discipline	-Controlling Black Bodies -Restorative Justice
GVV-Teachers Instructional Practice	Refers to the ideas and practices promoted for organizing classroom instruction; include any type promotions of approaches or model for classroom instruction/activities	-Instructional Absolutes -Grouping -Individualized Learning -Scaffolding -Collaborative Approach -Ideologies of Instructional Models-Student Centered -Social and Emotional Approaches -Cultural Scaffolding
GVV-Instructional Materials	Curriculum-Materials from the formal curriculum and/or that used to meet standards mandated by district, state, or federal policy.	
	Culturally Responsive- Materials used for creating class lessons that are labeled culturally responsive or aligned with culturally responsive aim.	
	Outside Resources- Materials used for creating class lessons and/or collaborating with other staff and/ staff professional development, that are not from policy, another staff member, or from the district. These include new items created by the teacher, online resources, and other outside organizations.	
GVV-School Values	Refers to values promoted throughout the school, along with values promoted throughout the school as mandated by the common core standards	
GVV- History	Refers to history of the school mentioned. History stems from a type of ideological assumption that the history of the school necessarily impacts the ways goals are attempted and the vision is shaped.	
GVV- Parents/Community	Refers to school level practice/events for engaging parents and the schools' neighboring community.	

Family: Leadership and CRSL (Formal Mechanisms for Learning & Collaboration)		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
CRSL-Distribution of leadership tasks	Distributions leadership and instructional tasks. → leadership tasks are understood to be distributed across school organizations in order to effectively meet school organizational goals.	(Spillane, Halverson, Diamond, 2007; Spillane, 2005).
CRSL-Leadership influence	Mentions behaviors, ideas, presence, or direction provided by anyone who serves as a leader at school organization.	-Consistent messages/United front -ignorant of classroom practice -Admin student relationships/lack of time with students -presence in the school building -Leadership Style
CRSL- Reflective Practice	Mentions that/how the principal leader critically reflect on their leadership behaviors	→This type of reflection is represented through behavioral expressions of commitments to continuous learning of cultural knowledge and contexts (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006). These leaders display a critical consciousness of their practice in and out school (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Johnson, 2006).
CRSL-Develops Staff	Mentions that/how the principal leader develops culturally responsive teachers →In doing so, formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are geared toward developing teacher capacities for culturally responsive pedagogy (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz, Brazil, & Scott, 2003).	→They conduct collaborative walkthroughs (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012). →They create culturally responsive professional development opportunities (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz et al., 2003) and they use school data to see cultural gaps in achievement, discipline,

		enrichment, and remedial services (Skrla et al., 2004).
CRSL-School Environment	Mentions that/how the principal leader promotes a culturally responsive school environment →In doing so, informal social structures are used to support teachers in accepting local identities (Khalifa, 2013).	-refers to lit -Leader/Admin Modeling →Enhance collegial bonds amongst staff (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012). →Create opportunities for teacher leaders to model culturally responsiveness in their interactions (Khalifa, 2011; Tillman, 2005). Promote a vision for inclusive instruction and behavioral practices (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb- Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007
CRSL-Culture Context	Mentions that/how the principal leader engages students, parents, and indigenous contexts	→ Relatedly, culturally responsive school leaders attempt to develop meaningful, positive relationships with the community surrounding the school (Garner & Enomoto, 2006; Johnson, 2006; Walker, 2001).

Family: Formal Mechanisms for Learning & Collaboration- Professional Development		
General: Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to connect to resources (Penual et al., 2010).		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
FM-PD- Nature/Type	Mentions who is facilitating the learning (teacher, administrator, district, state-wide conference, etc)	-Systemic/Ongoing -District Technical Support -Demonstration Classroom -Reporting from Conference

FM-PD-Use	-Mentions the content of the professional development (CRP, technology, assessment, etc)	-Subject Matter Content -Culture -District Cohesion →First, the goals of professional development programs should be aligned with the goals of the school as well as state and district standards, so that instructional and evaluative expectations are clear. →Second, professional development should focus on core content and model teaching strategies to improve delivery of instructional practices. →Lastly, professional development allows for collaboration among teachers, as well as continuous feedback through formative teacher evaluation (Archibald et al., 2011).
FM-PD- Evaluation	School- Refers to formal evaluations of school wide practice, including curriculum audits, equity audits, leadership evaluations, and others formal measures from policies looking at alignment.	
	Teachers- Refers to individual staff member evaluations, including both formal and informal summative comments used to shape teachers practice.	

Family: Formal Mechanisms for Learning & Collaboration- On-going Instructional Supports		
General: I highlight the use of grade-level teams and cross-grade vertical, subject-disciplinary teams, as on-going instructional supports (Saunders, Goldenberg, & Gallimore, 2009).		
Code	Descriptor	Notes

FM-OIS-Grade Level Teams	Mentions of instructional conversations occurring during meeting times, and other tasks performed. → Structure time spent with members of a teaching team that work with within the same grade level.	Note: If these meetings happen, that happen within departments (based on my observations).
FM-OIS-Cross Grade Vertical Teams	Mentions of instructional conversations occurring during meeting times, and other tasks performed. → Structured time spent with members of a teaching team with those that work within the same content/subject.	-Demonstration Classroom →Note: I think I only observed cross-grade vertical teams.
FM-OIS-Core Course Team	Mentions of instructional conversations occurring during meeting times, and other tasks performed.	
FM-OIS-Common Planning Period	Mentions of instructional conversations occurring during meeting times, and other tasks performed.	

Family: Informal Social Structure		
<p>General: Informal social structure refers to human resources within a school building, that make up the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice about instructional matters (Penuel et al, 2010). →Multicultural scholarship is fairly clear on the significance of teachers’ collective learning and responsibility when attempting to adopt and sustain responsive teaching methods (Wood, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).</p>		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
ISS-Collegial bonds amongst staff	<p>→Collegial bonds amongst staff are instruments for promoting change and conserving the present.</p> <p>→The work of adult actors, in turn, results in the conditions that directly affect student learning; i.e. school learning climate and ambitious instruction.</p> <p>→Cross, Borgatti, and Parker (2001) refer to these staff interactions as “advice networks”. These informal mechanisms become important resources for individual and team problem solving and innovation. In doing so, they help individuals reframe problems, provide solutions to problems, and validate and legitimate interpretations of problems.</p>	(Little, 2012; Cross, Borgatti, and Parker, 2001).
ISS-Norms of trust	→Norms of trust is defined as confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship, or other sound principle, of another person or group. Trust grows through	(Louis, 2007; Payne & Clark, 2003).

	exchanges in which actions validate staff expectations of one another (Loius, 2007). →Through their words and actions, school staff show their sense of their obligations toward others, and others discern these intentions (Payne & Clark, 2003).	
ISS-Collective responsibility	→Teachers' sense of responsibility for student learning is connected with their beliefs about students' academic abilities through a set of organizationally embedded expectations. →Teachers' everyday interactions include evaluations of students that accumulate and give direction to the stream of beliefs in a school setting. Formal activities for teachers. Some of them are group oriented to try to get a sort of collective understanding.the tasks that they have together	Diamond, Radolph & Spillane, 2004)

Family: CRP- Evidence of Culturally Responsive Approaches		
General (Knowledge): Stated clearly, teachers' knowledge refers to teachers' general knowledge of cultural diversity, teachers' knowledge of their own cultural identity, and teachers' knowledge of students cultural backgrounded.		
Code	Descriptor	Notes
EV-CRP Knowledge	<p>→Cultural Diversity: Knowledge surrounding the cultural characteristics and contributions of different ethnic groups.</p> <p>-Referring to subject specific multicultural knowledge</p> <p>-coherenace may be moreo of an important topic in these settings.</p> <p>→ What is instructional congruence?</p> <p>→ Dr. Gooden</p>	<p>(Hollins, King, & Hayman, 1994; King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997; Pai, 1990; Smith, 1998)</p> <p>→ Gay, 2002: teachers need to know (a) which ethnic groups give priority to communal living and cooperative problem solving and how these preferences affect educational motivation, aspiration, and task performance; (b) how different ethnic groups' protocols of appropriate ways for children to interact with adults are exhibited in</p>

		instructional settings; and (c) the implications of gender role socialization in different ethnic groups for implementing equity initiatives in classroom instruction” (p.107).
	→ <u>Self</u> : Changing preservice teachers’ beliefs about diversity involves self-awareness and self-reflectiveness as “having an awareness of one’s own beliefs and attitudes, as well as being willing and/ or able to think critically about them”	(Garmen, 2005, p. 205).
	→ <u>Students</u> : Today, scholars are more clear on the role of teacher expectations as guiding the practice and pedagogy that influence student learning and achievement (Jussim, Eccles, & Madon; Grossman, 1995; Anyon, 1997). -Referring to knowledge of specific students in which teachers are in surface (this knowledge can be explicitly and implicitly tied to a cultural lens).	(Anyon, 1997; Irvine, 1990). → Scholars of multicultural education tend to agree that culturally responsive teaching requires high expectations for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2001, 2010; Irvine, 1990).
General (Commitments): Teachers’ commitment refers to behavioral expressions of attempting to continuously improve their practice, along with adopting and sustaining a social justice orientation.		
EV-CRP Commitments	→ <u>Social Justice Orientation</u> : A social justice orientation is linked to culturally responsive caring dispositions, representing types of behavioral expressions related to equitable classroom strategies (Ware, 2006) and high expectations of students.	(Theoharris, 2009; Wiggins & Follow, 1999; Dee & Henkin, 2002).
	→ <u>Commitment to Continuously Improving Practice</u> : Relevant and responsive classroom practice requires teachers to be innovative and adapt to the changing demographics present within the nations’ public schools.	(Ashton, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay & Howard, 2001).

EV- Teaching Skills	Instances where a participant describes his/her (or other colleagues) behaviors used in the classroom or an “out of action” behavior or skills	
---------------------	--	--

Family: Context (CRP- Opportunities and Barriers)		
Staff Characteristics	Opportunities- staff background and characteristics that might serve as an opportunity for CRP	
	Barriers- staff background and characteristics that might serve as drawback for enacting CRP	
Policy and Politics	Opportunities- how policies create space for enactments of CRP, including teaching dispositions, knowledge and classroom instruction.	-Changes to Student Demographics -Response to the literature on CRP
	Barriers- how policies negatively impact enactments of CRP, including teaching dispositions, knowledge and classroom instruction.	
Goals, Vision and Values	Opportunities- Includes the overt organizational aims and individual ideologies that serve to foster enactments of CRP or a cultural/racial lens.	
	Barriers- Includes the overt organizational aims and individual ideologies that seem to prohibit enactments of CRP or a cultural/racial lens.	

Family: CRP- Opportunities and Barriers—Formal Mechanisms for Learning & Collaboration		
Opportunity for CRP-Leadership	facets of the school leader behaviors that might serve as an opportunity for CRP.	→Formal mechanisms for learning and collaboration are structural conditions that enable teachers to connect to resources (Bidwell & Yasumoto, 1999; Penual et al., 2010).
Barrier to CRP-Leadership	facets of the school leader behaviors that might serve as a drawback for enacting CRP or using a cultural/racial lens.	
Opportunity for CRP-PD	facets of the school level professional development that might serve as an opportunity for CRP.	
Barrier to CRP-PD	facets of the school level professional development that might serve as a drawback for enacting CRP or using a cultural/racial lens.	

Opportunity for CRP-Ongoing Instructional Supports	facets of the school level team meetings that might serve as an opportunity for enacting CRP or using a cultural/racial lens.	
Barriers to CRP CRP-Ongoing Instructional Supports	facets of the school level team meetings that might serve as a drawback for enacting CRP or using a cultural/racial lens.	
Family: CRP- Opportunities and Barriers—Informal Social Structure		
Opportunity for CRP -Informal Social Structure	Mentions any type of social or material resources that is used in the classroom, shapes their ideas, ways of doing, and/or ways of being.	
Barriers to CRP -Informal Social Structure	Mentions any limitations, drawbacks, or missed opportunities related to → Informal social structure refers to human resources within a school building, that make up the actual patterns of giving and receiving advice about instructional matters (Penual et al., 2010).	OIS-Barriers to enacting CRP- Mentions anything that detracts from teachers' CRP knowledge and dispositions.

Family: CRP- Opportunities and Barriers—Teachers Knowledge and Dispositions		
Opportunity for CRP -Teachers Knowledge	Any social or material resources that is used in the classroom, shapes their ideas, ways of doing, and/or ways of being. → Teaching Resources: Mentions online resources, help from another staff member, or aid used to guide classroom instructional practice and/enactments of CRP. → Teachers Knowledge: Mentions any new or existing knowledge that was used to guide classroom instructional practice and/enactments of CRP.	-Student Interests -Locating CRP -Pockets of CRP/Success -Multicultural Content -Culturally Responsive Teaching Materials Unused Supports Teacher to Teacher support -Organizing Teacher Learning -Influencing Teacher Knowledge -Influencing Teacher Learning -Knowledge of students' home culture
Barriers to CRP -Teachers Knowledge	Mentions having a lack of knowledge of: self, students, and/or cultural diversity.	

<p>Opportunity for CRP</p> <p>-Teachers Commitments and Dispositions</p>		<p>-Being Responsive</p> <p>-Commitments to continuously improving practice</p> <p>-Commitments to a social justice orientation</p>
<p>Barriers to CRP</p> <p>-Teachers Commitments and Dispositions</p>		<p>- CRP Efficacy- Mentions feelings related to staff confidence for enacting culturally responsive approaches.</p> <p>-Culturally Responsive Teaching Materials Unused</p> <p>-Commitments to continuously improving practice</p> <p>-Commitments to a social justice orientation</p>

Appendix G: Discussion Chart

Formal Mechanisms for learning and collaboration	School Level Mechanisms	Similarities	Differences	
	Professional Development	Both	WHS	CHS
		Cultural Bias Training	Cultural Bias Training included sessions on implementing Culturally Responsive Materials	
		PDs on Trauma Informed Practices/Partnership with ACES	Work with teaching teams to adapt their curriculum	General Discussions on Social Justice
		PD's for enhancing student engagement	Focusing Strategies for critique inquiry/DBQ's	Focusing strategies for student voice
			Demonstration Classrooms-CRP PD	
	Ongoing Instructional Supports	Both	WHS	CHS
		English teams seem more capable, willing, and further along in adopting CRP.		
		Math teams experience challenges understanding and implementing CRP.		
Informal Social Structure	Norms of Trust	Both	WHS	CHS
		Staff mainly rely on their teaching team	Relies heavily on school support staff	Apprehensive toward administrators
			Difficulty trusting teachers who are new/ struggling with classroom management issues	Lack of Buy-in for initiatives adopted.
				Co-teaching teams that support (in the moment) cultural scaffolding.
				Reports some negative experiences with colleagues or administrative leaders
	Collegial Bonds amongst staff	Staff who share bonds have frequent communication and share ideas.		

		Staff express variations in closeness.		
		Staff exchange materials for increasing student engagement.		
	Collective Responsibility	Both	WHS	CHS
		Individual teachers on the same team held different ideologies	Vision for Leadership platforms	Some staff play the blame game
AP’s at both schools believed that their strongest teachers also were the ones who supported students in “critiquing ideology”		Teacher leaders who encourage staff to engage culturally responsive lessons		
Influences on Teachers Practice Related to Enactments of CRP	Cultural Knowledge Base	Both	WHS	CHS
		Shaped by information shared during passing times, team meetings, and PD’s.	Learning about their own cultural identity on the job.	Recognize holders cultural knowledge as those from the community
		Team meetings are necessary but insufficient mechanisms for addressing cultural problems of practice (cultural scaffolding strategies)	Encourages others to use their cultural knowledge before administering punitive practices.	
		Recognizes the limitations of their colleagues practices as stemming from lack of cultural knowledge	Cultural knowledge is discussed to inform supports and protocols for immigrant students.	
		Cultural divide exist between same race teachers.	Cultural knowledge is used to inform policies for extreme weather conditions.	
	Commitments	Both	WHS	CHS
		Intentions to foster commitments to address learning haps	Attempts to address student failure rates through standards based grading.	English department implements book studies to further teachers’ commitments to students.
		Encourages teachers to address gaps within the curriculum	Developed enrichment courses to address content and skills for standardized achievement tests.	-Staff understand limitations of the schools’ instructional capacity stem an unwillingness to adapt.
		Staff understand sharing the same students as a	Encourages teacher to experiment.	

		condition that supports their work with students.		
		-Understands strategies for addressing learning gaps and those for enhancing rigor as contradictory	Principal leader encourages teacher advocacy to encourage equitable teaching practice.	

Appendix H: Definition of Key Terms

Racially Minoritized Students:

This term reflects an understanding of *minority* status as that which is socially constructed in specific societal contexts. Over the past fifty years, Black, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native American students have enrolled in k-12 schools and college in steadily increasing numbers (El-Khawas, 2003). These groups constitute those who have been racially minoritized in U.S. society. The term “racially minoritized students” as opposed to students of color or minority students is informed by Benitez’s (2010) use of “minoritized” and similar to this usage is intended to refer to the “process of student minoritization” (Stewart, 2013, p. 131). For the current project minoritized refers to the process of student minoritization as it relates to racial, ethnic, and cultural origins.

African-American:

This term refers to an ethnic group of Americans with ancestry from black racial groups of Africa. Many are descendants of Africans who were enslaved, primarily within the United States boundaries (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, and Chavous, 1998). This term has been referred to as Black American or Afro-American.

Academic Achievement Gap:

The term refers to the disparities in standardized test scores between Black and White, Latina/o and White, and recent immigrant and White students (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Learning Opportunity Gap:

This term refers to students’ experiences that result in different ways of describing disparities among students in schools; it is used to shift the frame from *achievement gap* which looks at measures of educational outcomes. This term calls attention to the fact that African American and Latino students are less likely than White students to have teachers who emphasize high quality instruction, and appropriate use of resources (Flores, 2007). For example, African American and Latino students are less likely than White students to have access to: teachers who emphasize reasoning and non-routine problem solving; computers; and, • teachers who use computers for simulations and applications (Strutchens & Silver, 2000).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:

This term refers to a pedagogical tool used to describe classroom strategies and teaching dispositions intended to challenge the current status quo of the social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It is used to summarize the work of many scholars of multicultural education, relying heavily on the original tenants found in the original study conducted by Ladson-Billings (1995). They include: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness.

Cultural Knowledge:

This term refers to the types of knowledge required for teachers to enact culturally responsive pedagogies. They include: (a) knowledge of cultural diversity, (b) conceptions of self, and (c) conceptions of students.

Dispositions:

This term refers to the values and commitments that define teacher performance. For example, The NCATE standards call for dispositions that are consistent with the idea of “fairness” and “the belief that all students can learn” (NCATE, 2009).

Commitments:

This term refers to teachers’ work commitment. More specifically, (a) it relates to teachers’ commitment to adopting and sustaining equitable teaching methods, and (b) teachers’ commitment to continuously improving their practice. Teachers’ work commitment is identified by a psychological bond or identification of the individual with an object that takes on special meaning and importance (Firestone & Pennell, 2003)

Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL):

This term refers to a framework for the expanding body of literature that seeks to make the entire school environment, responsive to the schooling needs of minoritized students. The model outlines leadership behaviors; they include: (a) critical self-reflects on leadership behaviors, (b) develops culturally responsive teachers, (c) promotes culturally responsive/inclusive school environment, and (d) engages students, parents, and indigenous contexts (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016).

Formal Mechanisms:

This term refers to structural conditions that are used to organize teaching and learning in school organizations. Schools differ in how formal aspects of the organization are comprised given school policies and student needs. These aspects include: grade-level teams, formal leaders, and cross-grade vertical teams (Penuel et al., 2010).

Informal Social Structure:

This term refers to the social conditions that influence staff actual patterns of advice giving in school organizations. Schools differ in the ways in which more informal influences, such as collegial bonds among faculty members and norms of trust and collective responsibility, emerged over time (Penuel et al. 2010)

Predominately African-American High Schools:

School organizations that have over 65% African American students. (Bankston & Caldes, 1996).

Racially Isolated High Schools:

School organizations that have over 95% African American students. (Powell, 1985).

High Minority schools:

School organizations that have over 65% racially minoritized students including: Black, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native American (Peske & Haycock, 2006).

References

- Abrams, E., Yore, L. D., Bang, M., Brayboy, B. M. J., Castagno, A., Kidman, J., ... & Yen, C. F. (2014). Culturally relevant schooling in science indigenous: Stressing the all in science literacy for all. In *Handbook of research on science education*. Taylor and Francis.
- Abrams, L. S., & Gibbs, J. T. (2000). Planning for school change: School-community collaboration in a full-service elementary school. *Urban Education*, 35(1), 79-103.
- Ackerman, R. H., & Mackenzie, S. V. (2007). *Uncovering teacher leadership: Essays and voices from the field*. Corwin Press.
- Albers, C. (2008). Improving pedagogy through action learning and scholarship of teaching and learning. *Teaching Sociology*, 36(1), 79-86.
- Alston, J. A. (2005). Tempered radicals and servant leaders: Black females persevering in the superintendency. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 41(4), 675-688.
- Anyon, J. (1997). *Ghetto schooling: A political economy of urban educational reform*. Teachers College Press.
- Archibald, S., Coggshall, J. G., Croft, A., & Goe, L. (2011). High-Quality Professional Development for All Teachers: Effectively Allocating Resources. Research & Policy Brief. *National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality*.
- Ashton, C. V. (2007). Using theory of change to enhance peace education evaluation. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 25(1), 39-53.
- Askew, K., Beverly, M. G., & Jay, M. L. (2012). Aligning collaborative and culturally responsive evaluation approaches. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 35(4), 552-557.
- Au, K. H., & Kawakami, A. J. (1994). Cultural congruence in instruction. *Teaching diverse populations: Formulating a knowledge base*, 24.
- Au, K., & Jordan, C. (1981). Teaching reading to Hawaiian children: Finding a culturally appropriate solution. *Culture and the bilingual classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography*, 139-152.
- Ball, S. J. (2003). *Class strategies and the education market: The middle classes and social advantage*. Routledge.
- Bankston III, C., & Caldas, S. J. (1996). Majority African American schools and social injustice: The influence of de facto segregation on academic achievement. *Social Forces*, 75(2), 535-555.
- Banks, J. A. (2001). Approaches to multicultural curriculum reform. *Multicultural education*:

Issues and perspectives, 4, 225-246.

- Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (Eds.). (2010). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Barlow, A. T., Frick, T. M., Barker, H. L., & Phelps, A. J. (2014). Modeling instruction: The impact of professional development on instructional practices. *Science Educator*, 23(1), 14.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1993). Transformational leadership and organizational culture. *Public administration quarterly*, 112-121.
- Benitez Jr, M. (2010). Resituating culture centers within a social justice framework. *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice*, 119-134.
- Bidwell, C. E., & Yasumoto, J. Y. (1999). The collegial focus: Teaching fields, collegial relationships, and instructional practice in American high schools. *Sociology of education*, 234-256.
- Blase, J. J. (1985). The socialization of teachers: An ethnographic study of factors contributing to the rationalization of the teacher's instructional perspective. *Urban Education*, 20(3), 235-256.
- Bogler, R., & Somech, A. (2004). Influence of teacher empowerment on teachers' organizational commitment, professional commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in schools. *Teaching and teacher education*, 20(3), 277-289.
- Bogotch, I. E. (2002). " Enmeshed in the Work": The Educative Power of Developing Standards. *Journal of School leadership*, 12(5), 503-25.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. (1991). E.(2003). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*, 3.
- Bondy, E., & Ross, D. D. (2008). The teacher as warm demander. *Educational Leadership*, 66(1), 54-58.
- Bowers, C. A., & Flinders, D. J. (1990). Responsive teaching. *An Ecological Approach to Classroom Patterns of Language, Culture, and Thought*.
- Boykin, A. W. (1983). The academic performance of Afro-American children. *Achievement and achievement motives*, 321-371.
- Boykin, A. W. (1984). Reading achievement and the social-cultural frame of reference of Afro-American children. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 53(4), 464-473.
- Brown, L. D. (1991). Bridging organizations and sustainable development. *Human relations*, 44(8), 807-831.

- Brown, K. M. (2004). Leadership for social justice and equity: Weaving a transformative framework and pedagogy. *Educational administration quarterly*, 40(1), 77-108.
- Brown, M. R. (2007). Educating all students: Creating culturally responsive teachers, classrooms, and schools. *Intervention in school and clinic*, 43(1), 57-62.
- Brown, J. C., & Crippen, K. J. (2016). Designing for culturally responsive science education through professional development. *International Journal of Science Education*, 38(3), 470-492.
- Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)
- Bryk, A., & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Buchmann, M. (1984). The use of research knowledge in teacher education and teaching. *American Journal of Education*, 92(4), 421-439.
- Cazden, C. B., & Leggett, E. L. (1976). Culturally Responsive Education: A Response to LAU Remedies II.
- Capper, C. A., Hafner, M. M., & Keyes, M. W. (2002). The role of community in spiritually centered leadership for justice. *School as community: From promise to practice*, 77-94.
- Chapman, T. K. (2007). The power of contexts: Teaching and learning in recently desegregated schools. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 38(3), 297-315.
- City, E. A., Elmore, R. F., Fiarman, S. E., & Teitel, L. (2009). *Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning*. Harvard Education Press. 8 Story Street First Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138.
- Corcoran, T. C. (1995). Transforming professional development for teachers: A guide for state policymakers.
- Colvin, J., & Tobler, N. (2013). Cultural speak: Culturally relevant pedagogy and experiential learning in a public speaking classroom. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 36(3), 233-246.
- Cooper, C. W. (2009). Performing cultural work in demographically changing schools: Implications for expanding transformative leadership frameworks. *Educational administration quarterly*, 45(5), 694-724.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications, Inc.

- Cross, R., Borgatti, S. P., & Parker, A. (2001). Beyond answers: dimensions of the advice network. *Social networks*, 23(3), 215-235.
- Crowther, F., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2009). *Developing teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success*. Corwin Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi delta kappan*, 76(8), 597.
- Daniel, P. T., & Walker, T. (2014). Fulfilling the promise of Brown: Examining laws and policies for remediation. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 83(3), 256-273.
- Day, C. (1993). Reflection: A necessary but not sufficient condition for professional development. *British educational research journal*, 19(1), 83-93.
- Dee, J. R., & Henkin, A. B. (2002). Assessing dispositions toward cultural diversity among preservice teachers. *Urban Education*, 37(1), 22-40.
- Desimone, L. M., Porter, A. C., Garet, M. S., Yoon, K. S., & Birman, B. F. (2002). Effects of professional development on teachers' instruction: Results from a three-year longitudinal study. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 24(2), 81-112.
- Desimone, L. M., Smith, T. M., & Ueno, K. (2006). Are teachers who need sustained, content-focused professional development getting it? An administrator's dilemma. *Educational administration quarterly*, 42(2), 179-215.
- Diamond, J. B., Randolph, A., & Spillane, J. P. (2004). Teachers' expectations and sense of responsibility for student learning: The importance of race, class, and organizational habitus. *Anthropology & education quarterly*, 35(1), 75-98.
- Dixson, A. D., & Dodo Seriki, V. (2014). Intersectionality and pedagogy: Teachers and the quandary of race, class, and culturally relevant pedagogy. *Researching race in education: Policy, practice and qualitative research: Critical cultural studies series*, 185-218.
- Donnelly, L. A., & Argyle, S. (2011). Teachers' willingness to adopt nature of science activities following a physical science professional development. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 22(6), 475-490.
- Drago-Severson, E. (2012). New Opportunities for Principal Leadership: Shaping School Climates for Enhanced Teacher Development. *Teachers college record*, 114(3), n3.
- DuFour, R., & Mattos, M. (2013). Improve Schools?. *Educational Leadership*, 70(7), 34-39.
- Duran, R. P. (1998). Learning and technology: Implications for culturally responsive instructional activity and models of achievement. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 67(3), 220-227.

- Easton, L. B. (2008). From professional development to professional learning. *Phi delta kappan*, 89(10), 755-761.
- El-Khawas, E. (2003). The many dimensions of student diversity. *Student services: A handbook for the profession*, 4, 45-52.
- Elmore, R. F. (2000). Building a new structure for school leadership. *Albert Shanker Institute*.
- Enyedy, N., & Mukhopadhyay, S. (2007). They don't show nothing I didn't know: Emergent tensions between culturally relevant pedagogy and mathematics pedagogy. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 16(2), 139-174.
- Erickson, F., Mohatt, G., Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (1982). Doing the ethnography of schooling: Educational anthropology in action.
- Esposito, J., & Swain, A. N. (2009). Pathways to Social Justice: Urban Teachers' Uses of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy as a Conduit for Teaching for Social Justice. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, 6(1), 38-48.
- Farkas, G. (2003). Racial disparities and discrimination in education: What do we know, how do we know it, and what do we need to know?. *Teachers College Record*, 105(6), 1119-1146.
- Farkas, G., Grobe, R. P., Sheehan, D., & Shuan, Y. (1990). Cultural resources and school success: Gender, ethnicity, and poverty groups within an urban school district. *American sociological review*, 127-142.
- Fasching-Varner, K. J., & Dodo Seriki, V. (2012). Moving beyond seeing with our eyes wide shut. A response to "There is no culturally responsive teaching spoken here". *Democracy and Education*, 20(1), 5.
- Firestone, W. A., & Rosenblum, S. (1988). Building commitment in urban high schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 10(4), 285-299.
- Firestone, W. A., & Pennell, J. R. (1993). Teacher commitment, working conditions, and differential incentive policies. *Review of educational research*, 63(4), 489-525.
- Flores, A. (2007). Examining disparities in mathematics education: Achievement gap or opportunity gap?. *The High School Journal*, 91(1), 29-42.
- Ford, A. C., & Sassi, K. (2014). Authority in cross-racial teaching and learning (re) considering the transferability of warm demander approaches. *Urban Education*, 49(1), 39-74.
- Foster, I. (1995). *Designing and building parallel programs* (Vol. 191). Reading: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.

- Fox, A., Deaney, R., & Wilson, E. (2010). Examining beginning teachers' perceptions of workplace support. *Journal of Workplace learning*, 22(4), 212-227.
- Fraire, N. J., & Brooks, J. S. (2015). Toward a theory of culturally relevant leadership for school-community culture. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 17(1), 6-21.
- Frost, J., & Walker, M. (2007). Cross cultural leadership. *Engineering Management*, 17(3), 27-29.
- Fullan, M. (2011). *The six secrets of change: What the best leaders do to help their organizations survive and thrive*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Gardiner, M. E., & Enomoto, E. K. (2006). Urban school principals and their role as multicultural leaders. *Urban Education*, 41(6), 560-584.
- Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American educational research journal*, 38(4), 915-945.
- Garmon, M. A. (2004). Changing preservice teachers' attitudes/beliefs about diversity: What are the critical factors?. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55(3), 201-213.
- Gay, G. (1993). Building cultural bridges: A bold proposal for teacher education. *Education and urban society*, 25(3), 285-299.
- Gay, G. (2000). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, practice and research. *New York: Teachers College Press*.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of teacher education*, 53(2), 106-116.
- Gay, G., & Howard, T. C. (2000). Multicultural teacher education for the 21st century. *The Teacher Educator*, 36(1), 1-16.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press.
- Ginsberg, M. B., & Wlodkowski, R. J. (2000). *Creating Highly Motivating Classrooms for All Students: A Schoolwide Approach to Powerful Teaching with Diverse Learners*. *The Jossey-Bass Education Series*. Jossey-Bass, 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104-1342.
- Giovannelli, M. (2003). Relationship between reflective disposition toward teaching and effective teaching. *The journal of educational research*, 96(5), 293-309.

- Good, T., & Brophy, J. (1994). Looking in classrooms (6th Eds.).
- Goddard, Y. L., Goddard, R. D., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2007). A theoretical and empirical investigation of teacher collaboration for school improvement and student achievement in public elementary schools. *Teachers college record*, 109(4), 877-896.
- Gooden, M. A. (2005). The role of an African American principal in an urban information technology high school. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 41(4), 630-650.
- Gooden, M. A. (2012). What does racism have to do with leadership? Countering the idea of color-blind leadership: A reflection on race and the growing pressures of the urban principalship. *The Journal of Educational Foundations*, 26(1/2), 67.
- Gooden, M. A., & Dantley, M. (2012). Centering race in a framework for leadership preparation. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 7(2), 237-253.
- Graham, P. (2007). Improving teacher effectiveness through structured collaboration: A case study of a professional learning community. *RMLE Online*, 31(1), 1-17.
- Graves, D. H. (2002). *Testing is not teaching: What should count in education*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Grisham, T., & Walker, D. H. (2008). Cross-cultural leadership. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, 1(3), 439-445.
- Gresalfi, M. S., & Cobb, P. (2006). Cultivating students' discipline-specific dispositions as a critical goal for pedagogy and equity. *Pedagogies*, 1(1), 49-57.
- Grossman, P., & McDonald, M. (2008). Back to the future: Directions for research in teaching and teacher education. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(1), 184e205.
- Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and teaching*, 8(3), 381-391.
- Gutierrez, K. D., Asato, J., Santos, M., & Gotanda, N. (2002). Backlash pedagogy: Language and culture and the politics of reform. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies*, 24(4), 335-351.
- Hale-Benson, J. (1986). Black Children: Their Roots. *Culture, and Learning Styles*.
- Hallinger, P., & Leithwood, K. (1996). Culture and educational administration: A case of finding out what you don't know you don't know. *Journal of educational administration*, 34(5), 98-116.
- Hanushek, E. A., Kain, J. F., O'Brien, D. M., & Rivkin, S. G. (2005). *The market for teacher quality* (No. w11154). National Bureau of Economic Research.

- Hargreaves, A. (2002). Teaching and betrayal. *Teachers and teaching*, 8(3), 393-407.
- Harris, A. (2001). Building the capacity for school improvement. *School Leadership & Management*, 21(3), 261-270.
- Hastie, P. A., Martin, E., & Buchanan, A. M. (2006). Stepping out of the norm: An examination of praxis for a culturally-relevant pedagogy for African-American children. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 38(3), 293-306.
- Haycock, K., & Crawford, C. (2008). Closing the teacher quality gap. *Educational Leadership*, 65(7), 14-19.
- Hefflin, B. R. (2002). Learning to develop culturally relevant pedagogy: A lesson about cornrowed lives. *The Urban Review*, 34(3), 231-250.
- Hill, H. C., Ball, D. L., & Schilling, S. G. (2008). Unpacking pedagogical content knowledge: Conceptualizing and measuring teachers' topic-specific knowledge of students. *Journal for research in mathematics education*, 372-400.
- Hilliard, A. G. (1997). Language, culture and the assessment of African American children. *Assessment for equity and inclusion: Embracing all our children*, 229-240.
- Hilliard III, A. (1999). Colloquium on Student Achievement in Multicultural School Districts: Keynote Address. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 32(1), 79-86.
- Hollins, E. R., & Guzman, M. T. (2005). Research on preparing teachers for diverse populations. *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education*, 477, 548.
- Hollins, E. R., King, J. E., & Hayman, W. C. (Eds.). (1994). *Teaching diverse populations: Formulating a knowledge base*. 1944. SUNY Press.
- Hollins, E. R., King, J. E., & Hayman, W. C. (Eds.). (1997). *Preparing teachers for cultural diversity*. Teachers College Press.
- Honig, M. I., & Hatch, T. C. (2004). Crafting coherence: How schools strategically manage multiple, external demands. *Educational Researcher*, 33(8), 16-30.
- Hord, S. M. (1997). Professional learning communities: Communities of continuous inquiry and improvement.
- Hord, S. M., & Sommers, W. A. (Eds.). (2008). *Leading professional learning communities: Voices from research and practice*. Corwin Press.
- Hord, S. M. (2009). Professional learning communities. *Journal of staff development*, 30(1), 40-

- House, R. J., Wright, N. S., & Aditya, R. N. (1997). Cross-cultural research on organizational leadership: A critical analysis and a proposed theory.
- Howard, G. (1999). You can't teach what you don't know.
- Howard, T. C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into practice*, 42(3), 195-202.
- Huberman, M. (1985). What knowledge is of most worth to teachers? A knowledge-use perspective. *Teaching and teacher education*.
- Hulpia, H., Devos, G., & Van Keer, H. (2009). The influence of distributed leadership on teachers' organizational commitment: A multilevel approach. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 103(1), 40-52.
- Ingersoll, R., & Merrill, L. (2010). Who's Teaching. *Educational Leadership*.
- Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & Stuckey, D. (2014). Seven Trends: The Transformation of the Teaching Force. Updated April 2014. CPRE Report.# RR-80. *Consortium for Policy Research in Education*.
- Irvine, J. J. (1990). *Black students and school failure. Policies, practices, and prescriptions*. Greenwood Press, Inc., 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881.
- Irvine, J. J., & Fraser, J. W. (1998). Warm demanders. *Education Week*, 17(35), 56-57.
- Ishihara, N. (2004). Intercultural Challenges and Cultural Scaffolding: The Experience of a Nonnative English-Speaking Student Teacher in a US Practicum in Second Language Teaching. *Creating Teacher Community*.
- Jackson, C. K., & Bruegmann, E. (2009). Teaching students and teaching each other: The importance of peer learning for teachers. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 1(4), 85-108.
- Johnson, B. (2003). Teacher collaboration: Good for some, not so good for others. *Educational studies*, 29(4), 337-350.
- Johnson, C. C. (2011). The road to culturally relevant science: Exploring how teachers navigate change in pedagogy. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 48(2), 170-198.
- Johnson, L. (2006). "Making her community a better place to live": Culturally responsive urban school leadership in historical context. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 5(1), 19-36.

- Jordan, C. (1985). Translating culture: From ethnographic information to educational program. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 16(2), 105-123.
- Jussim, L., Eccles, J., & Madon, S. (1996). Social perception, social stereotypes, and teacher expectations: Accuracy and the quest for the powerful self-fulfilling prophecy. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 28, 281-388.
- Justi, R. S., & Gilbert, J. K. (2002). Science teachers' knowledge about and attitudes towards the use of models and modelling in learning science. *International Journal of science education*, 24(12), 1273-1292.
- Khalifa, M. (2012). A re-new-ed paradigm in successful urban school leadership: Principal as community leader. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(3), 424-467.
- Khalifa, M. (2013). Promoting Our Students: Examining the Role of School Leadership in the Self-Advocacy of At-Risk Students. *Journal of School Leadership*, 23(5).
- Khalifa, M. (2013). Creating spaces for urban youth: The emergence of culturally responsive (hip-hop) school leadership and pedagogy. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 8(2), 63-93.
- Khalifa, M. A., Gooden, M. A., & Davis, J. E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 1272-1311.
- Kleinfeld, J. (1975). Effective teachers of Eskimo and Indian students. *The School Review*, 83(2), 301-344.
- King, M. B. (2002). Professional development to promote schoolwide inquiry. *Teaching and teacher education*, 18(3), 243-257.
- Kohn, A. (2000). *The case against standardized testing: Raising the scores, ruining the schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kozleski, E., Sobel, D., & Taylor, S. (2003). Embracing and building culturally responsive practices. *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, 6(1), 73-87.
- Kruse, S., Louis, K. S., & Bryk, A. (1994). Building professional community in schools. *Issues in restructuring schools*, 6(3), 67-71.
- Kyndt, E., Gijbels, D., Grosemans, I., & Donche, V. (2016). Teachers' everyday professional development: Mapping informal learning activities, antecedents, and learning outcomes. *Review of educational research*, 86(4), 1111-1150.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1992). Culturally relevant teaching: The key to making multicultural education work. *Research and multicultural education: From the margins to the mainstream*, 106-121.

- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American educational research journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into practice*, 34(3), 159-165.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Fighting for our lives: Preparing teachers to teach African American students. *Journal of teacher education*, 51(3), 206-214.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms. The Jossey-Bass Education Series*. Jossey-Bass, Inc., 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational researcher*, 35(7), 3-12.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). 'Who you callin' nappy-headed?' A critical race theory look at the construction of Black women. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 12(1), 87-99.
- Lampert, M., Boerst, T. A., & Graziani, F. (2011). Organizational Resources in the Service of School-Wide Ambitious Teaching Practice. *Teachers College Record*, 113(7), 1361-1400.
- Larson, C. L., & Murtadha, K. (2002). Leadership for social justice. *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, 101(1), 134-161.
- Lawless, K. A., & Pellegrino, J. W. (2007). Professional development in integrating technology into teaching and learning: Knowns, unknowns, and ways to pursue better questions and answers. *Review of educational research*, 77(4), 575-614.
- Lee, C. D. (1995). A culturally based cognitive apprenticeship: Teaching African American high school students skills in literary interpretation. *Reading research quarterly*, 608-630.
- Lee, V. E., & Smith, J. B. (1996). Collective responsibility for learning and its effects on gains in achievement for early secondary school students. *American journal of education*, 104(2), 103-147.
- Lee, O., Hart, J. E., Cuevas, P., & Enders, C. (2004). Professional development in inquiry-based science for elementary teachers of diverse student groups. *Journal of research in science teaching*, 41(10), 1021-1043.
- Lee, C. D. (2007). *Culture, literacy, & learning: Taking bloom in the midst of the whirlwind*. Teachers College Pr.
- Leonard, L., & Leonard, P. (2003). The continuing trouble with collaboration: Teachers talk. *Current issues in education*, 6.

- Levine, T. H., & Marcus, A. S. (2010). How the structure and focus of teachers' collaborative activities facilitate and constrain teacher learning. *Teaching and teacher education*, 26(3), 389-398.
- Lezotte, L. (1993). Correlates of effective schools. In *Maryland Educators Conference, Baltimore, MD: Effective School Products, Ltd.*
- Lieberman, A., Saxl, E. R., & Miles, M. B. (2000). Teacher leadership: Ideology and practice. *The Jossey-Bass reader on educational leadership*, 1, 348-365.
- Lindsey, R. B., Robins, K. N., & Terrell, R. D. (2003). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Corwin Press.
- Little, J. W. (2012). Professional community and professional development in the learning-centered school. *Teacher learning that matters: International perspectives*, 22-46.
- Lipman, M. (1997). Education for Democracy and Freedom. *Wesleyan Graduate Review*, 1(1), 32-38.
- Lipman, P. (2004). *High stakes education: Inequality, globalization, and urban school reform*. Psychology Press.
- Lindsey, R. B., Robins, K. N., & Terrell, R. D. (2003). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Corwin Press.
- Louis, K. S., Kruse, S. D., & Bryk, A. S. (1995). Professionalism and community: What is it and why is it important in urban schools. *Professionalism and community: Perspectives on reforming urban schools*, 3-22.
- Louis, K. S. (2007). Trust and improvement in schools. *Journal of educational change*, 8(1), 1-24.
- Louis, K. S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., Anderson, S. E., Michlin, M., & Mascall, B. (2010). Learning from leadership: Investigating the links to improved student learning. *Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement/University of Minnesota and Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto*, 42, 50.
- Louie, N. L. (2016). Tensions in equity-and reform-oriented learning in teachers' collaborative conversations. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 53, 10-19.
- Love, A., & Kruger, A. C. (2005). Teacher beliefs and student achievement in urban schools serving African American students. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 99(2), 87-98.
- Macias, J. (1987). The hidden curriculum of Papago teachers: American Indian strategies for mitigating cultural discontinuity in early schooling. *Interpretive ethnography of education: At home and abroad*, 363-380.

- MacPherson, S. (2010). Teachers' collaborative conversations about culture: Negotiating decision making in intercultural teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), 271-286.
- Madhlangobe, L., & Gordon, S. P. (2012). Culturally responsive leadership in a diverse school: A case study of a high school leader. *NASSp Bulletin*, 96(3), 177-202.
- Mangin, M. M., & Stoelinga, S. R. (2009). The future of instructional teacher leader roles. In *The Educational Forum* (Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 49-62). Taylor & Francis Group.
- Mangiante, E. M. S. (2011). Teachers matter: Measures of teacher effectiveness in low-income minority schools. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 23(1), 41-63.
- Marks, H. M., & Printy, S. M. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: An integration of transformational and instructional leadership. *Educational administration quarterly*, 39(3), 370-397.
- Maxwell, L. A. (2014). US school enrollment hits majority-minority milestone. *The Education Digest*, 80(4), 27.
- Maxwell, L. A. (2014). ESL and classroom teachers team up to teach Common Core. *The Education Digest*, 79(5), 4.
- McLaughlin, M. W., & Talbert, J. E. (1993). Contexts that matter for teaching and learning: Strategic opportunities for meeting the nation's educational goals.
- Meier, D. (1992). Reinventing Teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 93(4), 594-609.
- Melnick, S. L., & Zeichner, K. M. (1995). Teacher Education for Cultural Diversity: Enhancing the Capacity of Teacher Education Institutions To Address Diversity Issues.
- Merchant, B., Garza, E., & Ramalho, E. M. (2013). Culturally-responsive leadership. *Leading schools successfully: Stories from the field*, 174-183.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education. Revised and Expanded from "Case Study Research in Education."*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St, San Francisco, CA 94104.
- Milner IV, H. R. (2011). Culturally relevant pedagogy in a diverse urban classroom. *The Urban Review*, 43(1), 66-89.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis*. Sage.

- Mohatt, G., & Erickson, F. (1981). Cultural differences in teaching styles in an Odawa school: A sociolinguistic approach. *Culture and the bilingual classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography*, 105.
- Morrison, K. A., Robbins, H. H., & Rose, D. G. (2008). Operationalizing culturally relevant pedagogy: A synthesis of classroom-based research. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 41(4), 433-452.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., & Steers, R. M. (2013). *Employee—organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. Academic press.
- Murphy, P., Hall, K., & Soler, J. (Eds.). (2008). *Pedagogy and practice: culture and identities*. SAGE.
- National Center for Education Statistics, Monitoring Quality: An Indicators Report, December 2000
- National Center for Education Statistics, Monitoring Quality: An Indicators Report, December 2006
- National Center for Education Statistics, Monitoring Quality: An Indicators Report, December 2019
- Newmann, F. (1981). Reducing student alienation in high schools: Implications of theory. *Harvard Educational Review*, 51(4), 546-564.
- Newmann, F. M., King, M. B., & Youngs, P. (2000). Professional development that addresses school capacity: Lessons from urban elementary schools. *American journal of education*, 108(4), 259-299.
- Nias, J., Southworth, G., & Yeomans, R. (1989). *Staff relationships in the primary school: A study of organizational cultures*. Mansell.
- Nicotera, A. M., Clinkscales, M. J., & Walker, F. R. (2003). *Understanding organization through culture and structure: Relational and other lessons from the African American organization*. Routledge.
- Nixon, A., Dam, M., & Packard, A. (2010). Teacher dispositions and contract non-renewal. *Planning and Changing*, 41(3/4), 210.
- Opfer, V. D., Pedder, D. G., & Lavicza, Z. (2011). The role of teachers' orientation to learning in professional development and change: A national study of teachers in England. *Teaching and teacher education*, 27(2), 443-453.

- Orton, J. D., & Weick, K. E. (1990). Loosely coupled systems: A reconceptualization. *Academy of management review*, 15(2), 203-223.
- Owens, R. G. (1970). *Organizational behavior in schools*. Prentice Hall.
- Pai, Y. (1990). Cultural pluralism, democracy, and multicultural education. *Adult education in a multicultural society*, 11-27.
- Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of educational research*, 62(3), 307-332.
- Pawan, F. (2008). Content-area teachers and scaffolded instruction for English language learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(6), 1450-1462.
- Payne, C. M. (2008). *So much reform, so little change: The persistence of failure in urban schools*. Harvard Education Press. 8 Story Street First Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138.
- Payne, R., & Clark, M. (2003). Dispositional and situational determinants of trust in two types of managers. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(1), 128-138.
- Pea, R. D. (2004). The social and technological dimensions of scaffolding and related theoretical concepts for learning, education, and human activity. *The journal of the learning sciences*, 13(3), 423-451.
- Pedder, D., & Opfer, V. D. (2011). Are we realising the full potential of teachers' professional learning in schools in England? Policy issues and recommendations from a national study. *Professional Development in Education*, 37(5), 741-758.
- Peña-López, I. (2009). Creating effective teaching and learning environments: First results from TALIS.
- Penuel, W. R., Riel, M., Joshi, A., Pearlman, L., Kim, C. M., & Frank, K. A. (2010). The alignment of the informal and formal organizational supports for reform: Implications for improving teaching in schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(1), 57-95.
- Peske, H. G., & Haycock, K. (2006). Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students Are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality: A Report and Recommendations by the Education Trust. *Education Trust*.
- Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 US 537 (1896)
- Pounder, D. G., Ogawa, R. T., & Adams, E. A. (1995). Leadership as an organization-wide phenomena: Its impact on school performance. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 31(4), 564-588.
- Powell, G. J. (1985). Self-concepts among Afro-American students in racially isolated minority

- schools: Some regional differences. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*, 24(2), 142-149.
- Powell, R. R., Zehm, S. J., & Garcia, J. (1996). *Field experience: Strategies for exploring diversity in schools*. Prentice Hall.
- Presley, J., White, B. and Gong, Y. (2005). Examining the Distribution and Impact of Teacher Quality in Illinois. Illinois Education Research Council.
- Prescott, B. T., & Bransberger, P. (2008). Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State, Income, and Race. *Ethnicity. Boulder, CO: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*.
- Price, H. E. (2012). Principal–teacher interactions: How affective relationships shape principal and teacher attitudes. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(1), 39-85.
- Printy, S. (2010). Principals' influence on instructional quality: Insights from US schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 30(2), 111-126.
- Ronfeldt, M., Farmer, S. O., McQueen, K., & Grissom, J. A. (2015). Teacher collaboration in instructional teams and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52(3), 475-514.
- Rosenholtz, S. J., & Simpson, C. (1990). Workplace conditions and the rise and fall of teachers' commitment. *Sociology of education*, 241-257.
- Ravitch, D. (2010). The death and life of the great American school system. *New York: Basic Books*, 101, 21-30.
- Reyes, P. (1990). *Teachers and Their Workplace: Commitment, Performance, and Productivity*. Sage Publications/Corwin Press, 2455 Teller Rd., Newbury Park, CA 91320.
- Rist, R. (1970). Student social class and teacher expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy in ghetto education. *Harvard educational review*, 40(3), 411-451.
- Ritchie, S. (2012). Incubating and sustaining: How teacher networks enable and support social justice education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63(2), 120-131.
- Rosenholtz, S. J. (1989). Workplace conditions that affect teacher quality and commitment: Implications for teacher induction programs. *The Elementary School Journal*, 89(4), 421-439.
- Ross, J. A. (1995). Strategies for Enhancing Teachers' Beliefs in Their Effectiveness: Research on a School Improvement Hypothesis. *Teachers College Record*, 97(2), 227-51.

- Ross, J. A., & Gray, P. (2006). School leadership and student achievement: The mediating effects of teacher beliefs. *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue canadienne de l'éducation*, 798-822.
- Rowan, B. (1990). Chapter 7: Commitment and Control: Alternative Strategies for the Organizational Design of Schools. *Review of research in education*, 16(1), 353-389.
- Rowan, B., Schilling, S. G., Ball, D. L., Miller, R., Atkins-Burnett, S., & Camburn, E. (2001). Measuring teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in surveys: An exploratory study. *Ann Arbor: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania*, 1-20.
- Sampson, D., & Garrison-Wade, D. F. (2011). Cultural vibrancy: Exploring the preferences of African American children toward culturally relevant and non-culturally relevant lessons. *The Urban Review*, 43(2), 279-309.
- Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Horn, S. P. (1997). Teacher and classroom context effects on student achievement: Implications for teacher evaluation. *Journal of personnel evaluation in education*, 11(1), 57-67.
- Sato, M., & Lensmire, T. J. (2009). Poverty and payne supporting teachers to work with children of poverty. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(5), 365-370.
- Saunders, W. M., Goldenberg, C. N., & Gallimore, R. (2009). Increasing achievement by focusing grade-level teams on improving classroom learning: A prospective, quasi-experimental study of Title I schools.
- Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Bryk, A. S., Easton, J. Q., & Luppescu, S. (2006). The Essential Supports for School Improvement. Research Report. *Consortium on Chicago School Research*.
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and social psychology review*, 2(1), 18-39.
- Seriki, V., Brown, C. (2017). A Dream Deferred: A Retrospective View of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Teachers College Record* Volume 119 Number 1, 2017, p. 1-8.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership* (Vol. 2). John Wiley & Sons.
- Sleeter, C. (2009). Developing teacher epistemological sophistication about multicultural curriculum: A case study. *Action in teacher education*, 31(1), 3-13.
- Stewart, D. L. (2013). Racially minoritized students at US four-year institutions. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 82(2), 184-197.
- Sherer, J. Z., & Spillane, J. P. (2011). Constancy and change in work practice in schools: The role of organizational routines. *Teachers College Record*, 113(3), 611-657.

- Shields, C. M. (2010). Transformative leadership: Working for equity in diverse contexts. *Educational administration quarterly*, 46(4), 558-589.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.
- Simon, R. I. (1987). Empowerment as a pedagogy of possibility. *Language Arts*, 64(4), 370-382.
- Skrla, L., Scheurich, J. J., Garcia, J., & Nolly, G. (2004). Equity audits: A practical leadership tool for developing equitable and excellent schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(1), 133-161.
- Smith, L. S. (1998). Concept analysis: cultural competence. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 5(1), 4-10.
- Smylie, M. A., & Hart, A. W. (1999). School leadership for teacher learning and change: A human and social capital development perspective. *Handbook of research on educational administration*, 2, 421-441.
- Smith, Y. E., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2006). National Insight: Toward A Clearer Understanding of Preparing High School Students for Passing State Examinations for Graduation in the State of Texas. *Online Submission*, 16(3).
- Smylie, M. A., Conley, S., & Marks, H. M. (2002). Exploring new approaches to teacher leadership for school improvement. *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, 101(1), 162-188.
- Smyth, J. (2006). 'When students have power': student engagement, student voice, and the possibilities for school reform around 'dropping out' of school. *International Journal of Leadership in education*, 9(4), 285-298.
- Southworth, G. (1993). School leadership and school development: reflections from research. *School Organization*, 13(1), 73-87.
- Sparks, S. (2000). Classroom and curriculum accommodations for Native American students. *Intervention in school and clinic*, 35(5), 259-263.
- Sparks, R. L., Ganschow, L., Artzer, M. E., Siebenhar, D., & Plageman, M. (2004). Foreign Language Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Academic Skills, Affective Characteristics, and Proficiency: Replication and Follow-up Studies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37(2), 263-278.
- Spillane, J. P. (2012). *Distributed leadership* (Vol. 4). John Wiley & Sons.
- Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed leadership. In *The educational forum*. 69, (2), 143-

- 150). Taylor & Francis Group.
- Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating school leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Educational researcher*, 30(3), 23-28.
- Spillane, J. P., & Hopkins, M. (2013). Organizing for instruction in education systems and school organizations: How the subject matters. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 45(6), 721-747.
- Spring, J. (2017). *The intersection of cultures: Multicultural education in the United States and the global economy*. Routledge.
- Strahan, D. (2003). Promoting a collaborative professional culture in three elementary schools that have beaten the odds. *The elementary school journal*, 104(2), 127-146.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage.
- Stockero, S. L., Rupnow, R. L., & Pascoe, A. E. (2017). Learning to notice important student mathematical thinking in complex classroom interactions. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 63, 384-395.
- Stone, C. A. (1993). What is missing in the metaphor of scaffolding. *Contexts for learning: Sociocultural dynamics in children's development*, 169-183.
- Strutchens, M. E., & Silver, E. A. (2000). NAEP findings regarding race/ethnicity: Students' performance, school experiences, and attitudes and beliefs. *Results from the seventh mathematics assessment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress*, 45-72.
- Sockett, H. (Ed.). (2006). *Teacher dispositions: Building a teacher education framework of moral standards*. AACTE.
- Takaki, R. (1993). Multiculturalism: Battleground or meeting ground?. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), 109-121.
- Tate, W. F. (1995). Returning to the root: A culturally relevant approach to mathematics pedagogy. *Theory into practice*, 34(3), 166-173.
- Taylor, S. V., & Sobel, D. M. (2003). Rich contexts to emphasize social justice in teacher education: Curriculum and pedagogy in professional development schools special issue: Partnering for equity. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 36(3), 249-258.
- Teel, K. M., & Obidah, J. E. (Eds.). (2008). *Building racial and cultural competence in the classroom: Strategies from urban educators*. Teachers College Press.
- Tharp, R. G., Estrada, P., Dalton, S. S., & Yamauchi, L. A. (2000). Teaching transformed. *Achieving excellence, fairness, inclusion, and harmony*.

- Theoharis, G. (2007). Social justice educational leaders and resistance: Toward a theory of social justice leadership. *Educational administration quarterly*, 43(2), 221-258.
- Theoharis, G. (2009). *The School Leaders Our Children Deserve: Seven Keys to Equity, Social Justice, and School Reform*. Teachers College Press. 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027.
- Tillman, L. C. (2005). Mentoring new teachers: Implications for leadership practice in an urban school. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 41(4), 609-629.
- Timperley, H., & Alton-Lee, A. (2008). Reframing teacher professional learning: An alternative policy approach to strengthening valued outcomes for diverse learners. *Review of research in education*, 32(1), 328-369.
- Toliver, K. (1993). The Kay Toliver mathematics program. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 62(1), 35-46.
- Trochim, W. M. (1989). Outcome pattern matching and program theory. *Evaluation and program planning*, 12(4), 355-366.
- Tytler, Russell 2004, Improving pedagogy in the middle years, Professional voice, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 17-22.
- Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). *Educating culturally responsive teachers: A coherent approach*. Suny Press.
- Villegas, A. M. (2007). Dispositions in teacher education: A look at social justice. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 58(5), 370-380.
- Vogt, L. A., Jordan, C., & Tharp, R. G. (1987). Explaining school failure, producing school success: Two cases. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 18(4), 276-286.
- Voltz, D. L., Brazil, N., & Scott, R. (2003). Professional development for culturally responsive instruction: A promising practice for addressing the disproportionate representation of students of color in special education. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 26(1), 63-73.
- Walker, V. S. (2000). Valued segregated schools for African American children in the South, 1935-1969: A review of common themes and characteristics. *Review of Educational Research*, 70(3), 253-285.
- Walker, J. (2001). Developing a shared leadership model at the unit level. *The Journal of perinatal & neonatal nursing*, 15(1), 26-39.
- Ware, F. (2006). Warm demander pedagogy: Culturally responsive teaching that supports a

- culture of achievement for African American students. *Urban Education*, 41(4), 427-456.
- Webb, J., Wilson, B., Corbett, D., & Mordecai, R. (1993). Understanding caring in context: Negotiating borders and barriers. *The Urban Review*, 25(1), 25-45.
- Webb-Johnson, G. (2006). Sankofa: reclaiming community. *Black History Bulletin*, 69(1), 31.
- Wenger, E. (2000). Communities of practice and social learning systems. *Organization*, 7(2), 225-246.
- Westheimer, J. (1998). *Among school teachers: Community, autonomy and ideology in teachers' work*. Teachers College Press.
- Wiggins, R. A., & Follo, E. J. (1999). Development of knowledge, attitudes, and commitment to teach diverse student populations.
- Willis, M. G. (1989). Learning styles of African American children: A review of the literature and interventions. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 16(1), 47-65.
- Wineburg, S. S. (1987). The self-fulfillment of the self-fulfilling prophecy. *Educational Researcher*, 16(9), 28-37.
- Wood, D. (2007). Teachers' Learning Communities: Catalyst for Change or a New Infrastructure for the Status Quo?. *Teachers College Record*, 109(3), 699-739.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). Discovering the future of the case study. Method in evaluation research. *Evaluation practice*, 15(3), 283-290.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage publications.
- Young, E. (2010). Challenges to conceptualizing and actualizing culturally relevant pedagogy: How viable is the theory in classroom practice?. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), 248-260.
- Zeichner, K. M. (2009). *Teacher education and the struggle for social justice*. Routledge.