

**Teacher Educator Identity:  
Emotional enactment and engagement in preparing teachers for diverse  
students**

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to Justin, one of my first students in my first classroom. You challenged me, you scared me, you pushed me, and you demanded from me what the world didn't give you- equity, justice and opportunity. Because of you, I will work to prepare teachers to provide all that you deserved.

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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

*“Hold up. Hold up. Dang Ms. Tobin, are you white?”*

*“Shut up man, she ain’t white. She’s cool. We respect her, don’t be saying that about her.”*

*“You fools, of course, Ms. Tobin’s white. What do you think she is?”*

*“Yeah fools, of course she’s white, she’s the teacher. What else would she be? All teachers are white.”*

Stemming from an attempt to address the tragic manifestation of the challenges of global diversity that had happened only hours before, but would be remembered for a lifetime as 9/11, a class comprised entirely of students of color attempted to understand their suddenly evidently white teacher. Simultaneously, their teacher would struggle to understand her place within that classroom and the consequential significance, or possible detriment, of her role within that space, and ultimately, the world beyond room 312.

In that moment, as a white teacher facing a room of students who were all racially, culturally, and linguistically different than me, I realized that the intensity of intercultural dysfunction was not only blatantly present within the culture of my classroom, but the broader implications had global manifestations that had recently become strikingly clear. I was given a glimpse of the way in which my students were experiencing and understanding the existence of injustice through the lens of their own immediate context and I realized that I played a role in that no matter what I said or did. I didn’t know what to say, what to do, or most importantly who I was supposed to be. In

that moment, my choices were not about pedagogical best practice, they were not about reenacting previous experience, and they were certainly not about meeting a standard or curricular guideline. My actions in that moment required so much more and I will always wonder if I provided enough. What I could be, and what I could offer in that moment was what would define me, at the very core, as a teacher. Being a teacher is not just about making smart instructional decisions. That is the easy part. Being a teacher, in the moments that are the most challenging and the most defining, involves a deep understanding of human relationships, self-understanding, and ultimately, human interconnection.

Our quest to prepare teachers for these moments is no small task.

Scholars continue to contest the role of the teacher, and the best way to prepare teachers for a classroom. On the one hand, scholars propose that ideal teacher candidates are masters of content alone, and that thorough content knowledge is the ultimate aim of teacher education and preparation (Finn, Kanstoroom, & Petrilli, 1999; Hirsch, 2010). On the other hand, there has historically been minimal attention within teacher education programs to directly teach or incorporate issues of equity “very little on teachers’ awareness of equity issues or on their training to transform society or empower pupils” (Davis & Skilton-Sylvester, 2004, p. 53). The National Council on Teacher Quality released a report emphasizing the need for teacher preparation programs to focus more heavily on assessment and data-driven instruction as the primary component of teacher education (Greenberg & Walsh, 2012). The council emphasizes comprehensive reports

that attempt to rank the nation's teacher education institutions by how well they prepare teachers to use assessment for instructional improvement. The purpose of these reports is to encourage teacher education programs "to focus more on the importance of future teachers' knowledge and skills in the increasingly critical area of assessment" (Greenberg & Walsh, 2012, p. 1). While competency in knowledge and skills is absolutely important and necessary, such factors need to be measured and assessed in appropriate and meaningful ways as "discussions about teaching quality have shifted from a discourse of defining "good" teaching through the establishment of performance standards to creating processes for evaluating teaching through performance assessments" (Sato, 2014, p. 1). Current methods and approaches to assessment and data-driven instruction can lack emphasis on issues of equity or the transformative potential of teachers to empower students and ultimately work toward a more socially just society.

The idea that education has the potential to change, not only the perceptions and understandings of students and teachers within schools, but also to more broadly institute change within the society in which schools exist is the foundation of transformative teaching and transformative education. Melanie Walker (2003) highlights this within her work about the essential role education plays "in the process of social reproduction, education is always, simultaneously, a major source of social transformation, providing learners with those critical and reflective forms of consciousness and understanding that will enable them to participate in the creation of an improved and more desirable form of social life than that which currently exists" (p. 169). At the core, transformative teacher education posits teachers as agents of, and for, social change.

The transformative tradition is not based on a metaphor of knowledge as a commodity, the “outcome” of the transformative tradition is to shape and reshape the person in ways that leave both teacher and student in a different state of being as a result of the instructional relationship. (Sato, 2014, p. 4)

While transformative theories view education, as intrinsically important, as well as instrumentally important (Robeyns, 2006) such theories can seem somewhat idealistic without thinking about the specific ways in which they can begin to exist within classrooms and ultimately throughout entire school systems. One of the most tangible ways to achieve this is through the education of teachers as “transformational education needs transformed teachers, it is important therefore that the training of teachers not only raises their status and self-esteem but is empowering for them and, through their teaching, for their students” (Aikman, Unterhalter, & Challender, 2005, p. 248).

Teaching is an art, and it is a science, and it involves the very core fundamentals of human dynamics and human interaction. It is indeed about content and knowledge acquisition, about shared expertise, and about learning. Yet, teaching is simultaneously about the very core of humanness, about human interactions, relationships, and engagement. Nel Noddings (1992) emphasizes how students who feel recognized and cared for by their teachers tend to learn and thrive through genuine respect and trust for their educators as “a caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for” (p. 15).

Teaching is relational work and relationships- between teachers and students and among teachers and teacher educators- are critically significant in attempts to realize and attain

educational equity. Teaching carries the potential to mold and shape lives, viewpoints, perspectives and understandings, while in many ways determining who will have the capacity and “capabilities to achieve the freedoms and the kind of life that they have reason to value” (Aikman et al., 2005, p. 246).

Schools have the potential to maintain or deconstruct components of a community and the cultural and ethnic groups that constitute that community. Regarding cultural conflict and issues of inequity “teachers act as a front line to sense when potential problems or conflicts may arise” (Goh, Wahl, McDonald, Brissett, & Yoon, 2007, p. 67). If schools possess the power to mediate and define what a society values and deems important, teachers become the managers of that process, and accordingly, the role of teachers, and of those who educate teachers, becomes critically significant.

If teachers begin by challenging social inequalities that inevitably place some students at a disadvantage over others, if they undergo a process of personal transformation based on their own identities and experiences, and if they engage with colleagues in a collaborative and imaginative encounter to transform schools to achieve equal and high quality education for all students, the outcome is certain to be a more positive one than is currently the case. (Nieto, 1999)

While it is certainly debatable how lasting and influential the impression of each individual teacher can actually be on specific students’ lives, it seems somewhat undeniable that there are certain moments, within a classroom and within a students’ life, that can affect the way in which one will forever know and understand the world. It is within these moments, and within the actions and reactions of a teacher, that we come to

see that the role of educators is more than just to impart knowledge. Yet the, “manifestations of the current reform movement place a great deal of pressure on teachers to engage in practices that are counter to, and/or make it difficult for them to realize, the principles and purposes they hold as educators, including those tied to the moral work of teaching” (Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2013, p. 52). The role of a teacher, and the way a teacher interacts with students is significant, it is influential, and it demands meaningful preparation as “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 & Lensmire, 2009, p. 365). The culture, characteristics, and quality of the context that teachers create within their own classrooms, potentially becomes the foundation of normalcy in the societal contexts of the future. What teachers idealize and normalize for students within classrooms today will be part of the foundation of what those students know and reinstitute tomorrow. Teacher education must recognize the enormity of such responsibility and address it as such. Ultimately, education has the potential to transform, not only the perceptions and understanding of the students and teachers within schools, but also to more broadly institute change within the society in which schools exist (Banks, 1996; Cummins, 2000; Delpit, 2006a; Walker, 2003).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to critically explore the emotional enactments and engagements of teacher educators within the interior spaces of teacher education, as a necessary component of teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners. Brad

Olson (2011) emphasizes how “teacher identity is emerging as a promising way to offer fuller, richer, context sensitive accounts of teachers and teaching” (pp. 257). Identity, as conceptualized within this work, is not stagnant, or bound. Rather, identity and the work of becoming a teacher educator, is a multitude of influences, experiences, and states of being, it is an ongoing process of multiple simultaneous movements across spaces.

Becoming a teacher educator is a journey that involves developments in understanding, in practice, in being, and in doing. This work is about better understanding the aspects of such development “as it suggests neither a point of beginning nor an end; development implies a sense of ‘coming to be’ of pushing ahead toward a more advanced state” (Loughran, 2006. p. 3). This work seeks to better understand the influences and components of that development- of ‘coming to be’ a teacher educator- and the ways in which teacher educators ‘push ahead toward a more advanced state’.

Teacher education research has shown that teachers depend on “embedded understandings *of* and *for* themselves as teachers, which derive from personal and prior experiences as well as professional and current ones... shaping how teachers interpret, evaluate, and continuously collaborate in the construction of their own early development” (Olsen, 2008, p. 24). Teachers and teacher educators “need support in developing a better understanding of themselves and their worldviews in order to better engage with children who bring different experiences, cultures, values, and ways of understanding the world into the classroom” (Sato & Lensmire, 2009, p. 370).

Teaching is complex and includes integrated levels of engagement and human interaction, “such complexity is embedded in the very nature of teaching itself and thus

when the focus is on teaching teaching, even more sophisticated understandings are essential” (Loughran & Russell, 2007, p. 2). Additionally, it is necessary to better understand and theorize a little understood but very consequential dimension of the work of teacher educators: the role of affective reflexivity on their actions and reactions and the influence of emotional labor in their relational work with teacher candidates. Ultimately, the way in which we prepare teachers to effectively embrace and engage the array of diversity and difference within their classrooms illuminates the ideals of what we hope our society will embrace as well. Thus, the significance of the education, preparation, and support we provide to teacher educators as they engage in the process of facilitating and educating intelligent, competent caretakers of the future (Delpit, 2006a).

### **Problem Identification and Rationale for the Study**

*It is unethical for me to expect students to be silent, to mask and closet their identities, to feel guilty, scared, or angry because of who they are. It is equally unjust for a teacher to promote oppression that causes marginalization, or passively stand by and do nothing, which equates to nothing more than silent approval. Teachers have the power to act; they have the power to assist, and they have the power to break the status quo in order to promote for the greater good, which is always what is best for the students. I will work to create a learning environment that is inclusive, intellectual, safe, and engaging for all students.*

-Teacher Candidate, Teacher Identity Self Study

Effectively preparing teachers to meet the needs of the highly diversified student population in today’s classrooms is an evolving critical issue within comparative and international development education as well as the larger field of education. Research shows significant evidence that U.S. public education consistently neglects the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students, and that teachers are not adequately

prepared to meet those needs (Cummins, 2000; Delpit, 2006a, 2006b; Ladson-Billings, 2009). There are gaps in the education teachers receive to prepare them to realistically meet the needs of diverse students populations and, even more so, there are gaps in the preparation teacher educators receive regarding who to provide such preparation “few studies look at teacher educators’ professional experiences and induction needs as they enter Higher Education institutions to take on academic roles” (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 125). Preparing teachers to meet the needs of the highly diversified students in today’s classrooms is especially significant in light of increasing cultural differences between teachers who are primarily white, middle-class, native-English speakers, and the rapidly increasing linguistically and culturally diversified students within their classrooms.

In response to these gaps, current trends in teacher education reforms include; explicit coursework in multiculturalism and sociocultural and sociolinguistic diversity, increased integration between practical experience and theoretical learning, emphasis on teacher identity development, and educational models emphasizing reflective practice within a professional learning community (PLC). Accordingly, the expectations of teacher educators and teacher education have shifted and many teacher educators are not adequately prepared to meet the evolving requirements of more transformative models of education. Especially in consideration of models designed to better prepare teachers for diverse student populations- teacher educators are often not appropriately and effectively prepared for the complexities of such work. Social justice oriented education requires teacher development efforts that prioritize the preparation and ongoing support of equity minded teachers.

Without clear conceptualizations and understandings, such transformations and redefinitions of teacher education are problematic for teacher educators who attempt to establish, facilitate, and coach teachers within contexts emphasizing learning in community. There is substantial research illustrating the effectiveness of PLCs (Hord, 2004; Hord & Sommers, 2008; Spillman, 2002) and reflective practice (Dewey, 1993; Schön, 1983, 1987; York-Barr, Sommers, & Ghore, 2006; Zeichner & Liston, 2013) as highly effective ways of educating adults and specifically teachers. However, there is limited research regarding the necessary understandings, knowledge, and specific practices that teacher educators should possess and employ in order to best prepare teacher candidates for diversity, especially within PLC contexts “moral agency and autonomy demands critical self-reflection, which is, again, an unfamiliar practice to some teachers in their professional lives” (Sockett & LePage, 2002, p. 164).

John Loughran (2006), a key scholar in the field of teacher education, emphasizes the need for further development and articulation of the specific work of teacher educators in their efforts to prepare the next generation of teachers:

The highly visible teaching in teacher education must make clear all of that which has hitherto been unseen and unappreciated. To do so is obviously a demanding task and helps to account for the growing momentum for the articulation and development of a pedagogy of teacher education. (p. 173)

While significant efforts are being made to adjust teacher education models to better meet the needs of diversified student learners, current teacher development for cultural and linguistic diversity is often scrutinized based on: 1) questions of lasting

influence on actual practice 2) problems of identity development and ownership and internalization of knowledge 3) notions that decontextualized, theoretically-based teacher education shows limited results in affecting change in teacher practice. However, there is research showing the benefits of the following components of teacher education models that will be examined in more detail later in this work: 1) engaging within a PLC, with support from a facilitator, when conceptually necessary 2) reflective practice and critical analysis of information 3) teacher education that integrates classroom observation and practical experience for ownership of learning (Cummins, 2006).

When looking across the body of literature within the field of teacher education, there is significant research regarding the content of teacher education for diverse student populations (Anyon, 1989; Au, 2009; Banks, 1996, 2001, 2007; Biegel, 2010; Cowdery, Ingling, Morrow, & Wilson, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Delpit, 2006a, 2006b; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2006a, 2006b, 2009; McIntosh, 1990; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992; Nieto, 1999, 2009). However the literature is less extensive in defining the ways in which teacher educators need to be prepared to facilitate and guide such learning regarding “the need for beginning teacher educators to find social, emotional, and intellectual spaces within teacher education, and to learn within supportive communities, was very evident in the literature” (William et al., 2012, p. 254).

Additionally, the research addressing the relationship and integration of such content and teachers’ identity development is becoming more developed and prominent (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard, Meijer, Verloop, 2004; Britzman, 1994; Bullough, 1997; Day, Kingston, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Gee, 2000; Hammerness,

Darling-Hammond, Bransford, Berliner, Cochran-Smith, McDonald, & Zeichner, 2005; Izadinia, 2012; McNally, Blake, Corbin, & Gray, 2008; Olson, 2008, 2011; Sugrue, 1997; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2010; Zembylas, 2003). Yet, the significant layer of this work, that is often not addressed throughout the literature is an exploration of the processes of teacher educator identity development “knowing yourself is an important precursor to being able to help others do likewise; and is an important element of learning, especially in regard of teaching” (Loughran & Russell, 2007, p. 8).

Recent developments across the literature address specific components of teacher educator identity development as a necessary considering in the preparation and development of teacher educators. Accordingly, it is necessary to examine the processes of teacher educator identity development, while simultaneously addressing the practices and structures established by teacher educators to support and foster similar development for teacher candidates, as a means to influence equity in education for students regardless of race, ethnicity, class, or gender (Hammerness et al., 2005). Identity development is a critical component in empowering teachers to better meet the needs of diverse students as “it provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of ‘how to be’, ‘how to act’, and ‘how to understand’ their work and their place in society” (Sachs, Denicolo, & Kompf, 2005, p. 15). The conceptualization of teacher educator identity drives the overarching purpose of this specific study, while a deeper exploration of individual elements of identity development push the work to be more specific and nuanced.

Emotions, as an integrated element of identity are starting to be more deeply explored and conceptualized throughout teacher education literature. While this was not

an emphasis within the initial intent of this study, the evidence throughout the data made it a significant finding and area for deeper study. Concepts related to emotions, emotional labor, and affective reflexivity will be further explored and developed throughout the findings chapters. Attention to the understandings, identity and practices of teacher educators must be a fundamental purpose of improving equity within schools. Through equity within education and the resulting equity from education “teachers truly can revolutionize the education system and change a country, one classroom at a time” (Delpit, 2006b, p. 231). If teacher educators are to seriously tackle the challenge of preparing teachers to meet the needs of all students, there is a need for more extensive research examining the knowledge and practice of teacher educators. Thus, transformative teacher education needs further research regarding the specific roles, capabilities, and interactions that influence the intersecting and interacting aspects of teacher educators’ identity development.

Finally, a fundamental concern in looking at such dilemmas and gaps within the broader literature surrounding teacher education and teacher candidate development is that it is still unknown if such efforts are actually changing teacher understandings and practices in ways that better meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. There is a need for further research illustrating the ways in which teacher preparation, and teacher educator preparation, actually influences teacher and student interactions, engagement and ultimately student success and well-being. It is important to recognize that while this work emphasizes U.S. teacher education, the outcomes have

broader implications and relevancy, as the complexities of cultural and linguistic diversity in teacher education have global manifestations.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were used to guide the direction and emphasis of this work:

1. How do teacher educators (as PLC facilitators) understand and enact their teacher educator roles and practices?
2. What are the most salient dimensions of teacher educators' (as PLC facilitators) identity development and how do those dimensions influence their teacher educator practice?
3. What are teacher educators (as PLC facilitators) doing to support and foster teacher candidates' professional identity development in preparation for student diversity?

While these questions were developed to guide the original intent behind literature review, data collection and ultimately data analysis; through such processes it became clear that what was significant in the data did not necessarily align with all three questions. Accordingly, the study shifted to focus more deeply on the first two questions within the work of this particular study. Such shifts in emphasis are to be expected in a qualitative study where designs are understood to be, in part, emergent (Creswell, 2013). The final question is still important and relevant and should be pursued more explicitly through additional research.

## **Personal Location Within the Study**

I came upon this work through multiple channels throughout my career, all of which reiterated and reinforced my belief that teacher education needs to include something more. Through the extensive existing literature and research regarding teacher education and development, there was still something missing that wasn't being adequately addressed. It hadn't been addressed for me and I felt it when I became a teacher. It continued in the way that I knew I was missing something in the support I offered practicing teachers whom I coached and mentored within schools. Even as a University instructor for teacher candidates, I knew that I wasn't adequately prepared as a teacher educator and I continually questioned whether I was effectively preparing preservice teachers for what they would be called to do, and who they would need to be, when they entered the field.

In that initial moment of my own first year of teaching, in which my own inadequacy became most clear, I began to realize that teaching held enormous potential to overcome centuries of injustice and inequity. A teacher can not only change the life of a child, but ultimately, teachers can change the course of history and transform what children accept as normal, just, fair, and right. If enough students began to see the world differently, eventually they would become the adults who make decisions, determine outcomes, and create the structures and cultures in which we exist.

Within my very first month of being a "real" teacher, my students not only questioned my racial background, they were questioning me, and who I was, and would be for them in that moment. This was especially significant in a moment in which young

minds were trying to understand the complexities and meaning behind what had just happened on September 11 and the new normalcy it would create for them depending on how they came to understand it. Even though I had just received my Master's Degree in teaching, with an emphasis on multicultural education, I was not prepared for that moment. That is what teacher education often fails to provide, and what this study hopes to better understand and explore; how do we realistically prepare teachers for those moments in which people have a chance to better understand one another and foster trust and respect? This work is not about the best practices, pedagogy, or content to help teachers meet the needs of diverse learners; there is significant work that has already been done to address that (Anyon, 1989; Au, 2009; Banks, 1996, 2001, 2007; Biegel, 2010; Cowdery et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Delpit, 2006a, 2006b; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2006a, 2006b, 2009; McIntosh, 1990; Moll, et al., 1992; Nieto, 1999, 2009) and I firmly believe that teachers should know that content and know it well. This work seeks to listen and to learn from the experiences of those trying to enact and teach such understandings. It seeks to tell the stories of the movements, and processes, and engagements that teacher educators experience as they prepare teacher candidates for the moments in a classroom that matter- the moments that can define a future.

## Theoretical Framework

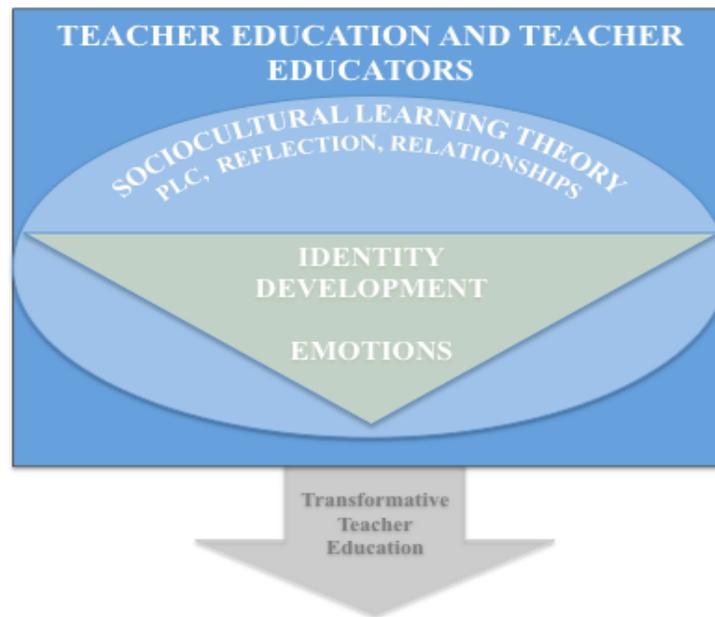


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework and Relevant Bodies of Literature.

The theoretical framework utilized within this study provides a foundational knowledge base and maps out the necessary conceptual understanding that this work is built upon. The theoretical framework applied within this study consists of three primary bodies of literature that guide the theoretical understandings guiding this research. The first body of literature serves to provide a broad overview of the literature related to *teacher education and the role of teacher educators in preparing candidates for student diversity*.

Situated within the overarching conceptualization of *sociocultural learning theory*, more specific literature related to *professional learning communities, reflective practice*, and *relationships* helps to illustrate the significance of the context in which this study occurs as well as to explore the significance of reflective practice and the way that it is interrelated to the work teacher educators are doing throughout this study.

*Sociocultural learning theory* posits learning as an “integral and inseparable aspect of social practice” (Wenger, 1999, p. 31). This theory provides a theoretical understanding for the context, interactions, and ways of being and knowing that exist within this study. Wenger (1999) conceptualized learning as coming to know how to participate in the discourse of a particular community of practice. Within this study, the primary context of teacher education occurs within PLCs, which are based on the fundamental concepts of sociocultural learning theory. The PLC context within this study is a purposeful way of allowing teacher candidates to work collaboratively and collectively to learn and grow while simultaneously developing their own sense of identity, echoing Wenger’s (1999) notion that through engaging in and contributing to the practices of these communities, we “learn and so become who we are” (p. i).

Finally, to better analyze the role of the significant participants within this study, literature addressing *teacher and teacher educator identity development and emotions* will be explored and applied. To be a truly culturally relevant pedagogue (Ladson-Billings, 1995) requires a deep understanding of one’s own beliefs, values, experiences, and self, all of which are explored throughout this work as components of identity. In the process of preparing teachers, content and pedagogy can be learned and applied, and then adjusted and reapplied if necessary. However, I believe that in order to apply the ideals of culturally relevant pedagogy, throughout the most challenging moments of actual practice, requires a deep and critical level of self-awareness, emotional investment and labor, and critical self-reflection. Thus, this work explores the elements of teacher educator identity development, especially as it manifests through emotions, as a

necessary component of teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners within classrooms.

### **Contextual Grounding**

The University of Minnesota is currently engaged in the Teacher Education Redesign Initiative (TERI). This effort is a large-scale redesign that spans across curricular areas. In collaboration with fourteen additional higher education partners, working within the Bush Foundation's Network for Excellence in Teaching (NExT), this work hopes to improve graduation rates and reduce gaps in student achievement (<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/teri/>). As stated within the University website, "*The College of Education and Human Development is engaged in a significant re-envisioning of our teacher education program to better prepare teachers for the challenges they face in a 21st century classroom*" (<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/teri/>). The work related to this redesign was driven by six guiding practices, including: shared professional language, shared coaching strategies, shared expectations of performance, shared evaluation tools, shared policies, and shared inquiry questions.

One component of this effort that is significant to the work within this study includes the redesign of foundation courses previously taken by teacher candidates before their clinical work. The course is now labelled as one of the Universities, *common content courses*, and combines the content of two previous courses, *School and Society*, and *Human Relations*, into a singular, more comprehensive and integrated course design. This newly created course includes EDHD 5000, EDHD 5010, and EDHD 5020 and is titled, *Culture, Schools and Communities*. It spans three academic terms, starting in the

summer and continuing throughout both semesters of the following school year. “This course provides teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills to address social and cultural dimensions of education. Students explore a wide range of challenges and dilemmas facing contemporary educators in the U.S. and in other global locations” (EDHD 5000 Course Syllabus, 2012). Within the structure, content, and design of this course there is integrated field experience for teacher candidates to observe, fulfill practicum hours, and even student teach in a highly integrated way within the established concepts of the course curriculum.

Within this model, teacher candidates experience 10 *Great Lessons*, which are large group seminar style lessons covering a broad array of curriculum and topics related to diversity, equity, and aspects of teacher professionalism. Each *Great Lesson* was also aligned with a corresponding small group PLC meetings (see *Table 1*). Additionally, the course design included five, *Teacher Identity Self-Study* (TISS) written, reflection assignments and five *Professional Rotation* (PR) written reflection assignments. These assignments are planned, explored, written, and reflected upon within the PLC that each candidate participates within. The PLC facilitator for each group also provides written feedback and grading for each of the written TISS and PR assignments.

<b>SESSION AND DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>TISS ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>PR ASSIGNMENT</b>
<b>Great Lesson 1</b> May 20, 2013 <b>PLC 1</b> May 20, 2013	<i>Ways of Being Human-Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Class &amp; Culture</i>	<b>TISS 1:</b> Cultural Autobiography Project	
<b>Great Lesson 2</b> Aug. 29, 2013 <b>PLC 2</b> Sep. 4, 2013	<i>Competing Norms &amp; Ideals of US Public Education</i>	<b>TISS 2:</b> Educational Autobiography	
<b>Great Lesson 3</b> Sep. 18, 2013 <b>PLC 3</b> Sept. 25, 2013	<i>Philosophies of Education</i>	<b>TISS 3:</b> Educational Philosophy	
<b>Great Lesson 4</b> Oct. 2, 2013 <b>PLC 4</b> Oct. 9, 2013	<i>Culture &amp; Learning</i>		<b>PR 1:</b> Culture, Learning and Socialization
<b>Great Lesson 5</b> Nov. 6, 2013 <b>PLC 5</b> Nov. 13, 2013	<i>Race, Culture &amp; Education</i>		<b>PR 2:</b> Student Diversity Cooperative Learning
<b>Great Lesson 6</b> Dec. 4, 2013 <b>PLC 6</b> Dec. 11, 2013	<i>Gender Diversity in Education</i>	<b>TISS 4:</b> Gender/Sexual Orientation Reflection	
<b>Great Lesson 7</b> Jan. 8, 2014 <b>PLC 7</b> Jan. 15, 2014	<i>Family &amp; Community Partnerships that Support Learning</i>		<b>PR 3:</b> Family & Community Connections
<b>Great Lesson 8</b> Jan. 22, 2014 <b>PLC 8</b> Jan. 29, 2014	<i>Culturally Relevant Pedagogy</i>		<b>PR 4:</b> Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
<b>Great Lesson 9</b> Feb. 5, 2014 <b>PLC 9</b> Feb. 12, 2014	<i>Professionalism, Teacher Leadership &amp; Adaptive Expertise</i>		<b>PR 5:</b> Navigating School Culture
<b>Great Lesson 10</b> Feb. 26, 2014 <b>PLC 10</b> March 5, 2014	<i>Working in Schools: The Roles and Functions of School Personnel</i>	<b>TISS 5:</b> Letter to a Young Teacher	

Table 1. Great Lesson and PLC Content, Dates, and Related Assignments.

Most importantly, within this learning context, the candidates experienced on-going engagement, discussion, and support and completion of course assignments within a PLC inspired learning group. Since each PLC is facilitated by a teacher educator who stays with the same group for the duration of the yearlong course allowing for significant relationships and interactions within this context. The teacher educators, (or Teaching Fellows) are current graduate students who are selected through a written and verbal interview process with a panel that includes the course instructors and Office of Teacher Education staff members from the University. The characteristics and components of the PLC context will be further explored in the following chapters but it is important to emphasize that each of these spaces provides the heart of the context within this study. The primary work of the focus participant teacher educators is to establish and facilitate a PLC throughout the duration of the yearlong course. Within these spaces, teacher candidates are given the time and space to foster and develop their own developing teacher identity consequently this study found that the teacher educators were simultaneously fostering their own teacher educator identity development. This unique and progressive context for teacher education provided an important window into highly complex and challenging work of teacher educators that will be further uncovered and analysed throughout the data and findings within the study.

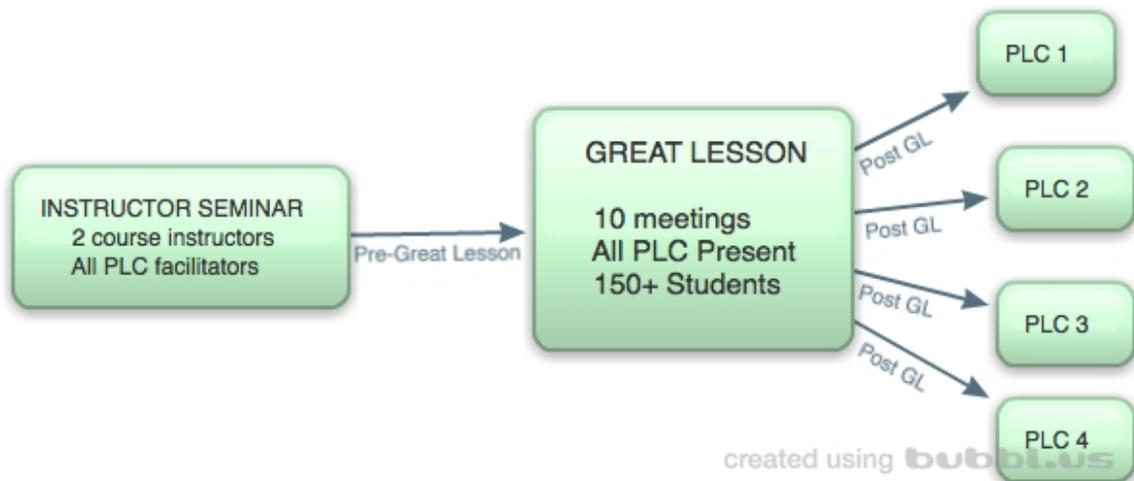


Figure 2. Contextual Grounding of the Research.

The content of this course, as shown through the overarching topics of the Great Lessons, provides the concepts that will be explored throughout the study. Specifically, this study will explore how teacher candidates and teacher educators enact and engage within and around such content regarding *culture, race, gender and sexual orientation, and class*, and how teacher educators facilitate and support candidates in their efforts to apply this to their own developing *teaching philosophy, professionalism, teacher leadership and adaptive expertise*. Topics such as these are not simplistic and require a deep sense of awareness and understanding- not only about the content itself, but also about one's own beliefs, and the way those are shaped by experiences, perceptions and values. As such, the conceptual understandings needed by teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners are not merely received by exposure. Identity development happens in ways that allow candidates to better understand, process, and apply such conceptualizations within the practice of teaching. Accordingly, teacher educators also

wrestle with the same understandings of such content as they engage with the content in order to push and facilitate the development of equity-minded teachers.

### **Key Terminology**

It is also important to clarify and define some of the key terms utilized within this study. First, it is important to distinguish between the phrase *teacher educators* and *teacher candidates*, both of which are used extensively throughout this work. In this context, *teacher educators* are those who are working at the university level, (either as professors or as graduate level teaching assistants) in the process of educating the university students who are currently teacher candidates. *Teacher candidates* are university students, either undergraduate or graduate level, who are pursuing their Minnesota Teaching license, and potentially Master's Degree in teaching. Teacher candidates come from numerous different content areas and areas of emphasis. Further, throughout this work the terms *teacher educator*, *PLC leader* and *PLC facilitator* are all used interchangeably as each of the terms was used to describe and define the role of the focus participants within this study.

While the notion of *teacher identity* will be further clarified and deconstructed later in this work, it is recognized that identity can be a highly complex conceptual term that has been defined quite differently across various scholarly perspectives. Sachs, Denicolo, and Kompf, (2005) believe that teacher identity stands at the core of the teaching profession, and provides an initial conception of the way teacher identity is viewed and applied within this work “[teacher identity] provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of ‘how to be’, ‘how to act’ and ‘how to understand’

their work and their place in society. It is not something that is fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience. (Sachs et al., 2005, p. 15).

While it is not specifically used throughout this particular writing, the theoretical principle of *adaptive expertise* provides the reason and purpose underlying this work. Within our current educational context there are calls for teacher education that provides teachers with adaptive expertise to fulfil the continually evolving demands of teachers in a changing world (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). Teachers must become lifelong learners capable of adjusting and modifying their practice, their understandings, and even their beliefs to better provide for the expectations of academic standards and equitable education present in today's schools (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). Such capabilities are termed adaptive expertise and have become the premise that underlies the primary objective of many teacher education courses and programs.

### **Summary**

This chapter has introduced the foundation and conceptualization of the work within this study. Through providing a clear rationale for the study and delineating the parameters of the problem being addressed, the introduction provides the necessary foundational understanding behind the research questions guiding this work. I have presented an overview of my own location within this work to provide the reader with a more complete understanding of the way in which this research will be conducted and the objectives and perspective of the researcher conducting the work. Finally, I have presented the overarching theoretical framework that provides a cohesive

conceptualization for the specific related literature that is more deeply explored within the Chapter 2. Chapter 3 expands on the specific components of the methodology utilized throughout this work. Chapter 4 provides an introduction to the participants in the study and presents a more thorough theoretical orientation to the concept of emotion within teacher identity conceptualizations. Chapter 5, 6 and 7 present discussion around the significant findings within this work related to the *interiors* of teacher education, the *enactments* of teacher educators, and the *engagements* within teacher education. Finally, Chapter 8 provides a summative reflection on the work and implications for future research and development. The following figure illustrates the ways in which the interconnected elements and findings within this work will be conceptualized and presented throughout the following chapters. Each of the elements within the figure will be discussed in further detail throughout the following chapters.

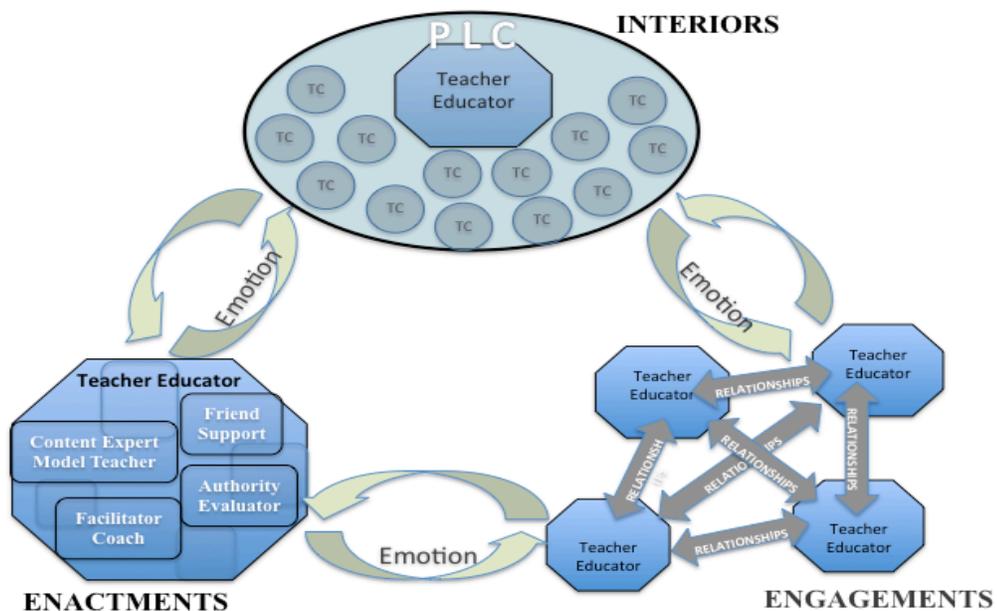


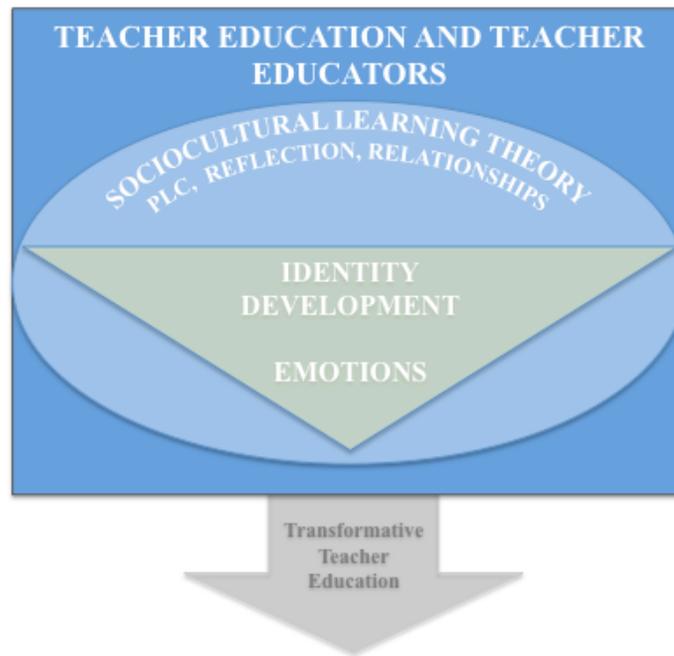
Figure 3. Components of Teacher Educator Identity Development

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

To study the multilayered influences of teacher education intended to prepare equity-minded teachers capable of meeting the needs of diverse students, this literature review explores several areas to provide orientation within the field and deeper understanding of relevant theoretical frameworks. The selected bodies of literature provide a foundational understanding of the necessary and influential concepts surrounding the work within this study and provide a framework to better understand “how this proposed research fits into what is already known” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 123).

A broad overview of teacher education literature and the roles of teacher educators in preparing candidates for student diversity will provide a foundational understanding for the work. Situated within the overarching conceptualization of sociocultural learning theory, more specific literature related to PLCs, reflective practice, and relationships helps to illustrate the significance of the context in which this study occurs as well as to explore the significance of reflective practice and the way that it is interrelated to the work teacher educators are doing throughout this study. Additionally, to better analyze the role of the significant participants within this study, literature addressing educator identity development, emphasizing the role of emotions, will be included as an integral component of the ways in which teachers internalize, process, and apply the necessary content, understandings, and beliefs required to meet the needs of the highly diversified student population within classrooms in the United States.



*Figure 4.* Theoretical Framework and Relevant Bodies of Literature.

**Teacher Education and Teacher Educators: Preparing teacher candidates for student diversity**

Recent contributions to the teacher education literature have emphasized the role of teachers as agents of equity within schools for the vastly diversified student population that constitutes modern classrooms in the United States (and elsewhere). There has been extensive literature surrounding teaching and pedagogy for diverse student populations, for educational equality, and for teaching to overcome inequity in student achievement across student populations and across schools (Anyon, 1989; Au, 2009; Banks, 1996, 2001, 2007; Biegel, 2010; Cowdery et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Delpit, 2006a; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2006a, 2006b, 2009; McIntosh, 1990; Moll et al., 1992; Nieto, 1999, 2009). Such literature addresses teacher preparation to meet the

needs of diverse student populations as framed by race, class, gender, socioeconomic status, and language.

Transformative teacher education perspectives emphasize that “mainstream schooling is what needs to transform if all students are to succeed academically within its structures” (Nieto, 1999, p. 167) and that the related teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse mainstream classrooms is not one-dimensional. Authentic attempts to educate teachers in ways that will realistically and meaningfully, theoretically and practically, prepare them to meet the needs of diverse students and their families are highly complex and multifaceted. Transformative theories of teacher development acknowledge that not only are students vastly diversified but so are teachers and the contexts in which teaching and learning occur. Such conceptualizations highlight the importance of deeper understandings of the work of teacher educators who also need opportunities for professional growth and development (Kamhi-Stein, 1999).

I am fully transparent in my stance that teacher education should be a distinct and necessary field of research and development, distinguishable from classroom teacher preparation. While directly integrated and tied to the work of classroom teacher preparation, teacher education is different and demands attention accordingly “the discipline of teacher education is teaching and learning. Thus, teacher educators are always teaching about teaching on at least two levels: what they are teaching teacher candidates (content) and how they are teaching teacher candidates” (Williams, Ritter, & Bullock, 2012, p. 255). The work of teacher educators requires unique knowledge, skills, pedagogy and capabilities to successfully prepare teacher candidates and the field needs

to respond accordingly.

John Loughran (2006) defines a specific pedagogy of teacher education that addresses teacher educators' work as teaching about teaching while simultaneously learning about teaching. The assumption that good classroom teachers are automatically capable and competent to fulfill the necessary roles and responsibilities of teacher educators can be problematic (Zeichner, 2005). While there are cases in which classroom teachers become powerful teacher educators; it is not without growth, development and new learning.

Current trends often lead academic institutions to assign graduate students to fulfill teacher education courses and roles. Often, such graduate students have educational interests in related areas but not necessarily in teacher education. This trend is problematic and undermining to the profession. Indeed, Gallagher, Griffin, Parker, Kitchen, and Figg, (2011) observed "teacher education is complex work involving curriculum, pedagogy and research, yet most teacher educators are provided with little professional development support or mentoring in most teacher education programs" (p. 880). Zeichner (2005) illustrates the ways in which graduate students are often given the work of instructing teacher education courses and supervising teacher candidates. Often these graduate students are not even students with a direct emphasis on teacher education but rather find themselves in the role of teacher education as a means to publication, research, or simply just tuition assistance for their related education graduate coursework. I agree with Zeichner (2005) that this is problematic in that it not only has the potential to lower the quality of instruction and support for teacher candidates but it also undermines

the significance and status of the field at large as a separate and necessary area for dedicated research and development.

Kay Martinez (2008) addresses these assumptions through a study exploring the specific transitions required of classroom teachers as they move into teacher educator roles. Her work helps to provide clarity regarding some of the distinctions between the work of effective and successful classroom teachers and that of teacher educators.

Martinez (2008) found that becoming a teacher educator required individuals to transition from teaching children to learning about and interacting in meaningful ways with adult learners. Becoming a teacher educator requires learning novel technologies and learning formats while simultaneously balancing new means of engagement and instruction that model and reinforce the pedagogical theories being taught. Additionally, Martinez (2008) illustrates the contextual understandings that must be addressed including learning about new institutional structures, practices and policies- especially while transitioning into a new culture established around research and hierarchy. Teacher educators must learn and develop ways of being and existing within such a new climate and culture that often demands independence while requiring capabilities that may or may not be familiar. Such requirements often lead to feelings of incompetence and consistent questioning of one's own effectiveness and capabilities. As a developing teacher educator, I felt the pressure of all of these transitions and saw examples of it within the data of the teacher educator participants within this study. Accordingly, teacher educators need specific preparation and support that "entails the learning of new social mores as a teacher educator and the creation of a professional identity" (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 126).

When looking specifically at the role of teacher educators in preparing teacher candidates, research has shown that mere attention to the content that is to be taught is not enough; rather it is necessary to consider teaching techniques as an equally important influence (Shulman, 1987; Freeman, 1989, 1993; Borg, 2003). Freeman (1989) highlights this idea in his call for “theoretical and practical understanding of how people are taught and learn to teach, and how they learn to implement that description of teaching in practice” (p. 26). Freeman (1989) elaborates on these principles by emphasizing teaching as a process of “decision-making based on knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness to teach teachers about teaching” (p. 28). While Freeman and other pedagogical experts emphasize the significance of specific content, skills, objectives, and goals within coursework, they highlight that the core – teaching itself – cannot be underestimated or underemphasized in the process of teaching and learning.

In analyzing the processes of teaching, especially teaching that occurs within the critical and influential moments of a classroom, we see that pedagogy alone is not enough to understand the actions and reactions of a teacher. Teachers make classroom decisions based on who they are, what they know, and ultimately what they believe and value. Such conceptions of teacher beliefs and values are derived from the experiences teachers have had, the ways in which they understand and process those experiences, as well as the ways in which they are pushed to rethink, problematize, and reaffirm the accepted understandings that they already possess. To do this, teacher educators experience processes of personal and professional identity development. Thus, teacher education should encourage, foster and support such processes “teacher education must work with

the beliefs that guide teacher actions, with the principles and evidence that underlie the choices teacher make” (Shulman, 1987, p. 9).

### **Sociocultural Learning Theory: Reflective engagement within a community of learners**

There is substantial research exploring the effectiveness of professional learning communities as a context and a means of educating teachers, both practicing and developing (Hord, 2004; Hord & Sommers, 2008; Wenger, 1999; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Awareness of the potential of PLCs gained prominence in part based on theoretical conceptualizations of *sociocultural learning theory* (Vygotsky, 1986) which emphasized that learning increases through collaboration, collegiality, dialogue and conversation, and ongoing reflection (Senge, 1990; Senge et al, 2000; Hord, 2004). Especially significant within this theory of learning is the emphasis on shared and collective thinking and understanding through various forms of communication. Bakhtin and Holquist (1981) posit that thought “is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggle with others’ thoughts” (p. 92).

Etiene Wenger (1999) and Wenger et al., (2002) explore the ideas encompassed within sociocultural learning theory by highlighting that shared engagement of group members provides a sense of belonging that is necessary for shared vision and purpose and through such shared vision, participants can interact in ways that will allow all members to learn and apply concepts more effectively. When participants share mutually accepted and developed ideas and vision, they can then interact in ways that are honest

and thought provoking while establishing a context in which constructive criticism can occur effectively for the benefit of the group (Wenger, et al., 2002).

### **Professional Learning Community.**

The ideals of a PLC are theoretically influenced by sociocultural learning theory in that it posits learning as an “integral and inseparable aspect of social practice” (Wenger, 1999, p. 31). Wenger (1999) conceptualized learning as coming to know how to participate in the discourse of a particular community of practice. The PLC context provides a purposeful way of allowing teacher candidates and teacher educators to work collaboratively and collectively to learn and grow while simultaneously developing their own sense of identity. This reflects Wenger’s (1999) notion that through engaging in and contributing to the practices of these communities, we “learn and so become who we are” (p. i).

These initial understandings about sociocultural learning theory as well as the developing understanding of the benefits of a PLC within educational contexts established the foundation for further understandings about the potential of PLCs for teacher education and development “if our aim is to help students become lifelong learners by cultivating a spirit of inquiry and a capacity for inquiry, then we must provide the same conditions for our teachers” (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 152).

It is important to mention that recent efforts to implement PLCs broadly across schools and districts, as a professional development strategy, have in many cases watered down the theoretical components of what constitutes a PLC. Thus, in many current contexts, the characteristics of actual PLCs in practice no longer reflect the ideals defined

throughout the research. This work looks at the theoretical definitions and specific characteristics explored within the literature to clearly illustrate the potential of a PLC as a means in which to effectively educate teacher candidates as reflective practitioners.

Shirley Hord and William Sommers (2008) provide some of the most influential and applicable research surrounding the potential of PLCs as a means to effectively educate teachers. They have masterfully balanced their work in a way that is meaningful and relevant to researchers and practitioners across the various realms of education and see a PLC as an integral piece of the necessary work of redefining the nature and culture of schools. They emphasize that “we attempt to marry research and practice to make schools ‘learningful places’ for educators and students through PLCs” (Hord & Sommers, 2008, p. 6). To provide a clear conceptualization Hord (2004) and Hord and Sommers (2008) identify significant components of a PLC: 1) shared beliefs, value, and vision 2) shared and supportive leadership 3) collective learning and its application 4) supportive conditions 5) shared personal practice. These characteristics exist within a community of learners that includes all members who share equal significance in the community and are all contributors to the shared vision and shared work of the group. Fundamentally, cohesive and unyielding attention to student learning and student success is the driving force and core characteristic of a PLC (Hord, 2004).

While there is a need for more research regarding the effectiveness of PLCs across various contexts and with various structural designs there is currently significant research exemplifying the benefits and positive outcomes of PLC involvement for teacher learning and growth as well as student success (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007;

DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008; DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Hord, 2004).

Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2007) emphasize the importance of learning to teach in purposefully constructed communities of practice as a critical means of developing a professional identity. They emphasize that through such communities, teachers and teacher educators can more deeply develop knowledge of content, pedagogy, social contexts, and students while also developing more complex understandings of vision and dispositions.

Especially significant within this overarching work is the area of research surrounding leadership for, and within, a PLC. Hord (2004) claims that supportive and shared leadership is the primary element of a successful and effective PLC. The role of the facilitator or leader is critical to the success of a PLC which within this study is fulfilled by TERI teaching fellows. An important fundamental understanding about PLC leadership is that it does not just exist within one person. Ultimately, a PLC will have leaders from within and not one solitary leader from above. Therefore, it is important to talk about leadership as a notion of something that exists within and throughout and not just about a leader (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Lambert, 1998). Thus, leaders within a PLC have a dual-faceted role to lead and also to develop and foster other leaders in order to create a culture of distributed leadership (Spillman, 2012).

Throughout their research Hord and Sommers (2008) identify and explore seven elements of leadership: 1) communication 2) collaboration 3) coaching 4) change 5) conflict 6) creativity and 7) courage. All of these characteristics contribute to effective and powerful leadership, which in turn leads to a successful PLC. The necessary

leadership requires individuals who possess “the critical skills needed to foster meaningful conversations, encourage, enhance, and sustain reflective practice, and manage conflict... just as modeling is the first way students learn from adults, the same is true for adults, the adults need models for what is expected” (Hord & Sommers, 2008, p. 96). Successful PLC leaders or facilitators offer that model through strong communication, staying open, withholding judgment through active listening, and by allowing others to learn and develop in a way that is meaningful and relevant (Hord & Sommers, 2008).

Strong leadership of, and within, a PLC context allows individuals to self-reflect in order to push their own growth, understanding, and perspectives in ways that might not have been achieved otherwise. Through such a sense of community and interaction, individuals rise and flourish “through interaction and participation within the community, identities emerge, and individuality (as difference) is embraced rather than suppressed” (Westheimer, 1998, p. 147). Ultimately, leaders create powerful PLC members “being powerful is making it possible for people to do their best, contribute to others’ learning, and take responsible risks for making learning happen (Hord & Sommers, 2008).

With effective leadership, a PLC will establish its own “culture of adult learning and collegiality” (Hord & Sommers, 2008, p 49). Such a culture incorporates the theoretical best practices of adult learning, or *andragogy*, emphasizing the need for adult learners to personally invest in their own learning through both theory and practice (Knowles, 1980). Additionally, some of the common characteristics of an effective PLC culture are shared vision and goals, distributed leadership rather than more traditional

notions of hierarchical leadership, strong relationships based on reflection, trust, and transparency (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Hord & Sommers, 2008).

### **Reflective Practice.**

PLC scholars address the critical significance of reflective practice as an integral part of effective communities of adult learners (Hord & Sommers, 2008; York-Barr et al., 2006). John Dewey (1933) was one of the initial prominent educational scholars to emphasize the significance of reflective practice within educational contexts. Dewey (1933) believed that reflective thinking involved the processes that individual learners apply to understand and make meaning of the relationships between experiences and ideas. Donald Schön (1983) is another predominant voice in the scholarly conversations regarding reflective practice and is known for his theories about reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Schön (1983) emphasized the importance of practice and experience in developing deeper understanding and calls for professional competence gained by active reflection through learning by doing. York-Barr et al. (2006) contribute substantially to the developing body of research surrounding reflective practice and its significance for teacher educators, teachers, and students “at its core, reflective practice is about tapping into things deeply human: the desire to learn, to grow, to be in community with others, to contribute, to serve, and to make sense of our time on earth (York-Barr et al., 2006).

Building on the work of Donald Schön (1983), York-Barr et al. (2006) and Hord and Sommers (2008) distinguish four types of reflection that are important aspects of the overarching ideals of reflective practice including: *reflection-on-action*, *reflection-for-*

*action*, *reflection-in-action*, and *reflecting-within*. *Reflection-on-action* involves a process of looking back on what one has done to better understand the implications of their own actions (York-Barr et al., 2006). *Reflection-for-action* involves reflecting ahead or thinking about the desired outcomes of future action while *reflection-in-action* occurs while someone is teaching, or acting, and is simultaneously processing and interpreting the situation (York-Barr et al., 2006). Finally, they propose the concept of *reflecting-within*, which is an especially critical component of teacher identity development. *Reflecting-within* involves the processes that occur “in those quiet moments in our life when we have time to think by ourselves” (Hord & Sommers, 2008, p. 103).

Within a similar and related framework, Jay and Johnson (2002) categorize three types of reflective thinking in education: 1) descriptive reflection 2) comparative reflection that includes examination of a situation from diverse perspectives to employ different conceptualizations, 3) critical reflection in which a teacher analyzes circumstances for all students, or participants, involved in the situation. Throughout these various perspectives on the differing categories of reflective practice scholars illustrate the ways in which reflective thinking is multifaceted and multifunctional. The significance can be seen throughout various educational contexts and for various members of such contexts including students, teachers, and teacher educators. Through reflecting on one’s place within the processes of teaching and learning students and teachers experience “a substantial examination of *identity*, the ways in which who we are in our work, consciously and subconsciously, drives both our thoughts and actions... serving to deepen personal inquiry and thought that leads to greater learning about

ourselves and to grounded actions as professional educators” (York-Barr et al, 2006, p. 68).

Through her teacher education research in Malawi, Shirley Miske (2003) provides a powerful example of the potential of reflective practice in influencing the developing identity of a teacher. This work illustrates the way a teacher gains a more critical sense of consciousness surrounding gender bias through his own attempts to apply teaching best practices. Through his involvement in a teacher development program, the teacher is working to apply teaching pedagogy “best practices,” however, from that process he comes to a more critical consciousness of his own gender bias evident in his reflection on the teaching process he had been employing: “there were discussions in groups; pupils were interacting among themselves; pupils were able to ask the teacher questions; gender bias was minimized” (Miske, 2003, p. 9). Through this deeper level of structured self-reflection and awareness the teacher was able to push his own thinking and awareness about gender bias through his teaching and engagement with students. Ideally, this teacher will continue to reflect and engage on his own biases as well as the ways in which gender bias and gender equity exist within his classroom. The existence and potential for lasting change are evident within this example in a way that they may not be within simple lessons covering equity in a contextually removed teacher education curriculum.

This example of a teacher’s professional identity development through reflective practice shows how “confronting one another across differences means that we must change ideas about how we learn; rather than fearing conflict we have to find ways to use it as a catalyst for new thinking and for growth (hooks, 1994, p. 113). This level of

engagement in learning and development is what is required and necessary to prepare teachers for the challenges of modern classrooms and the highly diversified student populations within them. In their work acknowledging the challenges of appropriately preparing teachers, Hammerness et al. (2005) highlight components of sociocultural learning theories to emphasize that learning to teach within purposefully constructed communities of teachers provides teacher candidates the necessary space for the development of professional identity. This notion of professional identity development includes growth in “understanding, practices, vision, tools and dispositions (Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 386).

In this light, preparing equity-minded teachers includes attention to highly complex and multifaceted influences. Providing a space for critically reflective practice within PLCs requires the establishment of contexts that provide “enough support and encouragement for participants to feel safe, as well as enough pressure and challenge to promote divergent thinking and action” (York-Barr et al., 2006, p. 256). Integrating PLC groups within teacher education contexts is a way to allow teacher candidates to process and comprehend knowledge but also to wrestle with the complexities of their own beliefs, values and philosophies. While content can be presented to teacher candidates through a variety of pedagogical means and approaches, without the space to really own and take-up such concepts, teachers will only superficially acquire such content. To return to the ideas within Wenger’s (1999) sociocultural learning theory, it becomes clear that true and deep learning occurs through and within human interaction and engagement “[learning] is

the vehicle for the evolution of practices, and the inclusion of newcomers, and the vehicle for the development and transformation of identities” (p. 13).

### **Relationships.**

Throughout socioculturally oriented teacher education literature; the notion of relationships is often seen as critical to the practices of teaching and learning “the heart and soul of teaching begins with relationships. Teaching is a relationship. Without building relationships the purpose of teaching is diminished” (Loughran, 1997, p. 58-59). Scholars refer to the significance of relationships between teachers and students and the impact it has on student learning (Kohnstamm, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Muller, 2001; Noddings, 1992; Wallace & Chhuon, 2012). Additionally, scholars talk about the significance of collegial relationships among teachers within a building and across various professional education settings (Barth, 2003; Shulman & Sato, 2006; Wenger, 1999; York-Barr et al., 2006).

John Loughran (2006) discusses the significance of relationship as a critical component of teacher education pedagogy in his conceptualization of teaching as something beyond just transmission of knowledge “it is about the relationship between teaching and learning and how together they lead to growth in knowledge and understanding through meaningful practice” (p. 2). It is clear that the notion of relationship, whether between teachers and students, among education colleagues, or even between teaching and learning is a significant and integrated part of education.

In looking more closely at the literature surrounding the significance of teacher and student relationships, Wallace and Chhuon (2012) found that, for students in schools,

the student-teacher relationship was one of the most significant relationships "in addition to important tangible types of support via pedagogy and other academic resources provided by teachers, the student-teacher relationship represents a critical variable in the development of students' positive identities and aspirations" (p. 16). These relationships were especially influential in helping to support the personal identity development of adolescents as they wrestle with questions regarding their own sense of self. Their findings emphasized the significance of positive and meaningful affective relationships between students and their teachers and the resulting ways in which such relationships contribute to a strong sense of belonging for students. Noddings (1992) agrees that relationships are significant for students and teachers, and emphasizes the significance of care within such relationships "a caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (p. 15). Additionally, Noddings (1992) reiterates that students who feel as if they are cared for in a relationship with their teacher are much more likely to work and learn and maintain a deeper sense of trust and respect for their teacher.

Such research shows that teachers who can connect and build strong relationships with their students are much more successful in meeting the specific needs of diverse students. Such relationships are a fundamental aspect of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching, (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay 2010) and teacher candidates are thus prepared accordingly. Teacher education programs are moving toward pedagogy and content addressing the significance of student relationship building. However, there is less of an emphasis on the significance of relationships and relationship building within

the requirements of teacher educator preparation. Relationship building skills for teacher educators are rarely addressed in specific and purposeful ways, yet the relationships between and among teacher educators and teacher candidates was something that continually came up in the data throughout this study.

Strong relationships provide teachers with foundations that allow them to meet the needs of students in more effective and meaningful ways. When a student and a teacher have a strong relationship, the teacher knows and is able to learn more about that student. In knowing our students we are able to push them in ways that help them achieve their maximum capabilities and achievement. Through well-developed relationships teachers better understand how their students learn, how they interact and engage, and how to best support learning and developmental needs. Additionally, strong relationships within education are built on trust and mutual respect. However, such trust and respect are not often established without significant emotional investment and vulnerability. Building and developing trust requires a certain degree of vulnerability for students, teachers, and teacher educators. Clearly emotions and emotional work is intimately and predominantly present within the vulnerabilities of establishing trusting relationships. Teachers who have their students or colleagues trust and respect are far more likely to foster safe and productive learning contexts in which students can grow and flourish; so the emotional work required to build such relationships become necessary.

**Identity Development: Who am I? Who will I become as a teacher educator? How does that influence teacher candidates?**

In order to address persistent, predictable opportunity gaps based on race, efforts in teacher development have moved toward ideals of more culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This includes preparing teachers to meet their students where they are, and integrate aspects of students and teachers intersecting identities. As Banks (1996) indicated 20 years ago, such work requires teacher to have a keen understanding of their own identities. Relationships and identities matter in teaching and learning and both must be recognized and acknowledged within and throughout teacher education. It is assumed, throughout this study, that teachers and teacher educators must consider their own identity development, and practice empowering pedagogy, before they can effectively meet the needs of their diverse students' identities. While there currently exists a developing body of literature addressing teacher identity development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Britzman, 1994; Bullough, 1997; Day et al., 2006; Gee, 2000; Hammerness et al., 2005; Izadinia, 2012; McNally et al., 2008; Olson, 2008, 2011; Sugrue, 1997; Zembylas, 2003). There is significantly less literature addressing the identity development of teacher educators and the influence of that on their work with teacher candidates. This research attempts to address that gap through an acknowledgment that teacher educator identity development is a critical component of developing approaches to better prepare teacher candidates to meet the needs of diverse students within classrooms.

Throughout teacher education literature there are calls for an emphasis on the influence of identity development “student teachers must undergo a shift in identity as they move through programs of teacher education and assume positions as teachers in today’s challenging school contexts” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 175). In a study of first year teachers, Olson (2008) found that many teachers experience “fundamental identity conflicts as they work to reconcile long-held expectations with current teaching realities, and merge their personal self-understandings with their developing professional identities” (p. 27). Teachers who practice empowering pedagogy can more effectively meet the needs of their diverse students’ identities as “identity is a resource that people use to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and to the world at large” (MacLure, 1993, p. 311). Before looking at the ways in which identity shapes how teacher candidates take up concepts and practices of teaching, it is first important to explore the various conceptualizations of identity that exist throughout the literature.

### **Conceptualizations of Identity.**

Historically, the concept of identity has been explored throughout various perspectives and disciplines. George Mead (1934) was an influential early voice in the conversation regarding initial conceptualizations about identity through his work regarding the notion of the self. Mead (1934) talked about identity as an aspect of the self that is developed and evolves through interactions and experiences with the environment. According to Mead (1934) the self develops within social settings and social engagements and includes our own beliefs and attitudes. Another historically influential voice speaking to the ideas of identity was Erik Erikson (1968). Coming from

a psychological perspective, Erikson (1968) also emphasized the importance of context and social interaction in the formation of one's identity. Erikson (1968) presented various developmental stages that a person passes through that contribute to a person's continually evolving identity. Thus, Erikson (1968) emphasized the way in which identity is not stagnant or bound but rather something that is continually changing throughout a lifetime.

Across the literature related to teacher and teacher educator identity, there are three primary conceptual frameworks that take up notions of identity somewhat differently: psychological, sociological, and post structural. Psychological conceptualizations of identity originated from the work of Mead (1934) and Erikson (1968) and focus on a sense of self as something internal and singular within individuals. Self, or identity, is not heavily influenced by context as it exists within an individual. Erikson (1968) believed that identity was developmental and linear and included various progressive stages throughout a lifetime. Within this perspective, identity is perceived as something that can change over time but only through individual self-analysis and reflection.

An additional theoretical conceptualization of identity is grounded in sociocultural perspectives (Bourdieu & Waquant; Gee, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999) that view identity as something that is individual, similar to psychological perspectives, but also as something that is socially constructed. Sociocultural perspectives of identity see context as influential and significant. Identity is seen as something that is within the individual but is also simultaneously externally influenced and shaped. Within

this theoretical conceptualization, identity involves interactions with society and culture and looks as much on social influences as on individual constructions. Within this perspective identity exists within an individual but is shaped and reshaped throughout time and contexts.

Finally, post-structural conceptualizations of identity (Britzman, 1994) include many of the aspects of sociocultural perspectives but also include an additional emphasis on agency and power. Literature that is oriented in this framework emphasizes the influence of discursive practice, communication, and especially the power relations embedded within such practices. Within this orientation, language is critical as a process and product of identity development.

Scholars from different disciplines and orientations attempt to define identity somewhat differently and choose to acknowledge various components of identity as significant when considering its influence on teaching and learning. It is commonly accepted that there is not a clear and definitive definition to encompass all that might be included within the work surrounding the identity development of teacher candidates (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004). While scholars tend to define identity somewhat differently depending upon various discipline influences, most agree that there are not definitive parameters to the notion of identity and that it is constantly evolving within and across a teacher's career "the literature on teaching and teacher education reveals a common notion that identity is dynamic, and that a teacher's identity shifts over time under the influence of a range of factors" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177).

In a study with novice teachers, Olson (2008) theorized identity as both a process and a product. This study worked to establish common themes and categories of identity that could then be used to further analyze the data. The following model of teacher identity was utilized within that study and serves to illustrate an example of some of the potential interacting components of teacher identity.

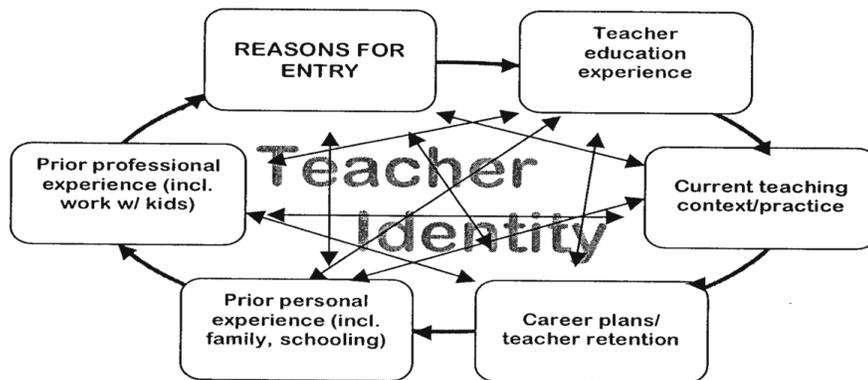


Figure 5. Teacher Identity as Dynamic, Holistic Interactions (Olson, 2008).

### Professional Identity.

Numerous scholars talk about the distinction of professional identity as an influential component of an individual's overarching identity (Antonek, McCormick, & Donato, 1997; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaar, et al., 2000; Gee, 2000; Geijsel & Meijers, 2005; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2010). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) emphasize the significance of professional identity that is manifested through individual agency enacted through teachers pursuing their own professional development and career oriented goals and ambitions. Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt (2000) view professional identity in relation to the professional knowledge teachers need including subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Similarly, Antonek et al. (1997) acknowledge the multiple factors contributing to a teacher's professional identity

including knowledge of teaching and learning, human relationships and even content knowledge or subject matter knowledge.

While it would be nearly impossible to distinguish specific factors that constitute professional identity development from personal identity development, this study considers factors that contribute to educators developing professional identity, or who they are becoming as teachers and teacher educators. This process incorporates aspects of what teachers know and believe upon coming into the profession and how they integrate that into who they are becoming within the profession as they create their own developing identity as a teacher educator. Sugrue (1997) found that this development begins with a teacher's personality which is shaped by immediate family, significant others, apprenticeship of observation, memorable teaching experiences, policy context, teaching traditions and cultural archetypes. These factors are all influential within the process of professional identity development. Sutherland et al. (2010) term this process a *teacher's voice* and sees this as a critical component in developing a professional identity: "In making the transition from student to teacher, preservice teachers create their own professional identity. Their ability to articulate this identity is examined through a new construct, a *teachers' voice*. A teacher's voice develops when preservice teachers interpret and reinterpret their experiences through the processes of reflection" (p. 455). Such reflection allows teachers to more deeply explore their own interpretations of experiences, their perceived place within society, and their interactions and engagement with others as a means of developing their professional identity (Gee, 2000; Sutherland, et al., 2010). Ultimately, teachers teach based on who they are; this can't be avoided:

“One cannot talk of students learning without talk of teachers teaching” (Lather, 1987, p. 569).

There are key concepts that are repeatedly emphasized throughout the literature as the primary components of, and influences on, a teacher’s professional identity development including: *context*, *emotion*, the *link between self and identity*, and *reflection*. A more specific exploration of each of these concepts helps to illustrate the ways in which teacher identity scholars understand the complex nature of identity.

### **Identity and Context.**

Teacher identity scholars (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Erikson, 1968; McNally et al., 2008) highlight the relevance and importance of context in understanding and exploring identity development. Not only do past contextual influences and experiences shape identity, but the context in which a teacher learns and engages also influences identity development as individuals exhibit different identities within different contexts. In her work exploring the cultural and linguistic hybridity of Somali youth Martha Bigelow (2011) addresses the way in which “hybrid” (Bhabha, 1994, in Bigelow, 2011) identities “strive to reconcile or blend cultural practices and viewpoints across different places and times” (p. 31). Additionally, the multifaceted identities that individuals enact are shaped by the forces of dominant culture across various contexts (Bigelow, 2011). Accordingly, teacher candidates are charged with developing a sense of professional identity that is reflexive across the multiple contexts in which they interact and engage and is influenced by the dominant cultures and characteristics within society.

A specific illustration of this complexity is presented through the consideration of the two dramatically different contexts in which teacher education occurs for most teacher candidates: the theoretically-oriented academic context of teacher preparation coursework, and the practically-oriented student teaching context. The way in which knowledge is generated and processed within these two different contexts is often somewhat contradictory. In academic teacher preparation contexts, knowledge is highly theoretical and decontextualized while experiences within classrooms, as student teachers, force candidates to think more specifically and practically to address the immediate needs of classroom realities (Sutherland et al., 2010). When considering the way in which teacher candidates' professional identity develops, it becomes clear that the process is likely to be different depending on which context the teacher is actively engaged within.

Not only is it important to consider the distinction of context between a teacher's academic preparation and their classroom based preparation, it is also important to consider the influence of context across academic settings. This study looks specifically at the PLC context in which teacher candidates engage as it provides a space for reflection as an essential aspect of identity development. McCarty (2005) studied the process of teachers' professional identity development within teacher study groups and found that such groups emphasize teachers' expertise while defining gaps in their understandings which ultimately "accelerated the transformation of teaching and assessment that, in retrospect seemed to be a defining moment in the transformation of the teachers professional identities (p. 52). McCarty's (2005) work emphasizes

collaborative, reflective practice that allows teachers to exchange funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) about students but also about their own developing teacher identity through attempts to improve their practice (McCarty, 2005).

The integration of the PLC context within this study is critical to the exploration of teacher candidates' professional identity development. Through participation within a professional community, "a teacher is subject to the influences of this community on identity development. It might be expected that new teachers, whose identities are only tentative, will particularly feel the impact of a community context" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 180).

### **Identity and Reflection.**

In order to better understand and develop one's own identity, it is necessary to engage in the process of reflection- "reflection is recognized as a key means by which teachers can become more in tune with their sense of self and with a deep understanding of how this self fits into a larger context which involves others; in other words, reflection is a factor in the shaping of identity" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, 182). As was discussed throughout the literature surrounding PLCs and reflective practice, teachers often learn and develop more effectively and more deeply within a community of reflective practitioners. As defined previously, reflective practice may take different forms including: *reflection-on-action*, *reflection-for-action*, *reflection-in-action*, and *reflecting-within* (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Schön, 1983; York-Barr et al., 2006). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) explore the idea that through reflecting in a future sense, which might be equivalent to the processes of *reflection-for-action*, provides a way of

perceiving one's possible future identity or one's sense of self as a future teacher.

### **Identity and Self.**

In looking more specifically at the components of a teacher's professional identity development an emphasis is placed on the relationship between the conception of self and identity across contexts. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) highlight some of the factors that contribute to this link between self and identity including "the interplay of emotion as a part of the self and identity, the narrative and discourse aspects of the self and the shaping of identity, the role of reflection in understanding the self and identity, and the connection between identity and agency" (p. 180). Within this understanding, scholars see the connection between the self and identity as interrelated and relational but somewhat distinct. Lauriala, Kukkonen, Denicolo and Kompf (2005) view identity as similar or equal to self-concept and present three dimensions of self including the *actual self*, the *ought self*, and the *ideal self*. The *actual self* is that which currently predominates within one's sense of self, whereas the *ought self* is the ultimate goal as recognized by society or others. The *ideal self* is the self that the individual hopes to become (Lauriala et al., 2005). These three conceptualizations of self help distinguish between the multiple notions of self that teachers perceive and imagine in regard to their own developing professional identity. The work of McNally et al. (2008) explores the way in which new teachers' identity develops and changes in a fluid and ongoing way as a process of self-discovery and a "growing reflexive awareness that a self-as-teacher is becoming possible" (p. 290).

Some scholars emphasize the significance of the concept of relationship in

defining identity and view identity as a way of seeing one's own relationship to various contexts and to the world (MacLure, 1993; Norton, 2000) Specifically, Norton (2000) views identity through the primacy of the concept of the relationship between one's self and the world in which one exists: "Identity encompasses how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands the possibilities for the future" (p.5).

Not only do teacher candidates need to reflect and develop their own perception of themselves as teachers, they then need to continually adapt, modify and evolve such perceptions as they learn more and experience more in their new role as a teacher. Once teacher candidates begin to engage in classrooms and interact with colleagues and students, their professional selves develop even more significantly: "These concepts or images of self strongly determine the way teachers teach, the way they develop as teachers, and their attitudes toward educational changes" (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 108).

Throughout this review of the literature surrounding teacher identity development, it has been shown that teacher education scholars emphasize the significance of professional identity development for preservice teachers. Accordingly, one of the primary goals of the PLC oriented groups examined in this study is to foster the professional identity development processes of teacher candidates throughout the components of their teacher education. Hammerness et al. (2005) emphasize that "the identities teachers develop shape their dispositions, where they place their effort, whether and how they seek out professional development opportunities, and what obligations they see as intrinsic to their role" (p. 383). Such identity development is important for

teachers in developing their own practice and beliefs.

Teachers with a strong sense of professional identity become more empowered and empowered teachers possess a sense of agency to empower students and elicit change: “What may result from a teacher’s realization of his or her identity, in performance within teaching contexts, is a sense of agency, of empowerment to move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p.183). Being a teacher, in the moments that are most challenging, can require a sophisticated and developed sense of self: “Learning inherently involves a degree of humility, meaning that one does not always know what to do. Few professionals maneuver in a more complex work environment than do teachers” (York-Barr et al. 2006). Teachers who are adaptive experts continually learn, adjust, modify and evolve to the ever-changing needs and requirements of the reality of a classroom. Accordingly, the transformative potential of identity development for preservice teachers is significant and worth further exploration: “In future research on teachers’ professional identity, more attention needs to be paid to the relationship between relevant concepts like ‘self’ and ‘identity’, the role of the context in professional identity formation, and what counts as ‘professional’ in professional identity” (Beijaard et al., 2004, p.107).

### **Identity and Emotion.**

The final aspect of identity conceptualizations addresses the concept of emotions and affective reflexivity. Before I began collecting and analyzing data, I considered emotions to be an additional influential aspect of the overarching concept of identity development. What I found through the course of this study was that emotions, emotional labor and

affective reflexivity were an incredibly significant and predominant aspect of this work that became a finding all its own; worthy of distinct attention. As such, the literature regarding emotions and emotional labor will be more deeply explored within Chapter 4.

### **Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of the relevant literature surrounding the key concepts that guide the study. Sociocultural learning theory provides the foundations for the study, especially regarding specific literature related to professional learning communities, reflective practice, and relationships. Additionally, there was an overview of the literature related to teacher education and more specifically the roles and expectations of teacher educators as they work to prepare teacher candidates for diverse classrooms. Finally, in order to better understand the findings that will be presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, an overview of relevant literature related to teacher educator identity was explored and presented. This work does not exist in isolation, it is dependent on the concepts and understandings from across the literature that guide current practices of teacher education; the hope is that it will contribute an additional perspective to the existing literature. The following chapter will outline the various components of the methodology utilized within this study.

## CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present and clarify the components of the overarching methodology utilized throughout this study. The following research questions guide the specific methods utilized within this study:

4. How do teacher educators (as PLC facilitators) understand and enact their teacher educator roles and practices?
5. What are the most salient dimensions of teacher educators' (as PLC facilitators) identity development and how do those dimensions influence their teacher educator practice?
6. What are teacher educators (as PLC facilitators) doing to support and foster teacher candidates' professional identity development in preparation for student diversity?

This chapter serves to provide the readers with an overarching conceptualization of the research methodology employed throughout this study. The chapter then presents the specific research methods as well as data collection procedures and data analysis utilized within this work. Finally, I will address the potential ethical issues and possible limitations of this study.

### **Methodology**

While the underlying intent of this work was to explore ways to better prepare equity-minded teachers to meet the needs of the diverse students within their future classrooms, the lens through which to pursue that intent shifted throughout the course of the work. The more involved I became in the work the more I realized the significance of

examining these teacher educators themselves. There is extensive literature surrounding teacher candidates and the way in which they grow and develop in becoming culturally relevant and culturally responsive educators (Anyon, 1980; Au, 2009; Banks, 1996, 2007, 2010; Biegel, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Delpit, 2006a; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2006a, 2006b, 2009; McIntosh, 1990; Moll et al., 1992; Nieto, 1999, 2002). Such literature helped me to better understand the strengths and gaps within the processes teacher candidates go through in order to better become culturally relevant educators. I found the existing scholarship provided a solid foundation when thinking about the preparation of teacher candidates for student diversity. What I found to be more complex and challenging, and much less explored throughout the literature, was the role of teacher educators within such processing and development. I found - through my observations, conversations, and even through my own experiences- that the process of developing a teacher educator identity is complex, challenging, and in many ways misunderstood and minimally supported. Such a shift is to be expected in a qualitative study where designs are understood to be, in part, emergent (Creswell, 2013).

There is often an assumed capability given to teacher educators yet the work they do requires extensive knowledge, understanding, awareness, sense of self and other aspects of professional identity that are given very little attention in the research literature or in their preparation programs. Across multiple levels of teacher preparation and teacher development, (within schools, and within higher education) experience teaching in a classroom, especially if one has taught for a long period of time or was deemed to be an effective or successful classroom teacher, warrants being an effective teacher educator

(Loughran, 2014). While I have seen that this assumption can be an accurate indicator for successful teacher educators, I would also argue that it is not always the case and there is a big difference between being an effective pk-12 classroom teacher and an effective teacher educator. The expectations, characteristics, and requirements within the role of a teacher educator include much more than just previous experience as a teacher. Murray and Male (2005) show how the journey of “becoming” a teacher educator is a difficult and complex process that involves a significant transition from being a classroom teacher.

Accordingly, the emphasis of this research shifted from its initial conceptualization to better understand the specific characteristics of the work of teacher educators and the related components of their professional identity development as they strive to teach, support, foster, and prepare teacher candidates for diverse classrooms. Specific components of this research shifted in a way that prioritized the data taken from teacher educators and looked deeply at their thinking, the challenges they faced, and their developing understandings of the work they were doing with teacher candidates. The data taken from teacher candidates became supplemental and served to present a broader and more inclusive picture of teacher educator identity. Thus, the emphasis within this work is not specifically about the ways in which teacher candidates develop their teacher identity. Rather, it looks more deeply at the ways in which teacher educators grow and develop their own sense of professional identity as a means to better prepare teacher candidates. What I found was that neither aspect, (teacher educator identity development or teacher candidate identity development) could be looked at in isolation because it was

an intimately integrated process that occurred simultaneously and contingently. Much of the processing happened between and among teacher educators and teacher candidates and the relationships and interactions that occurred were the work and the challenges that needed to be explored. This research seeks to better understand teacher educators, teacher candidates, and the spaces and movements that they collectively shared and maneuvered. This is the story of those spaces, those movements, and the processes that happened within.

I lived this. I felt it. I struggled with it and I grew within it. I learned what I didn't know, I experienced failure, and I experienced success. I grew from my own engagement and interactions with others within the work and most importantly I developed relationships with those in the work, those who were participants in the research. I will talk more deeply about the effect and implications of those relationships and the ways in which they shaped the movement and processes that I was trying to define. The relationships became the research and the emotions, actions, and reactions within those relationships became the significant story to tell, "deep personal involvement and passionate commitment to a topic can bring enmeshment, with its risks of distortion, but they can also motivate more thorough investigation and a deeper understanding" (Stiles, 1993, p. 614).

I do not pretend to be a removed or neutral observer. I was not. The only way in which I was ever removed from the work were the times in which I wrote about the moments after they had happened and in that sense I was still intimately engaged within the work through my own reflections on that which I observed, but more importantly,

lived. The very nature of this research design and the study, data, and analysis that happened within the research design force me to write about it in a narrative and personal way. To remove that would be to present what happened without a lens that gives a deeper, more honest, more authentic view: “narrative inquirers cannot bracket themselves out of the inquiry but rather need to find ways to inquire into participants’ experiences, their own experiences as well as the co-constructed experiences developed through the relational inquiry process” (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 47). Stories allow us to present the truth, within an authentic contextual reality, that allows human experience to become meaningful (Stiles, 1993). I personally walked in an arena of education that I knew needed more development, more understanding and more research. That is why I contribute this, because I needed to know more and to do more. There is a gap in the literature surrounding the roles, the professional identity development, and the challenges of being teacher educators. Consequently there is a gap in my understanding and in the work I am capable of doing as a teacher educator. This work seeks to add to that body of literature.

### **Study Design.**

This interpretive case study with an auto-ethnographic component sought to better understand the experience of teacher educators through an exploration of their own lived experiences, perceptions and honest introspections. As this was an interpretive study the work aimed to gain greater understanding and awareness of the processes or, action-in-context (Demerath, 2006), that occurred within and through teacher education. The case study did not seek definitive answers or solutions as it assumed there are no definitive

answers to be found, rather this study seeks insight, exploration and interpretation, not than hypothesis testing” (Merriam, 2001). Epistemologically, this work questions the notion of absolute truth in regard to human experience and perspective. Rather, knowledge is perceived as subjective and socially constructed by those who live and experience the world. This idea is especially present in consideration of concepts such as individual identity and social interaction in which each individual experience adds value to overall understanding and knowing: “ethnographers study the meaning of the behavior, the language, and the interaction among members of the culture-sharing group” (Creswell, 2013, p. 90).

In order to gain more reliable and trustworthy understandings this study employed multiple methods including; *observation, interview, group interviews, document analysis* and *researcher memoing*, to provide the opportunity for triangulation of sources and depth of perspective (Creswell, 2013). I realize that I can only present what I am exposed to and that my singular exposure is further limited by the fact that I am only able to observe and understand through my own lens of being and knowing. However, throughout this work I attempted to broaden the knowledge base through building a deeper understanding of teacher educators and the experiences, beliefs, and perspectives that they encountered during the time and space in which this work occurred.

I had previous experience working within the role of a PLC facilitator for this course and I was, of course, a PLC facilitator for the duration of the course while the research as conducted. The nature of my previous experiences and participant role within

the context of this study allowed me to provide an unique and informed perspective regarding the processes of teacher educator identity development within that context.

The autoethnographic component of this work aimed to tell the “personal story of the author as well as the larger cultural meaning for the individual’s story (Creswell, 2013, p. 73). I aimed to tell the story of teacher educators’ work in striving to prepare teacher candidates for the realities of diverse classrooms – in part by drawing on my own experiences and perceptions. Ultimately, I also aimed to tell my story- reflecting on my own experiences as a classroom teacher, an instructional coach, and a PLC facilitator within schools. But most significantly for this study, I aimed to tell my story as it unfolds throughout my own engagement within this work as a researcher and a practitioner as “autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 1). I tried to tell the story of a researcher, a teacher educator, and a PLC facilitator striving to engage others as they developed their own capacities and understandings to celebrate human diversity in their future classrooms, schools, and beyond.

### **Participants.**

There was one primary type of participant within this study and an additional, supplemental participant group. The first group of participants consisted of three teacher educators who were all University graduate students selected as TERI Teaching Fellows. The teacher educators, or PLC facilitators, (within this study the two terms are used interchangeably) were selected to serve a one-year appointment as teaching fellows for

the yearlong course previously described. They assisted in teaching the Great Lessons for the entire population of the course and were also responsible for facilitating a PLC for their own smaller group of ten to fifteen teacher candidates. The PLC groups were determined before the start of the course and remain constant throughout the duration of the yearlong course. The teacher educators also met together as a group, with the other non-participant PLC leaders in a meeting once a month to discuss their role as teacher educators as well as the content of the course.

The second group of participants included representatives from the teacher candidates who were University students in a Master's level teacher education program. They are all enrolled in the mandatory course described above. Two teacher candidates from each of the participant PLC facilitator groups were selected for the study. However, one teacher candidate participant ended up leaving the study due to personal circumstances that made her postpone her teacher education program. In total, there were 3 teacher educator participants and 5 teacher candidate participants. All of the participants within this study were selected via *purposeful selection* "in which particular settings, personnel, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that can't be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 88). Attempts were made to diversify the participants across race, gender, age, experience, and teaching content area.

Finally, I considered myself a participant within this study. I kept detailed written reflections and researcher memos (Maxwell, 2012) throughout all of the interactions, conversations, and observations I participated in during the course. I wrote about my

experience as a researcher, but I also explored my own experiences as a teacher educator within this context. While I considered myself a teacher educator participant within this study, I did not include teacher candidate participants from my PLC, due to the potential ethical conflict of including students who I advise, teach, and assess.

## **Methods**

This study utilized multiple data sources and triangulation as a means of increasing validity and trustworthiness throughout data collection and analysis (Maxwell 2012). In doing this, I aimed to collect rich data that accurately portrays the experiences of teacher educators in order to better understand the needs of teacher preparation for diverse classrooms. Data were analyzed throughout the data collection process to better inform and guide future data collection “data-gathering and data-analysis are interrelated and ongoing throughout most ethnographic research” (Somekh & Lewin 2005, p. 18). Integrating new learning about the participants’ experiences and perceptions helped to guide the ongoing process of data collection toward more meaningful and insightful understandings. While there were standardized interview protocols and guidelines for participant reflection to insure consistency across the data, the guidelines were modified accordingly to allow for further probing of ideas uncovered within the initial data collection. While each of the methods utilized within this study worked cohesively with the other methods to more fully address and explore the research questions, each method will be discussed individually to provide clarity regarding the methodological components of this work.

### **Observation.**

“If empiricism means knowledge gained from direct observation, what could be more direct than using one’s own embodied presence—one’s own sensory apparatus?” (Demerath, 2006). Accordingly, this qualitative study included direct observation to gain an overall contextual understanding of the participants within their teacher education contexts. Both teacher candidates and teacher educators were observed within their PLC meetings as well as during the overall course meetings. This provided a glimpse into the experiences of teacher candidates and teacher educators as they interacted within their established PLC groups. Accordingly, through observation I was able to “gain unique insights into the behaviors and activities of those observed as they participate in their activities, and to some extent be absorbed into the culture of the group” (Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 140). While it was not possible to observe every PLC meeting of every participant, the data included video recording for observation of the participants’ PLC meetings in order to ground the interview and focus group data within the actual practices that the participants were experiencing. I observed or video recorded each of the participant’s PLC groups for the duration of the course which lasted throughout much of the one year master’s degree program, from August until the following April. Because the PLCs involved such rich social interaction and engagement, and were the manifestations of sociocultural learning theory, it was important to observe and collect data on the way in which teacher candidates and teacher educators interacted and responded within those contexts. Additionally, observation of the PLC contexts provided a much richer understanding of the ways in which the PLC facilitators supported and

fostered the learning and development of teacher candidates.

While I did not video record my own PLC meetings as a means of data collection, I did reflect and record my reflections about each of my own PLC meetings as “writing enables the researcher to gain distance from an experience to reconstruct and reevaluate it from alternative points of view” (Somekh & Lewin 2005, p. 29). Within these reflections, I deeply considered my own developing role as a teacher educator and wrote memos and reflections in response to what I experienced in facilitating the PLC meetings and supporting the teacher candidates within my group.

### **Participant Reflection and Self-Study.**

Self-study has become an important and significant methodology in teacher educator research as “those who work in teacher education programs need to think consciously about their role as teacher educators and engage in the same sort of self-study and critique of their practice as they ask their students to do” (Zeichner, 2005, p. 123). While this work certainly included elements of self-study as an integral piece that the rest of the work hinged upon, the methodology of this study attempted to go further. Self-study was only one component of the story attempting to be told within this research study. It included my own ongoing reflection, research, and growth as a source of information that guides the rest of the work. But it also included an element of self-study, independently and collectively among all of the participants. In their work with teacher educators and teacher candidates across multiple international contexts, Fred Korthagen, John Loughran and Tom Russell (2007) found that the developing teacher educators all shared “the assertion that one does not learn through experience, but through reflection

on experience and through interaction with others” (p.1025). These integrated overarching methods utilized self-study as a collaborative tool of reflection in hopes to collectively understand the identity development of teacher educator within their communities of practice.

### **Interviews and Group Interviews.**

In addition to the data collected through participant observations, this work also included interview data. Teacher candidates and PLC facilitators were interviewed in an ongoing manner throughout the fall and spring semesters. There was one, formal individual, hour-long interview conducted with each participant toward the beginning of the data collection, and then there was a formal group interview with the teacher educators and one with the teacher candidates conducted later in the year. Additionally, there were ongoing, more casually oriented interviews conducted throughout the course of the study as I was in direct interaction and engagement with the participants throughout the duration of the course. While the more formal interviews included a predetermined protocol and were semi-structured, it was important to integrate a less structured approach in order to address important findings as they arose within the conversations (Maxwell, 2012). It was always hard to predict what people were experiencing or feeling regarding such complex ideas like identity development, thus it was important to be responsive and reactive to the ideas that came up within the interviews to allow for further probing and exploration.

I keep waiting for them to reflect on their teacher educator identity development! I want them to think about things like, *who am I as a teacher educator?* But they aren't talking about that, not at all really. Maybe they just aren't saying it in the way that I am expecting to hear it. Maybe I need to listen and think about how they are talking about who they are in the work. But I feel like they are only thinking about their specific practices and not aspects of their identity. Maybe I need to listen to their reflections on their practices. I feel like I am trying to push them into it in a way that isn't meaningful or relevant to them. Maybe it isn't as significant to them as I think it is, or maybe they just aren't even aware of it. Maybe it doesn't feel like a safe space to talk about these things yet. I guess I need to stop pushing them somewhere they don't want to be and just listen to where they really are.

Obviously, I didn't interview myself, but I did reflect and memo about each of the interviews immediately following the interview and I have included my own reflections within the narrative of this work. Additionally, I found that there were times when I needed to include my voice in the work in a pure way, as it existed at the time of the work, without my analysis on my own reflection. I realized that there was a life and an essence to this work that existed because I was a researcher living in the work with the participants in a way that lost some of its significance if I included a retrospective integration of my thinking.

### **Researcher Memoing.**

Throughout the previously mentioned methods of data collection, I have briefly defined the integrated and ongoing process of researcher memoing (Maxwell, 2012) or keeping a research diary (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). As a researcher and participant within this work I saw this component of the data collection as a critical perspective that was necessary to fully understanding the various perspectives being explored. I utilized researcher memoing as a way to engage and critically self reflect (Maxwell 2012).

Throughout the data collection process I utilized the various types of memoing that

Somekh and Lewin (2005) identify within a researcher diary: descriptive sequences, interpretive sequences, theoretical notes, methodological notes, and planning notes in order to collect comprehensive and rich data.

I attempted to delineate times when I was reflecting primarily as a researcher within this work and times when I was reflecting as a participant/teacher educator within the work. However, that distinction tended to become incredibly blurred and interrelated in ways that I couldn't force apart. My attempts to be a researcher of teacher education while also living and developing as a teacher educator presented "moral and epistemological dilemmas associated with living in, and repeatedly crossing back and forth between, two epistemologically different places on the landscape" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995, p. 5). I was a developing teacher educator, trying to understand my own developing teacher educator identity and my role as a researcher was a part of that. I believed that the duality of my role and position in this work would provide a much stronger and broader perspective in relation to the experiences I was trying to illustrate. In the end, I don't think the story could have been told as well had I not been walking on the exact path I was trying to describe. Acknowledging the assumption that subjectivity was inevitable, I tried to include constant and ongoing reflection to purposefully seek out my own subjectivities and explore that as an integrated part of the work (Peshkin, 1988). Thus, the reflection and memoing component of this work is not seen as merely an additional lens for viewing the data, rather it is perceived as an additional source of data that provides an integrated link between the participants the researcher, and the research study itself. I attempted to utilize my own subjectivity "as virtuous, for it is the basis of

researchers' making a distinctive contribution, one that results from the unique configuration of personal qualities joined to the data they have collected" (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18).

While I sometimes included my own self-study data as a part of the overarching findings, I also felt the need to sometimes insert the raw data from my own reflections as a pure window of insight into exactly the thinking and dilemmas that I encountered throughout my engagement within this study. It felt like there were times when it would undermine the significance of my thinking if I tried to analyze it or include it within a data analysis perspective. There was data that needed to be included as my voice and perspective without analysis. I felt it was important for the reader to hear my experience as a developing teacher educator simultaneously engaged in self-study work. My hope is that the reader can then analyze in a way that I objectively could not. I have included those pieces of data within their own text box as a way of broadening the images, perspectives and view the reader can perceive and interpret in ways that extend the work beyond my lens and perception.

### **Document Analysis.**

Another data collection method utilized throughout this study was document analysis of the *Teacher Identity Self Study* (TISS) assignments and the *Professional Rotation* (PR) assignments that the teacher candidates submitted as coursework throughout the year. There were five written assignments of each type that the teacher candidates submitted to their PLC facilitator throughout the year. The assignments required the candidates to reflect, in writing, to various teacher identity concepts and

professional rotation topics that were being addressed within the course. While the first type of reflection, TISS, tended to push the students to think critically about their own developing teacher identity, the second type of reflection, PR, lead the candidates to reflect on the more practical work they were experiencing within their student teaching placements. These assignments allowed the students to reflect on the process of their own developing personal and professional identity as it related to the course content surrounding teaching and diversity. Additionally, the assignments fostered the candidates' reflection around the ways in which their developing teacher identity was influenced by the very pragmatic and real experiences they were exposed to within their professional teaching rotations or student teaching placements. Accordingly, these assignments provided an insightful and honest source of data regarding the experiences and perceptions of the teacher candidates that was relevant to the work of this study.

Additionally, data was collected regarding the written feedback that the PLC facilitators provided in response to the candidates written reflections. This exchange of written reflections and responses between teacher candidates and teacher educators provided data regarding what teacher candidates think about, feel and believe as they work to become teachers, while simultaneously providing insight into the ways in which teacher educators react, respond, support and foster such growth. Throughout my own experience reading, assessing and providing feedback to these assignments, I found that it was a much more complex process than I would have ever imagined and I realized it took a great deal of self-reflection about my role as a teacher educator and how I perceived that role. While the teacher candidates within my PLC were saying that it was extremely

challenging to honestly reflect and realize their own thoughts on these issues, I simultaneously realized that it was much more complex than I thought to provide feedback on such reflections. We were all struggling to define what we knew, what we believed and what our role within such challenges would be. This multifaceted complexity of identity work, reflection, and response demands further investigation and exploration through data collection and analysis.

Because of my role in grading and assessing the teacher candidates' work within my own PLC, I did not include their work in any of the document analysis. I did, however, include an additional component of my own reflection and memoing regarding my experiences and thinking in providing feedback. My prior experience in this role allowed me to see that the process of effectively educating and guiding teacher candidates through written response to their reflections is an extremely challenging task and one that certainly requires greater understanding.

<b>TISS 1: CULTURAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY PROJECT</b>
Cultural autobiography is a reflective, self-analytic portrait of your past and present, and how your own cultural journey may impact your teaching.
<b>TISS 2: EDUCATIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY</b>
Locate yourself in the history of education in the United States and then adopt a critical perspective on how your educational autobiography was shaped by competing norms and ideals.
<b>TISS 3: EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY</b>
Begin viewing yourself as an emerging teacher, or to make a role shift from student to teacher. Explore how your personal educational autobiography may shape what you believe about the purposes of schooling, students, and how they learn.
<b>PR 1: CULTURE, LEARNING AND SOCIALIZATION</b>
This assignment provides you the opportunity to observe firsthand processes of cultural learning and socialization in schools.
<b>PR 2 (VIRTUAL): STUDENT DIVERSITY JIGSAW</b>
Using the principles and techniques of jigsaw cooperative learning, students will be formed into groups and each group member will be assigned a simulated child’s profile in a simulated school building in fictional Midland, USA (Cowdery, Ingling, Morrow, & Wilson, 2007).
<b>TISS 4: GENDER/SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>
Describe a specific time when you noticed your gender and/or sexual orientation influencing your schooling experience. Analytically reflect on what you have observed in your practicum experiences with regard to how schools and the education professionals in them approach gender and diversity in sexual orientation. Then discuss your own developing approach as a teacher to creating a classroom environment that is gender and sexual diversity-fair and ensures that all students can flourish.
<b>PR 3: FAMILY &amp; COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS</b>
Identify and describe specific ways in which schools, parents, and community groups are trying to or have successfully established connections in a school community you are familiar with.
<b>PR 4: CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY</b>
Ladson-Billings (2006) identifies three elements of culturally relevant pedagogy that teachers must address. Identify in your schools a (Dreamkeeper) teacher who personifies these three elements in his or her practice.
<b>PR 5: NAVIGATING SCHOOL CULTURE</b>
Analyze the social, cultural, and professional roles that various people take on within a school. Keep in mind that such roles often function to uphold or maintain certain values, beliefs, or accepted practices within the culture of the organization.
<b>TISS 5: LETTER TO A YOUNG TEACHER</b>
Write a letter to yourself—similar to the young teacher Kozol corresponded with. Demonstrate the cumulative knowledge gathered from all the Great Lessons, field experiences, and teaching practice.. Write this letter knowing you will receive it at the end of your first year of teaching to reflect on how well you have met your own hopes and commitments.

*Figure 6. Teacher Identity Self Study and Professional Rotation Guidelines.*

## **Experience of Data Collection**

Throughout the process of data collection, I learned something about the pragmatics of the specific qualitative methodologies I was trying to employ within this research. Just as the nature of the entire work is dependent upon the reality of the lived experiences and ways of being taken up by the human participants in this study, the ways in which I was able to collect meaningful and “real” data was dependent upon the specific participants within the study. I wanted to collect realistic data of the honest insight, thinking, feeling, and processing that developing teacher educators engage with as they strive to develop their own teacher educator identity. What I didn’t think about was the fact that if I wanted that data to truly be authentic, I couldn’t dictate the ways in which that data was expressed. The manifestations of the data I most wanted to capture would find their own methodological path to me that I couldn’t necessarily control.

The more I let go of the specific logistical ways in which I wanted the participants to “produce data” the more they were able to do it in a meaningful way that not only made the data more authentic, but also allowed them to engage and live within the exact process I was trying to unveil. It became evident that Jane would come to depend upon and utilize the process of post PLC written reflections as a means of processing and growing in her own teacher educator identity development. Similarly, Kim seemed to find a space in her own verbal, recorded reflections that became a context for her own teacher educator identity development. Finally, I quickly grew to learn that Taylor could not authentically reflect in isolation after PLC meetings. It was not a realistic means of engagement for her. It was not productive and just didn’t happen. What she did need was

a space with a colleague whom she had a relationship with that would allow her to engage and interact with another as a means of reflection, introspection and true development of her educator identity. Accordingly, throughout the study we modified the way in which she provided reflections. She rarely reflected in writing or in audio recording. Rather, she engaged in conversation with me in what came to be a scheduled post PLC reflection between the two of us. Initially I tried to just let her talk as a sort of verbal reflection summary, but that also didn't seem to work well for her. What Taylor needed, and incidentally what I learned I also needed, was a deep and real and authentic interaction with another developing teacher educator. That is where, and how, our reflection, our growth and our identity development happened.

As a researcher I learned that I would be engaged in the methodology in a much different way and that authentic data collection would happen differently with this participant. The result was that Taylor and I were able to uncover some of the deep and often hidden work of identity development while simultaneously working to better understand ourselves and the teacher education profession in a meaningful way. I found that the best way to capture this data was not in the moment, if I recorded or if I wrote while we talked, sometimes yelled, swore, and even cried, it immediately ruined the authenticity of the moment and of the work that was happening in that space. Instead, I would write down everything that had been said immediately following the conversation, (with her full consent and approval). Because of this methodological development, much of the data from Taylor is only partially verbatim and is presented as an overarching conversation between the two of us. The implications of this were not only relevant for

the specific data collection and finding in this study. The implications of this also reveal a certain sense of awareness and significance regarding what and how teacher educators develop and grow in their own sense of teacher educator identity development. The data collection in this study was also the work being studied in this study. Learning from the ways in which teacher educators were able to “reflect” on their teacher educator identity development, was learning about teacher educator identity.

<b>Methods</b>	<b>Teacher Educators/ PLC Facilitators</b>		<b>Teacher Candidates</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Participant Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Educator (PLC A)</li> <li>• Teacher Educator (PLC B)</li> <li>• Teacher Educator (PLC C)</li> </ul>	Myself as participant and researcher  1 Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Teacher Candidate (PLC A)</li> <li>• 2 Teacher Candidates (PLC B)</li> <li>• 2 Teacher Candidates (PLC C)</li> </ul>	August 2013
<b>Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe PLC meetings</li> <li>• Observe Great Lessons</li> <li>• Observe TE meetings</li> </ul>	Reflection/memo after my PLC meetings	Observe PLC meetings  Observe GL	Ongoing - August 2013-March 2014
<b>Interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal individual interviews</li> <li>• Ongoing informal interviews</li> </ul>	Reflection/memo after interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal individual interviews</li> <li>• Ongoing informal interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal individual interviews, Fall 2014</li> <li>• Informal interviews throughout</li> </ul>
<b>Group Interview</b>	Spring 2014	Reflection/memo after interviews	Spring 2014	Spring 2014: 1-2 group interviews
<b>Reflection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal or written reflection after every PLC meeting</li> <li>• Additional reflections as needed- before/after 8095, GLs, grading</li> </ul>	Continual and ongoing researcher memoing and critical reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal or written reflection after every PLC meeting</li> <li>• Additional reflections as needed</li> </ul>	Ongoing - August 2013-March 2014
<b>Document Analysis</b>	Assessment/feedback on TISS and PR assignments	Reflection on giving feedback	TISS and PR assignments	Aligned with assignment due dates

Table 2. Data Collection Parameters and Timeline.

## **Data Analysis**

The data within this study was analyzed throughout the data collection through the previously described researcher memoing as well as through data coding and categorization. The data coding within this study began during data collection and was continuous and ongoing throughout and beyond the data collection. Because this work attempted to better understand processes and relationships it was important to analyze the data during collection in order to better guide further data collection. Additionally, as reflection and reflective practice was central to the work in this study, the data collection included continual researcher reflection regarding the data as it was collected. Such reflections helped to guide the process of further data collection.

The data within this study was deductively coded based on the themes and ideas explored within the related literature and conceptual framework. The data was also inductively “open coded” in an ongoing manner throughout the process of data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Data was analyzed based on the themes that arose during the initial data collection with the potential to develop and modify as additional data was collected (Creswell, 2013). Throughout the process more substantive categories were continually defined and refined (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, theoretical and conceptual categories were identified both emerging inductively from the data, and from relevant literature. In order to enhance the trustworthiness of the overall study, I employed triangulation across data sources throughout (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

## **Ethical Issues**

My previous experience as a teacher and as a teacher educator has given me my own perceptions and beliefs about being a teacher, the process of becoming a teacher, and the role of teacher educators in preparing teachers. Thus, the influence of researcher subjectivity is something I was very aware of and tried to minimize throughout the process of data collection and analysis. Additionally, the fact that I was a teacher educator, within this specific time and space, among the participants within the study, forced me to be very aware of the different roles that I filled in this work as participant and researcher. I attempted to utilize my multiple roles as a means of eliciting deeper and more insightful data without allowing the multiple roles to negatively influence the data collection process, or my teaching and PLC facilitation.

An additional ethical consideration was related to the confidential nature of the content of the data collected. Personal and professional identity development involves feelings, beliefs, perceptions, values, and experiences that might be very personal and confidential to the participants. All data collected was kept on a password protected computer and any identifiers that might make participants or their comments known were removed to insure that participants identity was kept anonymous. Great care was taken to protect the anonymity of the participants while simultaneously creating a context in which they felt safe and comfortable to speak about such topics. Also, participants knew that they were able to speak openly and freely, or refrain from speaking about any topic that they felt uncomfortable sharing. Participants were informed that they did not have to answer any question that felt uncomfortable and they were always free to dismiss

themselves from an interview, group interview, or without any related documents from the study. There were a few instances in which participants shared things within formal interviews that I felt they wouldn't want shared within the research. Because of the relationships that developed between the teacher educator participants in this work, there were times when participants shared intimate personal information that I chose to eliminate from the data presented within this work.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited by the fact that the findings were only interpreted by the researcher and such interpretations might be perceived differently by others who live or view such experiences. While this work seeks to present a fair and honest interpretation of the perspectives, beliefs, and experiences of the participants; I know that it is limited by my own lens of observation and interpretation as a researcher.

This relationship with my participants has become such a weird relationship. The participants are sharing so much with me through their reflections that sometimes it feels like I know them much better or we are far closer or more intimate than we actually are. Accordingly, I start acting in ways that are too close or personal. They don't feel as close to me as I do to them. They are getting to know themselves better at the same time as I am getting to know them in the same way. It becomes an awkwardly one-sided and unidirectional relationship that is perceived so differently by the different members within it.

However, within this work it is also recognized that I am able to offer a greater understanding of the experiences of teacher candidates because I have previously been one. I can offer a more insightful perspective about being a teacher educator within this context because I am simultaneously one with the participants. Thus, "by monitoring

myself, I can create an illuminating, empowering personal statement that attunes me to where self and subject are intertwined” (Peshkin, 1988, p. 20).

### **Trustworthiness**

This study provides detailed and rich description of teacher candidates and teacher educators working together to take up the necessary concepts and understandings to meet the needs of the diverse learners within today’s classrooms. Additionally, I hope it provides an honest and thorough accounting of my own experience as a PLC leader and teacher educator. To pursue more salient validity, this research tried to “probe thoroughly into the relevant histories, experiences and perceptions of participants that may bear on the topic (or, perhaps, how the participants have reformulated the topic)” (Demerath, 2006, p. 107). Such detailed interpretations of participants’ experiences throughout this study attempted to provide understandings that readers may usefully transfer to similar settings and programs throughout teacher education and teacher development. Through thick description and careful theorizing of the findings, I hope to contribute to the existing knowledge base regarding the needs of teacher education in a vastly diversified and complex world.

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented an overview of the research methodology used within this study as well as a more detailed presentation of the specific methods employed in data collection and data analysis. The intent of this chapter is to help the reader more fully understand the processes and components of the research methodology within this study in order to better understand the findings and knowledge gained from this work.

## CHAPTER FOUR THE EMOTIONAL HUMANITY OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

*By [teacher] identity I mean an evolving nexus where all the forces that constitute my life converge in the mystery of self- my genetic makeup, the nature of the man and woman who gave me life, the culture in which I was raised, people who have sustained me and people who have done me harm, the good and ill I have done to others and to myself, the experience of love and suffering- and much, much more. In the midst of that complex field, identity is a moving intersection of the inner and outer forces that make me who I am, converging in the irreducible mystery of being human.*

-Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*, 1998

The entirety of this work is about the participants. This research is their story, the story of their lived experiences and their understandings of those experiences. While I have attempted to tell their stories in a way that reflects their truths and their reality, it is also up to the reader to try to understand them in a way that makes their shared experiences meaningful. This cannot be done without *getting to know* the participants through exposure to the pieces of themselves they choose to share with me and with this body of research. This chapter seeks to provide that space; to present the participants and their relationships with me, their storyteller. It is my hope that this might allow the reader to develop a sort of unilateral relationship with each of the participants to better understand where they were coming from, how they were attempting to relate and engage with teacher candidates, and who they were becoming as they share their processes of developing a teacher educator identity.

### **The Call to Teach Teachers: Becoming a teacher educator**

The path toward becoming a teacher educator is not always as direct and intentional as one might assume. Ronnie Davey's (2013) research posits two primary

pathways to teacher education that most teacher educators tend to follow: the academic pathway, and the practitioner pathway. While these pathways tend to address the background experiences and foundational pathways leading one toward the field of teacher education, there are often more indirect and unintentional purposes involved in the actual fulfillment of such roles once individuals are in academia. Multiple teacher education scholars have acknowledged perceptions of teacher education as a low status area of research and practice in university settings (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008; Loughran, 2011; Zeichner, 2005).

Such scholars discuss the ways in which teacher education is often a secondary area of study undermined by other, similarly related education fields. Faculty within colleges of education often see their role in teacher education as secondary to other areas of emphasis and many graduate students share similar prioritizations about teacher educator roles and positions. Accordingly, there is limited formalized preparation for the work of teacher educators in academia; “indeed, the idea of deliberate and formal preparation is nascent, and the work of teaching teachers suffers, perhaps, from some of the same misconceptions that characterize teaching—those who can, do . . . those who cannot, teach (teachers)” (Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin, 2014, p. 284).

As was reflected in the experiences of the teacher educators within this study, much of the learning and development of teacher educators happens on the job while in practice. Needless to say, this lack of preparation for such highly complex work is problematic and self-defeating: “Knowledge-in-practice then became a somewhat haphazard and dysfunctional process of ‘learning through doing,’ ‘sinking or swimming,’

‘trial by fire,’ all terms which [teacher educator] interviewees used to describe their learning on the job” (Goodwin et al. 2014, p. 285). Not only are teacher educators often expected to learn-in-practice, but often, teacher education roles are filled by graduate students with limited teacher education experience who perceive their work in teacher education as secondary to the work they came to pursue in graduate school. Additionally, those graduate students who do acknowledge teacher education as their primary area of study often feel isolated and may struggle to find mentorship or leadership within departments that don’t perceive teacher education as a primary priority.

I can’t help feeling angry, or frustrated, or maybe just insecure about the fact that each of my participants sees teacher education as secondary to the other, more predominant emphasis of their work. They all see teacher education as secondary to their real priorities, for some it was initially just something they took on to help pay their tuition. They are all such deeply committed and passionate individuals that bring such a wealth of knowledge and depth to the field of teacher education, and yet, none of them had teacher education as their primary purpose in coming to graduate school. I feel alone and insecure about the fact that they are doing exactly the same thing as me and for them it is secondary to other priorities- for me it is the priority.

Loughran (2014) elaborates on the multiple levels of influence that shape this dilemma:

Not surprisingly, if “escape from teacher education” is the model for success as an academic that beginning teacher educators are confronted by, then the vision for professional development and the perceived nature of the demands of the university system stand in stark contrast to their individual hopes and expectations for making a difference for their students of teaching ...it is not difficult to see why beginning teacher educators might struggle to understand how to develop, or where to seek mentoring in, a field that institutionally may lack leadership in the scholarship of teacher education. (p. 273)

While the context within this study was purposefully designed in specific ways to address concerns of limited preparation and mentoring (through the establishment of an aligned teacher educator course that all PLC leaders participated in together), there were still ways in which traces of this overarching perception still permeated the work of the teacher educators. The teacher educators in this study were all novice and early career teacher educators and most felt that teacher education was a secondary priority in their overarching graduate work. Additionally, throughout the course of their work as teacher educators, they would all emphasize the fact that they needed more preparation, training, and understanding about the complexities of their roles and responsibilities as teacher educators.

It is important to understand that across the field of teacher education there are multiple roles and positions being fulfilled by individuals who do not necessarily perceive themselves as primarily teacher educators. While there are certainly examples of extraordinary teacher educators who also prioritize additional areas of education practice and research, there are also teacher educators who find themselves in the midst of the work without the preparation or understandings they need to be successful in their work with teacher educators. Understanding the diverse and sometimes unintentional paths taken toward the field of teacher education allows for a deeper and more complete understanding of the ways in which teacher educators begin to develop their identity as such.

## Exploring the Heart: The human selves of teacher educators

*The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts- meaning heart in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self.*

-Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*, 1998

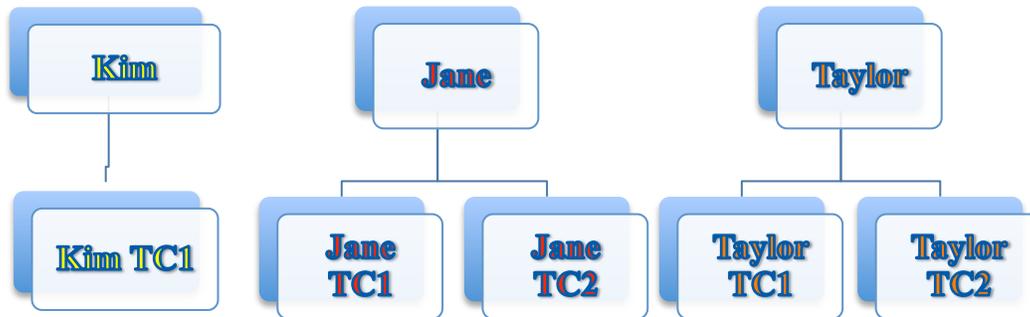


Figure 7. Teacher Educator and Teacher Candidate Participants.

### KIM

Kim is a PhD candidate in the Curriculum and Instruction department and started her path toward teacher education in her early career experiences as a classroom teacher. She then fulfilled multiple teacher education roles throughout her graduate career as an instructor, a supervisor and ultimately, a PLC leader. Because she received her initial teaching license at the program in which she was now a teacher educator, she had an insider perspective of the teacher candidate's experiences within this context.

Kim exudes a confidence that left an impression on me immediately. She was one of those women, of which there seem to be a lot in academia, who could make you question how in the world you got into this position because there is no way that you know as much or have done as much as she has. She seemed to be wise, and worldly, and experienced. It felt as if she had been here much longer than the rest of us, or maybe

she had done much more of this kind of work than the rest of us. I felt as if she knew the “right” answers to things and the “right” way to respond, react, and approach things while I often felt like maybe I was guessing or hoping my response would be close to the right one. In hindsight, and in actuality, I wonder if there is, or ever was, a predetermined and defined right way to handle the vast majority of the work we did. I doubt that there ever were right answers and there certainly wasn’t a place in which things had been mapped out or defined. But in the first moment I met Kim, and throughout our work together, I always felt as if Kim had the answers and knew what was best. My teacher education imagination believed Kim had access to the “teacher education manual” and especially to the “teacher education to prepare students for diversity manual” and she knew it by heart. Meanwhile, I was always wishing I could just get my hands on the imaginary, magical book for a bit more certainty about the actions, reactions, and responses I applied in my ongoing interactions mentoring, coaching, and teaching teacher candidates.

Kim did have experience. It’s funny how we conceptualize [experience] as if it is a completely quantifiable and measureable aspect of one’s overall capabilities. Don’t we all have experience? We all have extensive experience and that is what we bring to our daily interactions, understandings and perspectives, yet we refer to some people as having more valuable or appropriate or necessary experience. Kim did seem to have experience, in things that helped her to better know and understand the work we were doing. She had experience as a teacher educator- she had been a supervisor for multiple teacher candidates and she taught numerous courses at the undergraduate and graduate level in

teacher preparation. She has also led and conducted specific groups designed to prepare teacher candidates for specific aspects of diversity.

Kim also had experience living within an example of the “diversity” that we were striving to prepare teachers to understand and support in their work with students. Kim is a white, middle-class, English-speaking female. Kim is also bisexual. She is open about the fact that she has spent honest and reflective time and consideration wrestling with components of her own identity. She has experienced being a student when teachers weren’t prepared to meet her needs. She has felt moments when she was singled out as someone who is different than the predetermined norm that others have established for the contexts in which she exists.

While much of the time Kim exudes a confidence and demeanor that leads one to believe she has a strong sense of self and understands exactly who she is in the contexts she encounters, Kim also has moments when she openly allows those close to her to see a glimpse of her own identity struggles and challenges. She has felt judged, categorized, questioned and left out and misunderstood. In one of our conversations about preparing teachers for diverse students, Kim shared with us how she continually struggles to fill out the boxes on the forms we are all called to fill out for various tasks because there is never a box for her- there is never a bisexual box.

While this is just a minor anecdote of the ways in which Kim *experiences* diversity, it shows that Kim has experiences and a lived understanding and awareness of things that I don’t. Kim has lived and learned in a way I have not and that experience does prepare her to better understand. Because Kim is openly bisexual, and because she

lets students know that, she becomes a support in ways that others cannot. Teacher candidates seek her out as someone who can provide insight and resources. I wonder if this gives Kim a deeper purpose to her work and a more intimate and intentional drive to do the work. While my actions might represent intentions of social justice or equity, Kim's actions might be more about addressing a truth and a reality that I may never fully understand. Kim isn't simply trying to improve educational opportunities for LGBTQ youth, Kim is trying to improve on what was inadequate and possibly even harmful for her in her own lived experience.

When I reflect on Kim's engagement with others I realize that she illustrated the characteristics of a struggle that I too have felt and experienced. It seems as if Kim strives to live her life- through her actions, her words, her impressions and her analyses- in a way that is non-judgmental. Her work for equity leads her to act and react in ways that are open minded, accepting, and driven toward understanding rather than predetermined judgment. I was continually inspired and educated by watching the ways in which Kim enacted this principle in her interactions and engagement with others. Yet there were moments when I saw this falter. There were moments when Kim's reactions were guided by preconceived judgment and I don't think she would have denied that. When she felt that her judgments were warranted by what best represented equity and human rights, Kim owned that sense of judgment. I have wrestled with this dilemma in similar instances within my own experiences, where I judge certain people and certain beliefs because I feel that they don't represent equity, or justice, or human rights. Yet somewhere in those moments I am always pushed by the notion that I am judging others

and their beliefs. I am determining what I feel is right and wrong and best and, in that, I find a bit of a fundamental contradiction. I see it in Kim and wonder if she reconciles it in ways that make sense to her more than I am able to do. The complexity of this perceived contradiction is significant within teaching and teacher education where personal beliefs can so easily manifest in our interactions and engagements with those we teach.

### **JANE**

It took a long time for me to get to know Jane and much of her story is still a mystery to me. She is quiet and seems to be very introverted. In the presence of her silence and soft-spoken nature I found that I became more extroverted and vocal and because of that I realized that I didn't get to know her as quickly or easily as I did the others. Jane is very quiet and contemplative and I really didn't start to build a relationship with her until I had known her for a long time and had given her the necessary space to engage in ways that I felt she was comfortable. While I know that we would have built some degree of relationship with one another, it certainly wouldn't have been to the degree that it was without our shared and common life experience.

Jane is also a white woman, and a PhD candidate in Curriculum and Instruction. She was an elementary and middle school teacher before graduate school where she simultaneously taught as an adjunct professor while also teaching 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She enjoyed that balance as she was able to place teacher candidates as student teachers at her middle school and work with candidates simultaneously across both contexts. She left her middle school teaching position because of a discrimination issue based on her disability and

became a PhD student. Originally, she came into the PLC position out of financial necessity but was glad to be back in teacher education as she had enjoyed her previous teacher education positions and wanted to continue to think about teacher education as it related to her special education focus.

When I first met Jane she was pregnant, something that was not that common among graduate school colleagues. I was also pregnant at the time and because we shared this somewhat personal and intimate characteristic, it seemed to foster our relationship. I started to talk to her about her pregnancy and her other children much more than others did and we developed a connection based on this. It was a somewhat challenging connection however, because the very notion of speaking about pregnancy and children was a somewhat awkward and minimally addressed topic among the competitive interactions of graduate students. There always seemed to be a sort of undertone of undermining ones professionalism when talking about the aspects of motherhood and so Jane and I didn't initially connect as much around this topic as we might have otherwise. However, as time went on, the experiences and moments of pregnancy, and motherhood would provide the bridge that allowed Jane and me to develop much more than merely a collegial relationship.

Jane's passionate commitment to special education and disabilities in education stemmed from her own life experiences, as Jane had a disability of her own. Jane had personally experienced inequity in education through her own moments as a student and later as a teacher, and in subtle and ongoing ways as a teacher educator. Just as Kim wasn't trying to merely "fix" something about education, Jane was trying to redefine and

conceptualize what education means and how it manifests for students whose reality was similar to her own.

Throughout the duration of the study I would learn that Jane was deeply committed to her Catholic faith but struggled to find spaces in which she could talk about that within her roles and identities as a teacher educator and PhD student. Toward the end of our time together she told me that she kind of avoided talking about her faith or religion as a graduate student but that troubled her as it was an important part of her identity that she didn't necessarily know how to integrate into the academic contexts of her life.

While I am somewhat uncertain about Jane's personal philosophical preferences related to education I know that she was highly influenced by an instructor who taught her in her graduate coursework. This instructor was strongly oriented toward critical theory and was known by many as a true master of critical pedagogy within his classes and through his mentoring. Jane often referenced his style and approach and would try to replicate it within her own interactions and engagements with the teacher candidates in her PLC. Accordingly, her PLC context was heavily influenced by critical pedagogy. While there were times when she found this overarching theoretical framework to be supportive and encouraging for the context and culture she hoped to achieve; she would also find ongoing difficulties throughout her attempts to create a critically oriented PLC with candidates who had vastly diverse philosophies of teaching and learning.

## TAYLOR

Finally, Taylor was a white woman who openly admitted that she never imagined herself in teacher education. She received a Fulbright after college that led her toward a teaching position abroad and then she pursued a teaching license in the US upon her return. She originally took the PLC position as a necessary assistantship. Taylor was still working as an ESL teacher in a p-12 classroom when she started her position as a teacher educator. She was just entering the PhD program in Curriculum and Instruction and immediately started her position as a PLC leader while still finishing out the school year as a teacher in an elementary school.

It is hard to describe Taylor in a way that remains neutral as a researcher. I cannot go back to the point where she was just a research participant who I viewed objectively and so I won't pretend to do that. I have found through this work that relationships are what define and drive the research and the data cannot be viewed in a way that removes that lens and so I won't attempt to do that. I have come to see how relationships and human interactions are integral, guiding, and highly influential. This work looks at the actions, reactions, and movements that happen within relationships and the way in which that influences how teacher identity is shaped and developed. Taylor and I developed a relationship early in the process of getting to know one another. Unlike most relationships that are developed after getting to know another person, our relationship fostered the process of getting to know each other. Our relationship, based on our shared context and position, allowed us to collaboratively negotiate "relationships, research purposes, transitions, as well as how we were going to be useful in those relationships.

These negotiations occur moment by moment, within each encounter, sometimes in ways that we are not awake to.” (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 47).

Taylor and I developed a strong and professionally connected relationship that helped us construct and deconstruct who we were within the work. My relationship with Taylor guided and shaped the way I understood what I was doing and even who I was within what I was doing. I feel that she would probably say the same about her interactions with me. My research interviews with Taylor were shared and collective identity explorations. While there were moments when I would try to withhold my own thoughts in order to maintain a more interview oriented dialogue, I found that to be limiting to the very work that I was seeking to explore. Taylor was deeply investigating, and complicating, and dissecting who she was in her new teacher educator identity, in a way that was meaningful and relevant to my own processing. Collectively we pushed, we challenged, we complicated, we connected, we supported, and ultimately I hope that we grew and developed.

It became especially evident through my engagement and interactions with Taylor that certain preconceived notions of identity “development” were very limited and could feel irrelevant and useless when wading in the depths of critical reflection about ones own identity. This idea of identity *development* seems to connote some sort of linear progression that leads us from a place of lesser understanding to a more developed and complete *product*; as if identity were a sort of tangible product. But that is the problem, teacher educator identity is not, and cannot be, a product. Consequently, we call it a process, yet that is still problematic in that it leads us to understand this work as some

sort of step-by-step way of doing and understanding that we can manage and move through. In reflecting on the shared professional identity struggles that Taylor and I encountered it was clear that:

Developmental processes are likely to be chaotic in this technical sense. In human development, early experiences feed back to color later experiences in unpredictable ways. Thus, although early experiences have profound effects that can be traced in the lives of individuals, they are unlikely to be amenable to law-like linear statements. (Stiles, 1993, p. 598)

My conversations with Taylor were not a progressive movement but rather a series of spiraling motions that sometimes went in a forward oriented direction, but often spiraled in ways that would leave me feeling as if I had progressed in a way I never knew existed while simultaneously moving rapidly away from what I anticipated. Our dialogic processing about aspects of our developing teacher educator identity illustrated how, “teacher development is circular even as it is also forward-moving: a teacher is always collapsing the past, present, and future into a complex *mélange* of professional beliefs, goals, memories, and predictions while enacting practice” (Olson, 2008, p. 24).

I felt frustrated if I tried to quantify our *identity work* or *identity processing* in any sort of structured or organized way. My interactions with Taylor were rarely the typical interactions of a researcher and participant; it never took that shape and wouldn't have been nearly as authentic if it had. Taylor was a participant in the work but when I engaged with her to reflect on the work we became collaborative participants in the work together. I often pictured us as Titanic passengers desperately trying to survive in the icy

waters surrounding the sinking ship. It would have seemed ridiculous to say, “Taylor, tell me more about how the water feels” within my own flailing attempts to catch my breath and stay afloat. We sank and we swam together through collective attempts to understand and maneuver the intensity of our own experiences. I suppose it is a bit telling that our experiences in trying to become effective teacher educators conjured metaphoric images of the sinking Titanic. I guess it goes without saying that I don’t subscribe to the view that anyone can teach or that any good classroom teacher will be a good teacher educator.

While I say that our relationship helped us to each think more deeply and critically about the work we were doing, there were also complications that came along with the relationship we developed. Taylor and I were honest and personal from the start and that sometimes challenged the relationship. It became intimate in a way that made it difficult to simultaneously foster a professionally collegial relationship “I find it hard to interview you because you’re so similar to me. You’re in my head. Everything you say I think, ‘YES, THAT IS ME TOO!’ You blatantly express the things I think and feel” (Jessica, Interview with Taylor, Nov. 1, 2013).

Sometimes I wonder if the stakes for trust were higher in this relationship because so much had been shared. Trust was difficult and scary as it pushed on a certain sense of vulnerability that anyone would be tentative to expose. The acceptance of trust with things that can be so deeply personal is difficult for anyone, especially two people who have not known each other that long and who are primarily interacting within professional contexts. The fact that research was involved only further complicated this

fact, and even though we both said we were willing to be open and honest throughout the process, for the benefit of the work and for the benefit of our own growth, it was still a challenge, and it was definitely something that existed as a subtle but pervasive presence within all of our interactions. While it was powerful how we could deeply examine our developing teacher identities, it was also humbling and scary to feel so exposed regarding something as significant and intimate as identity.

Each of these profiles presents only a glimpse of the complexities of human nature and individuality. The teacher educators within this study are incredible women who I feel grateful to have known and learned from. Their stories continue to unfold through the data and the findings that will be further explored in the following chapters. Further understanding of the participants will come through the additional data, exploration and representation of how they further took up the roles, responsibilities and expectations as teacher educators committed to meeting the needs of diverse students.

### **The Unavoidable Emotionality of Teacher Education**

*Feelings and emotion then, have a vital role in the development of learning since it is through our subjective emotional world that we develop our personal constructs and meanings of outer reality and make sense of our relationships and eventually our place in the wider world.*

-Day & Leitch, 2001

When I started this work, I assumed that emotions were somewhat irrelevant to the real work I was seeking to do. I wanted to keep a sort of conceptual distance from notions like emotion because it felt too abstract, vague, and possibly even frivolous. I wasn't necessarily alone in my misconceptions "there is suspicion in Western culture that there is something wrong with emotions" (Oatley & Jenkins, 1996, p. 38). It seemed as if

emotions were somehow unprofessional and not at the foundation of the real work to be investigated and understood. Accordingly, I had to address some of my own subconscious nagging regarding such westernized perspectives that perceive emotional responses as somehow deficit or a way to make things less rational and thus less relevant. Sceptically, I felt the only reasonable place to turn to address this sort of internal bias I was feeling toward the concept of emotional significance was cognitive neuroscience.

Somewhat ironically, I found the justifications I needed. The field of cognitive neuroscience utilized the rational and scientific conceptualizations I felt were missing from the work and used it to dismantle my concerns about the potential “fluffiness” of affective reflexivity and emotional labor “it is literally neurobiologically impossible to build memories, engage complex thoughts, or make meaningful decisions without emotion...the brain is highly metabolically expensive tissue, and evolution would not support wasting energy and oxygen thinking about things that don't matter to us” (Immordino-Yang, 2016, p. 18). Through my explorations within the cognitive neuroscience and social neuroscience literature I became convinced that not only are emotions significant and predominant within teaching and learning, they are critical and undeniable aspects of education. Neuroscience posited conceptualization of emotions as discursive practice that shows evidence in both verbal and physical ways and also emotion as sensation, judgment, social evaluation, and performance (Lutz & Abu-Lughod, 1990). Research shows that the human brain processes information emotionally and learning and emotion are directly connected and “without the appropriate emotions, individuals may have knowledge but they likely won't be able to use it effectively when

the situation arises, emotions are, in essence, the rudder that steers thinking” (Immordino-Yang, 2016, p. 28). Through the theoretical underpinnings within this area of research it became clear that emotions and emotional labor could be studied and explored specifically, not just abstractly, and the direct connections and implications could be drawn regarding emotional labor as a significant component of identity.

I realized that emotions were a significant aspect of the identity understandings that I was seeking to uncover. In fact, in many ways emotions were the evidence and product, and the outcomes and exhibitions of the practices and beliefs of effective and powerful teacher education I was hoping to better understand in order to know what identity development really meant. Scholars attending to the significance of emotions within education emphasize that teaching and learning are not only about knowledge, cognition and skills. Teaching and learning are also about *emotional practices* (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996) and emotions and cognition are intimately related and interconnected (Frijda, 2000; Nias, 1996). The presence of emotions as shared and evidenced by the participants within this study was significant and it was real. In order to give an authentic analysis, emotions had to be recognized and explored.

While many scholars allude to the significance of emotion in consideration of a teacher’s identity development, there is still very limited research regarding this component of a teacher’s professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Zembylas, (2005) has become a leading scholar addressing the role and place of emotions in education and finds this gap in the literature highly problematic as “emotion is the least investigated aspect of research on teaching, yet it is probably the aspect most often

mentioned as being important and deserving more attention” (p. 466). Additionally, Zembylas (2003b) talks about the influence of teachers’ emotions on their overall identity construction, “the emotions teachers experience, and in some cases are encouraged or forbidden to experience in particular contexts, may ‘expand or limit possibilities’ in teaching” (p. 122).

Many teachers and teacher educators have experienced the complexity of trying to leave emotions out of the work they do to try to avoid over-personalizing their engagement with students, while simultaneously attempting to employ authentic student-centered practices and beliefs, “the dilemma for teachers is that although they are supposed to care for their students, they are expected to do so in a somewhat clinical and detached way- to mask their intentions with parents and control them when they are around students” (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1069). Based on my own experiences as a classroom teacher, a teacher educator, and my experiences coaching other teachers, I certainly felt and witnessed the struggles of balancing the emotional aspects of teaching with the professional expectations and requirements of the job. Scholars exploring emotions in education recognize these dilemmas and call for efforts to redefine more, *classically oriented* notions of teacher professionalism that promote professional autonomy from students who are perceived as clients in overarching education contexts (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

Unlike many professions, teaching is always done at the dangerous intersection of personal and public life. A good therapist must work in a personal way, but never publicly: the therapist who reveals as much as a client's name is derelict. A good

trial lawyer must work in a public forum but remain unswayed by personal opinion: the lawyer who allows private feelings about a client's guilt to weaken the client's defense is guilty of malpractice. But a good teacher must stand where personal and public meet, dealing with the thundering flow of traffic at an intersection where "weaving a web of connectedness" feels more like crossing a freeway on foot. As we try to connect ourselves and our subjects with our students, we make ourselves, as well as our subjects, vulnerable to indifference, judgment, ridicule. (Palmer, 1998)

I agree with scholars who emphasize the significance of the influence of emotion on a teacher's identity development, (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hargreaves, 2001; McNally et al., 2008; Zembylas, 2005) and the need for further research exploring this relationship. Emotions provide the tangible evidence of the manifestations of identity processing. Emotions are the ways in which our identity exists within moments and contexts and realities, "a view of human nature that ignores the power of emotions is sadly shortsighted" (Goleman, 1996, p. 4). Within the feelings, actions and reactions of real and complex human interactions we begin to determine who we are, what we carry, and who we are continually becoming.

Our emotional responses are driven by our instincts, by our impulses, and by our logical and sometimes even rational responses and understandings of the realities we face.

Emotional knowledge is an important part of teaching and thus it is greatly needed in understanding teaching and teachers. Certain aspects of teaching can

only be learned in practice through how one feels and are not easily described by cognitive schemes. Teacher knowledge is a messy kind of knowledge that involves content knowledge, learning research and teaching techniques as well as knowledge that can only be attained in social practice or by personal exploration through how a teacher feels. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 468)

Teaching and learning are human interactions, whether between two or more people, or within ourselves, and such interactions and human responses cannot exist within an emotional vacuum. Whether one is an intensely emotionally guided person or someone who masks and controls emotions, the fact that we are human makes it impossible to discount the impact, influence, and outcomes of our existence as emotional beings.

The constant construction, destruction and repair of boundaries around the constitution of the self is fraught with emotions. Emotions (as well as thoughts and actions are part of the very fabric constituting the self, but they are also socially organized and managed... thus power and resistance are at the center of understanding the place of emotion in self formation. (Zembylas, 2003, p. 108)

Throughout the data collected from teacher educators, I continually found that emotions tended to guide responses, drive understandings, shape interactions, and frame reflections. Emotions were not just beliefs or reactions, they weren't affective responses of teacher educators, or merely outcomes of reflective processing; emotions were an inextricable aspect of teaching and learning (Zembylas, 2005, p. 466).

I had an interaction with a candidate in the Great Lesson last week and I felt extremely uncomfortable. She said she felt as if people were shutting her down and not letting voices be heard. I said I think it's more about the layout and structure of the room and the fact that there are nearly 150 people in one space which really isn't a good structure for discussion. The student got very upset and angry and said that's ridiculous- it is all part of this program. She later proceeded to cry to another GA about it and I felt personally hurt and frustrated by that. I felt angry. I felt defensive. How much of that was because I couldn't relate or understand her or how much of it was the reality of the situation? (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection with Jessica, Great Lesson 4).<sup>1</sup>

It was impossible to ignore the ongoing emotionally related codes that emerged throughout the teacher educator and teacher candidate data. I realized that emotions was not a finding within this research, the emotional codes were the research. They provided images and structure and parameters to something incredibly powerful and intangible in ways that demanded recognition. How we are, is who we are, and who we are is inseparable from how we are. Listening to the specific emotions of the participants, existing in specific times and spaces, allowed me to see "images of identity."

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<sup>1</sup> Block quotes represent longer excerpts of data taken directly from the reflection and interview data from the participants. Reflections are labeled according to the corresponding PLC or Great Lesson being reflected upon. The specific date and content of each Great Lesson and PLC can be found within *Table 1*. Within block quotes the use of four ellipses (....) indicates that protocol has been omitted, three ellipses (...) indicates a pause in the dialogue, and brackets [ ] are used to include nonverbal or clarifying information.

Understanding those images across evolving contexts and momentary circumstances allowed me to see the movements of relational identity.

Throughout the data collection and data analysis I was continually trying to find the relationship between, or the organization among, the categories of findings that I have chosen to pursue from this work. What I realized was that I was searching for an organizational structure that included a linear progression, or some sort of consequential interaction among the significant aspects of teacher educator identity development. What I am learning is that such a linear organizational structure does not apply here as it would be a format that isn't relevant or applicable.

Rather, the voices and experiences of the participants suggest that the multiple roles teacher educators take on influence the ways in which they are able to build and develop relationships. The ways in which they take up those roles and the conflicts that come from multiple roles also influence the various relationships they are working to build. The capabilities that teacher educators need to possess shift in significance and importance depending on the roles they are taking on and the types of relationships that have established and are working to establish. All of this happens within the continually changing and multifaceted contexts in which teachers and students engage and interact. The ways teacher educators establish relationships with teacher candidates influences the context of the PLC and the context of the PLC certainly impacts the ways in which relationships are stifled or fostered. Additionally, the ways in which teacher educators take up different roles absolutely influences the ways in which the context flourishes or

suffers and the context continually changes based on the roles and relationships of those within it and constructing it.

What was important to determine was the understanding that none of the key aspects of teacher educator identity development exist in pure isolation, each aspect influences and shapes the others. It is the interactions and engagement of each of the components that is interesting and important to study and explore. All of these aspects are significantly influenced by the emotions of the actual people who give life to this conceptualization. It is impossible to remove the influence of emotion as fundamental to everything that is examined here because this is personal and intimate human work, “if we want to grow as teachers-we must do something alien to academic culture: we must talk to each other about our inner lives- risky stuff in a profession that fears the personal and seeks safety in the technical, the distant, the abstract” (Palmer, 1998, p.3). To remove such humanness from this work is detrimental and I believe, impossible. Thus, the presence, influence, and constant engagement of emotions permeates the entirety of this work.

Throughout the data, there were ongoing reflections about the ways in which emotions influenced how teacher candidates and teacher educators reacted and interacted, responded, and engaged. Emotions influenced the ways in which content was learned, considered, and taken up or rejected, “emotions are integral to teaching. Yet this means more than advocating less rationalization and more passion in teaching and more than cultivating more caring dispositions or greater emotional intelligence among teachers” (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1075). Emotions were the manifestation of aspects of identity.

They are a significant part of who we are and what we believe, and yet they are simultaneously an influence on identity and a product of identity. If identity is fluid then emotions are a fluid intersection, both of and by, the multiple fluid components of identity.

The notion of emotions as an ongoing and permeable influence existed throughout the data across contexts and participants. Managing the various emotions experienced was a significant part of the work candidates and educators were doing as a part of their professional identity development. While there were certainly slight nuances in the specific emotions and emotional responses that participants experienced, for the sake of seeing trends across the data I attempted to categorize some of the more common emotional influences and emotional responses that occurred consistently across the data. These categorizations are not bound or all-inclusive but rather serve to provide an overview of the breadth and presence of the emotions that were continually referenced throughout the data from teacher candidates and teacher educators.

<b>Initial Emotion Coding</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>TEs</b>	<b>TCs</b>
Frustration	15	14	1
Regret, remorse	9	9	0
Moments of realized naivety	9	2	7
Disappointed, deflated	9	7	2
Excited	22	9	12
Scared, nervous, anxious	31	22	9
Hopeful	2	1	1
Insecurity/Doubt	47	36	11
Offended/mad	13	11	2
Overwhelmed	10	4	6
Proud	10	2	8
Trust/Distrust	53	41	12
Feeling fake	3	3	0
Shocked	1	1	0
Compassionate	1	1	0

Love	2	2	0
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*Table 3.* Type and Prevalence of Emotional Codes Across the Data.

There is an additional layer of complexity to consider when thinking about the role of emotions and emotional reactions and responses in teacher education. There tends to be certain assumed professional expectations regarding the manifestation of emotions in the context of schools and teacher preparation programs. I tend to agree with this line of thinking. I do think that there should be certain expectations for professional educators to be able to control and manage emotional responses- especially the outward manifestation of emotions such as anger, frustration, fear, doubt and insecurity- as a means of more effectively engaging and interacting with others within professional education contexts. And yet, what does this mean when I have just said that identity development occurs within and through emotions and the emotional reactions? Teachers must be emotional beings in order to interact and engage in meaningful ways, to care deeply and authentically about their students, and to build relationships that allow an authentic connection between the teacher and learner. Teacher educators must strive to find a balance of appropriate, professionally oriented, emotional responses so that “teaching can come from the depths of my own truth-and the truth that is within my students has a chance to respond in kind” (Palmer, 1998, p.17). Certainly, finding the balance between these often contradictory forces is not simple.

### **Summary**

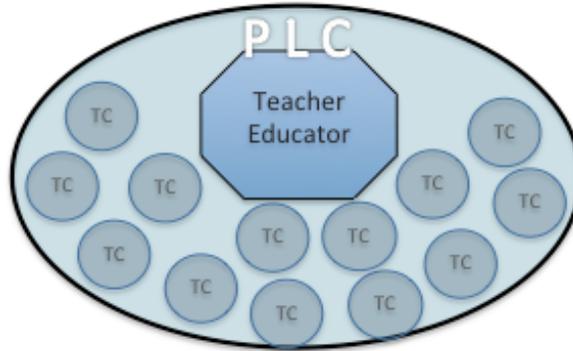
Teacher education cannot be removed from the humanness that defines the work

of teaching and learning. Teacher educators are complex individuals who are always evolving and changing. Their work cannot be examined without understanding who they are within the spaces in which they engage, and how emotions influence their actions and reactions. This chapter has attempted to breathe life into the participants within this study before more deeply exploring their work and interactions as teacher educators.

In a culturally diverse, increasingly unequal, and rapidly changing world, building strong, reciprocal partnerships with others to develop the depth of emotional understanding on which successful learning and caring for all students depends has never been more necessary. (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1076)

Emotions and emotional responses exist within the enactments of teaching and learning. They are alive within the engagements involved within teaching and learning and the interiors of teacher education are in and of themselves emotional spaces. Affective reflexivity and emotional labor exist and shape teacher education and accordingly they demand consideration and attention. This study explores the ways affective reflexivity and emotional labor shape, and are shaped by, the interiors of teacher education (Chapter 5), the enactments of teacher educators (Chapter 6) and engagements within teacher education (Chapter 7) as a way of conceptualizing an element of teacher identity. Mapping emotional labor in teaching and teacher education is crucial in attaining high levels of relational self-awareness to teach ALL students in meaningful, equity driven ways.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**THE INTERIOR OF TEACHER EDUCATION:**  
**CONSCIOUS CLIMATES AND SENTIENT CULTURES**



**Definition of Sentient**

1. responsive to or conscious of sense impressions
2. aware
3. finely sensitive in perception or feeling

*Sentient. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sentient>*

Throughout my observations of the various PLCs and through the PLC leaders reflections on their PLC cultures, I realized that it was impossible to ignore the influence and impact each PLC culture had on those who existed within it. It began to feel as if each PLC culture was becoming a participant or a character within the story and it acted like a character that could foster and hinder relationships, take on specific roles, and even react in emotional ways. In many ways the culture defined the roles of those within it and consequently the different roles would shape the evolving PLC climate and overarching culture. Each PLC context quickly became a culture of its own that influenced the ways in which the participants acted and reacted within and of that culture. Consequently, their engagement further shaped the culture and it became a sort of circular cycle, a dance, if

you will, between participants and the space in which they collectively existed.

The participants influenced the culture but the culture also influenced and shaped them. I found it hard to look at each of the significant aspects of identity development within this study (emotions, context, roles, and relationships) without considering how each shaped or was shaped by the other elements of teacher educator identity development. When examining something as personal, intimate, and complex as identity development, it felt impossible to look realistically or authentically at such processes without looking at the contexts in which those processes took shape and became reality.

### **Interiors of Teacher Education**

The relevant and related contexts across teacher education include multiple course contexts, school settings, and even personally oriented spaces. Lutz and Abu-Lughod, (1990) emphasize that while culture is often referred to as something bound in time and space, that isn't necessarily the case. Research efforts should employ and push this conceptualization to include more broad yet integrated and connected parameters of culture and context, especially within teacher education, where the spaces in which candidates exist are diverse yet need to be deeply connected.

For the purpose of defining a focused context for the type of exploration and observation needed in this study, the contextual emphasis resides within the individual PLCs with some attention to the larger Great Lesson context. While I tried to narrow the lens of perspective for the purpose of meaningful and deep data collection, I think that the findings from this context speak to a much broader conceptualization of context. Teacher educators and teacher candidates engage across vastly diverse contexts that all reside

within the overarching context of teacher education. For this reason, I have chosen to call these multiple spaces and contexts the *interiors* of teacher education- referring to the multiple different yet related and similarly situated contexts in which teacher education happens. While my lens of observation and exploration primarily explored the PLC context, the findings also speak to a more overarching conceptualization across the interiors of teacher education.

### **Nested Interiors.**

An additional complexity related to the context within this specific course was the fact that there were really multiple embedded layers of context in which each PLC culture existed. The PLC context was a sort of nested interior within the context of the larger Great Lessons and the overarching course. Obviously, that course then resided within a program of study at a specific University and was connected with pk-12 classrooms in which candidates were student teaching. Beyond that the context of the current teaching and teacher education field could be considered an additional influential culture or climate in which these multiple nested interiors reside. While it would be distracting to try to consider all of the influences of all of the contexts within the parameters of this study, it is important to acknowledge that they are there and they do carry a sort of influence regarding the more specific and nested interiors that are a focus within this study.

While each PLC had its own individual climate and culture; it existed within the larger cultures of the entire course as well as those above and around that. The Great Lessons and the work of the overarching course set a climate and certain norms that

tended to permeate the PLCs. While PLC facilitators could work to shape and develop the culture within their own PLC, it was continually influenced by the content, actions and experiences of the larger course setting and the nearly 150 people within it. That presented multiple levels of influence that were not always beneficial for the PLC cultures established within.

There are some issues going on in and around the course and they are going to keep growing and spiraling as the candidates talk to one another. There is a strong sense of distrust among the candidates. I feel like the PLC leaders and course instructors are being called to justify that our intentions are good and that we don't have ulterior motives or some sort of hidden agenda. I am concerned about the negativity that exists because it seems to keep spiraling and growing and I don't want it to ruin my PLC culture. (Jessica, Reflection, PLC 5)

Additionally, within the larger course context there were participants from every teacher education program area and those groups of people brought their own experiences, perceptions, and moods into the larger Great Lesson learning community and it often influenced everyone else within that context. It could be felt across all members of the context when one program area was struggling with something or angry at a decision within their program. Throughout the year there were often small groups of specific students who were unhappy with the state of their program or of the teacher education program at large, and their animosity and discontent could be heard and felt moving throughout the larger group on more than one occasion. It was as if such discontent created a ripple that could be felt moving through the larger context. It was a

ripple that eventually would flow into specific PLC cultures. Such ripples came in an ongoing way throughout the year and became an integral part of the cultures we were creating within each individual learning community. In hindsight I realize that such “ripples” were really more like tides of trust. There were times when a sense of trust seemed to permeate our relationships and interactions and there were certainly other tides of distrust and doubt that would require teacher educators to justify their intent and capabilities. More specific examples of such tensions of trust will be further discussed throughout this work.

Certainly, the climate of each of the Great Lessons carried over into the PLC contexts. Attuned PLC leaders could gauge the emotional state, or the warm and cool spots (Peshkin, 1988) within the Great Lesson climate to predict how that might be mirrored in their corresponding PLC meeting a week later. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the nature of the content being addressed influenced the cultural state of individual PLC meetings. I would often watch and listen to how candidates were interacting and responding to the content when it was originally presented in the Great Lesson and would find that to be a good indicator for how the candidates would continue to respond to the content in the corresponding PLC meeting. This chapter will look at the ways in which PLC spaces came to life and how that influenced the work that happened within them.

### **Establishment: Contextual birth and cultural creation**

I am thinking that I really need to do some positive “touchy feely” kind of stuff about teachers with my new PLC group. I didn’t do that tonight and they seem to need that when they are so new and naïve. I need to share my beliefs about how important teachers are and why I think teacher education is critical. I should probably add in some talk about the potential to change the world- new teachers need that inspiration and motivational tone I think. They really need a lot of positive right now. I should also add in something about all of their amazing experiences and the wealth of information that exists within our PLC context. If I make them feel as if they are invaluable members of our learning community then maybe they will be.

First impressions and initial interactions are critical in establishing a successful and productive learning community. All of the participant PLC leaders reflected that awareness and emphasis within their reflections related to their PLC. I could only learn about how the PLC leaders established their PLC culture through interview and reflection as I purposefully chose to avoid the first meetings of the PLC groups. I believe that the culture of an individual PLC group strongly influences what can and will happen within it; so I could not justify interrupting that establishment by observing or videoing the initial meetings of the groups. I knew that my influence would affect the authenticity of the culture of the groups and the ways in which candidates could interact and engage within such groups. I therefore chose to avoid the groups for the first 2-3 meetings so that they could establish a more authentic and realistic learning community designed for growth and support and not production or performance. While I didn’t see or hear the specific moments of planning and enactment in establishing the PLC groups, all of the teacher educator participants shared that they had been incredibly purposeful and thoughtful about how they would establish group norms and expectations within their PLC as well as giving significant time to activities that would lead to relationship

building and connections among group members.

Kim describes how she spent the majority of time in the first two meetings trying to build relationships among the members of her PLC.

From the beginning I have tried to get the candidates to relate to each other. In the first PLC I had the candidates interview each other. I had them listen to another person and I had them pick someone they didn't already know. They had to just listen for maybe 10 minutes and then they switched partners and listened to the other person. I had the candidates set their own norms and rules for the PLC. I tried to have them do the recording of their norms because I don't trust myself to not edit them while I am writing their thoughts. Anytime we meet I try to get them to be the ones writing. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 4)

She felt as if there were pre-established groupings of candidates based on their program areas and so she had to work purposefully to try to limit that and to include those who didn't have other members of their program in her group. She reflected a lot about this time spent trying to establish relationships within her PLC culture "since this year the candidates started the teacher educator program in courses with members of their program area, and then later started their PLC group, it seems like they tend to find their support and relationships from their program area colleagues instead of their PLC colleagues" (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013).

Throughout the year, Kim would return to this idea and felt that it was a big disadvantage to the establishment of her PLC culture and group dynamics. She was frustrated that they didn't get to start meeting right away in the candidates' program

experience. She believed that since they started the program in program area groupings without yet being in their PLC groups, it set a precedent for which group would be the most intimate and necessary for the candidates. In the previous year, Kim felt that her PLC group really leaned on each other as their primary source of support, while this year she felt that they found that from other groups and she would continually struggle against that fact throughout her group's existence.

While each of the teacher educator participants told me they didn't want to compare their group this year with the one last year; they all did it on multiple occasions. It seemed like an inevitable means of processing the development of their new PLC cultures. Jane often compared and was disappointed by the culture that was developing in her PLC group,

What worked last year seems to not be working this year, especially for diversity and valuing all of the opinions and voices that exist in a classroom space. That is something that is so important for me because of my own experiences, I have been on the other side of feeling like your work doesn't matter in the classroom, so I tried to be really conscientious about what I am teaching. Last year, it seemed they got that so much sooner. They really felt that whatever they were feeling was ok and they felt like they could say things no matter what, even if they felt like they weren't the *right* things. They felt like it was ok if they didn't know the right language to use and they felt like they could really share their opinions in our PLC space. They felt like they could do that because I worked very hard to create a space that was safe and that they would be able to take risks and be ok. They

would take leadership roles and take ownership of their own learning and ask the questions and lead the discussion. It became a really great space where students could share and support each other and that's what I want it to be. I want my role to just be a facilitator, who is not necessarily leading in an authoritative way.

This year, even though I have tried to create that same safe space and encouraged them to take risks and I let them know that it really is a process and a space to work and figure things out- it just isn't happening. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Jane would continue to struggle throughout the year with the same challenges she is describing about the initial establishment of a productive PLC culture. While there were moments in which she felt her PLC was starting to create a strong and positive culture, in general she would be continually challenged to create the classroom space she was striving for.

Jane and Kim both reflect on the ways in which they attempted to foster relationships within their PLC space as well as the ways in which they tried to create safe, comfortable, and inviting cultures that would facilitate the learning and engagement they were hoping to achieve throughout the year. Kim reflects on the logistics of the physical space of her PLC and how it impacts the engagement within it. Her group had been resistant to putting their chairs in a circle until Kim requests that they try it and reflects on how she manages the interactional culture within her group.

They have a tendency to look at me, so when they look at me I immediately turn and look at someone else. You know, giving visual cues to try to involve more

people. When someone talks I try not to say anything. I spend a lot of time waiting and looking around the room and nodding and waiting for someone else to speak. (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Kim was continually trying to reflect on the ways in which her candidates were interacting and existing within the space she fostered. In order to help the teacher candidates establish a sense of belonging within the context and to try to build a sense of commitment to the overarching culture of the group; Kim shared personally, of her own experiences in teacher education and offers advice based on her those experiences.

I explicitly told my PLC group that one of my regrets of my teacher education program was that I didn't get to know the people in my cohort- in terms of building a network. Now I wish I would have. I didn't because I'm naturally an introverted person but also there was a lot of personal stuff going on for me at the time in terms of my sexual orientation and the fact that I was pregnant. But, I didn't get a strong network out of my program. So I shared that with them and I recommended that they build that with the members of our PLC. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 8)

The idea of sharing personal aspects and experiences with teacher candidates was something that all of the participants within this study wrestled with. All of the teacher educators alluded to the fact that in order to create an open and honest PLC culture, it was necessary to be an open and honest participant within that culture. However, while this way of interacting with candidates helped to build a desirable PLC culture, it challenged some of the roles teacher educators were trying to fulfill within that space. Through her

effort to establish a safe and productive PLC culture, Taylor realizes that bringing her emotional self into that space required deep emotional labor that she was not necessarily prepared to manage at that point in her PLC culture creation.

I told the candidates that since I am expecting you to share some pretty personal stuff, it is only fair that I share some personal stuff with you. Ugh- the kind of stuff that I shared and the way I shared it- ugh (sigh of disgust and remorse). Maybe it was because I had just been forced to do all of the critical whiteness work as a part of the great lesson (laughs somewhat sarcastically). I was trying to tell them about the ways that I didn't know I was a part of the problem and there were moments when I realized I was. I told them I was uncomfortable and that there were other dimensions to it. What I realized was that I didn't talk about the stuff that I did well. Instead I was like, "I am going to be honest with you about how I have made mistakes and how realizing those mistakes hurt because my intention was from a position of trying to help people and I really thought I was doing the best thing. But that is part of the process and that's what we are trying to work through here". After saying that... [TC] made this sound and shook her head. I said, "I KNOW, that is the point I am trying to tell you. I know I made a mistake with these students and it came from a place of caring about them, but it was actually hurting them." That was why I was saying it, but she made me feel so bad about it. Then the conversation turned into her, [TC] saying, "I don't have to do this work because I am already black and I have been uncomfortable my whole life and I am ready for other people to be uncomfortable." Other people in

the group were not saying anything or were saying things like, “I am a white male and I realize that I am hurtful.” I was thinking, ‘*argh* (expressed angrily and with frustration) *this wasn't the way this was supposed to happen, not yet anyway*’. I think it’s good to be revealing, but I also think that the way I started it was not as productive as it was the year before. I also talked to them about my own experience growing up poor (nervously laughing). I was uncomfortable telling them that kind of stuff. You know, telling them personal things in that way about my family... I don’t know. A couple of them laughed when I was talking about it, like I was being funny and making light of it, but it isn’t light to me, it is something incredibly personal to me that was really hard to share (visibly upset). To be honest, it was a choice that I made that I’m not sure was the right choice. I feel like it should have waited. We should have felt each other out first and then it would have been more meaningful and I could have spoken more to where they really were. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

In these comments, Taylor is critically analyzing the ways in which she attempted to establish and foster her developing PLC culture. She had a vision for how the culture would be developed and what her role in that would be, but the culture created itself in ways she could not necessarily create or control. Taylor attempted to share her own personal and even somewhat private experiences with her PLC group as an attempt to establish a cultural tone of familiarity and trust within her PLC culture. In making herself a model of vulnerability and trust she hoped to create a sort of emotional security for the other PLC group members. What she didn’t anticipate were the ways in which she might

end up feel incredibly vulnerable and defeated from such efforts. The inappropriate response and reaction from the members of her group didn't necessarily foster the trust she hoped to receive. In fact, they probably undermined her own trust in the members of her group. Additionally, Taylor learned how complex it can be to manage a group culture in moments when the emotional valence within the culture is not felt or shared across the participants. What became challenging to her was her own presence within that developing culture and the ways in which the roles she took on, and the aspects of her own identity that she chose to share became a sort of living entity of the culture in a way that couldn't be undone. Pieces of her own identity would shape the consciousness of the culture and in turn the sentient culture would then influence aspects of her own developing teacher educator identity.

Taylor questioned her choices regarding how she would exist within the creation of her PLC culture. As time went on she continued to reflect on the ways in which her PLC seemed to have an existence of its own, somewhat removed from her own influence.

But now, our group discussions are really meaningful in a way that is different from last year. Last year they were productive around application and practice and this year they are more personally oriented. I don't necessarily feel like I have an awareness or sense of control over the direction of that though. I do wonder if any of it was because of our first meeting. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

While there is clearly no prescriptive or defined way of understanding the best way to establish a PLC context, it became clear from the data that meaningful engagement and critical analysis were required to create a PLC context and to foster its initial growth into

its own unique culture. The initial establishment of each PLC climate was important and gave the developing culture a shape and a foundation, however the teacher educators quickly learned that despite such establishment, the cultures within their PLCs would require additional and ongoing development and molding.

I am feeling really uncomfortable because today it got too deep too fast, and much too early in the development of our PLC. They were talking about challenging and personal content regarding race and racism and it was just our first night together. I know a lot of people were not comfortable sharing in that way yet. I didn't know if I should stop the conversation. I didn't want to because it was so valuable and deep. But it was too much for some and it was too soon. How do I balance who is ready for what and who needs what at what time? I feel really uncomfortable that I left off with such deep content exposed and basically just said, time is up. I think I scared some people and I probably angered some because there wasn't really the time or cultural establishment to challenge or push back. I think that I definitely need to spend more time setting norms and I need to remind people that this is their space to challenge and push themselves and potentially reconsider some of their own previously conceived notions about the world.

### **Evolution: Beyond place and space**

In looking at the ways in which the PLC cultures evolved throughout the duration of the course, specific influences became prevalent throughout the data analysis. This section will look at the ways in which *course content*, *prior experiences*, *relationships*, and *influential learning community members* influenced the ways PLC leaders attempted to shape and facilitate the evolving climate and culture of each of the PLCs.

#### **Prior Experience.**

Kim, who was also the teacher educator with the most classroom experience and the most teacher educator experience, reflected continuously and often on the state of her PLC culture and the ways in which it affected her role within it. She would compare it to her previous classroom cultures and contexts and apply what she had learned from those situations to the establishment and ongoing development of this current context.

Tonight I was running a couple of minutes late so I emailed my candidates and told them to just get started with check-in. When I got there I was disappointed because they hadn't done it. It gave me a sense of disappointment in that they are not in that rung yet of being able to take leadership of their own space. If I'm not in the room they're not going to do what they're supposed to do. That was one of my rules of thumb when I was a classroom teacher, if I leave the room then my students will know and do what they ought to be doing. Maybe that is different with teachers than with high school students... It's unfortunate that my candidates aren't at that point yet where they can just do what I ask them to do. But maybe... you know when I came in they were busy chatting with each other and they didn't miss me at all and maybe that is important, having that time to just really chat with each other. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 8)

While her previous teaching contexts help to establish her expectations and reflections on her current PLC culture, who she was within such contexts was also influenced by Kim's previous experiences in a context filled with strife. In one of her previous teaching jobs she was forced to exist within a culture that she didn't believe in. She taught in a school that discouraged teachers from talking with their students about anything related to sexual orientation. In talking about the influence of that culture she reflects on the way in which she ultimately came into a different relationship with that specific culture, "I think I got to this point where I was like, 'WHATEVER. FIRE ME'. There was only so far that I was willing to go at that point to compromise my professional self, (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013).

I wonder if her previous experience was part of the reason she tended to take things less personally than the other teacher educators and seemed to be able to remove her self from some of the negativity that inevitably happened within PLC contexts. Kim tended to look at her PLC culture as a whole unit and then would narrow in and reflect on individual candidates and the way they existed within that space. It was as if her prior experience allowed her to enter into teaching and learning relationships and interact with teacher candidates in a more emotionally managed way.

Complex emotional feelings, such as interest, inspiration, indignation, and compassion, are active mental constructions- they pertain not to the real physical context, but to abstract inferences, interpretations, and ideas. They pertain, in other words to what we think we know about the world at the current time, interpreted in light of our past experiences and our imagined possible futures, using our available skills... [emotions] are subjective, cognitive interpretations of situations and their accompanying embodied reactions" (Immordino-Yang, 2016, p. 19).

Kim seemed more capable of managing the ways in which she allowed herself to be affected, emotionally, by the interactions and relationships within her group. She also seemed to have a certain awareness regarding how much she would share, personally, with her teacher candidates in a way that would be emotionally manageable yet productive and facilitative in creating cultural norms throughout her group.

Somewhat differently, Taylor and Jane tended to look at their context more through the perspective of the individuals within it and how they collectively shaped the

overarching culture. Kim rarely reflected on specific individuals without seeing them as a part of the whole. In my attempts to posit such analysis on the data of the three teacher educators, I think it is also important to acknowledge that Taylor and Jane both had individuals in their groups who stood out for being very outspoken with distinctive perspectives and needs within the group, Kim didn't necessarily seem to have that type of individual within her PLC context. The influence of such significant personalities definitely had an impact on the overarching PLC culture for some groups and will be discussed later within this chapter.

While Kim certainly worked to establish individual relationships with the candidates in her group, she also seemed to work to establish a relationship with her group as a singular and living entity. She would attempt to assess the overall well being of her PLC culture by focusing on the ways in which specific individuals were engaging and interacting. After one particular PLC meeting, Kim actually used my observation video recording to more deeply reflect and on her own practice and her PLC context. She watched the video to see how her students were acting and reacting and then purposefully observed specific teacher candidates to monitor their engagement within the context. She watches one candidate who she has recently talked to about being more of an active listener to his peers. She has coached him, specifically on what an active listener says and does and even sent him some literature related to active listening. She watches the video to see if he is better and listening and engaging with his peers. She reflects that she is pleased to see he is shifting in the way he engages with his peers and in the way he exists within their PLC context.

Similarly, Kim uses the video footage to notice and reflect on a candidate whom she is concerned about but feels as if she wasn't able to connect or observe her throughout the PLC meeting. She remembers that this particular student had been incredibly open and honest in the previous PLC meeting and wonders if that is influencing the way she is acting in this PLC or if there is something different about the group culture that is influence this individual. Kim realizes that she never reinforced the candidate's honesty in the previous meeting and also realizes that because of the awkwardness and limited physical space of their meeting room, she probably couldn't even make direct eye contact with the student when she was sharing last week.

I watched a candidate who I have always counted on to contribute and be actively a part of things. She always seems to hold things pretty close and last time she really took some risks with being less on guard about being inclusive. I really appreciated that and I never got to reinforce that with her. In fact, I couldn't even make eye contact with her the entire time. I didn't even see that she had her computer open the entire time because of the terrible arrangement of the classroom. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 7)

Kim had previously reflected on the inconveniences of having a physical space that wasn't conducive to the ways in which she wanted her candidates to engage, "I asked them to close their laptops because they were like a wall between all of us. They were a barrier to our conversation and our work" (Kim, Reflection, PLC 7). Her critical analysis through watching the video reflection provided a clarity for Kim that helped her realize she needed to address this physical space constraint in order to create and foster a

productive culture within that space. She realized that the physical limitations of the space had the potential to cause emotional reactions that would alter the overarching climate and culture of her PLC. Kim wanted to insure access to eye contact with her participants as a means of engaging with them more meaningfully. She also realized that physical barriers, such as the computer screens, could act as a wall to the emotional engagements and relationships she was hoping to develop and foster within her PLC culture. Kim also illustrates an acute awareness of an individual candidate's actions and reactions within the PLC context as a reflection of the current evolution of the overarching PLC culture that she and the candidates existing within.

#### **Course Content and PLC Culture.**

A few of the PLC leaders said that last week went much better than ever before- that people were engaging and interacting in comfortable ways that hadn't happened yet. I felt that way as well. Jane and I were wondering if the feeling we shared regarding our cohesive and productive PLC cultures was more attributed to the fact that the content was an easy and light topic or whether the contexts really were shifting. Or maybe it was because of what I did and how I existed within that space? I was less formal and more light-hearted today and maybe my easy engagement with this content permeated the overall culture.

The content within this course absolutely shaped the culture of the learning communities, and even more so, the ways in which teacher educators enacted and engaged within such contexts. This course content examined multiple dimensions of humanity including race, culture, gender, gender orientation, class, worldview, perception, and language, (course syllabus). This is different from the content of a teaching methodology course. It is far more personal, more intimate, and more emotionally engaging and demanding. Such content forces individuals to explore their

own sense of self and critically analyze aspects of their own identity. It was difficult to just present or lead such content, it required teacher educators to engage within it in a way that involves self-awareness and critical self examination. Accordingly, the teacher educators needed more specific and purposeful preparation regarding how to fulfill the appropriate roles and relationships to create productive and safe contexts.

In looking at the development of individual PLC cultures it was impossible to ignore the influence that course content had on the ways in which the cultures evolved. In looking at the entire body of data, trends showed that teacher educators were thinking about and reflecting most deeply on the culture of their PLC groups following the meetings that specifically addressed race, ethnicity, class and gender orientation. Most evident was the fact that all of the teacher educators were deeply and critically reflective, both orally and in writing, after meetings that discussed race and ethnicity.

I am worried. As always, everyone in the room is white, except for one African-American woman. So again, it is going to be primarily white people talking about race and culture. Processing culturally relevant pedagogy can be such a different process for white people who haven't had much experience thinking or talking about race. One of my candidates shared that she had never really thought about race and this was making her realize that. How am I going to address this content in a group of individuals with such diverse perspectives, experiences, and perceptions? Our PLC includes a teacher with 15 years of teaching experience and a student who has just graduated from her undergraduate program and has never even lived out of her parent's house in rural Minnesota. Then there's the candidate who just told us that he believes racism doesn't exist and thinks that as long as you just work hard, everyone will achieve the same things. How can I facilitate the topic of race in a culture constructed around that kind of difference in understandings?

Each of the PLC cultures tended to shift and be influenced when PLC leaders addressed content that could be highly personal or even controversial; but there was also a level of anxiety for teacher educators to present content that was personally relevant or

meaningful to them. While Kim was a true expert in the field of gender and sexual orientation, she admitted that this was a content area that she was really nervous to bring into her PLC culture.

I have been really anxious about this PLC. I really tried to find the right things to present and provide our candidates regarding gender and sexual orientation. I have been really anxious about the effect it was going to have on the students and their thinking about sexual orientation and gender in the classroom. I have been really self-conscious about insuring that it wasn't too tokenizing but that it was complex enough. I worried if it would be appropriate for those who were very resistant to LGBT inclusion as well as for those who were ready to color the classroom rainbow. I was very mindful of some of the conversations the candidates had and of the feedback they gave. They said that it was too much sitting, which I totally agree with, but they also had a sense that... they had... they seemed free. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 7)

Maintaining a balance between forcing conversations about difficult content and merely providing candidates the space to easily process and develop their own thinking related to such content was something that was continually addressed and readdressed by the teacher educators within this study. Facilitating and pushing teachers to develop their own sense of equity-mindedness, and then helping them understand how to take such understandings into their practices and interactions in schools was something that none of us felt fully prepared to do. I can't help but wonder if we ever could?

There is a difference. I think conflict and discomfort are good when you are talking about race. We need to be pushed but that needs to happen in a safe space where you can feel uncomfortable- but not violated. I worry that she [teacher candidate] would have made people feel personally violated, not uncomfortable. She can be so aggressive and opinionated and often doesn't listen to others. There is a difference. In order to feel productive we need to listen as a part of that conflict and I worry that she wouldn't have done that. She talks over people so adamantly that it's not a conversation, it comes off as an attack and I have tried to regulate that as a facilitator and I can't seem to do it very well. She even talks over me and it makes people uncomfortable. They don't react in a positive, conversational way and then it just starts to explode and I don't want that. I don't know how to regulate that and so, accordingly, I just didn't let the conversation go anywhere that might have had any substance or potential to push and challenge people. I cut people off quickly. I didn't let people speak back and forth to each other. I spoke way too much. Consequently, the conversation was safe and there were no problems, but I don't think anyone got anything out of it. I didn't push anyone. I didn't challenge anyone. It was just them following directions in a very monitored context, and I hate that I did that! That is so unfair to the 13 other people in the group. In my response to address one problematic student, I ruined the learning context for everyone else and it is eating me up.

My own emotional work in this scenario alludes to some of the deep and often conflicting intentions educators as called to carry within the work of teaching and learning. In this moment, and throughout my reflection after the moment, I am conflicted by a sort of protective emotional response to one student, while simultaneously feeling guilty and despondent regarding my response to the needs of the other students. On one hand I am striving to meet the needs of ALL of my students, but in my effort to do that I have undermined and neglected the needs of some. My need to protect the vulnerabilities of certain candidates is in deep conflict with my overarching desire to push candidates regarding race, especially those who I believe aren't yet prepared to teach all students, especially not students of color. As a teacher, I care about the adult learners in my teaching context but I also deeply care about the student learners who will someday be in their care. It feels as if it is sometimes impossible to simultaneously be a strong advocate for the process of development for teacher candidates while also being a passionately

strong advocate for their current and future students. I realize that my own emotionally protective nature for those in my learning context, impacts the decisions and actions I consequently make within such contexts.

### **Relational Culture.**

There was a high co-occurrence of data coded for PLC cultural reflection and relationships. When the teacher educators were thinking critically about their PLC and the cultural norms developing within it, they were usually also thinking about the content, emotions, and relationships, “when we met with the candidates frequently it really helped me build relationships with them and with the group as a whole. Now that we have more time between meetings I don’t have as firm of a grasp on my candidates. It feels like I am relating a lot less to them” (Kim, Reflection, PLC 4). Relationship building became a part of the context and how such relationships building happened shaped the culture around those relationships. Successful relationships strengthened PLC culture and some times, but not always, strained relationships challenged the safety felt within the group culture. One particular interaction within my group illustrated how individual relationships could really shape the entire culture of the group. My reflection following a difficult and strained PLC meeting shows how one problematic relationship among the individuals in my group shaped not only our group culture but also the way in which other relationships would then form within the context of our PLC.

She was definitely shutting him down. I noticed that any time he tried to talk, she would start writing on the board, (dictating something else for the group). She had taken on a sort leadership role with that moment. I noticed that anytime he talked

she would say, “no, no, that’s not what we are saying, we’re going to move on.” She was really trying to shut him down and keep him from talking which made a very confrontational dynamic in and of itself within the group. I noticed by the end of the activity his arms were crossed and he was no longer speaking at all, and for that matter neither was anyone else. (Jessica, Reflection, PLC 5).

Because one teacher candidate within my PLC was clearly shutting down the interactions of another candidate, the entire climate of the PLC culture shifted. Not only did the candidate being shut down change the way he engaged with the other members of the group, but the other members of the group seemed to mirror both of the participants affect and accordingly, our climate became tense, quiet, and somewhat confrontational. The emotions elicited from their strained relationship spread to the other members of our group. Accordingly, the emotional climate of our group changed and our overarching culture shifted. Such a poignant example illustrates the way in which the emotional outcomes of a relationship were shaped by, but also shaped the sentient culture of our PLC group.

### **Influential Learning Community Members.**

Finally, there was a high co-occurrence across the data related to times when teacher educators reflected on the overarching PLC culture and times when they were reflecting on highly influential or problematic teacher candidates. Similar to the ways in which the interactions between individuals influenced the emotions and actions of those individuals; the culture of PLC groups tended to influence how these individuals engaged with one another and with the group as a whole.

I went into tonight very worried and nervous. I got feedback from a student last week saying, “wow thank you so much for managing our PLC so well tonight you do a great job of facilitating and keeping everyone in check and I am very grateful for that”. Then I got additional feedback from another PLC member saying, “a bunch of us stayed after our meeting and we are feeling really frustrated that [teacher candidate] talks so much. We feel like he really dominates the whole group. I thought I would send you an email because you seem really open to feedback. I was thinking maybe you could try popsicle sticks and everyone only gets one stick and with that stick they get their one chance to talk”.... Are you kidding me?

Such interactions then influenced the individual PLC climates. The actions of individual teacher candidates definitely had a significant and powerful impact on the direction and movement of the learning community, although such influences could shape the climate in a positive and productive way or, also it could happen in a negative way. This influence happened within individual PLC contexts but it also happened more broadly across certain program areas in ways that would trickle down to PLC cultures.

There are a few people with very strong voices in one of the cohorts and they have pulled in others with their ideas. Suddenly, it's not just 3-4 having this voice, it is more like 25. They argued and yelled so much with another instructor that they got out of doing one of the main assignments. Some communicated that they are going to cheat their way through it anyway since it isn't a valuable experience.... So now we are dealing with this idea of cheating too. Some of the students have written an apology emphasizing that they don't feel the same way as some of the people in our cohort but it is those few strong voices that are making the group go through this situation. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

While it is difficult to know the reasoning behind the candidates discontent with issues in other courses, what was clear within the parameters of this study was the ways

in which such negativity and discord could impact the PLC cultures in ways that made the work of teacher educators even more difficult. Jane knew of the issue because she also taught in another teacher education course and had witnessed candidates' anger and rebellion regarding one of the required assignments in that class. While the entirety of this happened outside of her PLC and with candidates who were not in her PLC she felt the aftershocks of that discontent in her own PLC, "it was such a perfect example how one voice, who is the only person from that particular cohort in my PLC, when that person was gone it was exactly like it was last year, just a great group, but when he is there it is such a challenge" (Jane, Interview, October, 15, 2013). Jane saw how the two instances were related and could really feel how teacher candidates had the potential to bring in dynamics that could dramatically influence the cultural evolution within PLC contexts in a way that could be highly problematic.

Then our second PLC meeting happened and no one talked. I got an email from a student saying that he felt like we were indoctrinating him and he thought this was a ridiculous hoop jumping situation, so he sat through that meeting with his arms crossed, obviously mad and so I felt bad. Then there was another student that didn't show up because he had a math class conflict and someone else didn't come either. I left feeling that this isn't good because already some candidates aren't taking this seriously. This one candidate is making it clear to everyone that he is unhappy and he's not going to respect the space that I have tried to create in that first time where everybody feels safe talking and being willing to take risks. He just sat there and his body language was really strong. We usually sit in a circle

and so everyone could see that he wasn't happy and so it was really hard. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Jane is addressing the fact that one strong personality is shaping the way in which her entire PLC culture can develop and grow. The emotional valence of one individual had a significantly negative impact on this PLC culture and ultimately shaped what other teacher candidates felt and experienced. The emotional tension within Jane's PLC culture was at times negatively palpable and without her ever telling me who the intensely negative candidate was, I could *feel* who he was the first time I entered her PLC. It was as if his sense of distrust and skepticism were tangible and I could have walked over and grabbed them every time I entered the room. I can only imagine the degree of patience and perseverance Jane must have needed to continually re-enter such a space with renewed effort to improve such affect incredibly admirable.

Similarly, Taylor shared with me about a student who continually caused her great frustration and worry. At the beginning of the year he complained to her about how this [teacher education program] isn't based on the appropriate theoretical influences. To address her feelings of frustration regarding his complaints, she scheduled a personal meeting with him to talk and help him understand how the various theoretical influences are built into the coursework. She dedicated a lot of extra time to meet this student's needs. After that she felt that he was often really problematic in the way that he would influence and force the conversation to only go in one direction. While one of his complaints was that the discussion was never practical and applicable enough he was also the first to bring the discussion back to a more theoretical and abstract level. So when she

would try to facilitate through that by saying things like- how would that look in practice? How would you apply that? Then he would immediately take it back to a very theoretical place in a way that was continually ruining the potential for conversation for the rest of the group.

Strong willed and oppositional individuals absolutely influenced the climate of individual PLC meetings and the climate of discussion and dialogue. The teacher educators were charged with facilitating and sometimes even managing such individuals in a way that would allow them to influence the understandings of the group without dictating or undermining the engagement of the other members. The culture of each group shaped the ways in which certain individuals could dominate such spaces and places. Teacher educators worked incredibly hard to create cultures that allowed multiple voices and perspectives to interact and engage with one another but such dynamics also provided an opening for problematic dispositions to manifest. Again, the role of teacher educators in facilitating and maneuvering these complex dynamics of people and of spaces, was something that proved to be incredibly challenging and hard to navigate.

In trying to be so open and understanding and to provide a space that works for him [teacher candidate] I have jeopardized my own beliefs and values and the meaning of why I do this. More importantly, I have not served the rest of the students as well. In trying to create a space for him to exist within our group I have limited the space for the others who are so drastically different than him. I feel really guilty about that and feel like I have failed them. I suppose that is the dilemma of teaching; you wonder how much you meet everyone's specific needs, sometimes at the expense of other students. I am realizing that I haven't been able to connect with my PLC in the same way that I have in the past, partly because of him. I have been standoffish and more of an authority figure to try to manage his abrasive interactions with others. I feel like I need to keep him in check to insure a safe context for everyone else. That has limited me from being more of an active participant in our group. Constructivism is hard when you have participants in that context that aren't helping to move the group in a productive way. Under those circumstances I stop being constructivist and start becoming more authoritative and directive, in order to protect our PLC space and I don't know if that it really benefiting everyone to the extent I would want for my students.

### **Emotion: The fluid temperament of a sentient context**

One of the ways in which the PLC cultures seemed the most sentient was manifested through the ever changing and evolving ethos of each of the cultures. Each of the teacher educators commented about the ways in which their PLC culture seemed to have a temperament of its own that was continually changing sometimes without reason. There were emotional shifts that seemed to follow a logical movement as illustrated through Kim's reflection on the "turning point" for her groups cultural temperament and the related emotional valence.

Today, in our third PLC, folks came in and they were really upset and that was kind of the big turning point. Whereas the first ones [PLC meetings] felt really cold and uncomfortable and sterile. But in the third one the candidates came in and there was all this chatter happening. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 3)

Although Kim felt positive emotional valance within her group and hoped that it would be a productive and beneficial way toward establishing an overarching positive culture; by the end of the next PLC meeting she was reflecting on the ways in which the mood of her PLC culture had shifted dramatically even within one meeting.

The forth time we met as a PLC I was confident that, yeah things have gelled now. We are where we need to be. But then I was hearing things from certain folks and was picking up on a lot of stress and negativity and madness. I know that in early October they get stressed and that it's going to be a difficult time. They get distressed. They get angry and upset and mad and they start questioning why everybody is doing everything so badly. They get really critical of the teachers they have been watching and struggle to put that into perspective. I've been having a hard time understanding the negative attitudes of the candidates and maybe that is because by the time we got to know them this year, they were already in that "October place". It has got to be a necessary part of becoming a teacher. They start doing it [teaching] then they start realizing how hard it is and then they start softening a bit. They start softening their critiques of their cooperating teacher or their PLC leaders or their instructors and they start seeing how hard it is... (Kim, Reflection, PLC 4)

While Kim seemed to have some sense of clarity regarding of the causes of the shifting culture within her PLC group, while Jane continually felt as if the culture of her group possessed a negative valence that she couldn't predict or manage. I found it difficult to understand how this culture struggled so much but could certainly feel the

cool affect (Peshkin, 1988) within her PLC culture when I would observe or visit. In previous years Jane had been incredibly well received and respected as a teacher educator and members of her previous group still came to her for support, advice, and to share news. She told me that her previous PLC culture had been consistently warm, inviting, supportive and comfortable. However, the culture of her current PLC was incredibly unpredictable and moody and seemed to be sensitive to the slightest influences. The following progression of reflections shows the ways in which Jane's PLC culture was incredibly temperamental, inconsistent, and unpredictable.

But I am thinking, they are graduate students, they should be more engaged.

There is a lot of silence in my PLC, and not that silence equates negatively, but it is like silence because no one is talking and no one is even trying to think aloud through things or engage in conversations. So it is just like argh, I'm thinking ok, it is almost 6:40, I've just got to make it to 6:40. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

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I was really happy with how class started because we always begin with a "meeting" in which the students are invited to share news or celebrations/frustrations from their week. Today students actually shared some meaningful things from their placements- how one student didn't kick anyone out, unlike his cooperating teacher who does every day. Another student shared something that was frustrating her. I was really pleased because I felt like perhaps we were reaching a turning point in our time together, where people were starting to view this as a safe space. What I want them to realize is that this space is for

them and it can be as valuable as they make it. Hopefully we are starting to get there. I know we have a way to go though. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 4)

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The setup tonight worked well, I think because everyone was engaged. Sometimes I have had problems with students not really talking about the topic but tonight as I rotated through the stations, they were on task and speaking with passion and interest about the discussion prompts. And for the first time ever, I had to STOP the discussion at 6:40 because I always try to be respectful of students' time. Usually I'm like (guilty to say this) clock watching and hoping the time goes by a little faster because the silence we've had during some lessons is a bit agonizing. I know there is value in silence and I believe in wait time and all that but even I find it hard to endure the silence in this PLC. But, shoo hoo, not tonight. It was great! (Jane, Reflection, PLC 7)

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My PLC continues to be a really interesting and perplexing group. So I noticed today that it was like 4:40 and almost no one was in the room. They were in that little gathering space in the basement of Peik, all gathered together socializing and being very jovial. They all kind of came in together as a group right at 4:40 or just a minute before and then suddenly it was like, now that we were in this formal space, the talking stopped. We opened with talk about what snow days/cold days do to the dynamics of the classroom, getting back into the swing of things with kids. The students talked a little bit then and I shared about how ridiculous it was

at my house with our own kids NEEDING to get out of the house. It was an “okay” discussion at that point and then we moved into a discussion about the great lesson and it was back to pulling teeth. ARGGGHHH! I don’t like that it feels like I am having to pull things out of them. It is their class, their space and I wish they would realize that. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 8)

It was clear that Jane’s investment in the development of these individuals and this group was continually challenged. It was also clear that such challenges took their toll on Jane and the teacher educator identity she was developing within this work, “I feel so invested in these students doing well. I want them to take a lot away from this and I am feeling defeated by the challenges that this group is presenting. I know there are things I could be doing better, maybe asking better questions or something, but I feel like the students also have to want to learn (Jane, Reflection, PLC 4). The challenges of trying to build and maintain a positive PLC culture would eventually push Jane to a place where she started to doubt herself and her capabilities as a teacher educator. She felt defeated by a sentient culture that had the power to alter the path of her own identity development in ways that may never be undone.

One might assume that a PLC culture would require a strong establishment and then some facilitating throughout in order to maintain certain cultural norms and expectations. However, the data within this study showed that the PLC cultures, like the individuals within them, were sentient and emotional beings that shifted with the tides of trust and doubt that happened within and around them.

I really tried to be aware of the mood of the space tonight. If I felt like things were getting too heated, to the point that I felt it was no longer productive, I asked them all to sit down and write silently what they were thinking. My intent was to serve two purposes- defuse the debate from becoming an argument and accusation, and also give them an outlet for their own thinking in the hope that through writing they might justify and clarify their perspectives. It seemed to help them to put their most emotionally charged thoughts down on paper. I think that sometimes some of our strongest convictions come about that way. So I told them that I would encourage them do that a lot so they could get their thinking down as a way to develop their own philosophy of education- but it is also my way of managing the emotional heat of our space!

In this excerpt, I am clearly reflecting on the ways in which I feel the emotional valence of my PLC and can sense that it demands my attention and monitoring in order to maintain a productive climate. While I don't think I was really aware of it at the time, I was engaging with the emotional consciousness of my PLC culture. I felt the emotional valence of our culture, and the shifting nature of that valence, and I knew I needed to engage with that. At that time, my actions were a sort of instinctual response, gained from other experiences facilitating a learning community. I was starting to develop a plan of action to facilitate emotional valence, but I could have been even more capable for the appropriate enactments if I had been previously educated and prepared for such influences.

PLC leaders could not just think about how to initially structure and establish the context, they had to continually shift who they were and how they would exist within a space that acted and reacted in response to the presence and engagement of those within it. McKeon and Harrison (2010) found that beginning teacher educators' professional identities were shaped by "active participation in a wide range of communities of practice" (p. 38) to develop their personal perspectives on pedagogical reasoning and

decision making. While the establishment of PLC cultures depended largely on the facilitation of teacher educators, the evolution of these spaces involved more of a reactionary approach to address the emotional and temperamental fluid nature of such spaces.

### **Conclusion**

I have to wonder, to what extent have I determined the culture of this context? Are the norms, and expectations, and ways of being within this space determined by me and my influence? Have I included the teacher candidates and their needs and ways of being enough? How will I know if I have just created a place for them to be and a way for them to be within it? I certainly don't want to dictate how this culture exists and lives, but I wonder if I have already done that and if there is really a way to avoid that? Is my facilitation and fostering of this PLC culture really just fancy terminology for my control over this particular space in which teacher candidates exist?

Context matters. It shapes what can happen, what does happen, and how such actions and reactions will be played out within a specific time and place. Accordingly, teacher educators need preparation regarding how to establish purposeful and productive contexts. But beyond that they also need ongoing development and support related to how to maintain and adjust such cultures to meet the changing needs of the culture itself and the individuals that exist within it. Without strong contextual establishment teacher educator identity development will not happen.

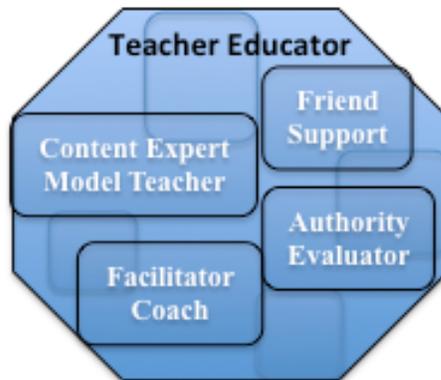
There is a profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants. As a consequence... practice entails the negotiation of ways of being a person in that context.

(Wenger, 1998, p. 149)

I'm in a weird balance between the fact that my roles have been supportive, encouraging, coddling, and helpful; yet, in doing that I make myself so much more vulnerable... That worked against me tonight. I opened myself up about my own insecurities and my own reflective practice in our learning community and then he [teacher candidate]... he violated that safe community space and the things we have asked for within it. He was not a listener, he was aggressive and attacking and that was made so much worse because I had just opened that space and tried to make it feel safe. It just showed me how much you have to demand- maybe not demand- it shows how vulnerable that actual space is. That is the risk of a PLC context and that is the risk of asking teachers to be reflective practitioners. If they are, then the potential for growth is enormous, but the potential for hurt is also enormous because you have opened yourself up and created a different space to exist in that can be so much more easily offended, hurt, or troubled.

The data showed that PLC cultures were impacted by the ways in which they were initially established. It also showed that the evolution of such cultures was heavily influenced by those within it and those trying to facilitate it. Additionally, the data highlighted that PLC cultures and the ways in which teacher educators could exist and engage within them was significantly influenced by relationships, by the content being taught and by the impact of highly influential (primarily problematic) individuals. Without giving attention and care to each of these aspects, it was nearly impossible to create and maintain a productive PLC culture that was conducive to the intense identity work, for both teacher candidates and teacher educators, that would inevitably happen within.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
ENACTMENT: ROLES, POSITIONALITY, AND IDENTITY CONFLICTS



*In comparison to the relative clarity of the role defined for the typical professional, teachers find themselves in a much more complicated role environment. The teacher needs to establish an emotional link in order to be able to motivate the student to participate actively in the learning process. The most powerful tool teachers have to encourage engaged learning is their emotional connection with their students.*

-David Labaree, 2004

**Relational Roles**

The specific enactments, categorized as roles or responsibilities, of the work of teacher educators is often ill-defined or minimally prioritized within academic institutions. This is sometimes based on the assumption that the requirements of teacher education can be adequately fulfilled by anyone who has been a master classroom teacher or has strong education experience. In many academic institutions, the work of educating teachers is seen as something that most graduate students in the field of education can fulfill while they are pursuing other education requirements. Teacher education research must continue to explore and clarify such misguided assumptions regarding the realistic enactments of teacher education. Teacher educators need opportunities for development

of more externally oriented understandings and knowledge, but also regarding more internally oriented understandings and growth “so that we might do critical and creative work on ourselves, in preparation for, and as part of, our critical and creative work with our students” (Sato & Lensmire, 2009, p. 369). Simplified understandings of the enactments of teacher educators perpetuate significant misconceptions that can have highly problematic outcomes for the field of teacher education and the quality of engagement that occurs within it. Teacher educators simultaneously fulfill multiple roles, and oftentimes, the specifics of each of those roles aren’t defined, explained, or even established. Such roles continually intersect, engage, overlap and change. Additionally, such multifaceted roles often contradict one another and become difficult or impossible to uphold simultaneously since “learning about teaching involves continuously conflicting and competing demands” (Korthagen, Loughran, Russell, 2006, p. 1025). While some of the roles teacher educators are called to fill include responsibilities they have previously experienced or have preparation for, many roles include expectations they have never been exposed to or may not even be capable of fulfilling. Such lack of preparation or capabilities can lead to fear, anxiety, inadequacy, insecurity, and poor performance and outcomes. It is easy to imagine the ways in which these simultaneous roles challenge and even trouble the developing and established aspects of a teacher educators’ professional identity. Additionally, teachers and teacher educators are continually required to “fit into socially, institutionally sanctioned roles that allow them, with legitimacy to call themselves (and ‘behave like’) teachers... identity it partly defined by what it is to be a teacher, irrespective of one as an individual” (Olson, 2011, p. 266).

Data from this study indicated that the work of teacher education requires individuals to act in multiple intersecting and interrelated spheres of influence and capacities. Such roles can sometimes be complementary and mutually supportive but are also often contradictory and problematic. The teacher educators in this study often felt conflicted in their attempts to be supportive mentors while also being an authority or evaluator to teacher candidates. Not only are teacher educators trying to fulfill the requirements of multiple different roles in their interactions and engagement with teacher candidates, they are also acting from, and within, multiple different positionalities- including graduate student, teacher and teacher educator- in ways that further complicate the work. Based on the belief that teacher education requires adequately prepared and capable experts, this work aimed to define some of the specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations of teacher educators and the resulting capabilities necessary for those who successfully prepare and educate teachers.

Just as students need to learn new ways of reasoning, communicating, and thinking, and to acquire dispositions of inquiry and sense-making through their participation in classroom discourse communities, teachers need to construct their complex new roles and ways of thinking about their teaching practice within the context of supportive learning communities. (Putnam & Borko, 1997, p. 1247)

Through observing the teacher educator enactments as actions, reactions, approaches, and priorities - shown through their engagements with teacher candidates- it became clear that teacher education is complex and multifaceted work. The roles that teacher educators are called to fulfill are incredibly diverse and exist at multiple levels and across vastly

diverse contexts that “conceptualize the education of teacher educators as an ongoing process of learning and unlearning with inquiry as stance” (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p. 10). The work of teacher educators was never just simplistic content instruction. In fact, I would argue that was often the easiest part for the teacher educators and the component of their work that took up the least amount of consideration, deliberation or strife.

This chapter explores the various enactments, as roles, that were fulfilled by the teacher educator participants as well as some of the responsibilities, expectations and related capabilities associated with such enactments. It is important to emphasize that the roles outlined in this chapter are certainly not all inclusive, rather they are categorizations of the common roles that tended to occupy the most time and energy of the teacher educator participants within this study. This is only a foundational understanding of the complexity of the roles and related responsibilities of teacher educators. It is assumed that additional roles exist across different contexts, content, and specific situations that will never be consistently the same. Additionally, this chapter explores the ways in which the multiple roles of teacher educators were often in conflict and didn't always align in productive ways. These findings attempt to illustrate the ways in which teacher educators face ongoing conflicts between the differing roles they try to fulfill and the often contradictory expectations of such roles. Accordingly, the teacher educators often found themselves in conflicts related to their own developing teacher educator identity and struggled to understand what such conflicts meant to their sense of self and self-understanding. Ultimately, the findings presented in this chapter illustrate the ways in which the multiple roles and expectations of teacher educators are incredibly complex

and multidimensional, often contradictory, and certainly demand purposeful preparation and support.

### **Multiple Roles and Conflicts of Enactment**

We have a difficult job. We have a few essential, often conflicting, roles we play in students' lives. One of those roles is to create a safe environment where students can be themselves and where they can explore and grow into the person they want to become. We are there to guide this exploration, but ultimately hope to get them to a point of independence and autonomy. On the other hand, we also have a role to prepare students for "the real world". We don't want to coddle them and tell them they are doing a great job when they aren't, and yet, that doesn't necessarily feel very supportive.

Throughout the data collection and data analysis within this study, the teacher educator participants were continually addressing and reflecting on the multiple roles in which they were being called to fulfill. These roles existed at multiple levels and across contexts and often seemed to have differing responsibilities and expectations. It would be impossible to identify and map out each specific role teacher educators are called to fulfill across all contexts and interactions. The findings in this study do not attempt to do that. What the findings do present is descriptive illustrations of the most salient roles teacher educators fulfill in their efforts to prepare equity minded teachers who enact culturally relevant pedagogy within diverse classrooms.

Specific categories of roles stood out among all of the participants and were continually reflected upon and addressed. The primary teacher educator roles, or categories of roles, that stood out across the data include: 1) facilitator, coach 2) authority, evaluator, gatekeeper 3) content expert and model teacher 4) colleague, friend, support. Deep exploration and attempts to understand the specifics of these roles, helps to provide clarity regarding the real work of teacher educators. Drawing parameters around

some of the roles of teacher educators provides a structure to better understand who teacher educators are within the work they are attempting to do to prepare teacher candidates.

### **Teacher Educator as Facilitator and Coach.**

One of the primary and predominant roles teacher educators were expected to fulfill was that of facilitator/coach. While it seems incredibly obvious and straightforward that this would be a clearly defined role, the responsibilities and expectations were quite complex and challenging. As PLC facilitators, the teacher educators were called to push and challenge teacher candidates while simultaneously supporting and protecting them. They needed to provide ongoing information and knowledge while facilitating and guiding candidates' self discovery and independent growth, "I feel like part of my responsibility as a teacher educator is to help candidates bridge the intersectionality of their identities. I need to be open and be very responsive to their questions and be sensitive to where they are" (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013).

The teacher educators were expected to lead, follow, and provide direction while simultaneously limiting their own power and authority. Facilitators were expected to coach each individual candidate in the ways they needed while simultaneously meeting the needs of the group in a short time frame and under the lead instructors parameters, content and structure. They needed to set clear expectations while encouraging candidates to take ownership of their own learning, time, and space. Kim exemplifies the complexity of this aspect of being a facilitator and coach in her reflection about coaching

teacher candidates in a way that teaches them while simultaneously facilitating their own learning and development.

When I am coaching a teacher candidate, sometimes I just have an intuitive feeling that their teaching plan just won't work. Of course, drawing from my own experience and understanding helps, but its also more than that. But trying to phrase that feeling in a manner that feels ethical and still gives them the choice about what they are going to do, while also relieving my own conscience from just standing by and watching a train wreck happen. So I feel like if a candidate really wants to try something I say, ok, lets give it a try. I try to indicate that there might be some difficulties to think through while still letting them think through their own imagined possibilities. Obviously, if it is going to harm the students in any way or impact their safety, or have any sort of negative outcomes, I step in. But the challenge is thinking through if it is something I should help them with or if I should just let them do it wrong... Trying to negotiate those concerns in a professional, helpful, coaching manner and not in a prescriptive manner, because you cant' do that. (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

In considering how she wanted to take on the role of facilitator with her PLC group, Jane describes how her ideal role would look as she tries to determine who she will be as a teacher educator within this context.

My ideal role, [as a PLC facilitator] would be like [professor name]. I have found that his ways of leading a class have been a very good learning environment for me- not always comfortable- but always good for me. I always learned a lot. He

really tries to deflect the role of authority so that you don't depend on him as the instructor. At first I didn't really understand. I thought he was disengaged because he wouldn't participate in the conversation and he would not even look at people. But one day he was very explicit about what he was trying to do. He said he was trying to not take on a role of power in this relationship and he wanted each of us to take ownership of the space. I appreciated that as a learner, I knew I would have to step-up as a learner and lead conversations and ask questions and take risks. That is what I am trying to recreate in my PLC space. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Jane has clear expectations of how she will fulfill the responsibilities and expectations of the type of facilitator she wants to be for her PLC group. She is quick to reflect and compare her current actions and reactions to her role and influence in the previous year when she was in the same position with a different PLC. She defines the specific ways in which she hopes her role will be enacted and the ways in which the teacher candidates respond as a way to validate her role conceptualization.

Last year, it worked really well. I would turn things over in the meeting, and I would have students share things that were happening around campus and in their worlds. I would even have them share personal things that were going on. Some of them shared celebratory news about things in their placements or things they were struggling with and some times things really jumped off from there. It became a great space where students could share and support each other. That's what I want it to be. I want my role to just be facilitating and not necessarily

leading in an authoritative way. I want the students to take ownership and ask questions and when they do, I feel really good about it, you know? I feel great and I compliment them on that and I say does anyone else have something they want to ask? Because you know when they are doing that I feel like it just makes the learning that much more effective in that learning space. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

While this was Jane's initial hope for how she would take up the role of facilitator, her ideal conceptualization of a specific teacher educator role was quickly challenged. She continued to struggle with being the type of facilitator that she admired and idealized in the context of her PLC.

This year I feel like I have to have a more direct, more authoritative presence. Recently we were trying to clarify an assignment due date in which some students thought the assignment was due at a later time. They were asking why I was being so hard on them and I told them I was just following the dates in the syllabus. I don't feel like I have any sense of... I don't know... I don't feel like I will be getting any thank you notes from this PLC this year. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

One of the biggest challenges experienced by the teacher educators existed within their efforts to create a purposeful context and a safe and productive PLC culture. This meant that the PLC time and space was safe yet still challenging and interesting, controlled and organized, yet free and inviting. Jane addresses this explicitly in her first PLC meeting and then reflects on the outcomes of this specific facilitator responsibility.

I felt really excited after the first PLC because the candidates were so open. I remember introducing myself and talking about how I wanted this space to belong to them. I wanted them to know that I would be the facilitator but they could take ownership in the group and ask the questions. We all introduced ourselves and I told them to give us a bit of background information about themselves since I don't know them yet and they didn't yet know each other. I think there was still a bit of anonymity for them at that point and so the discussion was really good. They were very talkative and it was just a really good meeting. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 1)

The PLC culture needed to have structure and leadership while simultaneously balancing group ownership with individual agency. This was something that Taylor would continually wrestle with regarding her teacher candidates and the way in which she interacted and engaged with them. It was important to Taylor that the candidates in her PLC maintained their own agency regarding the ways in which they could critically reflect and engage with one another and with the content. She worried that her influences as a facilitator and instructor could undermine such agency in developing their own professional identities. She was concerned about considerations of “structure versus agency: when a teacher has intractable agency to make choices but those choices exist within the framework of relatively intractable cognitive, social, and institutional structures” (Olson, in Ball & Tyson, 2011, p. 258). Taylor addresses this directly with her candidates through an email in which she attempts to explain her own actions related to the PLC context while simultaneously soliciting their involvement and ownership of the

group culture, “I know that last night worked better for some of you than others. Please continue to connect with me and let me know where you are in regard to our group dynamic and processing. I'm very open to figuring out multiple avenues to make our space a productive one” (Taylor, Email to Teacher Candidates, Post-PLC 2).

Adding an additional layer of complexity was the fact that the individual PLC contexts were sub-contexts within the overarching context of the course. Within that context, PLC leaders were seen more as graduate students or assistants whereas within their individual PLC's they were the facilitator, instructor, and leader. Also, the PLC leaders were called to operate and support the context of the overarching course learning community and then create their own learning community within that context. This added an additional element of influence on the creation of a safe and supportive PLC context and the roles and positions that teacher educators were called to fulfill within those contexts. While all of the teacher educator participants talked about the challenges of the influence of highly critical and negative individuals within the larger course context, Taylor specifically addresses the tension it caused, “I feel like I am constantly trying to justify that my intentions are good and that I know what I am doing. There seem to be a couple of really strong personalities in the overall course this year and they are having a strong influence on the tone of the larger group and not always in positive ways” (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection with Jessica, PLC 5).

Taylor is struggling with the feelings she has regarding how she thinks her candidates perceive her. One can only imagine that if she feels like she needs to justify her intent to the candidates she probably doesn't feel entirely valued or respected. Taylor

was incredibly dedicated toward building a culture of respect in her PLC, she continually tried to make her candidates feel as if they were valued and respected. I can only imagine that Taylor must have felt incredibly vulnerable if she felt like her candidates didn't trust her or believe her. It is easy to understand why this would become a source of personal insecurity and self doubt when you know that you are trying to meet the needs of students who don't necessarily trust your intentions or commitment. She would later admit that she constantly needed to remind herself that she was capable and competent and had a lot to offer this group because she would often doubt herself and her capabilities. Accordingly, Taylor's work to fulfill specific roles became emotional work in which she was forced to deal with the feelings and the resulting reactions to those feelings that arose from her candidates' perceptions of her.

While the teacher educators wanted to stay in a facilitator role they struggled with the fact that they found themselves acting and reacting from different roles especially in times of strife. After a PLC discussion did not go as I had hoped due to one strong personality dictating the course of the conversation and eventually causing others to disengage, my reflection notes revealed how I struggled to find the right balance of roles as a facilitator.

Should I have regulated him more or regulated the whole conversation more? But then I become too authoritarian and shut people down and then it becomes my group and not their group. I worry that I over managed it a sort of authoritarian rule. I am trying to foster and promote a discussion group. They already look to me every time they say something, as if I'm the authority and they are checking in

with me. I don't want to regulate conversation, especially not when they are already "checking-in" with me. But on the flip side, if we are only hearing from one person, then I'm not meeting the needs of the group. You have to meet the needs of all learners. I am always preaching that and yet, I am meeting his needs at the expense of all the others because his dominance demands it. I just don't know who, or how, I need to be in that space. (Jessica, PLC Reflection)

In this instance, my struggle to understand my appropriate role in specific moments was an emotional struggle. I doubted myself and the choices I had made and I worried that I had created problematic aspects of our PLC culture. The times I spent in an authoritarian role obviously made me feel uncomfortable, yet I continued to believe that an authority role was necessary in certain instances. I didn't know what my specific roles were or when they should be taken-up and accordingly I often doubted myself and felt insecure about who I was, and how I was, across various moments and spaces. I was uncertain about the specific aspects of my developing teacher educator identity and the resulting emotional labor further complicated and challenged my ability to productively respond.

These ongoing expectations related to the creation and development of PLC culture and context seemed to take on a life of its own and became a predominant theme throughout the data. Along with it came worry, anxiety, and often self-doubt and blame related to feelings of inadequacy in being able to productively control or manage a learning community and those within it. Accordingly, the complexities of the logistical tasks related to culture construction, and the related emotional labor associated with such work, will be discussed as an additional finding within Chapter 5.

While it seemed that the teacher educators wanted to act and exist in the role of facilitator more than the other roles expected of them, the enactment of that was not always as simplistic as one might think. It was never taken up as easily as expected. Not only were teacher educators being called to be productive and successful facilitators of their PLC groups, they were asked to fulfill multiple responsibilities within that specific role in ways that challenged and pushed their own developing sense of self. While they wanted to be facilitators, they found that being an authority, or a friend, or a just an academic content expert was often easier, better understood, and ultimately became the roles they tended to fall back on when things got challenging.

Part of the struggle is that I am terrified of conflict. It makes me so uncomfortable. It's just a problematic personal trait of mine. I am so worried about conflict and negative interactions. I want people to feel good and I want people to like me. You can't be an effective facilitator if that dominates, and it does dominate for me. It limits my facilitation skills. So I need to figure out how to embrace productive conflict and learn how to facilitate it. Then I can allow it to happen and encourage it in a controlled way. That is so damn hard as a facilitator. It is easier when you can act from an authority position and can manage conflict under your terms rather than just facilitating authentic conflict that can really challenge and push people. Great- I'm trying to be the critical and constructivist facilitator and instead I'm the PLC dictator.

### **Teacher Educator as Authority, Evaluator, Gatekeeper.**

An additional teacher educator role category, that was frequent and prevalent throughout the data was that of an authority, and evaluator and even as a gatekeeper. The teacher educators within this study felt incredible pressure from this role and felt that it significantly influenced the ways in which they were able to enact their other roles, “we are supposed to be facilitators of a learning community yet we have significant authority intrinsically embedded and integrated into our role. I grade their work, assess their

participation, and track their attendance. That makes me an authority which unfortunately, undermines my ability to create a learning community” (Jessica, Dialogic Reflection with Taylor, PLC 4).

Most of the time, the teacher educators didn’t want to be seen by the teacher candidates as an authority figure or evaluator. However, the nature and structure of their position forced that role upon them and made it something they couldn’t undermine or deny,

We’re supposed to be facilitating, not taking on a leadership role. I don’t want to take on this power role because I really want the students to feel like this PLC belongs to them. But I also feel like some days I just want to say, ‘listen, you get out of this what you put in and you’re not putting anything in so you are going to come out of this with nothing. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

It was interesting to see the ways in which each of the teacher educators within this study tended to see authority-oriented role as something that inevitably contained a sense of power that they didn’t feel comfortable exerting within this context. Such an assumption begs the question: does authority or leadership always involve power and if so, does such power always mean a lack of agency or even oppression for those not in power? I know that in my own experience, I tried to avoid feeling too evaluative or authoritative because I worried that such a presence would limit the open engagement and interaction that could occur within our shared space. Yet, I quickly found that the candidates responded well, and often expected, a certain sense of authority as a means of providing group organization, purpose and even cohesion. Whether or not any of us

wanted to take it on, the nature and structure of the course and the context predetermined a sense of power and authority within our roles. I wonder if our attempts to undermine or deny such power portrayed a sense of distrust that was then felt in the relationships between some of the teacher educators and the teacher candidates? As is apparent across the data, the emotion and feeling of trust was certainly not something that was easily attained across these roles and it was something that would be continually questioned and readdressed.

An additional challenge within this role stemmed from the fact that PLC leaders were responsible for grading all of the assignments and work of the candidates as well as their participation. Additionally, they kept track of the mandatory attendance that candidates were required to fulfill. They were in direct contact with the overarching instructors of the course and were called to report any problems or concerns to the professors of the course. This layer of responsibility greatly influenced the ways in which the PLC facilitators were able to act as facilitators or support for the teacher candidates;

Part of what makes this role so tough is that you are one thing on one hand and on the other hand you are something else. So you are always saying two different things. I am with you on this. I will support you. This is a safe space... however I will still assess you, and grade you, and I am part of the system. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

These specific teacher educators were being simultaneously asked to provide a safe and supportive space for teacher candidates to wrestle with the complexities of developing their personal and professional identity while also being asked to ensure that candidates

were appropriate, accountable, and acceptable for the occupation of teaching. This presented ongoing conflicts of role and identity for the teacher educators. In reflecting on the previous considerations related to establishing a sense of trust, it is clear that this aspect of the work of this role had the potential to limit such trust. PLC leaders were trying so hard to present themselves as non-judgmental to the candidates and yet they were called to provide a numerical grade on the candidates' written Teacher Identity Self Study, which is an intrinsically judgmental practice. Before looking more deeply at these conflicts of roles and responsibilities it is important to try to understand what the specific responsibilities and expectations of this role really were.

There were numerous reasons why the PLC leaders were often called to be more of an authority figure than a facilitator or coach. The structure of the course and of the interactions within the course called for PLC leaders to act as organizers and to instill order and organization in a large course with a very large class size and significant space and organizational demands. This was especially true during the great lessons, when PLC leaders would assist in managing 150 people interacting in a single space. Sometimes that sense of being an authority figure came from just trying to manage the logistics of place and space within this unique context, "it was hard to just get the candidates sitting together. There was a candidate from another PLC sitting with my group and I had to tell the candidate to physically move to another seat. It was just so problematic but that day it felt like I was more of a wrangler than a facilitator" (Kim, Reflection, Great Lesson 4).

Other times during Great Lessons, the PLC leaders could act almost like a peer within the structure of the Great Lessons since they didn't always have to lead or teach

and could participate as learners with their PLC members. While PLC leaders seemed to enjoy this role while in the moment, it could also present problems when they had to vacillate between filling the role as a colleague and being more of an authority figure because the context required it.

When we all got back together one of the teacher candidates tried to start directing everyone, so I felt compelled to take charge. I overstepped her in a way to re-establish my authority- not necessarily re-establish my authority- rather to re-establish that there was control and order and I had expectations and guidelines. I think its important that people know that there is order and expectations. That provides a sense of safety in a group, knowing there will be somebody guiding and leading. It just felt so awkward because I had been sitting around the table in collegial conversation with them the moment before, so when I switched to an authority role it seemed really out of place and invasive.

My presence within this community carried a presence that I wasn't always able to control or alter. The teacher candidates would always see me in certain roles that I couldn't necessarily avoid. As such, some of them may have felt uncomfortable when I didn't act as an authority figure, while others may have felt a bit betrayed when I then asserted my authority within a space that I had just tried to be an equal and engaged participants within. In re-establishing my sense of leadership I wonder if I had also exerted a sense of power that may have felt invasive, or even oppressive to the candidate who was trying to establish her own agency within our context. And if so, what might have happened to her trust in me and how would that affect our ways of being and engaging with one another? Holland and Lave, (2001) refer to the complexity of such intersecting and often conflicting aspects of identity as, "a constellation of relations". In a single moment I had probably reaffirmed my trust with some candidates as I reestablished their expectations for order and group leadership; while I may have

simultaneously jeopardized my trust with others who expected me to be a leader who supported individual agency and ownership within our shared learning community.

In looking at the relationships between self-consciousness and full-agency, Socket and LePage (2002) point out that “in a situation where teachers are more concerned with getting a good grade rather than struggling to learn content, it could be said that teachers are searching for (appropriate) validation from an authority figure. Some teachers of course do change during the program, getting over the need for validation and searching for a sense of themselves and their autonomy” (p. 164). Even though the teacher candidates wanted full agency, they also seemed to want and need leadership and authority. Accordingly, PLC leaders were often responsible for providing both aspects of that, concurrently, in their engagement with teacher candidates. Jane struggles with this balance as she reflects on the lack of discussion and engagement after a PLC meeting. She is frustrated by the way in which she feels that her candidates are waiting for her direction and need her to require their participation and engagement.

At our next PLC, I am going to say, I will now entertain three thoughts from the Great Lesson to require conversation. I feel like that is so punitive though but they aren't willing to do it, or they don't seem to want to talk on their own so I guess this is one way of managing that. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 8)

One of the most challenging aspects of the role of authority or evaluator came when PLC leaders were called to be a sort of gatekeeper for the occupation of teaching. PLC leaders worked directly and intimately with the teacher candidates in ways that allowed them to get to know individuals in ways that other supervisors and instructors did

not. They often saw candidates at their weakest, they heard their deepest struggles and they pushed them to be honest and forthright and completely real in ways that other teacher educators may not have been able to do. While this allowed these teacher educators to work deeply and intimately with teacher candidates to develop their dispositions and teacher identity, it also allowed them to see the sides of teacher candidates that were problematic. Yet, while these PLC leaders had this sort of access into the inner selves of their teacher candidates, they had very limited access to the appropriate ways in which to manage and handle such information and it made the responsibilities of this role incredibly difficult. Jane faced this with a candidate who never really presented hard evidence related to his problematic dispositions for teaching, yet she was exposed to it in her interactions with him.

So he was not there last time for no reason and he never explained himself, he just said, 'I had some things I needed to do'. So I sent a pretty reprimanding email to him, not reprimanding, well it felt pretty reprimanding. I said you know you can't just blow things off and just decide when you want to come or not. It was horrible and I felt way to authoritarian than I ever want to. I outlined the whole thing in a pretty harsh way emphasizing that I was concerned about his performance in this course. It felt terrible and yet I still don't think I am doing enough to hold him accountable. (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Jane continued to struggle with this student throughout the year. She wrestled with how to appropriately hold him accountable and how to portray the inadequacies that she knew existed but was unable to illustrate for those who had more authority than she

did, “sometimes I wonder if I should just red flag this student to someone, but I don't know if that is my job and if it is I don't know what or how I am supposed to do it” (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013).

Morally and ethically PLC leaders seemed to feel a certain sense of accountability regarding the teacher candidates they were preparing to be teachers. As teacher educators, their responsibility was to adequately prepare future teachers to meet the needs of students, yet when they didn't feel as if a candidate was capable or ready they were somewhat limited in what they could do. They were supposed to get to know the candidates in a real and authentic way but then were not prepared to handle that understanding if it presented information that was potentially problematic. Additionally, teacher educators wrestled with feeling as if they were betraying a sense of trust when forced to hold candidates accountable for things shared in a space that was supposedly safe for honest introspection and growth. Again, this teacher educator role seemed to be somewhat direct and clear in theory, but in actual practice it became incredibly complicated and complex.

What do I do now? It is 6 weeks until graduation. I don't know that kicking him [teacher candidate] out at this point is fair, but does fairness count when this is about students and about children? There is no way I would ever let him teach my children. So it isn't ok to let him teach any other children. If I don't act against this, I am validating it. So I don't know what to do... I feel responsible for this- all of the course instructors are responsible for this. At this point some of it is our fault that he has gotten this far. We haven't done enough along the way and so I feel like it is problematic if now we say, 'you aren't acceptable, you shouldn't be a teacher'. Now I feel like my conscience is on the line, I'm undermining everything I believe about fighting for justice and equity for children if I don't try to get him out of teaching. But if I do pursue this I'm undermining my own trust and relationships with teacher candidates- and this is my means to an end to achieve the equity I seek. I just don't know what to do.

When teacher candidates had problematic issues or concerns, the PLC leaders were suddenly forced into an incredibly complex discrepancy of roles. From the start of the PLC creation, all of the teacher educators within this study had sought to offer their candidates a safe space to wrestle with the realities of becoming culturally relevant professional educators. The teacher educators had asked, and even pushed, candidates to use the PLC space as a place to put forth honest and critical reflection and analysis of their own developing identities. Yet, when candidates exhibited questionable or problematic dispositions for teaching and learning; the PLC leaders were simultaneously expected to adjudicate and report their concerns to the course instructors. This structure sometimes caused PLC leaders to feel a sort of confidentiality breach, as if they were betraying a sense of trust that they all worked so hard to gain. It becomes clear that the educators were investing in building a trust with candidates that they may not have always felt they deserved. Accordingly, such interactions tended to contribute to a sense of normalization of the ongoing identity conflicts teacher educators would experience while enacting conflicting yet simultaneous roles and responsibilities. While this dilemma is especially visible within the structure of these specific teacher educators (serving as PLC leaders), I believe that this exists for educators across teacher preparation contexts; including instructors, supervisors, and cooperating teachers. Meaningful coaching of teacher candidate dispositions and professional identity development can uncover a shared awareness of a candidates' strengths and areas for growth. If appropriate structures and expectations for managing such information are not in place, teacher educators can unnecessarily carry a potentially problematic burden regarding

appropriate courses of action for teacher candidates with problematic dispositions for teaching.

### **Teacher Educator as Content Expert and Model Teacher.**

A seemingly obvious role of teacher educators is to prepare and foster future teachers, “becoming a teacher of teachers clearly draws on, but cannot be limited to, the knowledge and understanding of schooling accrued through practice” (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 137). Part of the PLC leaders’ work included providing a deep and clear understanding of the content, knowledge and skills presented throughout the course. While this is something more tangible and manageable for teacher educators, the reality is that it exists among and within the other expectations and needs of the work within a PLC, “I’m thinking about how to meet the course content objectives, like ed. history and philosophy. There are topics we need to get to but I’m also thinking about how I am going to start building our PLC culture and how I will establish strong relationships so that I can cover the content of the course” (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013).

Additionally, the PLC leaders were expected to present such information and understandings through modeling pedagogical best practices, “learning about teaching is enhanced when the teaching and learning approaches advocated in the program are modeled by the teacher educators in their own practice (Korthagen, Loughran, Russell, 2006, p.1036). While all of the teacher educator participants within this study had previous classroom teaching experience, for some of them, the time of that experience was minimal. The responsibility of teaching teachers in pedagogically exemplary ways was not always easy and often included undertones of, *do as I say not as I do*. Part of the

complexity of this came from the structure and nature of the course which included factors like limited time frames, teaching adults instead of children, and teaching about teaching rather than teaching specific academic content areas. Yet, the task of simultaneously being a model teacher while also being an honest and reflective practitioner was often somewhat conflicting.

I am struggling to put my beliefs into action. I find that what actually happens and the ways in which I realistically teach and engage isn't always aligned with what I believe about education and teaching. While I really believe that a teacher should be a facilitator and not the all-knowing expert in the room, (especially in a PLC context), I am realizing that a lot of my actions are as an authority figure who holds the power and is trying to be the expert in the room. Am I a hypocrite? Yet, there are so many moments when what they want, and expect, and maybe even need from me in this context seems to be an expert or a source of knowledge or answers. Am I supporting them by facilitating their own thinking or am I facilitating them to think and understand the things I want them to know? And if so, is that problematic or is that the real work of an educator?

While teacher candidates looked to their PLC leaders for models of how to best maneuver within the profession of teaching, the irony of the nature of the role was not missed. “One of my teacher candidates said, ‘Isn't that the best- realizing that all the people who are in teacher ed. are people who represent the dropout rate. I think that is why they are so committed to keeping us from dropping out’” (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013). The very nature of this particular role of teacher educators can be somewhat inherently ironic. Teacher candidates want to learn from successful and knowledgeable teachers and yet, by enrolling in a course in academia, they are likely not going to be taught by currently practicing teachers.

I always find it helpful to listen to teachers who are currently in the classrooms themselves. Although we have many great professors who are incredibly talented

in their jobs, it is always nice to hear from teachers who are still in the classroom. I feel like I have a lot stronger connection with those professors because we can have conversations about what went on in the classroom the day before. Having conversations with current teachers is more relevant for me as a student teacher than listening to a professor who has been removed from the classroom for a number of years. (Teacher Candidate, Interview)

Accordingly, this becomes a somewhat impossible expectation for teacher educators within this role.

Across PLC groups there was an ongoing expectation that teacher educators should present exemplary teaching and should always be enacting the practices that they were promoting. Kim illustrates the multiple levels of understanding and application that accompany her efforts to teach and facilitate the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy.

The main topic was culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and what does it mean to be a culturally relevant teacher? That was a question I explored in a self-study of my own teaching practice a couple years ago. It is something I hold myself to and something I think about intentionally. I think about the ways I have been helping my teacher candidates understand the systems around them and the ways that the systems around them might be supports or barriers to their ability to do their work and be the kind of teacher they want to be. So I have to know the content of CRP, but also be able to teach it, and ultimately check to see if I am employing and advocating it myself. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 8)

For the PLC facilitators, this need to always model the pedagogies being taught, in successful ways, created an incredibly high standard that often caused them to feel as if they could never measure up. Taylor felt this pressure and was extremely frustrated and humbled in her attempts to be a model teacher while teaching teachers.

I am so frustrated. I feel like I am not meeting the needs of my students, especially the needs of my black student who is challenging me and who pushes me. I feel like I am not handling it well and she needs more than I can give her. I don't have the necessary experience. I just don't have it and here I am in a culturally relevant course talking about what I am supposed to be an expert in and to be perfectly honest, I am an SLC and ESL teacher. I have never taught black students that are not Somali. I have never taught African American students, and yet I am supposed to be the expert in the room facilitating our conversations around how to best meet the needs of African American students. I have limited experience and I feel like it is evident. I feel like I am inadequate in this position and I am so uncomfortable and so frustrated. (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection with Jessica, PLC 4)

Taylor is alluding to the challenges of being able to know and understand highly complex content while simultaneously being able to develop your own thinking and identity development related to such content, while also engaging with others around the challenges of that content. This role becomes exponentially more complicated when the content includes topics like race, ethnicity, class, gender diversity, human rights and social justice. When the content includes topics such as these, it is no longer just a matter

of being a knowledgeable content expert. The role then has vastly more important implications than just knowledge transmission or pedagogical best practices.

I don't have a background in that content area at all, which is why I was so quick to tell her she should teach it [referring to another PLC leaders in the course]. She emailed me later and said, 'I am sorry I wasn't trying to step on your toes'. I realize now how it came off but I really wasn't offended or territorial about the content. I really meant to say, 'Do you want to teach this since you know this content, because I didn't realize you have a background in it and I just don't know what I am doing regarding this content. It came off in a very different way than I meant. I hope she isn't upset. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

In this case Taylor unintentionally struggled with her interaction with a teacher educator colleague. Her role required her to be an instructor and facilitator of an area of content that she didn't feel adequately prepared for or competent to teach. She also felt that this topic, which addressed race and whiteness, was incredibly important and critical so the stakes of facilitating it appropriately and meaningfully were elevated for her. Additionally, as part of her role of teacher educator, within a context that was not created or established by her, Taylor was being asked to fulfill a role in a pedagogical way that she would not have chosen to do herself. She admitted that she felt nervous and uncomfortable to be the instructor for this content as she didn't have a lot of experience leading discussions around this deeply complex and complicated topic. When Taylor learned that another colleague had prior experience and deep understanding of the content she felt uncomfortable in the role she was to fulfill and it impacted her interaction with

the other teacher educator. Taylor's work in this space became deeply emotional as she struggled with the worry that she had offended the other teacher educator or even violated their shared trust as colleagues and friends. This interaction also made her feel insecure regarding her own capabilities and competency to teach such content and when she had to about it, it forced her to make such insecurities public and explicit. Not only was she worried and stressed about teaching the content, she was also worried about how she might have damaged a relationship by the way she emotionally reacted with her colleague. When Taylor and I talked about the entire experience she seemed to be trying to emotionally protect herself by saying that the lesson might not go very well.

The nature of the content had a strong influence on the ways in which such content was taught as well as the ways in which it was taken-up by candidates. Teacher educators found that they could be much more successful when engaging candidates in content that was familiar yet less personally challenging. Jane describes the way in which characteristics of the content strongly influence the outcomes of the PLC meeting.

Wow, that was THE BEST PLC of the year. Everything fell into place. I was prepared. The students were engaged. It was utopia. Here's my theory on why it happened. First, family and community involvement is a "safe" topic. I didn't feel like I had to convince my PLC members that it was important. There were no dense theories surrounding it, and I feel comfortable talking about it. Unlike some topics in the class, I am not trying to figure out my own thinking on this topic. I am firmly in a place where I believe in the value of connecting with parents and nurturing relationships. I had many stories I could share from my teaching and

had some practical examples to share. I harbor a lot of passion for this topic and I felt that today in our PLC as I think it spread to the teacher candidates. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 7)

Jane shows how taking up content requires teacher educators to own the content, wrestle with it for themselves, and then find meaningful and even exemplary ways in which to bring the content to teacher candidates. Depending on the level of controversy or complexity of the content being presented the responsibilities associated with this role can be vastly different. Additionally, teacher educators must find ways to integrate the importance of other roles- authority, advisor, friend, facilitator- into their work as content experts and model teacher. In trying to do this, the PLC leaders felt the conflicts across roles in differing ways.

I personally think that Kim is in a different place than me. She seems more confident, at least in her ability to verbalize the times she doesn't feel confident to her PLC and not feel as though this jeopardizes her credibility. As a classroom teacher I always told students that I was learning too. I shared with them that I was in school and I had a lot to figure out. When they asked questions I didn't know, I made public that process of wanting to know more by questioning or doing research on my own and coming back to the class. I don't feel like I have that same capability with this group of adult learners. However, I realize that as an adult, I am guilty of wanting someone who is teaching me to appear credible and when they do something that makes me doubt their capabilities, I am less engaged and less likely to listen... I hope that, while I don't want to be viewed as

authoritative, I still want to be viewed as credible or trustworthy. I wonder if I am feeling this way because kids are less judgmental and forgiving of adults or is it something else... (Jane, Reflection, PLC 7)

Jane is wrestling with how to simultaneously fulfill the responsibilities of the role of content expert and authority, while also comparing her role fulfillment with the ways in which she perceives that Kim addresses such conflicts. While Kim does possess a certain confidence about her own place as a content expert who is simultaneously a reflective learner, Kim also struggles with the conflicting nature of being a confident content expert and model teacher with being too assertive in her role as a authority.

I try to help demystify things and help teachers understand what is actually their responsibility. I also try to empower teachers regarding what they can and can't realistically do to support students. Like, they don't actually have to grade all students according to the same standards. Unless there is some sort of school policy saying otherwise, they can have individual contracts with certain students and week to week policies -you know how to really differentiate within classrooms. When someone brings something to me that I am not sure about or even when someone brings me an assignment that I am unsure about I will look it up and share a resource and say how does this fit in with what you are talking about? I do a lot of questioning and guiding and I provide resources. If there is one thing that is really challenging for me as a teacher educator, it is finding that line between being an advisor for their thinking while not being too pushy about what I would do. (Kim, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013)

Within this reflection Kim is detailing the specific actions within her role as a model teacher. It seems to feel very comfortable for her to offer advice and suggestions regarding candidates' understandings about classroom management and the logistics of being a teacher. Yet, Kim is also very aware of the fact that such confidence can quickly turn into a sense of authority or directive that she doesn't want to portray or employ. Kim emphasizes how she is trying to empower teacher candidates and is concerned that her advice and guidance might undermine the very empowerment she is trying to establish and foster. On the one hand, Kim is trying to develop the coaching aspects of her teacher educator identity, but feels conflicted in trying to empower teachers without limiting their agency by providing opinions and answers for their choices and enactments.

#### **Teacher Educator as Colleague, Friend, Support.**

I take it so personally and I want them to like me. Which is not the sign of an incredible educator, but then again it is. Maybe it isn't so much like me, but I want them to respect me because I know that you can't be a good teacher if you aren't respected. Maybe sometimes I get confused about what is them liking me and what is about them respecting me. There are differences and sometimes maybe I get too caught up in them liking me. *Like* doesn't always mean *respect*.

A role that was less articulated and defined but certainly took up a large amount of time and consideration was that of a colleague, a friend, or a source of support for the teacher candidates. Two of the participants within this study even referenced this role as the times when they were called to act as a therapist. Considering how much of the content in this course pushed teacher candidates to personally reflect and examine their own sense of self as a means of developing their teacher identity, it isn't surprising that PLC leaders were often called to be a support within such a deeply intimate and personal

process. One of the course instructors, offered advice to PLC leaders regarding their multiple roles and ways of engaging with candidates, “so much of what we are expecting of teacher candidates is what we are expecting of you- I want you to remember WARMTH, in all your work and interactions” (Course Instructor). While teaching with a sense of warmth is absolutely something we should all demand from our teachers and teacher educators, the fact that it is necessary and important does not undermine the fact that it is also incredibly complex and difficult.

Just like when I was teaching in the classroom; I'm starting to care too much and too deeply. As educators we work to care authentically and meaningfully. We build relationships. We foster and tend to those relationships and when we do that successfully we find ourselves in a space that makes us incredibly vulnerable and potentially less professional. In caring deeply about our students, and engaging in meaningful relationships with them, we are able to teach in more humanistic and powerful ways, yet our engagement then becomes emotional and personal and alters who we are and the ways in which we can maintain ourselves within the work we are doing. I don't want to teach students without empathy or care but I also know that I need to protect myself in order to persevere and remain strong and professional and capable. The vulnerability within caring relationships challenges my ability to endure professionally.

Taylor shares the ways in which she often feels unprepared to handle the situations and circumstances she faces in the many roles she is called to fill. She is especially critical of her lack of preparation to fulfill the responsibilities of being there for candidates as their support person or therapist.

The area which I feel like I am not at all, and can never be prepared for, I just can't, is being a therapist. No way am I prepared for that. I feel like one of my strengths is to be attuned to social and emotional messaging and development and to be an engaged listener. Yet, still I have no idea, I just don't know. I worry if I can exhibit enough care and in the end I feel like I'm dropping the ball. A lot of

them are dropping the ball on themselves and I'm not expecting much from them because I'm like 'argh, you are in a tough place'. You never know what is going to get thrown at you. You never know if what you are saying is the right thing because you don't really know them either. It's so hard. It is just so hard. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

Being a PLC leader involved influential and oftentimes exhausting emotional investment through ongoing attempts to maintain an impression of confidence and capability in the face of uncertainty, while simultaneously trying to prepare and support oneself. Not only was it difficult for the PLC leaders to support the candidates in the ways they needed, but in order to do that strong and somewhat personal relationships were often built between the educators and the candidates within their PLC group. When this happened, the PLC leaders were able to act in more supportive ways, almost as a colleague or friend to the candidates, but then that made some of the other roles more problematic or confusing to fulfill. Acting in the role of support or confidant had the potential to then make the return to the evaluator role somewhat tricky, "how do I balance my roles with teacher candidates, I'm not quite their peer, but I am sometimes their support and confidant. How do I deal with that amidst the variety of experience, expertise, perspectives and attitudes that they each possess as well?" (Jessica, PLC Reflection).

The teacher educators found themselves wanting to be invested in the relationships and interactions they were engaging in but worried that such personal investment might be difficult for them to manage in professional ways. In this dialogue

Jessica and Taylor admit that their own desire to be liked might be an influence on how they interact and engage with candidates, “I worry I am caught up in wanting to be the cool PLC leader that they really like and admire and want to be around. But then I worry that I won’t be seen as formal enough or strict enough or serious enough. Finding that balance is so hard” (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection with Jessica, PLC 5).

The difficulties of enacting this specific teacher educator role were far more complex than the PLC leaders seemed to realize. While it seems that merely letting candidates know you are present and will support them would be enough to fulfill a successful measure of responsibility within this role, it tended to be more complicated. Kim’s reflection on a simple moment of engagement with teacher candidates, (within a Great Lesson) illustrates how small moments, actions, or reactions can carry a significant impact.

I approached the empty chair, but there was a bag on it so I asked if I could sit there. It became really tense about whether or not I could sit there. Even though they were working collaboratively with their peers, I wanted to join the group and engage in their conversation. I am sure that I made the wrong decision. The candidate said, ‘no, I am saving this for someone who is running late’. I said, ‘oh no, there is space over there so they can sit there when they come’. I sat there and then it felt really tense and my attempts at facilitating the conversation were sullied by that. I really made the wrong choice but once I realized that, there was just really no getting out of it. But that is one thing that I do with my candidates when something like that happens. I am very honest with them about the times

when I do something and it doesn't work the way that I wanted it to. I try to communicate to them and apologize. I just own it- I don't try to make excuses.

(Kim, Reflection, Great Lesson 3)

Kim shared this incident with her PLC group and used it to explain the way in which sometimes taking up the wrong role in the wrong moment can be problematic for teachers and teacher educators. However, the teacher candidate who this incident happened with was not in her PLC and he later took the time to talk to me about it because he felt so personally upset and offended by the incident. The irony of this incident is that Kim's attempt to fulfill the role of friend or peer, within this context, was problematic for the teacher candidate involved. Because that candidate only knew Kim as an instructor, (she was not his PLC facilitator) he felt very uncomfortable by her attempt to act within a different role than he was familiar with. While Kim's way of handling and publically reflecting on the complexity of these concurrent roles provided a powerful learning moment for the candidates in her PLC, it was simultaneously offensive and perceived as an example of what not to do for a candidate coming from a different context.

This experience illustrates how emotions and emotional perceptions, (at multiple levels and involving diverse individuals), greatly complicate the nature of the work teacher educators are trying to do within these spaces. After this happened, Kim responded to the incident with a sense of deep humility and made herself incredibly vulnerable. In one context, her own PLC, the candidates viewed her as honest and able to admit the embarrassment of her mistake and respond to it with integrity. In the other

context, with the candidate who was not in her PLC, she was perceived as being somewhat inconsiderate and assumptive. Within her PLC she was able to assess the emotions that were present in the room and respond accordingly, probably in part because it was after the fact and so she was no longer emotionally reactive. In the context where the incident happened and she didn't have the relationships or trust of the candidates from another group, she reacted in a more emotionally raw way that was reactive and not necessarily responsive. In that space, and from the perception of the candidates within that space, she violated trust, while in her own context she deepened trust. In this case, the influence of emotions is determined by the role that is taken up, the context in which such role exists, and by the nature of the relationships between the individuals within those contexts.

### **Positionality, Conflicting Roles, and Identity Conflicts.**

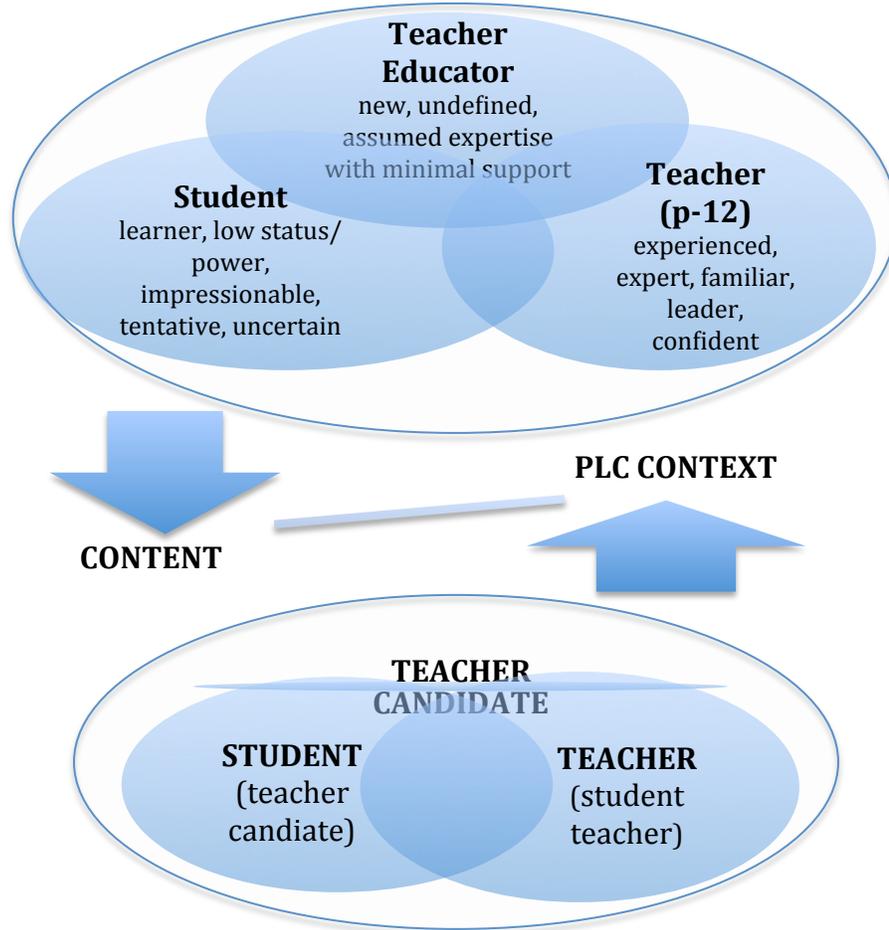
Ronnie Davey (2013) talks about the ways in which new and novice teacher educators experience “identity shock” which she finds is a, “significant feature of most teacher educators’ initial experience of teacher education, and that this situation is problematic primarily because of the inadequacy of current institutional induction processes. Davey (2013) applies this term to the overarching feeling of new teacher educators within her study. Similarly, the teacher educators within this study all seemed to exhibit manifestations of this overarching feeling of *identity shock* during their year as novice teacher educators. Accordingly, this work attempted to look at specific moments and instances that contributed to, or illustrated, Davey’s (2013) conceptualization.

Throughout the work with the teacher educator and teacher candidate participants it became increasingly clear that they were all wrestling with taking on multiple conceptualizations of their developing professional identities. The context of teacher education and the institutional positionalities within it created contextual parameters that influenced how identity development occurred. Such manifestations of various aspects of identity sometimes worked cohesively and in an integrated way but often seemed to exist in conflicting ways. Accordingly, the teacher educators and the teacher candidates were continuously maneuvering among conceptualizations and expectations of themselves that were built on multiple interacting roles and simultaneous institutional positionalities.

Consequently, developing an overarching sense of teacher educator or teacher candidate identity often involved multiple conflicting influences or *identity conflicts* as I refer to them here. These ongoing identity conflicts seemed to collectively contribute to the overarching *identity shock* referenced by Davey (2013).

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While it is recognized that *positionality* is most often used to articulate markers such as race, class, and gender as relational positions rather than essential categorizations (Alcoff, 1988), in this context it applies to the institutional positionalities ascribed to teacher educators as part of their academic positions within a University context.



*Figure 8.* Interacting Positionalities.

When teacher candidates entered the teacher preparation program they were automatically cast into simultaneous positions. These simultaneous levels of positioning that teacher candidates were called to fulfill were sometimes conflicting as dueling manifestations of their developing professional identity. Teacher candidates were students while also becoming and developing as teachers. Although their experiences were primarily in the role of a student teacher, it was still a very distinct role from their work and place as a student. There were multiple ways in which such positionalities were often not congruent, “during the teacher education program, a student teacher becomes

aware of an area of tension between his ideal ‘to be myself in my work’ and his inhibiting belief that this is something that only experienced teachers can achieve” (Korthagen, 2004, p. 92). Such contradictions caused identity conflicts that made the process of identity development more challenging and difficult. Some of the identity conflicts exhibited within the data for teacher candidates are presented in *Table 4*:

	<b>STUDENT</b> (Teacher Candidate)	<b>TEACHER</b> (Student Teacher)
Experience	Master/experienced	Novice
Capability and Confidence	Knowledgeable, informed, competent Confident, secure, capable	Naïve, uninformed, incompetent Scared, insecure, incapable
Causes of anxiety/overwhelm	Academically, theoretically	Realities of practice
Asset orientation	Easy to believe that all students can learn	Challenges of enacting a belief that all students can learn
Perspective on teaching and learning	Hopeful, idealistic	Disheartened
Perspective on education profession	Critical of structures and systems-rooted in academia	Critical of structures and systems- rooted in schools and districts

*Table 4.* Teacher Candidate Positionalities and Identity Conflicts

Similarly, but in an even more multifaceted way, the teacher educators experienced conflicting aspects of identity. Teacher educators tended to exist in multiple institutional positionalities and contextual spheres while also trying to fulfill multiple roles, responsibilities, and capabilities. Jean Murray and Trevor Male (2005) describe this transition from being a classroom teacher to becoming a teacher educator within academia as moving from being *first order practitioners* to *second order practitioners* working in a *second order* setting. They emphasize the difficulties of this transition due to influences like learning to work with adult learners, becoming researchers who are

simultaneously learners, and learning to exist within the new institutional expectations and norms of higher education. The majority of the novice teacher educators in their study found this process to be “a distinct and stressful career change, characterized by high levels of uncertainty and anxiety” (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 129).

Within the context of this study, the teacher educators had three primary and sometimes conflicting institutional designations that influenced their work as teacher educators: *Student* (PhD student), *Teacher* (previous or current P-12 teacher), and *Teacher Educator*. The multiple roles that teacher educators simultaneously took on and tried to fulfill, within the designated institutional positionalities further complicated and contributed the way in which identity conflicts existed.

There are times when I dread my role. I feel really worried and think about it all the time. I feel like I'm not meeting everyone's needs and like I'm a bit of a faker in that what I tell the candidates to do isn't necessarily what I actually do, or know, or believe. I feel like they see me as fake or question me. Or maybe I just see myself as a faker. I am trying to be a good student and learn a lot while also being a good teacher for them. I don't think I'm doing what I say they should do and that makes me feel like such an imposter. (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection, PLC 7)

Each of the roles and positions carried its own foundational experiences, understandings, pedagogical beliefs, and emotions. The teacher educator identity was even more complex as it consisted of multiple roles and responsibilities that were not often clearly defined or understood by the teacher educators. Additionally, the teacher

educator position was stressful, challenging and difficult to transition into from previous understandings of oneself as a classroom teacher. While teacher educators were trying to establish themselves in their new position, they often relied on their preexisting identity as a classroom teacher to gain credibility. Murray and Male (2005) see this “as creating conflict... since the substantial self remains essentially that of a school teacher, whilst their work situation is changing, with new teacher educators being influenced by academic peers and new and powerful discourses and practices in Higher Ed” (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 135).

While the boundaries and parameters of each position were not always concisely defined and delineated, it helps to try to illustrate and compartmentalize some of the aspects of identity related to each institutional positionality to try to better understand the potential influences and conflicts.

	<b>TEACHER</b> (current or previous P-12)	<b>STUDENT</b> (doctoral student)	<b>TEACHER EDUCATOR</b> (PLC Leader)
Self-Perception	Master/expert	Familiar and comfortable	Novice but expected expert, questioning capability, “fake”
Experience	Experienced	Experienced student but inexperienced doctoral candidate and researcher	Limited experience
Capability and Confidence	-Prepared and confident -Knowledgeable	Understandings are being challenged and pushed	-Unprepared for complexity -Insecure, self-doubt -Constantly questioning and learning
Reflective Practice	Reflective practice on capabilities in various stages of development and refinement	Critically questioning, roles, practices, capabilities	Balance between theoretical best practices and teaching experience expertise
Identity Development	Established teacher identity- possibly in process of refining and adapting	Validation and reconsideration of aspects of identity	Trying to find out specific sense of self as teacher educator- TE identity development

*Table 5. Teacher Educator Positionalities and Identity Conflicts*

## **Conclusion**

It is easy to see that identity and emotion are recursively shaped by the various roles and positionalities in which teacher educators act and react throughout their work as “emotions may drive the actions teachers make or they may be driven by the actions teacher make, emotions can be influenced and shaped by the way a teacher organizes their own teaching (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1057). Deeper understandings regarding the specific ways in which teacher educator roles are defined, taken-up, and interact is certainly an area for further exploration and research, as part of the ongoing attention to the gap in research regarding what teacher educators should know and be able to do

(Goodwin et al., 2014). The participants helped illustrate the levels of complexity of the specific roles of teacher educators and on the ways in which institutional positionalities influence such roles.

Finally, it is important to integrate the ways in which identity development depends upon and is influenced by the multiple relationships in which teacher educators participate and build. The multiple roles and positionality experienced by teacher educators made relationships more complex and emotions more significant and influential. How we feel, respond, react and engage across the multiple roles we fill determines how we establish and foster relationships, and the emotions and emotional responses within those relationships. Additionally, such complexity of roles and positionality were influenced by, and also influenced, the contexts in which teacher candidates and teacher educators built and fostered meaningful relationships;

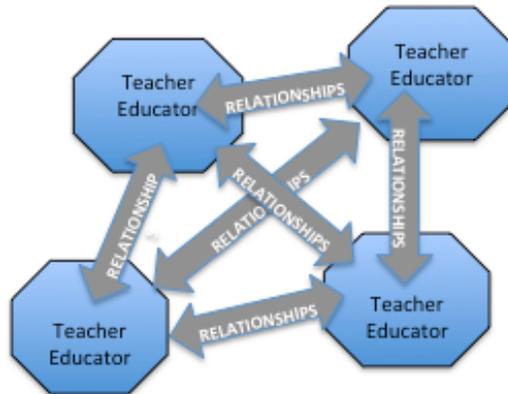
Sociocultural models of identity consider that people are both products of their social histories, and—through things like hope, desperation, imagining, and mindfulness—move themselves from one subjectivity to the next, from one facet of their identity to another, and can in some limited sense *choose to act* in certain ways considered by them to be coherent with their own self-understandings.

(Olson 2008, p. 24)

Ultimately, the roles teacher educators fill, and the positionalities from which they enact such roles, influence the ways in which teacher candidates and teacher educators move throughout and within their own developing identities.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ENGAGEMENT: GENERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS



#### **Significance of Relationships**

Strong relationships provide educators with foundations that allow them to meet the needs of students in more effective and meaningful ways. When a student and a teacher have a strong relationship, the teacher knows, and is able to learn more about, that student. In knowing our students, we are able to push them in ways that help them achieve their maximum capabilities and achievement. Through well-developed relationships teachers better understand how their students learn, how they interact and engage, and how to best support learning and developmental needs. Additionally, strong relationships within education are built on trust and mutual respect. However, such trust and respect are not often established without significant emotional investment and vulnerability. Building and developing trust requires a certain degree of vulnerability for students, teachers, and teacher educators. Clearly, emotions and emotional work is intimately and predominantly present within the vulnerabilities of establishing trusting relationships. Teachers who have their students' or colleagues' respect are far more likely

to foster safe and productive learning contexts in which students can grow and flourish. So, the emotional work required to build such relationships become necessary.

While there is significant research showing the positive outcomes of trusting relationships for teachers and p-12 students, similar research is less common surrounding the significance of such relationships for teacher educators and teacher candidates or teacher educators and their colleagues. Teacher educators need to know the candidates they are working with in meaningful ways in order to meet their needs; and, teacher educators certainly need to be able to create safe and well supported learning contexts in which they are trusted and respected if they hope to push and challenge teacher candidates. Relationship building in teacher education is important and requires preparation and development since “maintaining a respect for the need to positively develop and respond to relationships is the key to enacting a pedagogy of teacher education and is hopefully something that is genuinely and purposefully modeled in teaching” (Loughran & Russell, 2007, p. 6).

Many teacher educators were previously classroom teachers and many were successful teachers who tended to build strong relationships with their students. However, relationship building skills with children or youth are not necessarily transferable to strong relationship building skills with adults in a higher education context. Relationships among the teacher educators within this study were appreciated as a source of growth and development that will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

Simultaneously, the teacher educators in this study complicated their relationships with some students, other teacher educators, and sometimes even with the PLC group as a singular unit. They would often reflect on their evolving relationship with the PLC group as a whole while also reflecting about individual members within the group. The teacher educator participants wondered about how to connect, who to build trust and respect with, and how to engage with candidates in a meaningful, yet professionally appropriate, way. They struggled to establish and develop such relationships with candidates who were in a context that didn't always feel trustworthy or safe and often felt like it was really a creation of a larger establishment or context that was not controlled or influenced by their PLC facilitator. Accordingly, it was sometimes a challenge to work on relationships within such a context and through such perspectives.

Additionally, specific aspects of the required work, coupled with the various roles each person filled, sometimes made authentic relationships a struggle. Candidates knew that PLC leaders would be assessing and submitting their grades for the course. They also knew that, although PLC leaders promised a safe space to wrestle with difficult issues of identity development, the PLC leaders were also accountable to the teacher educators above them and would report out from the PLC context if some issue came up that was deemed to be too problematic to be considered just a minor construct of identity wrestling. PLC leaders were supposed to tell when there were problematic candidate dispositions. This conflict of interest presented a challenge in establishing realistic and trustworthy relationships.

Throughout the data, evidence of the significance of relationships was shown in the ways that teacher educators relied on relationships for support, understanding, encouragement, advice, and even strength in times of difficulty and need. It was interesting to see the ways in which different relationships tended to provide somewhat consistent support across participants. Teacher educators seemed to get the most joy, job satisfaction, and feelings of self-worth through the establishment of relationships with their teacher candidates. In a related way, they seemed to be the most distressed and deflated from the moments of relational failure or setback with their teacher candidates. In terms of support and personal development, teacher educators all seemed to find great strength and potential for capacity building in the relationships they built with the other PLC leaders and teacher educators. These relationships served to limit ongoing feelings of loneliness and inadequacy felt by teacher educators through shared understanding and collaborative processing. Additionally, relationships served as a source of knowledge building and increased understanding of the work of teacher education and preparation since “learning about teaching requires an emphasis on those learning to teach working closely with their peers” (Korthagen, Loughran, Russell, 2006, p.1032). Throughout the data, it became clear that meaningful relationship and “collaboration does not just happen; teachers need to spend time together to build trust so they can be candid about false starts and doubts, as well as about occasions for genuine pride and even exaltation” (Sato & Atkin, 2007, p. 4). Specific evidence of such efforts and the related emotions will be explored throughout this chapter.

## **Generative Relationships**

While the data illustrated the significance of multiple layers of relationships across and among the teacher educators, teacher candidates and students, this work will look more closely at the data showing the significance of the relationships among teacher educators and the resulting influences on their teacher educator identity development. For the participants within this study, the concept of relationship was an ongoing consideration and area of emphasis.

I have chosen to utilize the term *generative relationship* as a means of conceptualizing the notion of relationship I seek to convey throughout this chapter. Such relationships are professionally oriented, yet personally developed, and result from purposeful and meaningful interactions and engagements. Generative relationships allow individuals to collaboratively produce new sources of value, gain new information, and more deeply develop understandings that would not have come into existence in isolation (Lane, Malerba, Maxfield, & Orsenigo, 1996; Lane & Maxfield, 1996). The term generative relationships was originally constructed by, David Lane and Robert Maxfield (1996) in their economically-oriented literature addressing strategy conceptualizations within the business sector. They utilize the term generative relationship to construct a specific notion of relationship “that can induce changes in the way the participants see their world and act in it and even give rise to new entities, like agents, artifacts, even institutions. Moreover, these changes and constructions cannot be foreseen from a knowledge of the characteristics of the participating agents alone, without knowledge of the structure and history of the interactions that constitute the relationship between them”

(Lane & Maxfield, 1996, p. 216). While this term was conceptualized within a business-oriented context, it has yet to be seen in education-oriented literature or teacher education scholarship. I think it has strong potential to address gaps in the discourse related to the significance of relationships for teacher educator identity growth and development.

Within this study, analysis of the data showed four significant conceptualizations of generative relationships as a means of developing teacher educator identity. These findings, shown below, will be further illustrated and explored throughout this chapter.

Generative relationships as:

1. Support and Strength
2. Affection, Admiration, and Apprenticeship
3. Competition, Doubt, and Insecurity
4. Professional Network or Intimate Human Connection: personal professional or professional personal

Additionally, evidence within the data helped to provide parameters for teacher educators to foster and develop generative relationships, which will be further discussed in the implications section of this work.

Generative relationships require:

1. Shared context, understandings and overarching purpose
2. Simultaneous and similar shared experiences
3. Trust: professional and personal
4. Space and time (clearly defined, guaranteed and safe)
5. Balance of personal intimacy and professional distance

### **Relationships as Support and Strength.**

I really need some help. I don't know if I am even supposed to do this but I won't tell you the candidate's name just in case. I really need some support and I don't know where else to get it. Can I read you an email I received from a candidate and get some advice or your reaction to it? Or can you help me know how I should be thinking about this, especially after everything you just told me, because I think we are facing very similar situations.

Throughout the course of this work, within my own experiences and through my observations of the other teacher educators, I came to see how critical relationships were as a source of strength and support for teacher educators. I quickly realized that the opportunity to be publically reflective and engage with others allowed for much deeper understandings and provided personal support. Such relationships and the support they offered became a necessity. I realized that even though I had very strong personal relationships that provided me with continual support, those relationships didn't have the power to give me the strength and support that I needed in the midst of this specific and challenging work. Those relationships often couldn't provide support in the ways my professionally oriented, generative relationships did. I began to realize that strong professional relationships were critical to my success in engaging with the multifaceted and complex work I was being called to do across my roles as a teacher educator.

During a particularly challenging series of interactions with a teacher candidate, I heavily depended on my teacher educator relationships as a means of coping as well as processing and reacting in the ways I needed to be successful. I even called Taylor at her home one morning because I needed human connection related to what I was dealing with and trying to process. I didn't fully understand what had happened in these certain interactions with the teacher candidate and, because of the emotions involved, I struggled

to find clarity. I felt angry that I had let those interactions happen and that the candidate had been able to influence me and cause me to feel such anger. I simultaneously felt a strong sense of self-doubt and insecurity that I had in some way caused the problematic interactions as if I should have been more capable of managing and guiding the candidate. Finally, I felt insecure about what my next steps should be and how I should handle future interactions and concerns regarding a candidate that clearly needed to be flagged for problematic dispositions that had manifested through interactions with me and would certainly continue in their future interactions with students. Because of the overwhelming influence of such emotional responses, I felt incapable of thinking about the situation and my future actions in a more pragmatic and purposeful way. I needed human interaction if I was going to be able to respond and react as the kind of teacher educator I really wanted to be. Such intense emotional responses might not allow me to engage with the candidate in the way I wanted. In order to build productive relationships and handle the emotional complexity of teaching- the human dynamics of teaching, I needed human interaction, understanding, encouragement and connection. Relationships were not just a smart pedagogical integration for me, they were a critical means of achieving the necessary capabilities required of me as a teacher educator. I needed human connection, within a relationship that was supportive, to help me understand why I was angry, to help me regain the confidence that I had lost, and to understand how I might have responded more productively, without just blaming myself. I needed human connection to help me understand the humanness of the work.

I was certainly not alone in my need for relationships as a means of strength and support. Throughout the course of this study, the teacher educator participants would often turn to one another for guidance, advice, and support in the decisions they were called to make: “I’m so glad Taylor shared that because that really mirrors the experiences I have been having with [teacher candidate] about her professionalism” (Jane, Reflection, Great Lesson 5). While sometimes we were able to provide answers for one another, sometimes the strength just came in being there as someone who really understood the problem and was there to support you in ways no one else could: “Don’t worry, I am right there with you in these feelings. Know that you are not alone in this, I am with you” (Jessica, during Interview with Jane, Oct. 15, 2013). When teacher educators felt worried and felt alone, such emotional responses and feelings were difficult to understand and manage. Yet, when they were able to articulate and talk through such worry with someone who could help them process specific concerns and problems, worry could move from a limiting reaction toward productive resolutions.

The teacher educators also leaned heavily on one another as a means of strength when the work was challenging, unclear, frustrating, or unmanageable. At various points throughout the data collection, each of the participants admitted that they absolutely needed the other PLC leaders to help them understand and react to the situations they were facing in a way that only someone in the same position could understand. At a time when I was deeply questioning my own competence as a teacher educator, I shared with Jane my ongoing struggles in facilitating a productive group discourse about cultural competency when one group member adamantly argued that racism doesn't exist and

endorsed color-blindness as the only means of effectively addressing equity for diverse students. Jane responded in a way that could only be understood through a shared emotional understanding of someone experiencing the same frustration: “I can absolutely relate but I have no advice for you. That’s almost exactly the same situation I’m dealing with related to one of my teacher candidates. I don't know how to deal with it and it’s making me really frustrated and lost” (Jane, Interview, Oct. 15, 2013). While Jane and I both felt frustrated and doubted our own capabilities regarding how to manage vastly different worldviews within one shared dialogic context (our PLC groups), the opportunity was there to offer each other support, advice, encouragement and even specific strategies that could allow us to ease the frustration through access to potential responses for such frustrations. While we may have still felt frustration with individual characteristics that complicated our contexts, we no longer felt lost regarding our own capabilities to address such frustrations.

Relationships are our natural habitat. From birth until death each of us needs others to seek us out, show interest in discovering who we are, and help us to feel safe. We all yearn to be understood, recognized, and appreciated. Regardless of age, it is vital for us to feel a part of, participate in, and contribute to our "tribe." The inabilities to connect, contribute to others, love and be loved result in anxiety, depression, and alienation. (Cozolino, 2013, p. 4)

The relationships that were fostered and built among the PLC leaders, especially among those in this study became one of the most powerful and meaningful sources of support and strength in ways that hadn’t been anticipated. Without this powerful tool, the

teacher educators would not have been able to fulfill the complex responsibilities associated with their many roles. In the interactions that were the most challenging, collegial support became more than just a beneficial addition; for teacher educators, it was a necessity.

### **Relationships as Affection, Admiration, and Apprenticeship.**

Throughout the connections and interactions with the teacher educator participants in this study, it became strikingly clear that the relationships they established and built with other teacher educators, especially with other PLC leaders, were critical to their success and overall wellbeing in the process of becoming a teacher educator. They were very grateful for the time in which they could engage with the other teacher educators and found those interactions to be incredibly beneficial: “That’s the most amazing part of the PhD program- the people. The other PhD students (PLC leaders) I’m working with are absolutely amazing. The fantastic, transformative things they’re doing is so inspiring and incredible” (Kim, Group Interview Reflection, Jan. 15, 2014).

Through extensive interviews with over 60 teachers, Hargreaves (2000) found that the most important source of enjoyment for teachers, and their primary source of motivation, came from their relationships with students. Similarly, throughout this work, one of the consistent areas in which teacher educators expressed fulfillment and satisfaction was within their relationships with other teacher educators. Kim felt extremely empowered and grateful for the relationships she had developed with her fellow teacher educators and felt that such relationships had allowed her to more fully fulfill her role as a developing teacher educator: “Thanks to all of you for the acceptance

and support that has helped me really be fully me in my work! You have made such a difference and you inspire me!” (Kim, email to other PLC leaders).

Through a group interview with the three teacher educator participants, I saw how this aspect of relationship was important to all of the teacher educators and their own personal development in ways that I hadn’t expected or anticipated. I knew that it would be a great opportunity for them to share their experiences and work in a collective way to learn from one another. I did not realize what a source of support and fulfillment it would provide for each of the participants and I did not realize how important the meeting would be to the teach educators as a means of relationships building among each other. Jane illustrates this in her reflection following the group interview.

I was expecting a chance to talk about how it is for us to be teacher educators, and what our role is in helping our teacher candidates do identity work, and what that means for our own identities. It was really awesome to get to spend that time with such amazing people that I respect so much, not only as educators but also just as really amazing people. I wish I could get to know them better as people outside of education to learn about their amazing families and the other incredible things that I only have a hint of outside of this work. (Jane, Group Interview Reflection, Jan. 15, 2014)

While I had scheduled the interview as a means to learn about the experiences, successes, and challenges of teacher educators, what I found was that the participants were hungry for a chance to connect and relate with other teacher educators. Within the emotional challenges of their work, the teacher educators seemed to feel isolated and

even lonely. Their experiences, and the resulting emotional responses to such experiences, left them feeling isolated in the ongoing questioning of their own capabilities. They each carried insecurities that stemmed from moments of self-doubt regarding how to engage in the intimately emotional coaching of candidates as they struggled to better understand who they were and who they might become in the process of becoming equity-minded teachers, “I feel... this self-doubt that I feel, I feel it all the time. I always feel better when other people admit to it... It is this thing that no one talks about, you wonder if other feel it and you think they probably don’t” (Jane, Group Interview, Jan, 15, 2014)

Throughout the course of the conversation, I gradually asked fewer and fewer questions and allowed them to lead and participate in the conversation in their own way. They needed the strength of the relationships they had formed through shared experience and shared context with these other teacher educators. Instead of questioning them about aspects of their identity development, I was listening to their own metacognitive processing of such processes of development in ways that were meaningful and relevant to who they were in that moment and who they were hoping to be in the PLC contexts they would soon enter.

I am trying to figure out so much some times and that is where I start to lose myself and that is where I start to feel like I am an imposter, or I am lacking, and then I have gone too far because then I lose sight of what I can offer. I have to remind myself of that every single time, every time. It’s so tough. (Taylor, Group Interview, Jan. 15, 2014).

They were realizing their own deep emotional investments with the candidates, within themselves, and with one another. Through listening and admitting to each other that they often felt incompetent or insecure or doubtful, they realized that they were not alone in those feelings. Accordingly, such emotions became legitimized through these relationships; rather than existing as a source of self-blame.

The teacher educators needed this space and time- in the presence of other teacher educators who were feeling the same sorts of emotions- to understand that what they were feeling was not abnormal, it wasn't a flaw, and it mattered. Rather than feeling guilty about their emotional responses to the work they were doing, they saw that such emotional responses were actually the heart of the work they were trying to do. They were emotional because they cared and because they were investing personally in each candidate they engaged. Until this point, they seemed to think that such emotional responses were professional flaws and shortcomings of more pragmatic capabilities. But in sharing pieces of themselves with each other, they found that what they were doing was caring deeply for teacher candidates in a way that had to be emotional to be authentic. The teacher educators in this study cared deeply and authentically for their teacher candidates and, accordingly, they reacted emotionally in their engagements with candidates. The emotional responses made them vulnerable and, whether they realized it or not, such vulnerability led them toward this deep need for one another. They felt the emotional reactions of such engagement and, accordingly, they needed the support of others to help them manage that. They were not able to respond to questions regarding

their own “identity work” because they were doing identity work through their interactions with teacher candidates and within their relationships with one another.

After a teacher educator group interview and an immediate subsequent PLC she facilitated, Kim’s reflection shows how the work she needed to do to be more capable, prepared and present for her work as a teacher educator came through the relationships and interaction she shared with her fellow PLC leaders.

I think having the opportunity to have that discussion with my colleagues, right before going to PLC, even though it made me stressed in feeling like I didn’t have my classroom or my materials set up and arranged in the way I wanted it to be- my head was in the right space and my heart was in the right space to work with my PLC folks. That was really good- it was awesome really. I felt really centered and I had this sense of clarity about what I was doing here and why I was doing it. Instead of being reactionary as just a part of the rush and mayhem of everything else going on, I felt really centered there. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 7)

Kim is describing how her generative relationships, and what she gains from those relationships, allows her to fully be herself in a way that she felt was productive and meaningful and allowed her to do the work that needed to be done within her PLC space. For Kim, “secure relationships not only trigger brain growth, but also serve emotional regulation that enhances learning” (Cozolino, 2013, p. 14). In order to help facilitate identity development and growth for her candidates, Kim needed to be present in that space of development in an appropriate way and she was able to do that through professionally generative relationships with the other teacher educators.

While both Kim and Jane reflected on the significance of the relationships they had with other teacher educators and the benefit of having space to develop those relationships, Jane goes on to further explore the nature of such relationships and how they are differently developed and differently relevant.

It was so nice to do that [participate in the group interview]. It is so good and valuable to hear that others struggle emotionally in this work like I do. I feel that connection most closely with you and Taylor. This is my personal sense of course, but I feel that Kim is in a different place than me in that she seems more confident. At least in her ability to verbalize the times that she doesn't feel confident aloud to her PLC and not feel as though this jeopardizes her credibility. (Jane, Group Interview Reflection, Jan. 15, 2014)

Jane is referring to a time in the conversation that addressed the ways in which it can be helpful to admit to your PLC group when you don't know the answers or to share your own insecurities, faults or mistakes. While Taylor, Jane, and I explored the idea that sometimes you can lose credibility when sharing too much of your own shortcomings, Kim quickly said that she tried to always share that with her group as it made it more authentic. Jane felt as if Kim was not in the same space as she was regarding her own feelings of self-doubt and questioning, and thus, it impacted the ways in which they could connect or relate to a certain extent. As a researcher, with additional insight into the doubts and insecurities of the participants, I wondered if Jane's interpretation was warranted or if it was only her perception in that moment? Further, I wonder if additional space for relationship development might have led to connections and understandings for

Kim and Jane that would have facilitated further advancement of their own understandings of self and the related ways such notions might influence the ways in which aspects of their identity exist within their PLC contexts?

My interactions with Kim allowed me to see that she didn't always feel as confident as Jane perceived but that was because I engaged with Kim in a different type of relationship. Our relationship was able to develop more deeply and personally. The fact that Kim was a participant within my study and I was the researcher fostered a deeper and more intimate relationship between the two of us. This intimacy was a product of the fact that we had a lot more time and space to talk, interact and get to know one another, but also because Kim had provided a lot of personal reflection and insight through her written and recorded reflections, interviews, and conversations that only I accessed. Jane was only able to engage with Kim as a fellow teacher educator, a colleague, and a fellow research study participant, none of which would provide Jane with the same relational understandings about Kim that I carried into my relationship with her.

What is important from Jane's reflection is the way in which it illustrates the complexity of establishing and building generative relationships. Engagement within such relationships involves a certain sense of vulnerability and risk. This was still a professional context in which the participants were trying to fulfill professional expectations and requirements. Additionally, they didn't necessarily know the other participants in personal ways and yet the nature of the content within the course, and the ways in which teacher educators were called to interact with such content, made it deeply

personal. This course addressed equity and inequality and bias and discrimination- content that demands a different level of engagement and personal investment. Building a relationship around such content forced such interactions to be personal, intimate, and often deeply introspective. Accordingly, engaging in these relationships involved emotional risk and vulnerability, as individuals needed to be open and personal in a space with professional parameters. The relationships within this context were emotional and they required emotional labor to establish and especially to maintain and foster. Despite that fact, or maybe because of that fact, the participants were incredibly grateful to have the time and space to further develop their relationships with other teacher educators. Each of the participants commented about the ways in which they found their relationships with the other teacher educators to be personally rewarding, supportive, and beneficial. They were all actively working to develop and foster such relationships even though the process was not always simple and rarely apathetic.

In other reflections on the development of generative relationships, it becomes clear that, while these relationships are incredibly important, they also included challenges that require attention and understanding.

I am disappointed because I feel like I knew the other PLC leaders so much better last year. There were a lot more conversations between the leaders; talking about what we were going to be doing and what we have seen or done. We were sharing resources or ideas or comments among each other. That was something I really liked last year, the amount of sharing among the PLC leaders, and I have really missed it this year. Maybe it was because we were all new together last year so

we were just figuring it out together. Maybe since there are now different levels of experience among the PLC leaders, no one is starting the conversations or connections like before? Anyway, the other PLC leaders are really great and I wish I had more opportunity to talk and share with them. (Kim, Reflection, PLC 8)

Kim is trying to better understand why she is struggling to connect and build generative relationships with the teacher educators in this current context to the same degree she did in the previous year. She questions multiple influences that could be contributing to this difficulty and wonders if it related to diverse levels of experience and familiarity (or *apprenticeship*) within the group of teacher educators this year. While Kim's example illustrates some of the complexity of building the more affectionate and admiring aspects of generative relationships, there were additional times in which such relationships illustrated very different interactions of human engagement.

### **Relationships as Competition, Doubt, and Insecurity.**

She [another PLC leader] tried to solve problems with my candidate and also with Jane's candidate. I know she is just trying to help but I feel like she is crossing a line. Is that my own personal jealousy? Is she connecting with students in a way that I am not and am I am jealous of that? Taylor has said she often compares herself to the other PLC leaders and worries she doesn't measure up. I am doing that too. I am comparing and thinking, 'ok, my group is probably better than his group, but it's not better than hers'. That's so ridiculous! But it's real. Why do I feel they can do it, but I can't or that a specific candidate would have been better off in a different group? I especially worry about this with my most challenging candidate. Sometimes I think there wouldn't have been any problems if he was in a different group. Maybe I was weak and scared and avoided the situation in hopes that it would go away instead of getting worse like it did. I know he would have had problems no matter which group he was in but I still blame myself and think others could have been better than me.

While the relationships within this study were often a source of support and strength for the teacher educators, they also served as a source of *competition, doubt, and insecurity*. Within a dialogic reflection following a PLC meeting, Taylor and I discussed an aspect of the complexity of the relationships we were forming with the other PLC leaders. We shared how it felt a bit ironic that the people that were becoming such a source of support for us in the work, were also the people that tended to make us feel the most insecure and doubtful about our own capabilities and practice. Not only were teacher educators addressing the emotional labor involved with insecurities from their relationships with the candidates, they were concurrently addressing additional self-doubt based on comparison and competition with the other educators.

Taylor shared that she continually thinks about what the other PLC leaders are doing and how their work is going for them. She elaborated about how that thought process inevitably leads her to think that everyone else is establishing great connections and that their candidates must love them. She wonders if the other teacher educators are having amazing conversations that are making a difference and she isn't. Somewhat tentatively, I agreed that I felt the same way and that other PLC leaders I had talked to alluded to a similar sense of insecurity and questioning regarding their own perceptions of themselves in comparison to the other PLC leaders. I was tentative because I somehow felt that admitting that would undermine my own sense of professionalism or competence. We both agreed that it was a bit troubling that we felt so insecure in this role in ways that we didn't feel in our other roles and positions: "This work has a humbling force to it that is hard to understand or define" (Jessica, Dialogic Reflection

with Taylor, PLC 4). What was hard to understand and define was the emotional labor and affective reflexivity that was such a dominant, yet unrecognized, force throughout this work. As teacher educators, we didn't talk about the reality of the emotional labor we were feeling in a way that validated it; we talked about it in a way that made it seem like our biggest fault or deficits that needed to be removed. Armstrong and Huffington (2004) call for a shift in common perception regarding the presence and influence of emotions as deficient or problematic, but rather encourage "understanding of the emotional undertow of people's experience in organizational life as a source of intelligence into the challenges and dilemmas they are facing" (p. 3). Through relationships with one another, even when they were competitive relationships, we learn that others also struggled emotionally with the affective realities of the work and, consequently, it became more normalized and manageable.

While the teacher educators admitted that, within the process of developing generative relationships, they sometimes felt incredibly insecure and even somewhat competitive within such relationships, they also realized that there was a sort of camaraderie in sharing such insecurities as they learned they weren't alone in their feelings. "You're undermining yourself. I don't think you're alone in your experience at all. You are undermining yourself, you have an incredible resume of experience. I am so impressed by you and think you have a ton to offer. That being said, know you aren't alone in how you feel, we all feel incompetent" (Jessica, Interview with Taylor, Nov. 1, 2013). In the moments when teacher educators shared their emotionality, they gained an awareness of what was often unconsciously influential. Awareness of emotional

responses allowed teacher educators to normalize them in ways that could then be understood, processed and responded to in a much more productive way.

Throughout the span of the course there were often instances when one PLC leader would engage with another PLC leader's teacher candidate. While this had the potential to be an effective and successful strategy to better meet the needs of the teacher candidates, there were also times when this became a point of contention or rivalry between the teacher educators. Sometimes the contention was legitimate in that there might be information that was unknown to the intervening PLC leader and accordingly the intervention caused uninformed, and sometimes inappropriate, responses or advice: "Tonight, she [another PLC leader] talked with a teacher candidate in my group and then talked to me about how this candidate has some frustrations and concerns that I should be aware of. Meanwhile I am thinking, 'yup, those "frustrations" have been brought up at a case meeting. This is way over your head at this point, I wish you wouldn't have gotten involved'. Unfortunately, I can't say any of that to her so I just tried to grin and bear it" (Jessica, Reflection, Great Lesson 8).

It is evidently clear from this reflection that my reaction in that moment was entirely driven by emotions: anger, frustration and possibly my own insecurities related to this candidate and to the actions of the other teacher educator. While my own beliefs about masking emotional responses in certain professional contexts dictated how I internalized such feelings within this engagement, the intense emotional response was still present and demanded time and attention for me to process and diffuse. My relationship and engagement with this teacher educator forced me to see that I was angry

and even resentful of the teacher candidate and the way he was influencing other teacher educators and potentially shaping perceptions of me. Because I did not have a generative relationship with this teacher educator I was not able to process any of my emotional responses, which in turn made the emotional responses even more intense.

While there were instances when the contention between PLC leaders was based on clear content disagreements, there were also times when the PLC leader relationships became contentious or competitive because of individual emotional insecurities.

Why did she [teacher candidate] go to him [another PLC leader] tonight to talk? She was crying to him and I know what it was about, I have been there trying to support her all along? I feel like I can't establish a strong relationship with her, yet I'm telling my candidates they must build strong relationships with their students. I feel like I'm failing. She probably trusts him. Why not me? Why didn't she come to me? He probably knows what to say and do, and I don't. (Taylor, Dialogic Reflection, PLC 5)

From an outside perspective observing this incident, the teacher candidate probably found someone who was available and present in that moment to share her concerns with. However, I know that she talked with the other PLC leader about the exact same things that she had been talking to Taylor about. Her concerns, which were incredibly real, complex, and intense, were not going away and she was likely pursuing every avenue she could to try to find some resolution to problems that couldn't be solved by a PLC leader. Ironically, the PLC leader that she spoke with that night expressed the same sense of remorse about the fact that he felt like he couldn't help her in the ways in

which she needed. It was beyond his capacity and capabilities. Ironically, he commented that the teacher candidate was lucky to have Taylor as her PLC leader because she was probably way better than him at providing the support the candidate needed.

**Professional Network or Intimate Human Connection: Personal professional or professional personal?**

I am good at building relationships with students. I have always been told that I do that very well and I know that students like me for that. But I wonder, what aspects of that make me a good teacher and what aspects of that might be problematic? What about my relationship to the content being taught? Is that relationship strong and does it interact with my student relationships as a part of my overall sense of being a teacher? What about professional boundaries and the times when I can't rely on personal relationships but need strong, formal, more professionally oriented relationships? I worry that some of my student relationships tend to get too personally oriented in ways that can make my work harder in certain situations.

Bullough and Gitlin (2001) describe teaching as a way of being with, and relating to, others. When they extend this into teaching about teaching, they state that it requires more than “just dispensing information in a timely fashion but of building trust, of talking and problem-solving together” (p. 3). John Loughran and Tom Russell (2007) extend that conceptualization to emphasize that teaching is relationship: “Understanding teaching as a relationship hinges on a responsiveness to the dynamic nature of the teaching and learning environment and a sensitivity to its participants” (Loughran & Russell, 2007, p. 6). If teaching is critically dependent upon, and sometimes even synonymous with, the notion of relationship and relationship building, then there is a greater need to define specific types of relationships. While there are some professions that might allow for greater structure in drawing boundaries between personal and professional relationships, teaching is not necessarily one of them. This is especially true when we are teaching and

guiding others through processes of identity development related to constructs like race, class and gender. There are times when being professional means masking, hiding or repressing real feelings and sometimes that can't be done because teaching draws on such deep emotional reactions.

One evening, after a particularly heated and intense interaction with a teacher candidate who was incredibly angry about some of the content addressed in our PLC meeting, I reacted emotionally, gutturally, and passionately. Accordingly, I didn't feel as if I had reacted professionally. The call to mask or control our own emotions can be very challenging and contradictory to our natural human responses. The emotional labor required to mask and even betray realistic emotional responses to human interactions can be incredibly draining. Teachers are encouraged to build authentic and meaningful relationships; yet, when real reactions and real human responses to those relationships happen, teachers are often encouraged to act "professionally" and control or hide such emotions. The cognitive demands of such emotional management and emotion-masking can be incredibly draining and self-defeating when doing such intimate and emotionally complex and demanding work. An email exchange between two of the teacher educators illustrates this complexity: "Thanks for letting me NOT be professional in order to be REAL. That is one of the tricky parts of teaching- it requires us to be professional while also requiring us to be personal and build relationships. Sometimes those two things just don't go together" (Jessica, Email to Taylor after PLC 8).

There is a somewhat ambiguous line defining the recently popularized term *professionalism* within teaching as it relates to emotional expression and personal

connection. On the one hand, educator professionalism represents an ability to control emotional expressions and to set professional boundaries around the relationships one engages within. Simultaneously, there is an additional voice in teacher education that speaks of the critical importance of developing meaningful relationships with students and being authentic and honest as a model of humanness and compassion that students can see and experience. There are times, especially within moments of relationship building, when a teacher can feel as if she is being torn in two different directions through distinctive means of being a professional educator. This exists for pk-12 classroom teachers and it exists for teacher educators. Taylor illustrates the problematic nature of this duality in her reflection on a moment when she tried to build relationships and trust by intimately sharing aspects of herself in a way that she would later regret.

During one of my first PLC meetings I tried to be very personal and real with my teacher candidates and as I was doing it, I was like ‘argh’ this wasn’t the way this was supposed to happen. I think it is good to be revealing and honest, but I also think that the way I started it was not as productive as it was the year before. I shared too much of myself too soon and then I shared something that I struggle to talk openly about and when they didn’t respond appropriately it really got to me. Not only did I feel completely deflated and insecure but I think I might have lost some of the respect and credibility I am trying so hard to gain. (Taylor, Interview, Nov. 1, 2013)

Taylor’s attempt to establish an authentic professional relationship by engaging personally undermined the sort of authority or credibility that she also needed to build

within that space. In a related way, Jane struggled to connect with one of her students and tried multiple different ways of building a relationship with this particular candidate. Jane feels frustrated that she cannot establish a more personal human connection with the candidate. She feels the only relationship they have is completely professional and feels more like forced interaction than any sort of relationship. She has previously discussed her challenge regarding the formality and lack of connection in developing any sort of meaningful relationship with this candidate. While she has expressed her challenges in trying to move this relationship from an overly professional and distant connection, the following interaction shows that the teacher candidate is also clearly struggling with engaging in appropriate and positive human connection.

After class tonight, the student with whom I am struggling the most stayed after to apologize for his phone ringing twice. When I asked if he needed anything, his response was a backrub. Weird. I'm trying so hard to connect with him. I think this is one of those relationships where you can try too hard and maybe he's picking up on that. (Jane, Reflection, PLC 4)

The balance between building intimate human connections within relationships that are established within professional contexts can be an ongoing struggle for teachers and teacher educators. There is a need to keep relationships professional in a way that allows those engaged in the relationships to maintain their defined and expected roles. Yet, there is also a need to make relationships authentic and personal for humanizing engagement and connections. Such challenges are magnified when similar age adults are working together and attempt to build personally-oriented, generative relationships,

especially when they are working in a context that demands care, empathy, passion and compassion.

Because of the strong personal relationship we have developed, Jane just sent me a very personal email sharing her current personal struggles. I am really struggling with how to balance being removed and staying professional as a colleague and researcher while still respecting her and our relationship. I don't want to make her uncomfortable in any way. I am worried for her, and my heart is breaking for her. How do I balance that human dynamic, that compassion, with my role as a researcher and a professional colleague? How do I be a deeply compassionate *professional*? Is it wrong that I am struggling with this?

Relationships are independently unique, contextually shaped and influenced by the differing roles taken on by those within the relationships. There are aspects of power and positionality involved within relationships, and in this case, the boundaries of privacy determine the ways in which relationships can develop across time and place. Within the conceptualization of *attachment theory*, “internal working models of relationships contain generalized information about the self, others, and self–other relationships that shape the development of new relationships” (Sply et al. 2011, p. 463). Relationships are defined by the participants within them and the ways in which those participants connect and engage with one another for specific purposes and outcomes.

Why didn't I get to know you sooner in my graduate career? I think I would have been much happier and well-adjusted and certainly wouldn't have felt so alone and different. Your comments about being a parent while also being a student meant a lot to me. It has been difficult to continually swallow my pride as I realize that I haven't done what everyone around me has, (related to academics) because I have been *raising* children- not just writing about them. I agree, that academia isn't always family friendly, I am amazed by how much that exists in education related departments. I feel like sometimes I am so negatively judged for the ways having children can get in the way of doing the work we are trying to do for children. I often joke about the irony- don't bother me right now [children], I am busy trying to make a difference for children. I can't tell you what a difference it makes to hear that someone else feels the same way, especially someone who I respect so much. Getting to know you makes it easier to really be me here.

My relationship with Jane developed from a personally oriented foundation. We weren't able to build a strong relationship until we shared personally. From that point, we built a powerful, generative relationship that allowed both of us to think more deeply about our teaching practice, to challenge each other professionally, and to develop our own teacher educator identities more deeply than we ever would have independently. While there were sometimes personal aspects that challenged the more professionally oriented work within our relationship- the strength, honesty, and safety allowed for specific areas of growth and development that weren't found elsewhere.

While Jane's agency and engagement seemed to come through personal connections, Kim tended to be more professionally oriented in her relationship establishments. Kim and I tended to connect, initially at least, through critical analysis of the content and practices within our work. Eventually Kim and I moved our relationship toward more personally oriented connections while, in contrast, Jane and I began to push and challenge each other in more pedagogically and conceptually oriented ways. Relationships are unique, they depend on the individual engagement of those within them acting within the parameters of the larger contexts in which they engage. Generative relationships for teaching and learning require personal, intimate human connection and they require professionalism. Ideally, each element constructs the other in the process of establishing productive, generative relationships within professionally oriented contexts.

## Conclusion

My most tumultuous relationship ultimately provided my most significant growth, in the complicated way that only happens through authentic human engagement. On the surface, the candidate was trying to move our relationship in a positive direction as we both knew it had become strained. He had been to a case meeting that he believed was only caused by his interaction with me, so he was trying to improve our relationship. While his methodology for improvement seemed productive to him, it felt like an inappropriate professional interaction for me. I had spent months developing a relationship with this candidate- one that had involved intense emotions and vulnerabilities- yet our relationship was still constrained by the invisible and undefined boundaries of a "professional" relationship. Such ambiguity causes problems. He attempted to improve our necessary relationship through increased personalization, while I felt such efforts further weakened our professionally oriented relationship. It was a necessary and forced relationship. Although I wonder, can we call a relationship forced? Relationships happen. They exist because two individuals engage with one another through simultaneous existence within a shared context. This relationship happened- my responsibility was to exist within it in a way that was professionally and personally productive for me and for the teacher candidate.

Ultimately, relationships were more than just the simplistic conceptualization of ongoing interactions within a shared space. The relationships I had, within this work, allowed me to go much deeper into the challenges and complexities of the real work within my roles as a teacher educator. Similarly, within his own self-study work, Shawn Bullock (2007) comes to define teaching and teacher education as a relationship. He determines that his own 'pedagogy of teacher education' could not grow or develop without relationships. It happened within and through the relationships that he had. My relationships with fellow teacher educators allowed me to critically analyze and critique my practices, my philosophies, and ultimately my own developing teacher educator identity in ways that I wouldn't have been capable or aware of otherwise. Relationships allowed me to be public with my thinking, questioning, and self-critique in ways that I couldn't have done in a larger public sphere, but wouldn't have ever conceptualized independently. Making my thoughts, my hesitations, my concerns, and my self-perceived

weaknesses public, by sharing them with someone I trusted, allowed me to admit and accept things that otherwise would have been left untouched in my own educator identity development.

I strongly believe that the other teacher educators shared my need for, and belief in, the power and potential of generative relationships. The relationships in this study, as portrayed through the data, offered support and strength in times of weakness and need. Generative relationships also illustrated the ways in which we foster affection for those we admire and build our own aspects of apprenticeship accordingly. Through the moments of underlying competition that seem to exist within the foundation of our very humanity, we are given a chance to explore and understand our own doubts and insecurities as a requirement for growth. Finally, whether relationships are primarily structured as professionally personal or personally professional is really just semantics-relationships happen within the complexly diverse contexts of our lives. The human connections we establish within those contexts influence and determine who we are. The multiple aspects and manifestations of generative relationships allowed teacher educator identities to grow and develop in ways that would not, and could not, have happened in isolation.

The other teacher educators said I shouldn't respond to him, that I should just leave it alone now. But I do need to interact in some way. I have built a relationship with him [TC] and that is exactly what this is all about. Teaching is not just a presentation of facts from one person to another. I have built a relationship with him- not a positive one- but a relationship. Because of that I need to stand up for myself and defend myself in our relationship and in the ways in which we will interact and engage. I feel accountable to the relationship we have established, even if I don't necessarily feel accountable to him or to his actions. Our relationship has a piece of me in it- if I don't attend to that I am ignoring who I am within the teacher I'm trying to be.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **Reflection and Summary**

I took on this work because I knew there was an important story to tell. I was not wrong. The work of educating teachers and preparing them for the complexity of teaching in classrooms today involves deep understandings of teacher education pedagogy, openness to develop and critically analyze ones own developing identity, and ongoing emotional labor; all of which can be incredibly overwhelming and demanding. While current research, practice, and policy focuses on the ways in which teachers must meet the needs of their diverse students there is much less emphasis on the requirements of teacher educators to meet the needs of those teachers.

During the 2016 American Education Research Association annual conference, Brad Olson spoke as one of the leading voices in the field of teacher identity. He called for moves to re-conceptualize the applications of teacher identity as a useful and necessary research frame because it treats teachers as whole persons across contexts and it allows for theoretical cohesion while recognizing teacher subjectivity. I agree and believe that through deeper and richer understandings of the concepts of teacher identity, teacher education research and practice can find specific understandings and approaches that allow diverse teachers, across contexts, to develop and refine their practices in theoretically supported and cohesive ways. Current research is addressing the knowledge and skills teacher educators need to best teach teachers (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, McIntyre & Demers, 2008; Darling-

Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Loughran, 2006, 2007; Zeichner, 2005). Teacher identity frameworks provide a means of understanding how such knowledge and skills can be enacted in realistic and meaningful ways across vastly different individuals and across the diverse interiors of teacher education.

Through the ongoing analysis and of the data and the literature I have attempted to construct a conceptualization of the identity development as it was presented through the stories of experience from each of the teacher educators. The findings showed that teacher educator enactments are directly related to the engagements of education as illustrated through the recursive loops within the diagrams. Additionally, both constructs are recursively looped to the contexts or interiors of teacher education and as was mentioned before, emotions provide the recursive loops but they also tend to permeate all other aspects of educator identity development. Each of the elements was looked at independently and also in relationship to the other significant elements of teacher educator identity development.

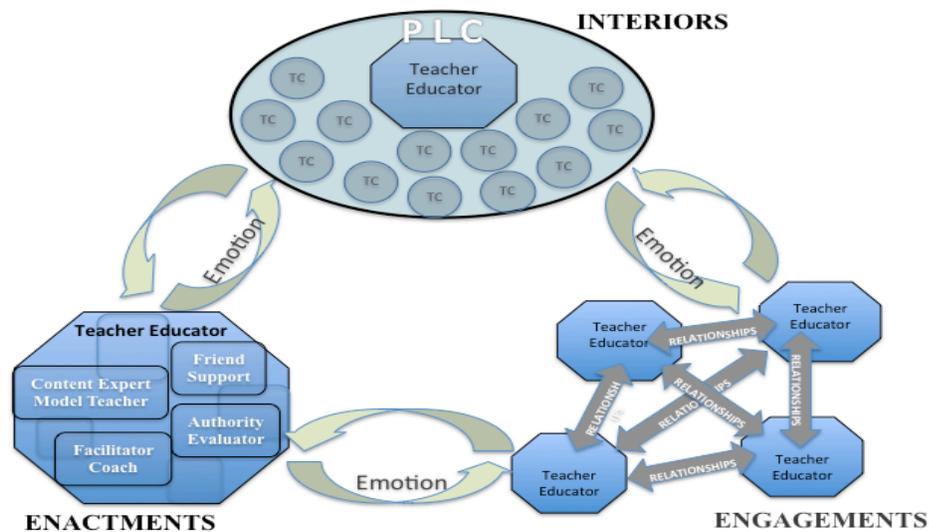


Figure 9. Components of Teacher Educator Identity Development

The teacher educator participants within this study were nothing short of heroes, in my humble opinion. They took every action and reaction from their teacher candidates seriously and authentically. They reflected constantly on what the true needs of their teacher candidates were and they critically analyzed their own practices related to those needs. But there was more. They were also critical of themselves, in an ongoing way, that pushed them to think honestly and emotionally about who they really were and who they hoped to become as they influenced future teachers. While it was outwardly evident that they were thinking deeply about how to best support teacher candidates; their stories helped illuminate the hard work they were doing to also develop themselves. That is a story that is often less told. Their enactment and engagement in becoming teacher educators forced them to be critical of their own histories, question their understandings and perceptions, admit their faults and weaknesses, and dig deep into the highly vulnerable and emotional core of their identity.

Additionally, in their work in the moments that mattered, the teacher educators used their affective responses- sometimes consciously and sometimes not- as a realistic way of existing within the intensely emotional interiors of education. Sometimes their responses were joyful, excited or passionate. Other times, they were vulnerable, insecure and filled with self-doubt. Such emotional responses were a very real and influential part of the work that often received very little attention or recognition.

Preparing teacher candidates to be competent and capable turned out to be intensely emotional work that demanded a certain degree of personal investment and sacrifice. Because of that, I would argue that each of the teacher educators was left with

an awareness of certain spaces within themselves that are still unfinished, raw, and certainly not understood. I know that I was. In seeking to “develop” the components of my own teacher educator identity, I was pushed to think in ways that would leave me questioning and uncertain.

I am still scared a little bit about what I think as a white person- what I experience, what I know, what I drive home to every day. I facilitate these conversations and teach this content and then I drive home to my reality- white, socioeconomically advantaged and in many ways, seeping with privilege. That is where I live and the space in which I exist. I metaphorically and literally drive into the city to deal with the complexities of urban education and then I go back to a different reality. What do I do with that? I can't change who I am or where I came from, but I worry that sometimes maybe I deny it or ignore it and that also doesn't seem right. Sometimes, it seems like the more I think about who I am in this work, the less I think I know.

There is no way to push others to dive deeply into understandings about race, gender identity, and socioeconomic status without uncovering aspects of one's own self that you don't necessarily know how to understand or develop. These stories were intended to illustrate the way in which teacher educator identity develops. Yet, that would have been a simplistic outcome of this work. Teacher educator identity is a composite of multiple elements existing as multilayered influences, experiences, values, beliefs, and ways of being- that all interact and coexist across moments and spaces. Identity development happens in every moment throughout the life we all live, and to try to provide boundaries on that would be unattainable. The intent of this work was not to seek boundaries or parameters. What was important was a deeper understanding of the ways in which individual components of such multifaceted identity development interact and engage and how that can cause specific actions, reactions and understandings. These

stories provided a window in which to see and better understand the reality of teacher education and the movements of those who engage within it.

From this work it became clear that the interiors of teacher education (Chapter 5) are emotional spaces. They shape and are shaped by the interactions that happen within them. The PLC context was an extremely powerful structural design to facilitate the deep identity work of teacher candidates and teacher educators that needed to happen. Each PLC context quickly became an individual sentient culture through the ways in which the teacher educators established it and influenced its evolution. It was found that specific influences shaped the emotional valence of each PLC including: the *teacher educators' prior experiences, course content, embedded relationships, and influential community members*. Most significantly, it was found that each PLC culture was a sort of emotional being of its own and the emotions within the fluid climate of each PLC would shape the enactments and engagement of those within it.

This study also showed the significance of the enactments of teacher educators (Chapter 6). Teacher educators enact multiple roles and from differing positionalities as they interact with teacher candidates. The data highlighted four overarching categories of roles as significant in the work of teacher educators in a PLC structure: 1) *facilitator and coach* 2) *authority, evaluator, and gatekeeper* 3) *content expert and model teacher* 4) *colleague, friend and support*. While these generalized categorizations of enactment are certainly not seen as all-inclusive they provide a structure for thinking about the more specific roles taken on through the participants' work.

An additional area of importance within the findings explored the engagements of teacher educators (Chapter 7). Within the parameters of this study, the engagements that were emphasized existed primarily within the relationships between teacher educators. The term generative relationship was used to describe the types of relationships that stood out from the data as relevant and significant in shaping the identity development of teacher educators. It was found that generative relationships served specific purposes and influences on the work of teacher educators as: *support and strength, affection admiration and apprenticeship, competition doubt and insecurity, and professional network and intimate human connection.*

Finally, it became clear through the course of this work that emotions are a significant and highly influential component of the work teacher educators do to prepare teacher candidates for student diversity. Emotion and the emotional labor they attended to permeated all aspects of the work. Emotions shaped and were shaped by, the enactments and engagements that happened within the interiors of teacher education. Emotional labor constituted much of the work of teacher education. Emotions had to be explored in order to look at identity development within a sociocultural conceptualization that posits;

Social emotions and their associated thoughts and actions as biologically built but culturally shaped; they reflect our neuropsychological propensity to internalize the actions of others but are interpreted in light of our own social, emotional, and cognitive experiences. (Immordino-Yang, 2016, p. 71)

While I tried to situate emotions within a distinct findings chapter, that felt conceptually inappropriate. The influence of emotions could not be told in isolation as the emotions

were an influence on the enactments and engagements and they were products of that as well. They were alive within the interiors that were explored. Emotions existed within and from the other findings and in turn, they were the findings.

Understanding emotions is also (and perhaps even more critically) about the meaning that students [or candidates] are making- that is, the ways in which students and teachers are experiencing or feeling their emotional reaction and how their feelings steer their thoughts and behavior, consciously or not. Emotions are not add-ons that are distinct from cognitive skills. Instead emotions, such as interest, anxiety, frustration excitement, or a sense of awe in beholding beauty, become a dimension of the skill itself. (Immordino-Yang, 2016, p. 21).

Throughout this study I learned that we are instinctual beings who act and are driven by emotions. Our emotions determine our actions and reactions and can dictate the ways we manipulate situations and interactions. There is great potential for further learning and development about how such emotional reactions and responses can become more purposeful and even emancipatory for those whom they engage. Such conceptualizations provide means to better prepare teacher educators to understand the reality of the work they are doing as they engage within teacher education. More specific understandings of the influences of emotions can offer more informed predictions regarding normative expectations of emotionality across the various roles (enactments), relationships (engagements), and cultural contexts (interiors) in teacher education. Such information and predictions allow for more meaningful and relevant preparation and

support so that teacher educators can purposefully understand emotional labor in order to productively manage and respond to it.

## **Implications for Research and Practice**

### **Education and Development.**

In looking at this work as a whole there were some overarching implications that arose from the findings. First and foremost, the data highlighted that the work of teacher educators requires emotional enactments and engagements within the valence of teacher education interiors. Teacher educators need purposeful and specifically designed professional development in order to adequately be prepared to do the work of teacher education. In order to grow and develop teacher educators need various systems of support, “the evolution of identities and practices is an on-going process, so it is crucial that appropriate professional learning opportunities for new and experienced teacher educators be provided as a core function of teacher education faculties” (Williams et al., 2012, p. 257). While certain programs and institutions are making significant efforts to do this within their program design, in most cases, I think it can be much more intentional and directed, “professional development of teacher educators must be purposefully conceptualized, thoughtfully implemented, and meaningfully employed” (Loughran, 2014, p. 280). Further research, policy, and practice should explore and implement the structures, supports, and practices that allow teacher educators to grow and develop professionally; including but not limited to, professional learning communities across teacher educator contexts, supports for meaningful reflection and coaching, and purposefully designed teacher education coursework and professional development

opportunities.

In the current climate of assessment and accountability, pushes for such integration can tend toward additional standards and assessment to insure teacher educator accountability, but that is not what I am endorsing. I think that institutions need to provide teacher educators the necessary preparation, education, and ongoing coaching and support required to prepare teacher candidates who are equity-minded teachers capable of meeting the needs of all students. Such efforts demand a “strong organizational culture that provides opportunities to construct personal professional narratives, and to examine how teacher identities are relevant in teacher education, as essential to the task of becoming a teacher educator” (Williams et al., 2012, p. 257). This will be addressed more thoroughly in the following sections addressing specific implications extrapolated from the research findings.

#### **Teacher Educator Enactment.**

Related to the individual findings within this study there are specific implications related to the roles and corresponding necessary capabilities of teacher educators. The findings within this study indicated that there are multiple roles and presented categories of role orientations that teacher educators need to enact to adequately prepare equity minded teachers. Current research and practice should explore these very different roles and provide preparation for teacher educators accordingly. Had I been more aware of the specific nature of each of the roles I was being asked to fulfill and been able to learn about the necessary capabilities related to those roles, I would have been much more competent in managing and employing the corresponding expectations. If teacher

educators are expected to be an evaluator and authority figure for teacher candidates, they need adequate preparation to fulfill the tasks related to that role. They also need an understanding related to how, and even when that role should be taken up. It would also be helpful to further explore and understand the ways in which that specific role interacts with the other roles teacher educators fulfill in beneficial and problematic ways. Teacher educators are expected to fulfill different roles and the differences across such roles sometimes conflict. There is a need for additional research regarding the specific capabilities related to such roles as well as deeper understandings about the specific ways in which enacting differing roles can allow teacher educators to better support, guide and coach teacher candidates.

Considerations regarding the diversity of roles and the related expectations teacher educators are called to fulfill in their work with teacher candidates, illustrates the broad range of capabilities teacher educators should have in order to meet such expectations. Teacher educators need knowledge and experience of teaching, school contexts, teacher education contexts, and of the overarching profession. They need strong interpersonal skills and relationship building capabilities. They need presentation skills, facilitation skills, and leadership skills. They should have a strong sense of self-awareness and self-confidence. They need conflict resolution skills. They need to be able to understand that their own identity is fluid and constantly in development, formation, and reformation. Teacher educators should possess a sense of emotional control and stability to be able to manage their own emotions in ways that allow them to remain empathetic and caring yet productive when coaching others. Teacher educators need

strong dispositional awareness and willingness to be coached dispositionally for their own growth and development. While all of these capabilities are significant and important, it can quickly become problematic to try to make an all-inclusive list of the required capabilities and competencies required for successful teacher educators.

Different people will be teacher educators in different ways and across different contexts and with different candidates, influencing the timing and degree of such characteristics.

Based on the previously mentioned conceptualization of certain necessary teacher educator capabilities, it becomes possible to start to look at the development of a teacher educator professional identity across time, context and the span of a career. Steffy et al., (2000) present a model of the Life Cycle of the Career Teacher in which they posit that a teacher's career cycle has distinctly different phases that are constructed from different capabilities, understandings, and ultimately have different needs for professional development and growth. They define progressive stages that teachers go through throughout the life cycle of their career and the possible needs and strengths of each stage. From their work it is possible to visualize ways in which professional development can be developed more specifically and more meaningful to meet the specific needs of teacher educators at various development phases of their career. Steffy et al. (2000) is clear to point out that teachers ways of being and ways of knowing are very different across the different stages and that teachers in different phases should not be defined, assessed or understood through singularly limited parameters.

Similar to this idea of career life cycle for teachers (Steffy et al., 2000), the establishment of specific teacher educator capabilities provides a foundation to consider a

similar conceptualization for teacher educators. One of the challenges of defining the required understandings, pedagogies and professional identities for teacher educators rests on the fact that such research is often conducted for teacher educators as a bounded and stagnantly defined group when the diversity of contexts, experience, and roles makes it incredibly complex. If we consider some of the necessary capabilities of a successful teacher educator, we can then begin to consider how that might be different for a novice teacher educator in the initial stages of establishing a teacher educator identity than for a veteran teacher educator who is refining and adapting a teacher educator identity. There is a need for additional research to more clearly determine and define such capabilities across various contexts and phases of a teacher educator's development in order to better guide practices related to this way of thinking.

While there is a need to better educate and prepare teacher educators for the diversity of roles within teacher education, there is also a need to pursue further research regarding how to coach teacher educators throughout their experiences. Ongoing coaching for teacher educators, especially related to the ways in which the differing roles can take on different meanings and impressions across content, contexts, and relationships, is another area of teacher education that warrants additional research and development. Because the nature of teacher education can be manifested so differently across various contexts, there is a strong need for ongoing context and content specific coaching for teacher educators as they are working with teacher candidates. I think that the possibilities for implementation of this implication are incredibly diverse and could

manifest in very different ways, all with the potential for great success in developing highly competent and capable teacher educators.

The structure of the context within this study included multiple structures for supporting the work of teacher educators. Such structural and organization components included small PLCs for teacher candidates, a teacher educator PLC to foster learning and community at that level, and also graduate level teacher education courses. I think that all of these components hold great potential for future models of organization structure that creates productive teacher education interiors. Additional integration of specific strategies designed to foster ongoing coaching and support as well as purposeful establishment and development of generative relationships would further create supportive contexts in which enactment and engagement can flourish.

#### **Teacher Education Engagement.**

I have mentioned the potential for development of generative relationships as a means of better preparing and supporting practicing teacher educators. I think this is also a significant implication from this work and something that warrants further research, development and integration into practice. The data in this study showed that the teacher educators relied heavily on the teacher education related relationships that they built throughout their work. Such relationships provided support, encouragement, academic growth, and ultimately a deeper and more productive means of engaging with one another and with the content being taken up throughout teacher education. Such relationships were deemed, *generative*, within this study to emphasize the ways in which they needed to be purposeful and intentionally established and fostered to increase effectiveness,

understandings, and emotional support to foster the care and maintenance of the self-as-teacher, (McNally, 2008). As this work illustrated, teacher education includes incredibly intense emotional labor; the more teacher educators can be prepared to understand the emotions related to their work, as well as provided structures and supports, (through generative relationships and PLCs) the more easily teacher educators will be able to develop and utilize the positive and productive aspects of their teacher educator identities.

While it was not included within the parameters of this study, I would offer that there is a need for future research to address the potential of generative relationships as something that can be structurally organized, taught, and coached. Such research should specifically explore the initial evidence that arose from this work emphasizing the following requirements for successful generative relationships:

1. Shared context, understandings and overarching purpose
2. Simultaneous and similar shared experiences
3. Trust: professional and personal
4. Space and time (clearly defined, guaranteed and safe)
5. Balance of personal intimacy and professional distance

### **Emotion and Teacher Identity Development.**

An exploration of emotions and emotional labor was not the initial intent of this work. It arose from and within the work and demanded my attention in order to tell the whole story. Unfortunately, emotional data cannot be retroactively explored in certain circumstances. In certain observations and interview data, I could only imagine or assume

the emotions related to the moment, yet emotional data collection requires deep and thorough observation of subtle physical and performative manifestations of emotional reactions and responses. Individuals perform emotions very differently. While the core affects of emotions may be similar, the performance of such emotions can be dramatically different. Sometimes silences tell the strongest emotional stories. I wish I would have known the significance that emotions would play throughout this work before I started collecting data. The identity conflicts that teacher educators experienced caused emotional collisions. In hindsight I know that I needed to collect different data and in different ways to really explore the significance of emotional labor as identity work. Emotions can be manifested in deeply internal ways that take on very different performances and public presentations. Had I been more attuned to those subtle performances I could have collected and analyzed data much more deeply regarding this specific finding.

I often found myself thinking back and wishing I had data related to what existed around and within the moments that became emotional. I remember the moment when one of the teacher educators said to me, “I don’t know if I can do this anymore. I mean it. I really don’t. I just can’t take it anymore.” I remember that the emotional density within that space, within that moment, was suffocating. I think I remember that she looked out the window so I wouldn’t see tears that were already deeply hidden in the darkness of the night air. That single moment, in which the depth of a person was pushed to the brink of teacher identity extinction- I wasn’t prepared for that- logistically or philosophically. Not only was I not recording or taking notes in that moment, I wasn’t ready to understand the

depth of what it means to really be an engaged, relationally-oriented teacher. Teacher identity, constructed from deep enactment and engagement, can diminish aspects of a teacher's sense of self until it can feel like there really isn't much left. Teaching is emotional. Preparing to teach students in contexts where social justice and equity exist more as taunting ideals than actuality requires intense emotional labor that isn't often acknowledged or documented.

Accordingly, such conceptualizations of teacher identity are necessary to allow researchers to acknowledge affective reflexivity and emotional labor as real and significant aspects of the work of teacher education and development. Such elements require research to predict trends regarding various emotional states that are common in the work of teacher education. For example, if data shows that new teacher educators tend to experience feelings of insecurity and self-doubt, (as was consistently evident throughout this data), then future teacher educators can be prepared to expect such feelings, they can be provided supports, (such as generative relationships and critically reflective practices), to address and manage such emotions as they arise. Teacher educators who are aware of the possibility and presence of such affective and emotional forces can then learn how to respond productively and even powerfully within such forces as a means of more effective teacher education. The manifestations of the resulting pedagogies of emotional aspects of teacher educator identity will ultimately be different across contexts, so additional research is necessary to study different failures and successes across contexts.

Through the process of carrying out my own emotional work throughout this study I learned about who I was and who I hoped to become. As I continuously analyzed my own practices and identity I began to understand my own experiences and from that was able to more meaningfully shape my teacher self and teacher educator identity. Zembylas (2003a) emphasizes how “an investigation of the emotional components of teacher identity yield a richer understanding of the teacher self” (p. 213). I would not have been able to see the emotional labor I was investing in my teacher candidates and in myself if I had not gone through the process of such continuous affective reflexivity. I brought that sense of reflexivity to the various ways in which I would enact different roles. I included it in the ways I engaged and built relationships and I was forced to think critically about the place and influence of various affects within my own PLC context and the culture that was built within it. It was in doing that work that I became a teacher educator. Who I am specifically within that role is still evolving but I now know that I have a teacher identity and I am more deeply attuned to its fluidity and emotionality.

### **Critically Reflective Practice and Methodology.**

A final element of the findings in this work that stood out and has potential implications for future research and practice was related to reflection and reflective practice. While reflective practice has become a highly familiar and often referenced practice across education settings; there were some unique aspects of reflection that arose from the data in this study. The very fact that the teacher educators were forced to reflect consistently and continually throughout their teacher education experiences implemented a support and growth structure that they all agreed deeply pushed their own learning,

development and identity processing. What I found was most important in this was the fact that they were unable to reflect in ways that weren't meaningful or relevant to them. The participants- teacher educators and teacher candidates- needed the space to reflect authentically in their own format or the reflections were not deep, critical or meaningful. For multiple participants, their initial attempts to reflect in the way I requested, (via written response) was not at all effective for them. When they were able to experiment and find a structure and format that felt natural and authentic to them, then the participants started to reflect in much more critical and honest ways. Additionally, I found that when I tried to direct their reflections with suggestions or even prompts, the level of reflection was significantly undermined. They needed to reflect as a part of their growth and in response to the things they were really wrestling with at that moment related to their own identity development. What they did need was adequate time and space to take on the critical reflexivity required for identity development. It needed to be intentional and not just haphazard. When they were pushed to critically analyze and reflect on their own developing identities, they did, and accordingly they grew and developed. Future implementation of critically reflective practices should push for intentional and purposeful reflection through methods that are familiar and meaningful to those reflecting. I especially think there should be additional attention to ways to do such reflective practice through social media resources and more technologically current tools as that is what has become normalized and familiar for this generation of teacher educators and teacher candidates.

An additional insight gained through the reflective processes of the participants within this study was the fact that dialogic reflection, whether it was the first choice of participants or not, was absolutely the most powerful and meaningful way to push identity development. Dialogic reflection was powerful and it was the way in which identity development happened. I wish all of the data could have been collected that way, as it was an impactful means of developing teacher educators' identity and for allowing them to manage the challenges of the related emotional labor within teacher education.

Personally, I am someone who prefers to reflect privately and would rather not to talk to others as a means of critical reflection. However, it became strikingly clear throughout this experience that my deepest moments of growth and development happened in the dialogic reflections that I was pushed to participate in throughout the work. This was especially evident when I was called to reflect on the content and areas of growth that were harder to comprehend and required deeper self understanding and analysis in order to facilitate and coach others- like race. The highest correspondence of data codes across all of the data analysis was between reflection and race. The teacher educators and the teacher candidates reflected the most often and the most intimately and deeply when there were conversations or content related to race. They needed reflection at this time and the most meaningful reflection came through dialogic conversations within generative relationships. These were also the times in which PLC cultures were challenged and when the participants of those cultures had the most significant emotional responses. Race and race relations tended to be one of the most difficult areas of

discussion, facilitation, and growth within the teacher education content. Continued attention within research and practice is necessary and pressing.

## **Conclusion**

The scenario in my introduction occurred at a time when our country was facing very specific and troubling manifestations of racial distrust and inequity. I wish I could say that our context has improved but I fear it certainly has not. When I was teaching, September 11 happened, and it was my obligation to provide my students a sense of understanding about that event, but more importantly, about themselves in light of that event. The teacher candidates I am now working with are leading their students through conversations about Trayvon Martin, terrorism, Black Lives Matter, an emotionally charged presidential race and other ongoing topics of equity, justice, and human rights. Teachers need to be prepared for this reality of the work in teaching the caretakers of our future (Delpit, 1997). It is commonly accepted that we need to teach content and skills to teachers, but I wonder why it is sometimes forgotten that we also need to teach and support specific ways of enacting and engaging as a means of developing a sense of self that can manage the complexity of teaching and learning in a diverse world.

Teacher educators can and will be more prepared, capable, and ultimately successful if they are adequately educated for the complexity of their work. Teacher educator enactment can be explored and brought to light so that specific roles can be taken up meaningfully and with purpose across moments and spaces. Teacher engagements can be meaningfully structured and fostered to provide teacher educators the types of generative relationships that will allow them to succeed and flourish. Finally,

emotional understandings can be taught, predicted, and supported in ways that allow teacher educators (or classroom teachers) awareness and understanding about the normalcy of certain emotional responses. Accordingly, teacher educators will be more prepared and capable to respond productively rather than just react emotionally. The role of emotions in education is significant at all levels, “teacher educators should attend to the emotional challenges associated with learning to teach: informing students that they are not alone in experiencing identity conflicts, that these conflicts are often resolved incrementally, and that teacher identity construction is forever ongoing” (Olson, 2008, p. 38). Teacher identity development and the corresponding emotions associated with it are important for teacher learning and ultimately students’ learning. The multifaceted influences that impact the learning and well-being of a child extend far beyond the classroom. Teacher educators, in many ways, provide the very foundation that will ultimately find its way to every child. Accordingly, the work of teacher educators is critically important and demands research, development and commitment. We owe our children nothing less.

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## Appendix A: Course Description and Objectives



### EDHD 5000: CULTURES, SCHOOLS, & COMMUNITIES

(EDHD 5000, 5010, 5020)

2013-2014  4 Credits

#### Course Description

This course provides teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills to address social and cultural dimensions of education. Students explore a wide range of challenges and dilemmas facing contemporary educators in the U.S. and in other global locations. They examine original research and theory from the social sciences, and learn how they have informed various educational policies and actual approaches to teaching. The course begins with a focused study of how U.S. educational history has been shaped by competing norms and purposes. It then moves into the role of philosophy in defining those purposes, and shaping actual approaches to teaching. The course then shifts to examine multiple dimensions of humanity including race, culture, gender, gender orientation, class, worldview, perception, and language in and out of school. These concepts lay the foundation for study of cultural transmission and acquisition, the learning preferences of diverse students, and ultimately, culturally relevant pedagogy, cultural competence, and cultural intelligence. The course then explores community partnerships that support student learning, and how teachers may navigate the social and political environment of schools and school districts to be effective advocates for their students. The last part of the course examines three themes that are interwoven throughout: professionalism, teacher leadership, and adaptive expertise. In sum the course encourages teacher candidates to imagine both the realities and possibilities of schooling in the contemporary world.

Learning experiences are made up of *Great Lessons* consisting of large group meetings involving speakers, simulations, and multi-media presentations; readings; *Professional Learning Community* discussions, activities, and projects; *Field Assignments* in schools and communities; and a cumulative *Teacher Identity Study*. Selected PLC activities, Field Assignments, the TIS, and specific assignments on student diversity and culturally relevant pedagogy will form the basis for course assessments (details below).

*n.b.* EDHD 5000 combines material previously taught in EDHD 5005, School and Society, and EDHD 5009, Human Relations: Applied Skills for School and Society.

*n.b.* As this is course has a unique year-long format teacher candidates should register for EDHD 5000 and 5010 for the fall term; and EDHD 5020 for the spring term. Teacher candidates will receive a “K” (continuing) grade at the end of fall term; final grades will be assigned at the end of spring term.

### **Course Objectives**

- To understand the competing norms and ideals of public education in the U.S.
- To increase teacher candidates’ professional knowledge of the social, political, and philosophical foundations of American public education
- To understand the effects of educational law and policy on public education and governance structure(s) of public education
- To adopt a sophisticated understanding of human difference in the domains of race, ethnicity, gender, and gender orientation
- To understand the cultural basis for worldview, values, perception, categories of meaning, and language
- To be aware of the cognitive and worldview biases underlying prejudice, and discrimination, particularly in teaching and educational settings
- To be able to look at these issues in terms of history, power, and perception across society, groups, and individuals
- To be able to reflect, in an informed way, on how they, as multicultural individuals, will respond in positive and sensitive ways to diversity among their students in terms of race, culture, gender, and gender orientation
- To begin to articulate aspects of their own philosophy of teaching
- To be able to teach with cultural intelligence
- To adopt a global comparative perspective on the relationship between educational practices and policies, and local norms and values
- To use professional literature and the knowledge of colleagues as bases for inquiry and professional development
- To understand standards of conduct and professional ethics in the field of education
- To develop an enduring disposition towards reflection, deliberation, and critical inquiry which will support teacher candidates’ ongoing development as professional educators

## **Appendix B: Notice for Participation**

### Notice for Participation

*A University of Minnesota PhD candidate in Comparative and International Development Education is seeking volunteers to participate in a study exploring the process of teacher identity development within preservice professional learning communities. The purpose of the study is to better understand the process of teacher identity development, and the ways in which teacher educators support that process, to better understand teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse student learners. Participation involves interviews, focus group participation, willingness to be observed within the PLC context and sharing certain written reflections and assignments with the researcher. Answers and your decision to participate will be kept private. If you wish to be a part of this study or would like to know more about it, please e-mail Jessica Tobin at [tobi0082@umn.edu](mailto:tobi0082@umn.edu).*

## Appendix C: Informed Consent

### *Teacher Educator Identity Development: Preparing teacher candidates for student diversity*

This observation is being conducted by Jessica Tobin, PhD student, Comparative and International Development Education. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before giving consent.

**Background Information:** The purpose of this observation is to observe the process of teacher identity development within preservice professional learning communities. This professional learning community was selected because it contains teacher candidates and a teacher educator in the EDHD 5000/5010/5020 course at the University of Minnesota.

**Procedures:** The professional learning community will be video recorded and will then be viewed by the observer to notice practices of the group and the facilitator.

**Confidentiality:** The records and participants of this study will be completely anonymous and all records will be completely confidential. The observation notes will only be used for the purpose of this study and will not be shared with any other students, instructors or PLC facilitators associated with the course.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with any members of the Professional Learning Community, the course, or the University of Minnesota. If you decline voluntary participation, your comments and participation will not be included within the study in any way.

**Risks and Benefits:** There is no direct benefit to participants within in this observation.

**Contacts and Questions:** This observation is being conducted by Jessica Tobin. You may ask questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 330 Wulling Hall, 86 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0021, (612) 819-7363, [tobi0082@umn.edu](mailto:tobi0082@umn.edu), or contact Dr. Peter Demerath at [pmd@umn.edu](mailto:pmd@umn.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

#### **Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix D: Teacher Candidate Consent Form**

### **TEACHER CANDIDATE CONSENT FORM**

*Teacher Educator Identity Development:  
Preparing teacher candidates for student diversity*

You are invited to be in a research study exploring the process of teacher identity development within preservice professional learning communities. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher candidate in the EDHD 5010/5020 course at the University of Minnesota. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Jessica Tobin, PhD Candidate, Educational Policy and Administration, University of Minnesota.

#### **Background Information**

The purpose of this study is: to explore the process of teacher identity development, and the teacher educators' role within that process, as a necessary component of teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: participate in 2-3 formal interviews and ongoing informal interviews to discuss your experiences as a teacher candidate and explore the process of teacher preparation; participate in 2 focus groups with other teacher candidates; share personal reflections (written or recorded verbal); share selected TISS and PR assignments, allow for audio and/or video recordings of your PLC meetings.

#### **Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

The study has minimal risks. You may feel somewhat uncomfortable discussing some of your experiences or feelings regarding the challenges of teacher preparation and the process of teacher candidate identity development.

The benefits to participation are: multiple opportunities to reflect on your own developing teacher identity as well as your own developing teaching practice, opportunities to join in focus groups designed to provide collective reflection on the experience of becoming a teacher in a community of other teacher candidates, access to the record of your ongoing reflection throughout your teacher preparation.

#### **Compensation:**

Due to the nature of personal reflection included within this study, participants will be dismissed from completing one of the Personal Reflection assignments associated with this course.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. I will maintain sole access and confidentiality of all audio or video recordings. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Study data will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. Your participation will be kept confidential from all other teacher educators associated with the EDHD 5010/5020 course and will in no way affect your participation or success within the course. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Jessica Tobin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 330 Wulling Hall, 86 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0021, (612) 819-7363, [tobi0082@umn.edu](mailto:tobi0082@umn.edu), or you may contact Dr. Peter Demerath at [pmd@umn.edu](mailto:pmd@umn.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E: Teacher Educator Consent Form**

### **TEACHER EDUCATOR CONSENT FORM**

*Teacher Educator Identity Development:  
Preparing teacher candidates for student diversity*

You are invited to be in a research study exploring the process of teacher identity development within preservice professional learning communities.. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher educator in the EDHD 5000/5010/5020 course at the University of Minnesota. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Jessica Tobin, PhD Candidate, Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development, University of Minnesota.

#### **Background Information**

The purpose of this study is: to explore the process of teacher identity development, and the teacher educators' role within that process, as a necessary component of teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: participate in 2-3 formal interviews and ongoing informal interviews to discuss your experiences as a teacher educator and explore the process of teacher preparation; participate in a focus group/shared reflection with other teacher educators; share personal reflections (written or recorded verbal); share selected TISS and PR assignment feedback, allow audio and/or video recordings of your PLC meetings.

#### **Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

The study has minimal risks. You may feel somewhat uncomfortable discussing some of your experiences or feelings regarding the challenges of teacher preparation and the process of teacher candidate identity development.

The benefits to participation are: multiple opportunities to reflect on your own developing teacher educator identity as well as your own developing teaching practice, opportunities to join in focus groups designed to provide collective reflection on the experience of being teacher educators in a community of your peers, access to the record of your ongoing reflection throughout your experiences as a teacher educator.

#### **Compensation:**

I will provide a written copy of all of your reflections and interviews for you to use in any way that supports your own work and study.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. I will maintain sole access and confidentiality of all audio or video recordings. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Study data will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Jessica Tobin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 330 Wulling Hall, 86 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0021, (612) 819-7363, [tobi0082@umn.edu](mailto:tobi0082@umn.edu), or you may contact Dr. Peter Demerath at [pmd@umn.edu](mailto:pmd@umn.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects’ Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix F: Initial Teacher Candidate Interview Protocol**

### **Initial Interview Protocol – Teacher Candidates**

1. Lets talk a little bit about what brought you to the field of education and teaching.  
When did you first think about becoming a teacher?
2. Did you ever consider or pursue another career path?  
If so, why did you decide to leave that path and pursue teaching?
3. Are there any other teachers in your family or friends?  
If so, have they had an influence on your decision to become a teacher?
4. Talk about an experience you have had with a teacher, either positive or negative, that has significantly influenced you.
5. Why did you decide to pursue your education degree at the UMN?
6. What aspects of the UMN program have you found to especially positive?
7. What has surprised you, thus far, about your experiences in becoming a teacher?
8. What kind of teacher do you think you will be?
9. What makes a great teacher?
10. What parts of your personality do you think will help you to become an effective and successful teacher?
11. Are there aspects of your personality that you think will make teaching more difficult for you?
12. Do you think of yourself as a teacher yet? Do you think other people consider you as a teacher?
13. What are you most excited about for your student teaching experience?  
What are you most nervous about?
14. Do you think you need to change in any way to become a teacher?
15. Is there anything you want to add or anything you want to go back to and say more about?

## **Appendix G: Initial Teacher Educator Interview Protocol**

### **Initial Interview Protocol -Teacher Educators**

1. First, tell me about your own teaching experience and your career path up to this point.
2. Lets talk a little bit about what brought you to the field of education and teaching.  
When did you first think about becoming a teacher? ... and a teacher educator?
3. How have your own experiences teaching helped you become a teacher educator?
4. Does it feel different to teach prospective teachers than it did to teach (in your previous teaching context)?  
How so, talk about those differences and/or similarities.
5. What has surprised you, thus far, about your experiences in becoming a teacher educator?
6. What parts of your personality do you think help you to be an effective and successful teacher educator?
7. Are there aspects of your personality that you feel make working with teachers more difficult for you?
8. What are you most excited about for this teacher educator experience?  
What are you most nervous about?
9. Do you think you need to change in any way to become a teacher educator?
10. What do preservice teachers need from their teacher preparation experiences, both at the University and within their practicum experiences?
11. What do you believe teacher candidates need from their PLC facilitators?
12. What role do you hope to play in their teacher development as a PLC facilitator?
13. Do you have any specific goals, objectives, hopes for the teacher candidates within your PLC?
14. Is there anything you want to add or anything you want to go back to and say more about?

## Appendix H: Ongoing Informal Interviews

### Informal Interview Talking Points

1. Initial Impressions: (Beginning of the course, PLC group establishment)
2. Development of PLC Group
3. Current Status of PLC Group
  - PLC Meetings
  - Great Lessons
  - Practicum and Student Teaching
- Course Content:
  - GL/PLC 1: Ways of Being Human
  - GL/PLC 2: Norms, Ideals of US Public Education
  - GL/PLC 3: Philosophies of Education
  - GL/PLC 4: Culture and Learning
  - GL/PLC 5: Race, Culture and Education
  - GL/PLC 6: Gender Diversity in Education
  - GL/PLC 7: Family and Community Partnerships
- Assignments and Feedback:
  - TISS 1: Cultural Autobiography
  - TISS 2: Educational Autobiography
  - TISS 3: Developing Philosophy of Education
  - PR 1: Culture, Learning and Socialization
  - PR 2: (Virtual) Student Diversity Jigsaw
  - TISS4: Gender and Sexual Orientation
  - PR3: Family and Community Engagement
- Your Development as a Professional Educator (your teacher identity)
  - Personal experiences and history
  - Beliefs and values
  - Integration of new ideas and content
  - Influence of current experiences
  - Your ideals and goals