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Systems of Accountability as a Technology of Governmentality: Policy, Preparation, and Inclusive Practice

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SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AS A TECHNOLOGY OF
GOVERNMENTALITY: POLICY, PREPARATION, AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

A Dissertation Presented

by

DENISE LAVOIE LAFRANCE

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By

DENISE LAVOIE LAFRANCE

Approved as to style and content by:

Sally Galman, Chairperson

J. Camille Cammack, Member

Ruth-Ellen Verock-O'Loughlin, Member

Jean Forward, Member

Christine B. McCormick, Dean
School of Education

DEDICATION

To my wonderful and loving husband, Michael, and our three vivacious and clever children Michaela, Lindsey, and Matthew LaFrance.

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ABSTRACT

SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AS A TECHNOLOGY OF
GOVERNMENTALITY: POLICY, PREPARATION, AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

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DENISE LAVOIE LAFRANCE B.S.ED., FITCHBURG STATE COLLEGE

M.ED., LESLEY COLLEGE

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Dr. Sally Galman

Neoliberal ideology frames the discourse of the current political rhetoric of education as an economic investment in the preparation of students to compete in a global economy. These discourses that emanate from policymakers shape the construct of schooling and control the trajectory of education in the US. As education policy becomes centralized, accountability systems are assumed to be the driver of positive educational outcomes and higher student achievement; however, the impact of these systems of accountability shape teaching practice and may be pushing students with disabilities out of the competition and violating their right to access and participate in general education. This study examined the outcomes of current educational policy on daily teaching practice and its impact on inclusive practice. In addition, it examined teachers' self-regulation as a means to adapt and remain in a regulated environment. The perspectives of beginning and experienced teachers from an urban and a rural area were analyzed through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis.

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CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the latter part of the twentieth century, society and government changed on many different levels and in various parts of the world. There have been vast economic, social, technological, and industrial transitions in the workplace; however, despite these significant changes, the structure of schooling has remained unchanged. Prior to the 1980's, teaching and learning was a public responsibility and functioned in local contexts. As the US expanded its economy to include global partners, the Reagan administration began viewing education through a global economic lens. This emphasis on business and the economy changed the culture and the common sense understandings of the role of education in America. These new ideas were part of a larger global construct of neoliberalism and New Public Management (NPM). NPM is the reformation of the public sector to change the operations of public services to include free-market principles in its service delivery. NPM ideology is consistent with neoliberalism as it shifts the role of the government from direct provider to facilitator of systems (Hursh, 2007; Brissett, 2011).

Currently, US reforms in education have designed and implemented systems of accountability to prepare students to compete in a global economy. The impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top (RTTT) on student performance may potentially be pushing students with disabilities out of the competition by interrupting teachers' ability to engage in inclusive practice. In order to be in compliance with these

reforms, districts have resorted to adopting “tools” or technologies to raise test scores and increase student achievement.

In the past twenty years disability advocates and stakeholders have fought hard to change perspectives and policy to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom. As a result many schools and teachers implemented differentiated and/or modified instruction to accommodate student needs. Since the Civil Rights movement and the creation of the US Department of Education, major federal legislation like Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the re-authored Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), have had a significant impact on the education of America’s children. Even though these laws sought to improve education for students, they perpetuated exclusion by authorizing systems that categorized and sorted students and required teachers to be accountable to a system rather than themselves. IDEA and Section 504 mandated rights of access and participation in general education and NCLB mandated the inclusion of students with disabilities in standardized testing; however, these major laws conflict with each other in terms of individualization versus universality.

Education in the US has become more centralized and accountability systems are assumed to be the driver of positive educational outcomes and higher student achievement. These systems designed and mandated by the government produce public outcomes that are used to judge effectiveness and performance of schools. When national standards, curriculum and assessments are fully implemented in US schools, all students will be engaged in universal constructs of “sameness”. All students will be

expected to achieve at the same level; be held accountable to the same academic standards; and be assessed by the same tests.

Neoliberal ideology frames the discourse of the current political rhetoric of education as an economic investment in the preparation of students to compete in a global economy. These discourses that emanate from policymakers shape the construct of schooling and control the trajectory of education in the US. Prior to widespread globalization and the infusion of neoliberal ideology in the US, schools focused on preparing students to live and work in a democratic society. Currently, the responsibility of a strong economy and political status in a global society rests on the education system. Policymakers use education as a tool or mechanism to keep the US ahead in the global competition. As a result, schooling has become more regulated; hence, the implementation of accountability systems.

The first section of this chapter aims to make evident the neoliberal educational reforms exercised and implemented as a form of Michael Foucault's theory of governmentality. In addition, it demonstrates the many levels of imposed accountability measures based on an economic theory of inputs and outputs. Applying a Foucaultian frame, the technology of accountability systems uses force and surveillance to create and implement interconnected systems that appear independent from direct government control. These stand-alone systems of accountability are consistent with principles in NPM as they give the appearance of little government control; yet, they exercise control of schools, teachers, and students by making the outputs public. This theoretical framework posits that the government utilizes legislation, discourse, and funding as a way to manage

education to align with its global economic goals and change perceptions and/or understandings in society.

Secondly, this chapter illustrates a theoretical model that applies Foucault's work to current neoliberal control and surveillance of schools and teachers. Moreover, it makes evident an economic model of inputs and outputs that function as an independent system of accountability. These systems function as a form of surveillance, a technology of governmentality. Lastly, critical disability theory is used to analyze the effects these neoliberal reforms have on teachers and their ability to engage in inclusive practice. Specifically, it examined technologies of accountability and surveillance that affected the curriculum and excluded students with disabilities.

In the past thirty years, neoliberal concepts have appeared in educational policy papers, legislation, and dominant discourses that served to alter Americans' concept of the role and function of public education. According to Harvey (2006) neoliberal ideology transcends all over the globe and can be found in all institutions including education. "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices which proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, free markets and free trade." (Harvey, 2006, p.145) The federal government began to utilize neoliberal economic practices by focusing on outputs to assess education quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. These outputs became products used as accountability measures for states, districts, schools and teachers (Klees, 2008; Spencer, 2001; Suspitsyna, 2010).

A common ideological principle in neoliberalism and NPM is to minimize government involvement and weaken regulations in the market. Through a neoliberal lens, federal regulations are viewed as a barrier to the freedom of the market to function independently and vigorously. Growth in business and information technology influenced the government to value economics and individualism (Davies & Bansel, 2007). The adoption and utilization of neoliberal practices meets societies demand for better products, through greater student achievement.

President Obama, in many of his speeches, insisted that a strong education system is essential to achieve a sustainable and prosperous global economy. In order to reach this goal, the federal government utilizes neoliberal practices by creating self-sustaining, transparent accountability systems. These systems allow control and monitoring, yet function to give the appearance of weak government involvement, therefore, minimizing the perception of big government (Spencer, 2001). These systems, discussed later in this paper, are constructed to show transparency in accountability as a way to shift blame and responsibility away from government and onto those operating in the system. The “technologies” used to construct these accountability systems is what Foucault calls “governmentality”.

Foucault used the term “governmentality” to refer to the art of government and government as a practice. He coined the term governmentality to refer to the ways the government used tools or “technologies” to shape the conduct of individuals in order to suit its own purposes. Foucault defines government as conduct, for example, the government identifies a problem and implements an intervention. Secondly, he talked about governmentality as a practice for individuals to self regulate themselves in order to

conform to the “ideal self” or the government’s ideal citizen (Lemke, 2001). He was interested in the “processes of co-evolution of modern statehood and modern subjectivity” and also focused on how statehood and the self “co-determine each other’s emergence”. (Lemke, 2007, p. 2)

Policymakers use neoliberal discourses in an attempt to change culture and push political agendas. Discourse can change the culture of a population by the constant reproduction by politicians, media, and school leaders. Eventually it becomes naturalized into a commonsense understanding. The discourse has the power to situate or subject people in certain identities or contexts (Adie, 2008; Au, 2008; Fairclough, 2000; 2003; Foucault, 1977; Walsh, 2006). Dominant neoliberal discourses are used so frequently that it makes the ideology stronger, necessary, and unquestionable (Hursh, 2007). According to Fairclough, (2000) people do not think to challenge or look beyond these hegemonic discourses because they are reproduced by “experts”. The government uses interventions to change a culture by changing language, getting staff to internalize a new language, paying attention to how policies are represented in the media, and putting an advantageous “media spin” on everything it does, therefore carefully designing its language (Fairclough, 2000). Foucault (1977) stated that as discourse gets internalized by individuals; it subsequently controls their behavior as they self-govern themselves and it becomes naturalized into their culture.

Foucault believed that government creates self-governing individuals to become entrepreneurs in a market (Kiersley, 2009). He posited that the government doesn’t necessarily have control *over* people but it *exercises* control through subjectification. “Power functions best when it is exercised through productive constraints, that is, when it

enables subjects to act in *order* to constrain them.” (Tremain, 2008, p. 4) The sense of responsibilization of subjects and an “ideal self” is what Foucault considered “technologies of the self” (Lemke, 2007).

Neoliberal practices aim to give the appearance of freedom and liberty to individuals, groups, and organizations in society. According to Davies and Bansel (2007), schools seem to be governed without direct physical government supervision; however they are heavily regulated and sanctioned.

Foucault was careful to point out that government was not a fixed entity; rather it is a transformative, social act where actors working in the government sector locate problems, devise interventions and implement solutions that support their global, economic motives. For the purposes of this paper governmentality is defined as the relationship of the government’s domination in shaping the field for actors, and the actors’ relationship with the self.

The Inception of Neoliberal Ideology in Educational Reforms

A landmark report that outlined an “eroding” public education in the US sparked a new reality in schools. In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* was released by a federal advisory committee and was soon found at the top of the political agenda. This report was released during a time of global economic prosperity. In an attempt to strengthen education to match technological and economic advances, deficiency discourse and rhetoric was produced and reproduced consistently in the media. The image of American education was that of being a broken system and in desperate need of being repaired. This image became a new mentality and called for “needed” educational reform (Adie, 2008; Tamatea, 2008). “Neoliberal discourses are ‘couched’ in the discourses of

improving/improvement, competitiveness, jobs, standards, and quality in an educational system that is seen as in total crisis.” (Apple, 2005, p.271)

Teachers who unknowingly participated in a discourse of failed schools embraced new reforms and sought to change their teaching behavior. This participation in discourse and changed behavior is an example of Foucault’s technology of the self.

“Governmentality desires both to rule a human whose life it understands to be a fundamentally transactional phenomenon and to instill in that human a certain sense of what counts as responsible behaviour in the marketplace of his life.” (Kiersey, 2009 p.365) The emphasis here is not to debate the content of the findings in *A Nation at Risk*; it is to make visible the “hidden” technologies used to exercise power in current neoliberal discourses. They are hidden in plain sight. These technologies are visible; yet difficult to see due to the naturalized, taken for granted discourses and ideology in the American culture (Hill, 2008; Philips, 1998).

Neoliberal policies aim to audit education by creating systems for schools and districts to regulate themselves. These systems of accountability were not only designed to reform education, but to also align with national economic goals for competing in a global economy. As the US economy expanded on a larger global scale, the demand for better schooling became the main instrument to prepare future workers to compete and maintain America’s status as a powerful country. This concept of globalization has crept into the dominant discourses in politics and education. Participation in these discourses aimed to create a competitive culture in schools as US students compete with high scoring nations like Finland, China and India (Apple, 2005; Nordtveit, 2010).

In education reforms, the accountability systems are a form of government surveillance. Many outputs of neoliberal mandates, standardized tests and teacher evaluation in particular, are used to monitor efficiency and effectiveness of teachers and schools. In addition, schools and districts are ranked by their performance and the information is published in local newspapers. Michael Apple (2005) refers to this as external surveillance rooted in a strong mistrust of teachers.

Published data creates a market for parents, the “consumer”, to choose schools that are labeled as “highly performing”. The concept of publically ranking schools and teachers will likely increase as national curricula, standards, and tests are implemented. This will create competition among states to compete for higher test scores. Once national curricula and testing is mandated in the US, it becomes the subject of debate and can be rewritten many times. Although the national standards may initially be written in a broad way, in the future it may become more prescriptive thus constricting and controlling knowledge (Apple, 2001).

Much of the criteria involved with evaluating teacher performance are not focused on inputs, but on outputs. “The implication of what counts as good teaching is found on a test score and little attention is drawn to the act of teaching.” (Apple, 2005, p.381) The offer of grant money can be seen as a macro level intervention technology as the federal government tries to control education at a distance by creating and implementing systems that operate interdependently (Rose & Miller, 2010).

The discursive frame of RTTT takes on a “war like” discourse and uses language like “task force” and “measure of teacher effectiveness” which implies a problem that needs to be fixed. These metaphors are argumentative and reinforce an attack on teachers

(Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002; Lakoff, 2003; Tamatea, 2008). They build on President Bush's discourses surrounding education during the time of 9/11 and war in the Middle East. He used discursive frames in reference to teachers like, 'soldiers of democracy' or "enemies of the state" (Goldstein & Beutel, 2009). Moreover, the discourse of labeling teachers places them in a competition that further promotes the neoliberal belief that competition will close the achievement gap. This system identifies subjects and makes teachers more governable as they self regulate themselves to align and be answerable to a system (Davies, 2005; Hursh, 2007; Tremain, 2008).

Foucault's theory of "governmentality" parallels the current state of educational reforms in the US. The next section of this paper illustrates a theoretical model of the technologies used for surveillance in a multi-layered system of accountability and control. An illustration of planetary gears represents the workings and visibility of neoliberal technologies as a panoptical system of surveillance.

Model of Accountability and Surveillance

Planetary gears were chosen to represent a system that works together in an interconnected way yet depend on each other to perform a function. A common example of a machine that uses planetary gears is a manual pencil sharpener. The diagram of a planetary gear in Figure 1.1 illustrates a simple machine operated by force from the center. In this example, planetary gears are used to identify an overarching system of education accountability.

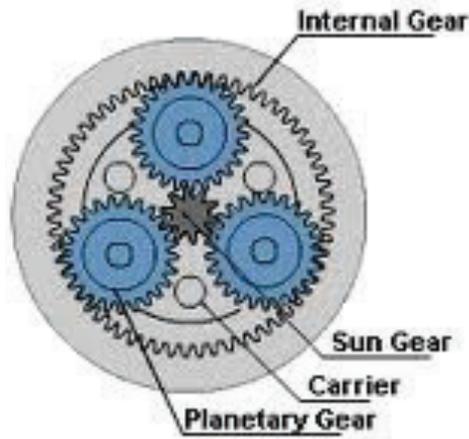


Figure 1.1: Planetary Gears as a Representation of Accountability in Education

The center force in the sun gear controls the other gears just as the federal government uses technologies of legislation, deficiency discourse, labeling, and the threat to close schools and/or withdraw funding. The other planetary gears that circulate around the center represent the many layers of accountability systems including schools, teachers, and students. These layers, which are described later in the paper, function in a transparent manner and are subjected to more responsibility and blame.

The planetary gear in Figure 1.2. displays a tall sun gear in the center. This illustration was chosen to represent the surveillance of the federal government in a panopticon. Foucault used Jeremy Bentham’s architectural design of a reformatory to show how people “drive to self-monitoring through the belief that one is under constant scrutiny.” (Wood, 2003, p.235) The following is an excerpt from Foucault’s (1977) *Discipline and Punish* as he explained panopticism in the time of the plague.



Figure 1.2: Planetary Gears as a Representative of Education in a Panopticon

Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. To achieve this, it is at once too much and too little that the prisoner should be constantly observed by an inspector: too little, for what matters is that he knows himself to be observed; too much, because he has no need in fact of being so. In view of this, Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable...The Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric

ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen. (Foucault, 1977, p. 201)

The concept of accountability and surveillance is shown in a planetary gear in order to describe a self-sustaining system that governs itself by the fear of inspection. This surveillance is operationalized through standardized testing for assessing the performance of students, teachers, and schools. The gears operate without direct supervision; however power begins in the center and is distributed through technologies of discourse, legislation and funding. “He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.” (Foucault, 1977, p. 202-203)

The concept of planetary gears also shows the interconnectedness in each accountability system used in education. Each gear acts as a separate system, yet relies on each other to meet their goals by using inputs to produce outputs. In this economic model, the outputs of each system become the inputs for the next system. This framework of transparent inputs and outputs removes the responsibility of education out of the government’s hands and places it on each system to produce their part or output. Each gear is responsible for producing an output for the adjacent gear in order to operate and maintain the system as a whole. Thus, the responsibility to create and maintain a strong education system and ultimately achieving a sustainable, prosperous global economy relies on the workings of the educational accountability system. When the system

malfunctions, blame and responsibility is placed on the system operating the closest to the goal, which in most cases is student achievement.

Input/Output Economics

Wassily Leontief, a Nobel Prize winner in Economic Science, developed an economic analysis to examine an industry's consumption of resources (inputs) and its production of goods (outputs). This economic framework is widely used in the public and private sector in the US. "...the purpose of the input-output framework is to analyze the interdependence of industries in an economy." (Miller & Blair, 2009, p.1) This section examines the present educational system of accountability as a component of a neoliberal economic model of inputs and outputs (Klees, 2008; McLaughlin & Rhim, 2007; Suspitsyna, 2010).

The illustration in Figure 1.3 shows an overview of all the individual accountability systems and their relationship with each other. The stakeholders make up the largest group and are placed in the center of the system as they are the group that demands accountability.



Figure 1.3: Educational Cycle of Accountability

The stakeholders play an essential role in informing and/or pressuring the federal government to reform education. As the graphic in Figure 1.3 shows, these reforms affect all the systems involved by using inputs and outputs in the whole educational system of accountability. The stakeholders are the sun gear and occupy the center as they demand accountability in all the systems shown. In addition, stakeholders provide inputs (money) to and demand outputs (outcomes) from all the systems. Essentially the process begins by the stakeholders pressuring lawmakers in the federal government to pass legislation in improving education. Once federal legislation has passed, the government mandates state governments to develop policy and regulations for schools, teachers, and students. Furthermore, each of these systems inform and report back to each other and to the center.

Stakeholders consist of those who have a stake in education to inform, improve, reform, or influence schools in the US. This group puts pressure on lawmakers to pass

legislation in an attempt to control, operate, and change what happens in schools. In general, stakeholders consist of US taxpayers however; groups that influence policy and pressure lawmakers consist of Washington DC think tanks, non-profit associations, advocacy groups, philanthropists, religious advocates, financial groups who want to privatize education for financial gain, and political candidates who use education for bipartisan support and electoral purposes.

Once the stakeholders apply the initial force that generates movement in the accountability process, it activates the entire system to rotate. As previously noted, this economic model uses outputs from one system as inputs into another system. Federal laws, mandates, and funding incentives are the outputs in Figure 1.4. The most influential and controversial law from this level was written in 2002 under the George W. Bush administration. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), aimed to boost reading and math scores for elementary and secondary students.

Although well intentioned, NCLB called for more accountability in schools by mandating the use of standardized testing and the adoption of curriculum that is based on scientific research. This law of accountability designed structures that required the implementation of academic standards; the use of performance based standardized testing; and published results based on outputs (Adams, 2006; McDermott & Jensen, 2005; Shaker & Ruitenberg, 2007).

Currently each state is required by law to implement federal mandates by designing regulations and policies. At this point in time, states have created their own standards and standardized tests for teachers and students. The states who applied for and

won large sums of money under the Race to the Top (RTTT) competition, have adopted the common core standards. As the US moves towards national curricula and assessment, states will eventually be administering nationwide assessments. RTTT and its affect on teaching will be discussed later in this paper.

When students fail to make progress on standardized tests, schools are codified as “underperforming” or are labeled in a way that denotes failure. Under NCLB districts must institute changes to raise test scores, which may include teaching test taking skills, teaching only the content on the test, and strictly using only curriculum materials based on scientific research, or they may face losing federal funding. In addition, if schools continue to not make progress, students are able to transfer to “effective” schools. Although this seems like a viable option, there may not be schools in the area that are “effective”. The reason may be that most of the schools in the area are facing similar issues or students may live in a rural area and do not have access to an “effective” school. Schools who continuously have an “ineffective” label have difficulty retaining and recruiting effective licensed teachers. In Figure 1.4 the school level system of accountability shows the states output as the only input to measure school effectiveness.

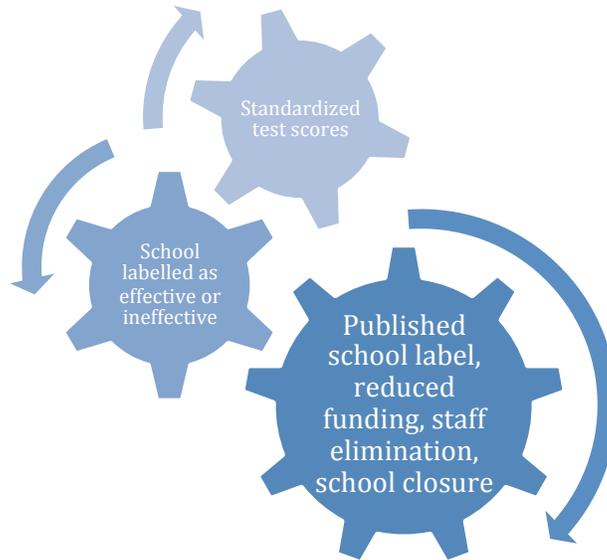


Figure 1.4: School Gear System of Inputs and Outputs

Mandates in NCLB exclude struggling students including those with disabilities in participating in Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), which is a civil right written in IDEA. In many states, students cannot graduate from high school unless they pass or reach a particular target on a test. This has had astounding effects on struggling students. Linda Darling-Hammond (2007) presented convincing data from schools all over the US that show increasing numbers of students dropping out of high school, being counseled out, retained, and expelled from school altogether. She also displayed data that show the use of the General Education Development (GED) test has risen by 50%. In order for schools to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), they must continue to raise their test scores. Obviously, when test scores of struggling students are taken out of the formulation, it greatly increases the schools ability to make AYP and meet NCLB mandates. This issue is being addressed in RTTT states; however non-RTTT states may not be addressing school dropout rates.

Like schools, students are also codified and subjected by labels like “failure” or “needs improvement”. This is an example of neoliberal entrepreneurialism where students internalize that the sole responsible party for graduating from high school is themselves. As a result this relieves the government from looking at bigger social problems like equity in funding and poverty.

Other countries in the world have figured out how to fund their schools in an equitable manner. In the US, NCLB is grossly underfunded and does not control for equity in funding among districts and towns. In fact federal funding accounts for less than 10% of all school funding. In some cases, wealthy districts spend upwards to 10 times as much as poorer districts. That leaves little resources for poorer districts who may spend \$3,000 per pupil compared to wealthy suburbs who may spend \$30,000 per pupil (Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Another technology used by the federal government to align educational goals with global economic goals is the Race to the Top (RTTT) competition under the Obama administration. The federal government offered over \$4 billion in grant funds for states to adopt or assimilate the common core standards, develop teacher and principal evaluation systems, create data systems to measure student growth, and turn around the lowest achieving schools. Although there was a new administration in the white house, the focus remained on outputs of student outcomes.

Many states may have participated in the bid for RTTT because the money was too big to pass up. The states that won the competition and received funds now must use outputs of test scores as a measure of teacher performance. The new data systems will track student performance on standardized tests, match it to teachers and use it as a

measure of teacher effectiveness in yearly teacher evaluations. Teachers will then be labeled as “effective” or “ineffective”. Depending on the state, policymakers may adopt an evaluation framework based solely on student test scores. These labels and practices tie into Foucault’s theory of governmental control by subjecting teachers to new positions or identities. In addition, these neoliberal practices create entrepreneurs out of teachers, as they are now the sole resource for raising test scores. Under a neoliberal framework the responsibility for educating students does not lie with the federal government, nor does the blame when schools and students do not attain desired results on a test.

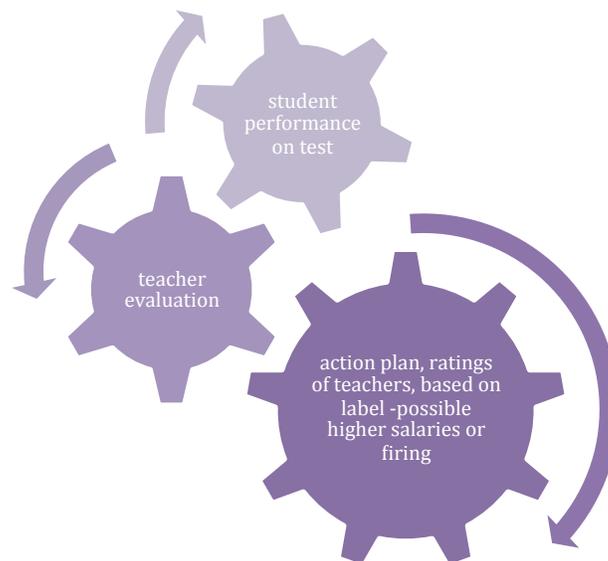


Figure 1.5: Teachers Gear System of Inputs and Outputs

Much of the criteria involved with evaluating teacher performance are not focused on inputs, but on outputs. The offer of grant money can be seen as a macro level intervention technology as the federal government tries to control education at a distance by creating and implementing systems that operate interdependently (Rose & Miller, 2010).

Disability Reforms

Prior to the Individuals with Disabilities Act, IDEA, education in the US was extremely marginalizing and exclusive to individuals who struggled academically. Although IDEA warranted rights for students with disabilities, it also implemented a system of diagnosing, labeling and placing students based on a medical view of disability. In addition, it created a whole schema of prescriptive therapies and methods of instruction based on a medicalized code or specific weak area. For example, standardized tests assess students for learning disabilities, and they examine strengths and weaknesses in auditory and visual perception, memory and problem solving, and attention and organization. The IEP, which is the plan for students with disabilities, requires specially designed instruction based on the students deficit profile. This is not meant to advocate for the elimination of IEP's or special education altogether; however through a critical disability lens, special education could be seen as another way to medicalize and separate "inferior" individuals from their "normal" peers. Critical disability theory examines the foundation of the common understandings or status quo surrounding people with disabilities. In particular, it focuses on diagnosing, labeling, and the positioning of people in society (Tremain, 2008)

Foucault questions the process of diagnosing and segregating students in public education. A general education classroom is filled with students with varying cultural, learning, emotional, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds and most have varying academic levels. As a whole they are grouped together and labeled "general" or "typical" into which we include our students with disabilities. With all this diversity and labeling, Foucault wondered what "normal" looks like. He continued to stress that medical

diagnosing is powerful as it subjects individuals and eventually they self-regulate their behavior and position themselves in society accordingly. Lastly, they are individualized or singled out and come to know themselves in a deficit scientific manner.

Inclusive Practice

In the past twenty years disability advocates have diligently fought to change educational perspectives from segregating students with disabilities to including them in the general education classroom. Through federal legislation like IDEA advocates and policymakers have authorized more inclusive practice; however the potential consequences of current neoliberal reforms could lead to more exclusive practices. Using critical disability theory, the next section of this paper will focus on the possible effects of neoliberal technologies on teachers' ability to engage in inclusive practice.

Inclusionist researchers Roger Slee, Linda Graham, and Julie Allan typically define inclusive practice as a process not only based on the physical presence in a classroom with their non-disabled peers; but as legitimate membership where students with disabilities know they belong (Allan & Slee 2008; Graham & Slee, 2008). Teachers involved in inclusive practice actively engage all students in the learning.

The discourse of inclusion, which is discourse that does not exclude, began in the 1980's and 1990's as inclusionists sought to abolish mainstreaming and replace it with full inclusion. The idea required a paradigm shift in how educators and people thought about schools and society. As a democracy, inclusionists seek an inclusive society where people are not segregated for reasons of ability, color, or gender. Inclusionists disagree with the labeling and diagnosing that schools utilize to target students for specialized instruction.

Inclusive practice changes the way instruction is delivered so that all students are actively participating in the learning (Simons & Masschelein, 2005)

Some researchers who examined NCLB would argue that students with disabilities benefitted from NCLB in three areas, access to the general curriculum, awareness of disability issues, and attention to the achievement gap (Roach & Elliott, 2009). West and Whitby (2008) posit that there was an increase of inclusive practice in the US as a result of NCLB. The important factor to consider, however, is the quality of instruction in the general education classroom rather than the quantity. Inclusive practice calls for teachers to actively engage students in the learning. With the current education reforms, strategies to improve test scores, like teaching to the test and adopting curriculum materials that focus on test content may exclude students with disabilities in the classroom. These students need a differentiated curriculum that focuses on the individual students' needs. As a result, the extra time needed to re-teach or utilize special teaching methods may result in more pull out for students, which means more exclusion.

In addition, West and Whitby (2008) argue that there is greater access and awareness as students with disabilities are included in state standardized testing. They report that teachers and administrators have more responsibility for students to achieve and produce similar outcomes as their peers. They posit that the awareness of students with disabilities has raised the expectations for their performance (Roach & Elliott, 2009; West & Whitby, 2008). Although NCLB provided more awareness and physical access for students with disabilities, new teacher evaluations based on test scores may cause more students to be excluded.

Exclusive Practice

Although current educational reforms were designed to increase student achievement, they have affected teachers' ability to engage in inclusive practice. The effects of these laws and initiatives interrupt inclusive practice by making it difficult for teachers to differentiate the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students. This leads to curriculum that is uniform and reductive, which can be detrimental for students with disabilities.

Universality of growth and achievement. Current educational policies require universal growth and accountability to standards. Students with disabilities who are fully included in the general classroom are presently held to the same expectation of meeting grade level standards. This concept of sameness and "one size fits all" pushes students out of the competition as it sets unrealistic goals. In the near future lawmakers are expected to reauthorize NCLB, however, minor changes are expected. One of the changes being considered is utilizing student growth percentiles as indicators of effective achievement. A student's growth percentile measures an individual's growth by looking at their current achievement compared to their academic peers, in other words, growth models will compare students to others with similar achievement levels (Betebenner, 2009).

Even though each student will be compared to their same academic peer, not all students with disabilities are the same. The idea of sameness is not fairness. Another proposition up for consideration is the trajectory toward meeting a standard, which is also known as "growth-to-standard" This information provides the rate each student will need

to grow in order to meet the standard. Again this premise assumes universality, which for students with disabilities is an impossible rate to justly quantify.

Reductive curriculum. The focus on student outcomes on standardized tests has narrowed the curriculum. Neoliberal ideologies reinforce a reductive curriculum by using drill and kill instruction to enhance performance on state mandated tests (Webb, Briscoe, & Mussman 2009). Race to the Top was initiated to develop national curriculum, which in the US is the Common Core Standards. Roger Slee (2011) refers to the national curriculum and testing in England as a “powerful cocktail for the control of activity in schools and classrooms.” (Slee, 2011 p. 6) He further states that school districts choose curriculum by trying to find materials that are closely aligned with the tests. It’s likely that schools that are focusing on test prep are likely reducing the time spent on other academic areas. Districts do not want to draw attention by being out of compliance of federal laws and labeled as an underperforming school. The focus on rote learning to foster higher test scores does not result in deep critical learning and it can be extremely difficult and meaningless for all students (Hursh, 2007).

Current education reforms have also narrowed the choice of curricular materials as NCLB requires “acceptable” teaching methods. The push for adopting curricular materials based on scientific research, or scientifically-based research (SBR) was situated in educational reforms in order to find reading programs with effective results (Shaker & Ruitenberg, 2007). The preferable form of research yields results by randomized control trials or quasi-experiments to assess the effectiveness of methods; however it tells little about what is really happening in the classroom. By limiting research to a preferred methodology, the state of education is being short-changed. SBR does not take into

account many scholarly researchers who use other methods like ethnography or narrative research. “This perspective on ‘scientifically-based research’ takes us back to a reductive positivism and glosses over the analyses and arguments put forward by philosophers of science for decades.” (Shaker & Ruitenberg, 2007, p. 210) Washington think tanks and other foundations that privately fund research may fall under the guise of SBR; however Michael Apple (2001) warns that their motives on educational policy must be questioned.

Standardized tests when used as an exit requirement for high school, provides an unyielding face and effective barrier to those who begin with serious deficits of what has come to be known as ‘educational readiness’. Some will argue that this is a fair and appropriate judgment of merit while others question whether a science that is imprecise should be mechanistically applied when it has such grave consequences to individuals. (Shaker & Ruitenberg, 2007, p. 215)

Scripted curriculum. One of the strategies that “underperforming” school districts have adopted is using commercial scripted curriculum. Many of these programs have positive results using SBR. Scripted curriculum provides teachers with a readable script and pacing chart. It does not allow for varying learning styles, questions or re-teaching for understanding. In other words, the curriculum is “teacher proof”. Under NCLB, the nations’ reading deficit was addressed by the National Reading Panel’s (NRP) review of reading programs that meet criteria for SBR. They approved programs that were adopted by the Reading First Initiative. Reading First was a federal program that provided funds to districts to adopt scientifically based reading programs. The reading programs that met the criteria in the Reading First program were scripted.

When a teacher has to read from a script every day, their ability to teach has been diminished. It's as if teachers are considered to be incompetent in their field.

Teachers go to college for a minimum of four years to prepare to go out into the world and educate their students. When these teachers are handed a script to follow, it nullifies their preparation and training, and it robs them of their prerogative to "teach." Teachers should be able to use reading programs that allow them to teach critical thinking and enable their students to absorb, interpret, and transfer information. (Demko, 2010, p 62)

Scripted curriculum narrows the curriculum for all students as it doesn't allow for differentiation or enrichment using higher level critical thinking skills. Teachers can no longer make connections between the learning and students' lives. This is very concerning as teachers are becoming "deskilled" and answerable to a system rather than to themselves. The loss of autonomy and the dependence on scripted curriculum has transformed teachers into trained technicians (Rouse, 1995).

Another drawback of using scripted curriculum is the time and labor-intensive nature of implementing the lesson. In some cases like Success for All, a scripted reading program, the length of a typical reading lesson is two hours. That leaves little time for other academic areas like math, science, social studies and the arts. The narrowing of the curriculum through using only curriculum based on scientific research, scripted curriculum, drill and kill rote learning and test taking strategies limits instructional time and may reduce academic areas that are not assessed on a standardized test. Furthermore, it may also interfere with the teacher's ability to engage in inclusive practice as it does not actively engage all the students in deep learning.

Conclusion

In the past thirty years, the ideological shift from educational inputs to outputs mirrors neoliberal economic practices. Through the use of neoliberal technologies, current educational reforms implement audit systems on many levels to evaluate student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Foucault's theory of governmentality is situated in accountability systems in the US and operationalized through technologies of legislation, discourse, and funding. Foucault's analogy of a panopticon is utilized to exhibit accountability systems as a form of surveillance of schools, teachers, and students.

The consequence of focusing solely on outputs largely ignores the need for inputs. Equity in funding, poverty, and cultural norms has been ignored as they are difficult to quantify, regulate, and standardize. The goal that every student will be able to compete in a global economy frames the discourse in education and controls the trajectory of the role and function of schools in America.

Unfortunately the present direction of education may take a long time to change as more reforms are calling for more accountability. In order for inclusionists to advance their agenda of democracy in the classroom, a whole shift in the philosophical paradigm needs to occur. The culture in society will need to stop codifying and segregating individuals by color, ability and sexuality before real change can happen. Sadly, schools typically don't change on demand; they respond to mandates.

Michael Apple (2001; 2005) refers to the concept of repositioning as a process to understanding educational policy and practices through a lens of those who have the least power. The voices that are most often heard are those who have the most economical, social, and cultural capital. These voices who are the furthest from the field of teaching

would call this accountability system a process of continuous improvement; however for those closest to the field it feels like an exercise of power, surveillance, and discipline. When the rhetoric of blame focuses on student and teacher performance, it dismisses other factors outside of the school context. It diverts the public's attention away from larger and more ominous economic, political, and social problems.

As Mariet Stromstad, a Norwegian inclusionist, reminds us, "Inclusion is not about bringing somebody who has been formerly excluded into an environment that has not adapted to normal diversity. Inclusion is about diversity living and working together." (Stromstad, 2003, p. 34) Even though lawmakers ensured the rights of students with disabilities under the law, they did not respond ethically to their needs. Nobody would disagree that education needs to be a strong and effective system or that there is room for improvement; however, policymakers need to close the "Washington gap", between their quest for economic and global positioning and the individuals working and learning in the classroom.

The following chapter is a thorough review of the body of relevant empirical studies on inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities with a specific focus on the literature in international and US contexts to illustrate theoretical conflicts within distinct strands of special education research. In addition, it illustrates the relationship between recent educational reforms and its impact on the civil rights of students with disabilities. The findings in the literature focused on the location of exclusive practices; the impact of current neoliberal educational reforms on inclusive practice; and inclusive and exclusive ideologies/practices in schools, in research, and in teacher education.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is organized to display background information on the evolution of inclusion and its relationship with educational policy, teaching practices, and pre-service teacher education. In addition, it reviews the troublesome body of research within the field of special education as it is divided along structural and ideological lines and is marred with numerous complexities and conflicts. These troublesome issues have been hotly debated among leading researchers and are essentially grounded in competing ideologies of how to best meet the needs of students with disabilities. The crux of the dichotomy lies in where the “problem” of disability exists and how to “fix” it (Allan & Slee, 2008).

The issues involved in the ideology wars among researchers stem from historical precedents of exclusion and are located in perceptions of disability; best teaching practices and “specialized” knowledge; and the politics of standardization and narrow achievement targets. These issues are transmitted and naturalized into US culture by deficit discourses that reinforce the practices of exclusion.

Essentially there are two camps situated in the disability and disablement literature. The first camp in the ideology wars is the Inclusionists. Advocates of inclusive education view societal perceptions and attitudes as a barrier for people with disabilities and as a result, engage and produce research that seeks social change. Inclusive education is a broader term that encompasses all learners regardless of ability, race, gender, etc. to actively participate in the learning. “...Inclusion starts with a premise that an individual has the *right* to belong to society and in its

institutions...inclusion necessitates the removal of barriers that may prevent individuals from belonging.” (Allan, 2005, p. 282)

The most prominent camp in the US utilizes a traditional special education teaching approach in working with students with disabilities. Special educationist ideology is grounded in psychology and views students through a medical lens. They seek interventions for specific skill deficits; thus the research and essentially, the “specialized” knowledge being produced focuses on categories of disabilities and/or interventions that remediate specific skills (Allan & Slee, 2008; Brantlinger, 1997; Slee, 2001). The ideology and practices of special educationists maintain a dual system in general and special education.

The current neoliberal educational reform in the US values outputs or outcomes of student achievement. This focus drives the special education research agenda by enticing researchers with large funding sources from the federal government or special interest groups to align special education practices with achievement outcomes. As a result, many of the leading experts in the field are not producing research that encourages social or structural change nor are they responding adequately to current policy initiatives. Finding evidence from researchers in disability studies that addresses a response to exclusion in current policy was difficult as the two camps, the traditional special educationists and the inclusionists, have different research agendas. The purpose of this paper is to review the literature and examine the impact of current neoliberal educational reforms on inclusive practices of students with disabilities. In addition, it will explore the inclusive/exclusive ideologies and practices in schools, in research, and in teacher education. The research questions driving this literature review are: What are the

consequences of current neoliberal educational reforms on inclusive/ exclusive practice?
What is the impact of recent educational reforms on the rights of students with disabilities? How are the inclusive/exclusive ideologies evidenced in practice, research, and in teacher education?

A systematic review of relevant empirical studies on inclusive and exclusive practices of students with disabilities was conducted by determining search parameters and criteria that helped in examining the inclusion of the studies. These parameters were executed through a search of the electronic databases of Eric, Academic Search Premier, and Pro-Quest. A series of categories or keywords were developed and organized into three columns on a spreadsheet. Then the categories were filtered through AND and OR statements to connect within categories and across categories. Search terms like empirical studies AND disability OR inclusion/exclusion were used to refine the search and eliminate papers that did not meet the specified criteria. The criterion for the inclusion of studies were that they must have been published in peer reviewed journals; they must have been published within the past twenty-five years to align with current policy and practices; they must be empirical studies with clear methodology; and they had to focus on teaching students with disabilities in schools. After careful review the studies were sorted into three categories: policy, teaching practices, and teacher preparation. In order to effectively understand the prevalence of exclusion in inclusive practice, it is important to include background information in the evolution of special education as an independent construct in ideology, policy, practice, and pre-service teacher education.

Background

A historical context of the development of special education is critical to fully understand how discrete general and special education currently operate and function in the US. Presently the dominant model in special education is rooted in the medical field. The reason for this is due to the early demand for specialized instruction for students with cognitive, vision, and hearing impairments. Early leaders in special education adopted and used methods from the medical field because these early experts were physicians (Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005).

The need for special education teachers based on categorical designation grew from federal case law in the 1950's and 1960's. The Education of Mentally Retarded Children Act of 1958 and the Teachers of the Deaf Act of 1961 created funding and support to train special education teachers. The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped was created to provide additional support to many teacher preparation programs across the US. These preparation programs were specific to student disability categories. As more students were identified with disabilities, the categories of disability and teacher certification expanded. In the 1970's states issued disability specific licenses to teachers, for example, teacher of emotional disabilities, learning disabilities, and mild retardation which led to the development of categories in special education (Brownell, Sindelar, Kiely & Danielson, 2010).

Additional rights to students with disabilities were implemented through the civil rights movements in the 1950's and 1960's. When "separate but equal" was decided to be unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education*, parents of children with disabilities advocated for equal rights. In *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v.*

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania it was decided that the state could not deny the right to an education for children with disabilities. In 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act was passed that “no otherwise handicapped individual in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving any Federal financial assistance.” (Walker, 2006, p. 1588)

Finally in 1975 The Education for All Handicapped Children (PL 94:142) ensured that all students with disabilities have a free and appropriate public education with instruction to meet their needs. It was realized that millions of students with disabilities were not receiving an appropriate education and one million students were excluded from public education entirely.

Research in special education branched out into two paths, which further reinforced the use of disability categories. According to Brownell et al. (2010), one path of research focused on a medical view of disability, which is the belief that the disability is organic and resides within the individual. In addition, it was believed that auditory and visual processing difficulties were the root of the students’ impairment and special education teachers could remediate by using specially designed interventions.

A second path of research was simultaneously taking place and was being implemented by behavioral psychologists. The use of behavior modification and applied behavioral analysis was being used with students with emotional and cognitive disabilities in laboratories. These techniques of controlling behavior eventually integrated into schools to teach and /or control behavior of students with disabilities (Brownell et al., 2010).

Preparing teachers to work with students with disabilities became a discrete program separate from the preparation of general education teachers. Coursework on special education law and disability characteristics and strategies were prevalent. Special education teachers were trained with “specialized” knowledge. Eventually the demand for special education teachers grew and states began issuing more general special education licenses to incorporate a variety of disabilities. Presently, most states issue a disability license by grade level, for example, Severe, all grades, Moderate Disabilities PreK-8 and 5-12.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s the specially designed strategies to “fix” processing issues were left behind and the field of special education embraced a new paradigm which focused more in academic areas. During this time most special education teachers were using direct instruction and behavior modification for students with disabilities. Prescriptive curriculum in reading and math was embedded as teachers used scripted direct instruction methods to remediate deficit skill areas. These prepackaged materials used scripted lessons and teacher prompts to elicit choral responses. Programs like, Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, and DISTAR Math required mastery of skills and were designed to keep students on task. Special education teachers were expected to collect data of student progress and make decisions about student progression in the programs (Brownell et al., 2010).

In the 1990’s the teaching of students with disabilities became a shared responsibility between the special education and general education. Landmark legislation like the re-authored Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997 (IDEA) and President Bush’s No Child Left Behind, (NCLB) paved the way for more inclusive

education in the United States. These two major laws mandated a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE), required highly qualified teachers, and authorized all students to be accountable in statewide assessments (National Council on Disability, 2008). One of the precepts in IDEA, FAPE provided all students with disabilities the right to not be rejected from public education because of their disability. Secondly, IDEA also sanctioned that students be placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE), which meant that all students needed to be taught with their typical peers as much as possible. By the late 1980's and early 1990's many educational researchers and disability groups advocated for students to be fully included in general education (National Council on Disability, 2008; Osgood, 1999).

The inclusion movement of the 1990's was fraught with many problems. The complexity and structure of schools became barriers as teachers struggled with roles and responsibilities. Teacher efficacy and attitudes led to many students feeling socially excluded from their peers, as more students with disabilities were physically included in the general classroom.

As schools moved toward inclusive environments, researchers in special education were unable to determine which placement produced better outcomes for students with disabilities. According to Brownell et al, there were no conclusive studies as to which setting had better outcomes thus; the determination of placement became a moral decision. This became a significant debate and divided the special education field into two camps, the traditional special educationists and the inclusionists.

In the 1980's teacher education programs began offering courses on inclusion which focused on individualized instruction, co-teaching, modifying curriculum, and accommodating students in the classroom. In the 2000's many teacher preparation programs offered special education in merged or integrated programs with their elementary and secondary programs. The US Department of Education sought to improve research and practice in special education by encouraging researchers to use evidence-based research to identify effective teaching practices. They created the What Works Clearinghouse, WWC, to solicit and publish evidence-based research studies that identified effective practices. According to Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, and Richardson, (2005), special education research is complex as the numerous disability categories listed under IDEA and the wide variety of placements and services makes research difficult to replicate and generalize. Researchers must establish equivalent groups and no two students with disabilities are alike (Brantinger et al., 2005). The bulk of the research performed in the US relies on specific methodology to find effective practices in particular settings and with students identified with specific disabilities. The inability of general education to effectively teach and meet the needs of students with disabilities resulted in the creation of a separate system of special education.

Exclusion in inclusive education occurs as a result of neoliberal influences in educational reform and in practices of a deeply divided field of special education. Certainly, the inclusion debate is not a new controversy; however, much of the focus in the past centered on the physical placement of students with disabilities. The more pervasive issue is quite larger and goes beyond the confines of a classroom. The historical and ideological divisions between general education and special education still

exist and are ubiquitous in research and scholarly work; in federal and state education agencies; and in schools and teacher education programs. Federal initiatives have been geared toward reforming general education with the onus on the field of special education to determine how to best align or “fit” students’ needs into the standards movement. Presently, lawmakers and policy workers are scrambling to find solutions to close the achievement gaps in standardized tests, evaluate special education teachers based on student performance, and assess achievement gains in students with disabilities.

The traditional approach to teaching in the US is grounded in a culture of “normal” and “abnormal” and reinforces discourse of exclusion and oppression (Law, 1998). Following the work of Foucault (1977), the labels and categories in special education create subjectivities and produce “specialized” knowledge. Foucault stated that as discourse gets internalized by individuals, it subsequently controls behavior and becomes naturalized into culture. He argued that discourse produces knowledge and regulates subjects. In addition he posited that knowledge becomes power and power, when exercised, creates “new knowledge”. Foucault was extremely critical of the social science fields because of the way they exercised power to codify, categorize, and label people. This practice causes people to understand and define themselves in terms of the labels and allow them to be more governable. Foucault used the word “government” as an action to control or shape actions of people by using dividing practices (Nystrom, 2007; Tremain, 2008). Labels in NCLB and IDEA have divided, classified and sorted students based on test scores and/or around clusters of behaviors or weaknesses that are viewed as abnormal. In essence the “specialized” knowledge and discourse of disablement creates a

perception of “expert” which sustains special education as a discrete separate field (Brantlinger, 1997).

Many articles have been published in journals defending and attacking inclusive practice. Inclusion has been criticized for being too ideological and has not been empirically proven to be effective based on inconclusive results. Secondly, inclusion represents a threat of the elimination of the field and a dismantling of specialized instruction (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2009; Brantlinger, 1997; Connor & Ferri, 2007). The special educationists fear that the social model of disability may “...contribute not only to a zealous pursuit of inclusion at the expense of effective instruction but also to the demise of special education.” (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2009, p.368)

Allan (2005) calls not for the destruction of the institutions that exclude but for a deconstruction of its policies and/or practices. She claims that the destruction of the institutions would cause more division in the field. The discourse of special education has become naturalized in our culture and needs to be deconstructed in order to change attitudes and beliefs of teachers. Allan (2005) posited that change begins with the need to engage in an ethical project of questioning the scientific research produced in special education and to not cause more damage to people with disabilities.

The environment where pre-service teachers are trained reinforces exclusive practices and conveys a concept of a dual system in schools. The transmission of exclusive practices that divide and label students in schools (testing, diagnosing, classifying) further perpetuates the idea of “special” knowledge in special education. These concepts move through discourse, and are witnessed in schools. A separate program in teacher education produces teachers with “expert” knowledge located in a

dual system. Slee (2001) warns of transmitting exclusive practices to future teachers. The power to diagnose, position, and label students as “defective” perpetuates exclusive practice. Pre-service teachers need to understand that special education knowledge of students with disabilities is “...an instrument of power that constrains and disables them.” (Allan, 2005, p. 293) Exclusion is structural as it divides and classifies students and it is cultural as the exclusive discourses and teaching practices have become naturalized into our culture. The literature in exclusive practice was divided into three categories: policy, teaching practice, and pre-service teacher education.

Policy

The immediate threat to inclusive practice is the centralizing of national standards, curriculum, and instruction to raise student achievement. One reason is that it discourages pedagogy that is flexible, creative, and differentiated to meet the needs of a diverse student population. This centralized and universal framework of common standards and narrow achievement targets is applied to the whole student body. A study that examined standardized test results of students with disabilities found that their scores were indicative to the specific school performance. According to Malmgren, McLaughlin, and Nolet (2005), the performance of the general education students was the biggest predictor of success for the students with disabilities. According to researchers a school effect shows that changes need to be context specific and address the students in each local community (Malmgren, McLaughlin, & Nolet, 2005).

In an additional study addressing policy and its affect on curriculum, West, Ainscow, and Stanford (2005), found that schools in the UK were sustaining school improvement by finding individual and context-specific solutions for diversity in the

curriculum within the government's reform framework. They suggested that there may not be one main "recipe" to diversify curriculum, thus individual schools must find ways that work in their own context (West, Ainscow, & Stanford, 2005). This contrasts with the current political initiatives for universal curriculum and instruction. Blanket policy reforms infringe on students' rights by not allowing for differentiation. As a result it interrupts access and participation for students with disabilities and leads to inequitable learning experiences.

Current educational initiatives in federal laws are contradictory. McLaughlin and Rhim (2007) outlined the juxtaposition between IDEA and NCLB in terms of equity. Under NCLB students with high incidence disabilities, like learning disabilities, are held accountable to the same standards as their peers. Schools are not allowed to alter content standards and under the changes in IDEA (2004) they must develop standards based IEP's which link student goals to grade level state standards. The team then determines how to provide supports and services to move individual students toward meeting the grade level standards/IEP goals. The conflict is the assumption that all students will benefit from the same outcomes. The concept of standards based IEP's conflicts with the procedural rights of FAPE and individualization. When schools provide only grade level instruction to students with disabilities, it conflicts with the principles in IDEA.

The discourse in NCLB and IDEA does not exist in a vacuum; it is based on society's ideology of normal and abnormal (Liasidou, 2008). Liasidou (2008) argues that the current position of special education needs to change; however, it can only happen if we go beyond the text and look at broader cultural and social processes. Many researchers advocate beginning with a deconstruction of the discourse in special

education, in particular the language that is used to divide and categorize students in teaching practice (Slee, 2001).

Teaching Practice

Much of the literature that identified areas of exclusion pointed to teacher beliefs and their practice. Berry (2006) examined social contexts of classrooms where she claimed students begin to construct identity of a teacher. Berry (2006) posited that rich contexts for learning must be developed to encourage participation of students with disabilities; however she cautions that inclusive settings must be examined to understand what students' experience. Additional findings suggested that teachers needed to be conscious of their own perceptions regarding difference and disability. Berry (2006) described "social participation as constitutive of opportunity to learn." (p. 522) Even though teachers used encouraging discourse, students still positioned students with disabilities in a negative way. She cited that unexamined understandings of fairness might elicit exclusive practice through discourse or the positioning of students with disabilities by teachers and other students in the classroom (Berry, 2006).

In the UK pedagogies of difference clashed with the common national curriculum. According to Norwich (2010), there is a prominent dilemma in teaching differentiated or common curriculum for students with disabilities. Teachers understood that there was a common curriculum yet wanted to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students (Norwich, 2010). Pedagogies are central to teacher identity and their fund of knowledge. Lingard, Mills, and Hayes (2006) found that teachers were supportive to difference yet offered insufficient intellectual "demandingness". They posited that mandated curriculum restricted professional practices and discussions among teachers (Lingard,

Mills, & Hayes, 2006). The teacher's inability to differentiate or change the curriculum to effectively teach students with disabilities engaged them in exclusive practices.

As previously noted in chapter 1, a common solution for school districts is the adoption of scripted curriculum to raise test scores. The research on prepackaged curriculum materials has proven effective only if the teacher does not deviate from the script. Essentially, these companies created "teacher proof" instruction. In the following studies, researchers identified poor working conditions, high attrition rates, and negative effects on teacher identity and engagement as outcomes in the use of scripted curriculum. Crocco and Costigan (2007) examined attrition rates among new teachers and found that scripted curriculum narrowed the curriculum and negatively affected the working conditions of the participants in New York City schools. In addition the researchers found that it also negatively affected their identity as a teacher; interfered with their ability to build relationships with their students; and greatly reduced their autonomy in the classroom. The researchers identified these factors as causes of high attrition rates. Smagorinsky, Lakly, and Johnson (2002) also found negative effects of scripted curriculum on teacher identity and engagement with students.

Similarly, in a study on middle school math teachers, scripted curriculum and the use of a math coach worsened working conditions in the school and interrupted the teachers' ability to create and sustain communities of practice (Cwikla, 2007). The researchers posit that the school continued to suffer from high teacher turnover. In Crocco et.al. (2007) and Cwikla (2007), the districts adopted scripted curriculum in an attempt to raise test scores. " There were no lessons or activities to develop, no creativity or spontaneity required by the teachers; they were simply to read a script, snap, and chant

with the students.” (Cwikla, 2007, p. 562) The participants in this study indicated the lack of teacher buy in with the curriculum and felt that their students were not being challenged. In addition, this study revealed that teachers need a common goal to engage in communities of practice (Cwikla, 2007).

Much of the research on the scripted curriculum was funded by the companies that produced it (Demko, 2010). However, a study by Moustafa and Land (2001) on Open Court, a scripted reading program, researchers compared state standardized test scores from schools who used the program to schools who did not. They found that there was no clear evidence that students using Open Court performed better on the state tests (Moustafa & Land, 2001).

Pre-service Teacher Education

Evidence of exclusive ideology and inclusive practices can also be found in how pre-service teachers are prepared. The great ideological divide in special education and current neoliberal educational reforms influence pre-service teachers’ beliefs, attitudes, identity, and early practices. This next section is broken into two areas of pre-service teacher education, practices of pre-service teachers and teacher education programs.

Practices of pre-service teachers. The literature on exclusive practice by pre-service teachers is rooted in the background; beliefs and attitudes; quality experiences and interactions; and expectations and ownership. According to Bourdieu (1991), a person’s habitus contains an unconscious repertoire of knowledge, beliefs, and experiences. “Habitus represents the idea that we all have dispositions to act and our actions are regulated by a set of durable and generative principles.” (Gray & Whitty, 2010, p. 6) Habitus does not dictate particular ways of behaving or acting. More

specifically, actions, ideas, and thoughts resonate with past experiences. Bourdieu explained that habitus evolves over time and continuously informs our thinking and our thinking informs the habitus.

Many studies showed teacher attitudes prior to entering teacher education programs were barriers to inclusive practice. Researchers at the University of Alabama found that pre-service teachers may not have been exposed to good teaching experiences as children, especially if their teachers did not hold positive attitudes or accommodate student needs. As a result, they may be coming into teacher education with negative attitudes based on prior perceptions of special education as a separate system (Donovan, Rovegno & Dolly, 2000). Donovan, Rovegno and Dolly (2000) suggested that if they are not participating in a program where they can reflect and discuss their experiences, then misconceptions about students with disabilities can be reinforced and they can affirm negative childhood experiences, thus informing the habitus. Brandes and Crowson (2009) concluded that pre-service teachers with culturally conservative backgrounds and perceived higher social dominance orientations displayed discomfort with disability, negative beliefs towards students with disabilities, and opposition to inclusive practice. The researchers posited that cultural conservative attitudes valued conformity, security, and tradition, where as social dominance orientation indicated the feeling of one's in-group as superior to out-groups. People holding cultural conservative values and social dominance orientation tend to have negative beliefs toward students with disabilities and oppose inclusive practice (Brandes & Crowson, 2009).

Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden (2000) found that confidence levels of teachers and attitude change were a result of gaining more experience and increased training

(Avramidis et al., 2000). Microteaching, case studies, video analysis, and inquiry and research are valuable methods for pre-service teachers to analyze teaching practice (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Other ideas proposed in the literature consisted of using autobiography, which gives students with disabilities a voice, and it raises awareness and fosters understandings in pre-service teachers (Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999). Golder, Norwich, and Bayliss (2005) recommended that pre-service teachers build a relationship with one child with a disability, with the goal of developing essential skills and positive attitudes (Golder, Norwich, & Bayliss, 2005).

The quality of field experiences and interactions with students was cited as an indicator of inclusive/exclusive practice in pre-service teachers. Donovan, Rovegno and Dolly (2000) posited that the quality is more important than the quantity of time spent in field experiences and they encouraged high quality interaction with students with disabilities. Quality interaction was also proven to increase academic and social progress for students with disabilities (Donovan, Rovegno & Dolly, 2000). According to researchers, general education teacher engagement is critical to the education of students with disabilities (Broer, Doyle & Giangreco, 2005, Devlin, 2005). Gee (1996) concluded that all students need to be recognized and accepted as part of the learning community so they become active members in their learning.

To ensure high quality experiences, pre-service teachers need to practice the skills learned in coursework in an authentic field experience supervised by experienced mentors. In a study by Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez (2009), field experience was rated as the most valuable aspect of teacher education programs (Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009). Pre-service teachers deepen meaning of theory and knowledge

through field experience as they make connections and understand the phenomena they witness (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Additional indicators of inclusive/exclusive practices in the literature were teacher expectations and ownership. Inexperienced teachers tended to have low expectations for students with disabilities, which led to exclusive practice. In a study by Hawley (1985) they seated them further away from teacher/student interactions; they called on them less and gave less wait time; used fewer cues to guide them to the correct answer; and praised less but blamed them more (Hawley, 1985; Murray, 1996).

Pre-service teachers who felt capable and responsible for teaching academics demonstrated higher expectations; they accepted responsibility when students made progress; they accepted responsibility when students did not make progress; and they provided support that challenged students to be engaged learners (Scharlach, 2008). In addition, the pre-service teachers who did not feel capable or did not assume responsibility for students with disabilities had lower expectations. These pre-service teachers showed problems with ownership, as they did not accept responsibility when students made progress and when they did not make progress. Instead they expressed a variety of reasons for the lack of progress with their students; for example, they suggested a lack of motivation, low socioeconomic status, poor behavior, or a disability. Pre-service teachers and teacher educators need to develop and foster an attitude of “it can be done” and “it is my job” (Scharlach, 2008).

Pre-service teachers begin to develop attitudes about disability as well as construct teacher identity in early field experiences. The research on pre-service teachers concludes that the use of more intense field experiences and a place where pre-service

teachers can deconstruct issues of disability is an effective means of changing attitudes. Stella, Forlin and Lan (2007) administered questionnaires that examined pre-service teachers' attitudes on inclusive education, interactions with disabled people, and concerns about inclusive education. The researchers indicated that the 20 hour, 10 week course was not sufficient to prepare teachers for an inclusive classroom and results of the pre and post survey showed no significant changes in attitudes toward inclusion. In addition, the researchers indicated that although minor changes occurred, pre-service teachers did not feel confident enough to teach students with special needs (Stella, Forlin & Lan, 2007). A one semester field experience was also found to be an insufficient intervention to change attitudes towards inclusive practice. Yellin, Yellin, Claypool, Mokhtari, Carr, Latiker, Risley, and Szabo (2003) also used a pre-test and posttest survey to measure changes in attitudes of 3 groups of pre-service teachers who were assigned 3 configurations of classes and field experiences. They concluded that attitudes of all the pre-service teachers were positive, but there was no significant difference in changes between the three groups (Yellin, Yellin, Claypool, Mokhtari, Carr, Latiker, Risley, & Szabo, 2003).

Positive results in attitude change were found in a study conducted by Rademacher, Wilhelm, Hildreth, Bridges, and Cowart (1998). The authors compared three special education course delivery systems. The first was a one-credit, three week course; the second group participated in a one-semester inclusive professional development school field experience; and a third group participated in a two semester professional development school field experience where they observed and taught students with disabilities in the general classroom. Results of a survey indicated that pre-

service teachers' knowledge and attitudes were affected by intense field experiences. The researchers argued that their direct contact along with reflective discussions and assignments correlated to a positive attitude toward students with disabilities, inclusion, collaborative teaching, and self-confidence. (Rademacher, Wilhelm, Hildreth, Bridges, and Cowart, 1998)

DeSimone and Parmar (2006) conducted a qualitative study on the attitudes, knowledge base, and preparation programs of middle school math teachers. They performed classroom observations to study their approaches and the quality of interactions with students with disabilities. In addition, the participants were asked to complete a survey that questioned their beliefs and assessed their knowledge and ability to adapt math instruction. The researchers suggested that pre-service teachers should observe and participate in inclusion classrooms to develop positive attitudes on inclusion. They also recommended that teachers spend more time collaborating with special education personnel (DeSimone & Parmar, 2006). There are many components to a successful teacher education program; however, the literature shows that quality field experiences and space where pre-service teachers can spend time challenging, reflecting and questioning disability and practice will allow pre-service teachers to develop inclusive beliefs of high expectations, ownership, and quality interactions with students with disabilities.

Teacher education programs. Teacher education programs are the ideal space for pre-service teachers to construct identity; however, the structure of the institution may be reinforcing the concept of a dual system in education. In addition, pathologized knowledge in IDEA and NCLB, further reinforce dividing practices.

There are many configurations on how knowledge, skills, and understandings of inclusive and exclusive practices are being delivered. A large study through the U.S. Department of Education, studied the strategies of 36 randomly selected colleges and universities in 6 southeastern states, to determine the extent teacher education programs integrated content related to students with disabilities. The researchers found that most required a course focused on students with disabilities, two-thirds required fieldwork specifically focused on students with disabilities, and more than half embedded issues relating to students with disabilities in their mission statements (Holland, Detgen, Gutekunst, & IES, 2008).

The divisions between general education and special education are also evident in many higher education institutions. Blanton and Pugach (2007) surveyed higher education institutions across the country and found a wide continuum in the structure of schools of education. Some teacher preparation programs required a single course in special education, where as others offered an elementary and special education license simultaneously.

The challenges faced by schools of education are to prepare general educators to work with students with disabilities as well as to prepare special education teachers to understand the general curriculum and assessment. Blanton and Pugach (2007) identified a typology of models that are currently in place in schools of education. The Discrete model refers to two separate departments of general education and special education that operate independently from each other with little or no collaboration among faculty. A study by Sapon-Shevin and Zollers (1999) indicated that in many general education programs, students were required to enroll in an introductory course focusing on students

with disabilities. The researchers posited that a separate course introducing pre-service teachers to disabilities, topics, and interventions tended to further define the dual system between general education and special education, thus, modeling inequity. In their study they reviewed special education textbooks and performed faculty interviews, Sapon-Shevin et al. stated that an introductory course was influenced by the faculty member's beliefs and by the curriculum and textbooks used in the course. They voiced their concern for special education in discrete programs because they reinforce a separate system where disability is viewed as a problem rather than a social construct. After reviewing four textbooks, the researchers concluded that the texts can lead pre-service teachers to adopt a deficit model of students with disabilities and see them as needing to be "fixed" (Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999). Many of the textbooks currently on the market focus on categories of disabilities and diagnoses rather than deconstructing disability in a critical manner.

Discrete programs demonstrated exclusive practices by positioning special education as being outside of general education with little collaboration. Villa and Thousand (1996) examined a discrete program and found that separate programs did not provide intense instruction or training to develop necessary skills and dispositions to collaborate with other teachers. The researchers recommended that teacher preparation programs should be more integrated to develop a common knowledge base of discourse, beliefs, and methods (Villa & Thousand, 1996).

Teacher education programs that offered one introductory course in special education were viewed as a one shot deal. Although it was recognized as providing important information, a one-course route did not provide the opportunity to revisit the

course material. Moreover, it did not provide a model of collaboration, which further supported the idea of separate systems (Voltz, 2003).

The second model described by Blanton and Pugach (2007) was an integrated approach to educating pre-service teachers. An integrated program in general education and special education is interdependent and collaborative. Typically, the faculty work together to redesign content and skills as well as participate in overlapping their curriculum in a shared core of courses (Blanton & Pugach, 2007). According to Riehl (2000), “real organizational change occurs not simply when technical changes in structure and process are undertaken, but when persons inside and outside of the school construct new understandings about what change means.” (p. 60)

In a nationwide survey of 252 four-year institutions of teacher preparation programs and interviews, Voltz (2003) inquired into the extent of collaborative infusion approaches, how they were implemented, and the perceived advantages and disadvantages. The results indicated that the dominant method of delivering special education content to general education pre-service teachers was by offering a separate class. About 45% of the institutions surveyed responded that they were integrating special education content in some way. Many faculty members expressed an interest in an integrated approach yet cited barriers for implementation. They were concerned with a lack of time to develop a program as well as the difficulty in collaborating with faculty. They cited conflicting philosophies in learning and teaching and were concerned about the lack of compensation for the development of an integrated program. According to Voltz (2003) many universities reported some collaboration either by co-teaching courses or offering collaborative field experiences (Voltz, 2003).

The following studies attempted integration between two departments at various institutions of higher education and showed concerns. In a pilot project investigation by Nowacek & Blanton, (1996) the researchers designed a team-taught course for general education and special education pre-service teachers in an attempt to move from a discrete model to a more unified one. They looked at whether a team-taught course would change the attitudes of general education teachers toward students with disabilities and if it influenced the pre-service teachers' knowledge of teaching students with disabilities. The participants were enrolled in 2 different sections of a methods course. One of the groups just enrolled general education pre-service teachers. The second section combined general and special education pre-service teachers. The structure consisted of a ten-week campus-based class and a five-week internship. The curriculum in both the experimental and control groups focused on the knowledge and skills of teaching and the interactive functions of teaching. The combined experimental group was team-taught by one faculty member from the Curriculum and Instruction department and one faculty member from the Special Education Program. In addition to modeling co-teaching, the faculty members changed the curriculum to add activities and opportunities for collaborative planning and teaching. In a pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design, the researchers used questionnaires, concept maps, and video vignettes to evaluate changes in attitudes, knowledge, and skills among the participants. Their findings on the pre and posttest concept map indicated that the students in the experimental group placed more emphasis on lesson planning and instructional processes, whereas the control group place emphasis on behavior management. According to

Nowacek and Blanton (1996), this was consistent with pre-service teachers' concerns of creating a smooth transition during activities.

Waters and Burcroff (2007) sought to model what they preached at East Stroudsburg University. The general and special education professors co-taught for ten years. They practiced and modeled strategies of co-teaching including parallel teaching and station teaching, while identifying the strategies and voicing their concerns. Waters and Burcroff (2007) shared their lessons learned from co-teaching so that they can address these issues in a co-taught classroom. They posited that change is a challenge and that teacher preparation programs should look to change the entire system rather than in just one classroom. If the goal of the program is co-teaching then schools of education should practice and model these skills (Waters & Burcroff, 2007).

Similarly at Northwestern State University in Louisiana the general and special education faculty model co-teaching and co-planning. Integration of a methods course resulted in a more global view of education based on broader goals for students with special needs. Duchardt, Marlow, Inman, Christensen, and Reeves (1999) reported positive outcomes in developing trust, learning to be flexible and collegial, finding pockets of planning time, learning through trial and error, forming partnerships, developing professionally, solving problems as teams, and meeting the needs of diverse learners. They also indicated the need for all teachers to collaborate with related services personnel like SLP's, counselors, physical therapists, etc. Pre-service teachers need to be taught collaboration skills to work as a community within the school. (Duchardt, Marlow, Inman, Christensen, & Reeves, 1999) These studies showed that change can be difficult and may take time, but the researchers believed that integration provided a good model of

co-teaching for pre-service teachers. In addition, an integrated approach helped diminish the perceptions of a dual system by offering a more cohesive knowledge and skill base, thus better preparing them for diversity in the classroom.

The third model described by Blanton and Pugach (2007) was a merged program, where general and special education pre-service teachers were prepared in a single curriculum. "...faculty prepare general and special educators, using a single curriculum in which courses and field experiences are designed to address the needs of all students, including those who have disabilities" (Blanton & Pugach, 2007, p.14). The faculty work together to ensure their students learn the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for working with students with disabilities. The goal is to prepare all students for both general and special education licensure. The merged programs in higher education institutions vary widely in licensure and teaching arrangements. For example, Syracuse University aligns their licensure by offering a general education 1-6 and special education 1-6 certification and the University of Saint Francis offers subject matter 6-12 and Special Education-Mild Interventions 6-12. Some universities only offer a merged program; however, in others like Indiana University and University of Nevada-Reno a merged program is an option (Blanton & Pugach 2007).

Conclusion

Even though lawmakers have made efforts to improve education for all students, the laws are focused on teaching practice and student outcomes. Current reforms have instituted neoliberal ideals of competition and accountability, which have resulted in intentional and unintentional consequences for students with disabilities. The consequences noted in the literature and throughout this review focused on the exclusion

of students with disabilities. Sadly, the field of special education is ideologically divided and the effects are reflected in research, policy, and school structure and teaching practice. Current reforms are underway and policymakers need to be informed by experts in the field including teachers who are most impacted by future changes.

Even though inclusive practice has become the goal in educating students with disabilities, it does not mean that there is an absence of exclusive practices. The purpose of this review was not to advocate for full inclusion of all students as this is a blanket statement and further reproduces the ideology of “sameness”; however, every effort should be made to promote inclusive practice. When inclusion is not done well, students feel socially isolated and excluded from their peers; therefore there needs to be a direct unified response from disability researchers and advocates to inform lawmakers on how to eliminate exclusion and allow every student to feel like a legitimate member of the classroom.

Unfortunately, the dual system of general and special education in the US reinforces structural and cultural divisions. The moral and ethical components of a democracy are compromised by pervasive segregation in educational institutions. Educational reform in inclusion can begin with changes in school structure and cultural perceptions. The literature shows that change must be context specific and begin with deconstruction of deficit discourse and beliefs. Even though pre-service teachers enter the field with prior beliefs and attitudes, studies have shown that changes can occur. Teacher education programs should offer quality field experiences with space to deconstruct meanings and learn about practices that lead exclusion.

Two fundamental problems that exclude students in the general classroom are the ideological divisions within the field of disability research and the dual system of general and special education in schools. The origins of special education resulted from the failure of general education to include all students which constituted an entirely separate system. Inclusionists and special educationists divide the research field and the lack of unity hinders a response to current neoliberal demands in education. This review revealed that exclusive practices exist in policy, teaching practice and in teacher education. Although legislation, such as IDEA and NCLB, has been implemented to include students and improve achievement, it has interrupted inclusive teaching practices and has infringed on the rights of students with disabilities. The US is currently engaged in centralizing education by creating national policy and accountability systems, researchers and educators in the field of special education need to take a unified stance to inform policymakers. In the next chapter, I outline the methods used to conduct a study to fill the gaps in the literature and utilize my theoretical framework illustrated in chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter is a description of my study to fill the gaps in the literature and utilize my theoretical framework. In addition, I will outline the methods I used, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the design of the study, the context, access and the participants.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how policy shaped daily teaching practices of beginning and experienced teachers. Moreover, it explored the challenges that affect their ability to adapt and remain in a regulated environment. The significance of the study was to better inform policymakers and teacher educators on the outcomes of current educational policy on daily teaching practice and its impact on inclusive practice.

Research Questions

My research questions consisted of: How do current educational polices, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives shape teaching practice? How do teachers respond and adapt to teaching in a regulated environment? Does policy like, NCLB and initiatives under Race to the Top, impact teachers' practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction?

Design of the Study

This research sought to investigate the daily lives of teachers and their interpretations and understandings of the world around them. A qualitative design was implemented to answer the research questions based on contextual data, perceptions, and

lived experiences. According to Merriam (2009), “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences.” (p.5) This study examined the participants in their natural settings and interpreted their processes and perspectives of how policy shaped their practice and their own self-regulation as they adapted and lived in a regulated work environment.

The data was analyzed vertically across settings and horizontally across participants. Using a strategy informed by grounded theory data analytic practices, I employed a constant comparative analysis of participant perspectives of exercised power and systems of accountability and the impact on daily teaching practice (Merriam, 2009). This qualitative study assumed a postmodern critical disability frame as it looked for hidden and/or evident issues of exercised power and its impact on inclusive and exclusive practices. Foucault’s theory of governmentality asserts that power is operationalized in small, everyday, taken for granted ways. I looked for evidence of the impact of surveillance and/or systems of accountability on the participants’ daily practice and sought to uncover any possible hidden practices of exclusion that may be operationalized through discourses, documents, and interviews.

Interviews. The depth of information was collected through one on one interviews in a semi-structured format. The interviews were semi-structured because as I collected demographic and background information on the participants and I prepared an interview guide of open-ended questions (see Appendix A). In order to capture participants’ worldviews and processes of adapting to a regulatory environment, an interview guide approach was useful to capture their perspective (Rossman & Rallis,

2003). “This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging world view of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic.” (Merriam, 2009, p.90)

The first set of interviews took about sixty minutes in length and were recorded and later transcribed. Notes were also taken during the interview to track additional questions or topics to be discussed at a later date. Through continuous analysis of the data, I developed a second interview guide for follow-up interviews two to three months later.

When my initial interview guide was completed, I used it to test my questions on two designated participants who were not included in this study. One participant is an experienced teacher with twelve years of teaching experience and the second participant had been teaching for two years. The purpose of this trial run was to help me to refine my questions, prepare follow up questions, and/or provide relevant insight as new topics emerged in the process.

Observations. Observation data was an essential method to collect information about the context and to gain an understanding of the everyday interactions and discourses in the classroom. I observed the three participants at least three times during the study. In the first observation I took extensive field notes and audio recorded each observation. My plan was to get a general sense of how the teachers interacted with students and how the students responded. In addition, I sought to capture interactions and discourses between students and analyze the physical setting. The preliminary observation data assisted me with the design and the trajectory of the follow up interviews and observations. This wide and narrow lens approach guided my thoughts,

helped me to see the “big picture”, and targeted the additional data needed to answer my research questions (see Appendix B).

Artifact collection. The participants were asked to collect and produce documents that provided evidence related to the theoretical framework and research questions. Each participant was given a three ring binder and asked to collect district or administrative paperwork that referred to policy initiatives (see Appendix C). These documents contained offerings for professional development, items related to MCAS, special education compliance, faculty meeting notes, correspondence from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and/or teacher evaluation information. Explicit directions were given with the binders and participants were encouraged to include a copy of everything, even if they are unsure of its relevancy, as it was my role to sift through the documents. Also included in the binder was a researcher-generated form for participants to capture the author, date, and purpose; what they understood about the documents; and any insights or thoughts regarding the documents.

Also included in the participant binder in a separate tabbed section, were instructions for the participants to include student work with identifying information removed (see Appendix D). I asked them to include assignments that were designed for district purposes and not specifically chosen by the teacher. After each interview and observation, I wrote research memos (see Appendix E). I compiled the information in my field notes with my reflections and ideas for the next round of interviews and observations.

Context, Participants and Access

Context. This study took place in two sites purposely located in areas with underperforming schools and were designated as urban and rural. These sites were chosen to examine beginning and experienced teachers' perception of policy in each context and its impact on teaching practice. In order to determine the city and/or town, I used the definitions located on the U.S. Census Bureau website. The two sites met population density requirements for the definitions of urban and rural areas, which are based on the 2000 U.S. census. The following data was retrieved on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website.

The urban area has over 6,000 students in their district and is designated as a city in central Massachusetts. This site was located in a small diverse urban city in central Massachusetts. The district houses four elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The student population in this city consists of 42.2% Hispanic, 40.7% White, 6.8% African American, 5.7% Asian, and 4.5% Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic. The 2010 graduation rate was 68.7% (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2011).

The rural school district is a small town in a regional school district with a total student body of 1,081 students in western Massachusetts. This regional district combines two rural towns and consists of two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The student population in this district consists of 68% White, 15.4% Hispanic, 8.2% African American, 5.5% Asian, and 2.4% Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic. The 2010 graduation rate was 82.1% (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2011).

Participants and access. Access to the settings was provided by personal acquaintances of the researcher who were currently teaching at the proposed schools. The criteria for selecting the participants depended on the number of years of teaching experience. I chose to define a beginning teacher as having less than three years of teaching experience and have completed a preparation program previously to their first year teaching. This criterion was used to capture the participants engaged in the beginning stages of adapting to a regulated environment. An experienced teacher is defined in this study, as having more than eight years of experience. I believe this is adequate time for the teachers to be in latter stages of adapting to a regulatory environment and provide evidence of an on-going process of self-regulation or technologies of the self.

Table 3.1: Participant Matrix

Participant	Classification	Years of experience	Setting	Level
Maria	Experienced	9 years	Urban	Middle School
Lauren	Beginning	>3	Urban	Middle School
Ann	Experienced	30 years	Rural	Elementary
Ally	Beginning	2 years	Rural	Elementary

A variety of methods were utilized in the initial outreach to the participants. All were personally invited to participate through face-to-face contact, email, Facebook, or via telephone. The first participant, Maria is an acquaintance of mine and had been teaching for nine years. She taught eighth grade Humanities and English in a

heterogeneously grouped classroom. Ann and Ally are also acquaintances who taught fifth grade and third grade. Lauren, a fourth grade teacher, volunteered to participate after her principal gave her a letter from me. Another important criterion for the participants is that they taught in a classroom with students with disabilities.

After the initial outreach to the participants, letters were sent via the US mail to the principals in each setting (see Appendix F). The letters of introduction contained my personal information including my current status in a doctoral program, a request for permission to perform research in their school, and a description and purpose of the study. One week after the letters were mailed, follow up emails were sent and phone calls were made to schedule a meeting with each principal. I felt it was important to meet with both principals to personally discuss the process and methods of the study. They were very supportive and one principal offered me space in the building. During the initial meeting with my participants, I obtained their written consent (see Appendix G).

Data Collection

Data was collected using the information in the following organizational chart. The chart displays the necessary information I needed to collect in order to answer the research questions (Campbell, 2005). The interview guide with the list of questions was developed based on the chart below.

Table 3.2: Data Collection Matrix, Research Question #1

How do current educational polices situated in neoliberal ideology, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives, shape teaching practice?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access?	What kinds of data will answer the question? Timeline	Questions I need answered
Do teachers self regulate in order to adapt to a more regulated working environment? What does it look like?	Governmentality – subjectification, positioning, deficit discourses, self-regulation, surveillance	Teachers	2 Interviews 1. January/February 2012 2. May/June 2012	Has your teaching changed? In what way? What caused it to change? Do you tend to go with the flow or do you resist the status quo? In what ways have you done that? Do you feel like you can express your opinions? Are they validated? What kinds of things do you do to fit in with the other teachers or administration? Have you ever been spoken to or criticized for expressing your opinions? What usually happens? Have you heard of other teachers expressing their opinions? How does that go?
What are the factors influencing their ability to adapt?	Habitus, messages, discourses	Teachers Administration	Interviews, Documents/ artifacts January - June 2012	Do you ever feel pressure to change your practice? Does it feel good? bad? Does it conflict with your ideas... values? Where does the pressure come from? Background info- how do you usually handle conflict? Can you tell me about a time growing up that resistance worked? Didn't work? In an ideal world what would you eliminate from your daily teaching practice?

How do current educational policies situated in neoliberal ideology, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives, shape teaching practice?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access?	What kinds of data will answer the question? Timeline	Questions I need answered
				What would you add?
Are there technologies of power and governmentality evident in the classroom? Is it evident or hidden in practice?	Technologies of the self, power, surveillance, discourses-resistance, compliance, conformity, submission	Teachers	Observations Interviews January – June 2012	What is your evaluation process like? Does the principal do walk throughs? Do you feel pressured to change your practice?
How do systems of accountability operate in the daily life of teachers?	Post-structural analysis of everydayness, taken for granted and naturalization, subjectification, autonomy, outcomes and performativity	Teachers Administration	Interviews,	How important is accountability in your school? How important is accountability in your classroom? How do you see the role of accountability in your daily practice? Do MCAS scores or teacher evaluation ratings impact your teaching? How or in what ways? Have your assignments changed? Do you focus more in particular areas because of performance outcomes? Has the curriculum shifted to align better with MCAS content? How do you define teacher effectiveness?
			Observations Documents/ artifacts	Are there artifacts on the walls that pertain to accountability outcomes? Does student work reflect MCAS prep? Drills?

How do current educational policies situated in neoliberal ideology, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives, shape teaching practice?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access?	What kinds of data will answer the question? Timeline	Questions I need answered
<p>How do neoliberal discourses of accountability shape practice?</p> <p>Are they hidden or evident in the classroom or perhaps some of both?</p>	<p>Foucault's Governmentality – subjectification, positioning, deficit discourses, self-regulation, neoliberal ideology, Technologies of Power</p>		<p>Interviews,</p>	<p>How do you find out about policy changes? Does the administration talk about it? How is it framed- important? Promise of improvement? Bureaucratic BS? Pressure? How does it make you feel? Do you do any digging of the topics or rely on admin for information? Media? How do you perceive accountability is portrayed?</p>
			<p>Observations, Documents / artifacts</p>	<p>Are there discourses that contain references to systems of accountability? Are these systems evident in the classroom through discourse or interactions?</p>
<p>How does this differ in urban and rural settings?</p>	<p>School performance Teacher performance, accountability</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Observations, Interviews, Documents / Artifacts</p>	<p>How does the community or school culture influence your teaching? Any particular pedagogy used?</p>
<p>How does this differ between experienced and beginning teachers?</p>	<p>Habitus Process of self regulation</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	<p>Interviews</p>	<p>What have you learned since completing a prep program? What has your experience taught you?</p>

Table 3.3: Data Collection Matrix, Research Question #2

How do teachers respond and adapt to teaching in a regulated environment?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access? Timeline	What kinds of data will answer the question?	Questions I need answered
How do teachers respond to the juxtaposition or duality of how they were prepared to teach and a regulated environment?	Conflict between identity and the “ideal” teacher; conform, resist	Teachers	Interviews	Was there a difference between your teacher preparation and your first year teaching? How do you know what is expected from you? Who tells you? Who helps you? How is it framed? What would have helped you to feel more prepared? What was the most surprising/ challenging as far as regulatory requirements? How did you handle it? What about your field experience? Did it complement the setting you are in now?
What discourses are classroom teachers receiving and/or using regarding current policy? Where are they hearing them? And, how do they respond?	Technologies of power – resistance, compliance, conformity, submission, identity, habitus	Beginning Teachers	Interviews	What were some of the values of your prep program? Where was their focus? Do you feel it aligns or misaligns with your personal values? In what ways? How would you describe your transition into teaching? How much information or knowledge did you receive about working in a regulated field? In what ways have you changed your practice? Do you think

How do teachers respond and adapt to teaching in a regulated environment?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access? Timeline	What kinds of data will answer the question?	Questions I need answered
				differently about teaching now? What has changed? How did it change?
How do teachers interpret and navigate the possible conflicting demands of mandates and their beliefs of good teaching?	Technologies of power – resistance, compliance, conformity, submission, deficit discourses	Teachers	Documents Interviews	How do you find out about regulatory changes? Have you been to any websites? Who do you depend on? How is the information framed? What is considered effective? What do you feel or think about policy? Do you feel it impacts you? In what ways?
How do teachers interpret and navigate the possible conflicting concepts of inclusive practice in a medicalized special education environment?		Teachers	Interviews	Do you feel that you are making changes to accommodate regs? Do you feel that policy supports your beliefs? Do you feel that you need ‘specialized knowledge’ to teach students with disabilities? What do you need to know?
How does this differ in urban and rural settings?	School performance Teacher performance, accountability	Teachers	Observations, Interviews, Documents / Artifacts	How does the community or school culture influence your teaching? Any particular pedagogy used?
How does this differ between experienced and beginning teachers?	Habitus Process of self regulation	Teachers	Interviews	What have you learned since completing a prep program? What has your experience taught you?

Table 3.4: Data Collection, Research Question #3

Does policy like, NCLB and initiatives under Race to the Top, impact teachers' practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access? Timeline	What kinds of data will answer the question?	Questions I need answered
How do teachers perceive the impact of policy on inclusive practice and/or tendency to include or exclude?	Voice, self-regulation, inclusion and exclusion, standardization, accountability	Teachers	Interviews	Have you noticed any shifts in student placements recently? If so, what caused the changes? Have you noticed any changes in the curriculum that may impact students on IEP's? Is it too hard? Do they need to be pulled out for reinforcement? Are students getting pulled out more for extra help than in the past?
Are these practices transmitted in the classroom and are they hidden or evident?	technologies of power – resistance, compliance, critical disability theory, conflict between concepts of special educationists/inclusionists		Observations	Are students being removed or set aside for reinforcement? Are students being left in the classroom but clearly don't get it? Does student work indicate that students need reinforcement? Or modifications? Is their work being modified? Is there more ability grouping than in the past? Are there supports available for students? Are support personnel in the classroom? If so, how are the services delivered?
What messages are teachers receiving and where are they being produced?	Technologies of power - deficit discourses, self-regulation, voice, silence, knowledge /power			What messages are you receiving pertaining to students on IEP's? Where are these messages coming from? How are they framed?
Do teachers	Dual systems,			Do you feel that current

Does policy like, NCLB and initiatives under Race to the Top, impact teachers' practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction?				
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Whom will I contact for access? Timeline	What kinds of data will answer the question?	Questions I need answered
perceive separate and/or different impacts of policy on general and special education? Do teachers perceive a dual system of general and special education?	knowledge of diagnoses and interventions subjects students with disabilities and as objects to be fixed, classification, coding, excluding, other			policy supports all students? Do you see benefits for general education students? Students in special education? What about consequences? Have any policy mandates changed your mind about including students or excluding students? Do you feel that the district goals or values are aligned with yours? How are they alike/different? What are your concerns about teacher evaluation and being held accountable for student outcomes?
How does this differ in urban and rural settings?	School performance Teacher performance, accountability	Teachers	Observations, Interviews, Documents / Artifacts	How does the community or school culture influence your teaching? Any particular pedagogy used?
How does this differ between experienced and beginning teachers?	Habitus Subjectification - process of self regulation	Teachers	Interviews	What have you learned since completing a prep program? What has your experience taught you?

Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research methods were chosen for this study because they are most effective in answering the research questions, which call for the examination of the participants' perspectives in their natural setting. I sought "truths" as they unfolded through the their worldviews and lived experiences. These truths are not static and the

results depended on the interpretation of how reality was being constructed by the participants. According to Merriam (2009), “Reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results.” (p. 220) Reliability, or the extent the study can be replicated is less important than the results being consistent and dependable with the data collected (Merriam, 2009).

The most essential strategy to ensure internal validity and reliability was through triangulation of multiple methods and data sources. Employing multiple interviews, observations, and collecting multiple artifacts added credibility and trustworthiness to the results (Merriam, 2009; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Trustworthiness in a study has been defined by researchers as being competently and ethically conducted (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Another strategy to strengthen reliability is through an audit trail. I wrote research memos describing how the data were collected and how the analysis was performed. In addition, these memos captured my reflections, questions, and served as a record of my interactions with the data.

The participants in this study were purposely selected to represent a range of variation. By including teachers based on their years of experience; placement in an urban and rural context; and varying grade levels allowed “...for a greater range of application of the findings”. (Merriam, 2009, p. 229) All the interview questions were piloted with a beginning and an experienced teacher prior to entering the field. These teachers were not included as participants in the study nor was the data utilized or analyzed for the purposes of this study. The testing of the questions helped establish

validity and reliability and added to the strength of the interview questions and the processes to ensure that I captured the intended and relevant data. In addition, after each interview I performed member checks with each participant. Member checking was performed through email after the interviews and observations were transcribed.

Using a critical friend to do what Merriam (2009) calls, *triangulating analysts*, further ensures internal validity. One critical friend served as a peer reviewer. In addition, this study includes a researcher profile and theoretical framework, which clearly shows researcher biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the analytical concepts that were operationalized in the data analysis. Furthermore, my audit trail was shared with my critical friend to further establish trustworthiness in this study.

Data Analysis

This study of policy impact on teacher practice was informed by the analytic concepts outlined in Table 5. These analytic concepts are situated in my theoretical framework and consist of Foucault's theories of power and governmentality, Bourdieu's habitus, critical disability theory, and concepts imbedded in neoliberal ideology.

Data analysis was recursive and ongoing with data collection. Moreover, I used a constant comparative method and a coding and memo system very much like Strauss & Corbin's (1998) practices associated with grounded theory. However, I do have an established theoretical frame and as such built my codebook from these concepts rather than strictly from the data itself. As with much qualitative research, I did a combination of top-down and bottom-up coding (see Appendix H). The bottom-up coding, where I looked to create informative categories from the data, resembled a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

All three coding procedures were used in this study. Open coding is the first step in a top down approach to the data to assist in the conceptualization of similarities and differences in the raw data. During the preliminary open coding, I wrote notes in the margins on the transcribed interviews and on the artifacts submitted to me by the participants, as well as on the field notes from the observations. During this process categories were merged and collapsed and properties and dimensions were identified. When open coding was completed I began the process of Microscopic coding to open up the data and analyze it again (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The second step in the data analysis was to use axial coding to identify subcategories and the relationship among the subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In order to gain a depth of understanding among the categories, I linked them by creating one sentence with a visual representation. This helped to situate the findings in a broader context. Summaries of the data were written up and separated by context and participant groups. For example, I divided and analyze the data across contexts of urban and rural placements. In addition, I reshuffled the subcategories and divided them out between experienced and beginning teachers. This cross-site and cross-participant analysis identified themes and common perspectives among the data.

In the final stage of selective coding, I identified the core categories and examined the relationships between them. I further refined the categories until a theory evolved (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Using the identified analytic concepts located in the theoretical framework and in Table 3.5, a theory of how teachers adapt and remain in a regulatory environment emerged. This theory further indicated how policy shapes teachers' practice of including or excluding students with disabilities.

Table 3.5: Analytic Concepts

Theories	Analytic Concept	Where is it Evident?
Governmentality	Technologies of the self	References to changes or shifts in practice; evidence of changes in conduct as a result of accountability system; references to self regulation of behaviors to become a more valued person/ teacher, use of the word “effective” as the ideal teacher.
	Subjectification	Discussions about what makes a good teacher, media, messages their receiving; evidence of change by self or others
	Knowledge and Power	References to special education teachers holding specialized knowledge; new knowledge created from power systems/ accountability and used to change practice; exclusive practices based on “truths” of disability
Habitus Field Capital	Conformity	Discussions on adapting and/or aligning to school objectives; talks about the process of adapting with little resistance displayed; patterns of acceptance behaviors based on lived experiences with little resistance
	Resistance	References to resistant behaviors of speaking out, sharing opinions, teaching against the grain, silence; patterns of behaviors based on past experiences of resistance; discourse of conflict and the behaviors that pushed back.
Critical Disability Theory	Inclusion & Exclusion	Evidence of exclusive practices that are evident - increased or decreased pull out services; evidence of hidden exclusive practices; Evidence of ownership and responsibility of students with disabilities, comfort with disability, attitudes and beliefs; expectations and experience
	Deficit Discourse	References to exclusive discourse - curriculum too hard, can’t keep up, negative language surrounding disability, attitude, beliefs, ownership, responsibility, expectations, and negative past experiences. Reproduced discourses from others – media, other teachers, administration, etc.
Neoliberal Ideology	Neoliberal Discourses	References to global economy, teacher effectiveness, investment, outcomes, performance
	Systems of Accountability	References or evidence in practice of MCAS drills, scripted curriculum, school policies, teacher evaluation; surveillance and outcomes
	Accountability Discourse	References to MCAS and/or student performance, student outcomes, teacher evaluation, making AYP; discourses of surveillance

Note. Analytic Concepts Matrix. Adapted from Ariadne’s Thread: Pre-Service Teachers, Stories and Identities in Teacher Education (p. 133-134), by Campbell, S.A., 2005, Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Copyright 2005 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company. Adapted with permission.

The organizational framework in the Data Analysis Matrices (Campbell, 2005), display the key data and analytic concepts utilized in the study. These tables assisted me as I analyzed the data and interpreted the findings.

Table 3.6: Data Analysis Matrix, Research Question #1

How do current educational polices situated in neoliberal ideology, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives, shape teaching practice?			
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Key data to examine	Analytic Concepts
Do teachers self regulate in order to adapt to a more regulated working environment? What are the factors influencing their ability to adapt?	I am hypothesizing that the federal government controls teachers as schools, administrators, and teachers self-regulate to conform to mandates. The habitus influences actions, discourses	Interviews, artifacts	Governmentality -technologies of self, subjectification Habitus –conformity, resistance Neoliberal Ideology – Accountability and neoliberal discourses
Are there technologies of governmentality evident in the classroom? What about surveillance and technologies of self? Is it evident/hidden in practice?	The government uses accountability of outcomes as a form of surveillance. I believe teachers may not be aware that they are being controlled as they align themselves to the “ideal” teacher.	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Governmentality -technologies of self Neoliberal Ideology – Systems of accountability, neoliberal discourse
What role do systems of accountability play in the daily life of teachers?	I am hypothesizing that teachers are controlled through accountability systems based on outcomes.	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Neoliberal Ideology – Systems of account, neoliberal and accountability discourse
How do neoliberal discourses of accountability shape practice? Are they hidden or evident in the classroom or perhaps some of both?	Teachers internalize neoliberal discourse, reproduce it and act accordingly. Some of these behaviors may be obvious while others may be so naturalized and taken for granted that they are difficult to identify.	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Neoliberal Ideology – Systems of accountability, neoliberal and accountability discourse Governmentality -technologies of self, subjectification
How does this differ in urban, suburban, and rural settings?	I believe that the context and the values and perceptions in the school play a large role in teaching practice.	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Governmentality -technologies of self, subjectification

Table 3.7: Data Analysis Matrix Research Question #2

How do teachers respond and adapt to teaching in a regulated environment?			
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Key data to examine	Analytic Concepts
How do teachers respond to the juxtaposition or duality of how they were prepared to teach and a regulated environment?	I am hypothesizing that some teachers struggle with adapting to a regulated environment. I believe that teacher preparation provides space to develop teacher identity and is conflicted during their experience teaching.	interviews	Habitus – conformity, resistance Governmentality subjectification
What discourses are classroom teachers receiving and/or using regarding current policy? Where are they hearing them? And, how do they respond?	Policymakers use discourse to control teachers and their practice. Through the process of subjectification, Teachers’ internalize discourses and regulate or police their actions and thoughts. These discourses create new knowledge, which is used as a form power.	Interviews, artifacts	Governmentality – technologies of self, subjectification, Knowledge and Power, Neoliberal Ideology - Neoliberal and accountability discourses, systems of accountability Habitus – conformity, resistance
How do teachers interpret and navigate the possible conflicting demands of mandates and their beliefs of good teaching?	Teacher identity is shaped by policy through the process of subjectification and results in a change in their practice.	Interviews	Habitus – conformity, resistance Governmentality – technologies of self, subjectification, Knowledge and Power, Critical Disability Theory -Inclusion/ Exclusion Neoliberal Ideology - Neoliberal and accountability discourses, systems of accountability

Table 3.8: Data Analysis Matrix Research Question #3

Does policy like, NCLB and initiatives under Race to the Top, impact teachers’ practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction?			
What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Key data to examine	Analytic Concepts
How do teachers perceive the impact of policy on their inclusive practice and/or tendency to include or exclude?	The trajectory of education is based on the economic agenda of the federal government (students as economic investments). I also believe that teachers are unaware of the impact of narrow targets, sameness, or outcomes in policy on the exclusion of students with disabilities.	Interviews	Neoliberal Ideology- Systems of Accountability Critical Disability Theory - Inclusion/ Exclusion, deficit discourses
Are these practices transmitted in the classroom and are they hidden or evident?	Teachers unknowingly engage in neoliberal discourses	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Neoliberal Ideology- neoliberal and accountability discourses, systems of accountability
What messages are teachers receiving and where are they being produced?	Teachers internalize discourses of achievement and lose sight of good practice or what change practices based on deficit discourses	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Neoliberal Ideology- Neoliberal and accountability discourses, systems of accountability Governmentality- subjectification, Knowledge and Power, Critical Disability Theory – Deficit Discourses
Do teachers perceive separate and/or different impacts of policy on general and special education? Do teachers perceive a dual system of general and special education?	I am hypothesizing that teachers perceive sameness in policy but see and experience duality of two systems	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Governmentality – Knowledge & Power Critical Disability Theory - Inclusion/ Exclusion, Deficit discourses
How does this differ in urban, suburban, and rural settings?	I wonder if there is a contextual impact on practice in terms of more or less exclusive practices	Interviews, observations, artifacts	Critical Disability Theory - Inclusion/ Exclusion, Deficit discourses

Researcher Profile

The reasons I pursued this research was based on personal experiences working as a special education teacher and as a mother of three children. All three of my children have, at times, struggled in school and have felt excluded. Two of my children have been on an IEP receiving services for speech and/or occupational therapy. In addition, one of my children has been diagnosed with ADHD and has also struggled in school. Although their learning issues are mild and are addressed in various ways, I am very concerned about their self-esteem and their subjectification in the classroom. At times, they have internalized deficit discourses of not being able to keep up and do well.

In my work with students with disabilities, they felt excluded from general education students and teachers, even though they were physically included in the general education classroom. It is my belief that the learning in the classroom is greatly impacted by the beliefs and the discourse used by the classroom teacher, who may embrace or reject students with disabilities. I feel strongly and very passionately about establishing equity for all students and being sensitive to feelings of isolation in the classroom. Exclusive practices greatly impact learning and achievement. As an inclusion teacher I co-taught and spent time in many classrooms and witnessed the inclusive and exclusive interactions between teachers and students.

The analyses of the interviews, observations, and artifacts, assisted me to uncover how policy shaped practice and how teachers were able to remain in a highly regulated field. Some of the assumptions situated in this paper are that teachers self-regulate themselves and their practice to align with federal mandates. These mandates are based on what is best for the economic welfare of the country, rather than what is best for the

community, students, and parents. In addition, the federal government's trajectory has a great impact on the daily practices of teachers and their practice of teaching students with disabilities.

Limitations of this Study

There were limitations to this study that are worth noting. First, the sample size was small. I originally planned to have six participants; however, I had difficulty finding six that met my criteria. Also, I originally wanted to look at a comparison among urban, suburban, and rural settings, but I chose to look at urban and rural only. In the future, looking at a broader context would be helpful. In addition, the two settings were similar and having a school with high student test scores would have been interesting to examine the disparity in the education towns with varying socioeconomic status.

Another limitation was the participants' varying levels of understanding of current educational reforms. I assumed that they would be aware of the state interventions involved to improve and turnaround low performing schools. This lack of awareness made it difficult to capture their perspective without explaining the reforms that were underway. For those who had some understanding, they still didn't understand the big picture and all the nuances involved in policy.

Conclusion

This empirical study on the daily impact of policy on teaching practice identified the strategies teachers use to negotiate the dynamics of power in a neoliberal framework of accountability. I sought to locate practices or references that indicated the process of subjectification in teachers. "Processes of subjectification are fields of struggle, self

against self, self against others, and others against self.” (Drinkwater, 2008, p.238)

Foucault posited that where there is power there is resistance. Using a Foucaultian lens of self regulating behavior as a result of surveillance, I sought to identify specific ways teachers govern their conduct to be the ideal teacher as defined by policymakers. The surveillance in a panopticon seeks to give the subjects the appearance of constant supervision. Foucault explains that the subject will police their behavior and the panopticon will be achieved when they become the “guard” of their own self.

When power is exercised and teachers self govern themselves to be valued members in the school by aligning their practice accordingly, they are no longer accountable to themselves or to what they believe is good teaching based on their habitus. I argue that they begin to shape their teacher identity and change practices that align with the greater goals of the school through the process of subjectification. The systems of accountability serve as what Foucault calls the “gaze” of surveillance.

In the next chapter, I display the results of the hidden and/or evident practices of inclusion and/or exclusion as a result of subjectification. I utilized Foucault’s governmentality and Bourdieu’s habitus to illustrate how the participants operationalized and negotiated their habitus, field, and capital by examining their perceptions, discourse, thoughts, and actions involved in the process.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter is a presentation of the findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis conducted with four elementary teachers from two school districts in Massachusetts. The objective of this qualitative study was to examine how policy shapes teaching, how teachers adapt to a regulated environment and the impact of policy changes on the inclusion or exclusion of students with disabilities. More specifically, I was interested in exploring how teachers address the demands of new federal and state laws and regulations as a result of the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and its impact on students with disabilities. My theoretical framework of New Public Management driven by neoliberal ideologies in educational policy, specifically the use of education as a public good used to improve the US economy, is at the heart of the sweeping educational reforms in the US. Utilizing this theoretical frame to examine its applicability to educators, this study is situated in schools that have been designated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) as underperforming schools. A main premise of the political discourse is of a “broken system”; therefore, this study is situated in settings where the state is trying to “fix” the “problem”.

Illustrated in my theoretical framework, a planetary gear system was used to compare the current system of educational accountability in the US. A planetary gear system works in an interconnected way and is dependent on each gear to perform a function. The diagram of a planetary gear in Figure 1.1 illustrates a simple machine operated by force from the center. In this example, planetary gears are used to identify an

overarching system of education accountability with little “visible” government input. In the era of a shrinking government in the New Public Management system, the government’s previous role of direct provider has taken on a newly constructed role of facilitator of systems.

These systems designed and mandated by the government produce public outcomes that are used to judge effectiveness and performance in schools. The systems are jointly designed and implemented by the state and school districts. More specifically, the system or an underperforming district’s turnaround plan, incorporates coercive discourse, labels, surveillance in the form of public shaming, and threatening consequences that force a total school redesign to produce rapid turnaround of student achievement. These systems function as a technology of governmentality and technologies of self as illustrated in Chapter 1. In addition, the implementation of compliance activities aligns with Foucault’s theory of surveillance in a panopticon.

Research Context

In the state of Massachusetts, The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), designates schools and school districts based on student performance into five levels. First, ESE ranks all schools based on student achievement, which is determined from scores on standardized achievement tests given at grade levels three through twelve. A district is placed in a level based on the lowest performing school in the district, for example if a district has six schools and they are all considered high performing, level 1 schools except for one that was deemed a level 2, the district will be placed in a level 2 designation. Each designation has increasing levels of state intervention to boost student outcomes. For the purposes of this paper, I will briefly

illustrate state intervention in levels 3 and 4 districts as the two schools chosen for this study fall within these two designations.

Once The Department of ESE ranks all the schools in the Commonwealth, they identify Level 3 schools by determining which schools fall within the lowest 20 percent of the rankings. Finally, they identify the lowest 4 percent in the rankings and label them Level 4. Currently there is one district in the state labeled Level 5, which indicates a history of chronic underperformance and now has joint district and ESE Governance.

In January 2010, the M.G.L. Ch 69, Section 1J: *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap Process for “Underperforming” Schools* was signed into Massachusetts law. This law requires districts designated as Levels 3 and 4 to begin a process for school turnaround. Districts must develop a state approved Turnaround Plan for rapid acceleration of student achievement within three years. Both of the districts in this study were in various stages of implementing or developing turnaround plans. The Regional School District developed a stringent Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP) and was in their first year of implementation. Likewise, in Hilltop Public Schools, the district was in the process of developing a plan to become an innovation school (The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2010).

This chapter is divided into four Parts. The first part describes the current educational context of the two sites in the study. The second section presents the technologies of governmentality used to overhaul and re-design the schools as well as its impact on the participants and their practice. I illustrate the changes in their teaching and including the loss of control or autonomy in their classrooms. In part three of this chapter, I present each participant’s struggle as a separate case and demonstrate how they

operationalized Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital to adapt and survive in a regulated environment. Finally, the fourth part illustrates the impact of policy on the inclusion and/or exclusion of students with disabilities.

Valley Regional School District. The Valley Regional School District is located within a diverse, low socioeconomic town in Massachusetts. This rural town of Mayberry was an industrial town and like many industrial cities and towns in the Northeast many of the renovated brick mills still exist. The population of Mayberry is just over 8,000 residents. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), the district houses 12,000 students in a K-12 public regional school system. Although the district does not have a level 4 school, they were designated by the Commissioner based on a report of district accountability review findings. According to the Valley Regional District Report, the district has a long history of administrative conflict and mismanagement to which the community felt state assistance was needed (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2011).

Mayberry Elementary School was labeled as an "underperforming" school resulting in state mandated interventions for rapid turnaround of student achievement. The state's goal was to provide direct intervention by redesigning the whole operation of the school and implement a stand-alone system that would produce publically reported outcomes.

The Department's theory of action is that if state interventions are concentrated on ensuring that the necessary district systems are in place and are focused on establishing and sustaining the Conditions for School Effectiveness in each school, substantial gains

in student performance will result. (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2011, Introduction to the District Self-Assessment Tool, p.3)

The district turnaround plan, also known as the Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP) was based on MA 603 CMR 2.03(4)(b), ESE's Conditions for School Effectiveness. First, the district was required to complete a self-assessment based on standards and indicators outlined in the MA Department of ESE state regulations. Using the data in the self-assessment the district developed an AIP, that served as a road map to meet the state standards and indicators. The areas involved in the complete redesign include leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, assessment, human resources and professional development, student support, and financial and asset management. The plan encompassed numerous objectives and strategies to turnaround student achievement and to remove their level 4 status. It is important to illustrate some of the objectives and strategies as the participants in the study referred to them often. As outlined in the AIP, the district agreed to:

- align curriculum from preschool through grade twelve based on the MA Curriculum Frameworks and create curriculum maps;
- implement research-based instructional practices and standards-based lesson plans;
- implement administrative learning walk-throughs or unannounced observations lasting for about twenty minutes;
- utilize systematic communication from administration to staff to ensure that all staff understand the components of the AIP;

- use interim and benchmark assessments to evaluate students’ mastery of grade level standards;
- differentiate professional development that will allow teachers to utilize varying sources of student data and make changes in instruction to improve student outcomes;
- utilize assessment data to determine student specific, differentiated instructional strategies resulting in increased student outcomes;
- increase the use of district wide, research-based practices with the assistance of academic coaches, resulting in improved student outcomes;
- create and implement a professional development plan that increases teachers’ use of the district wide, research-based best practices;
- establish a collaborative working group to create an educator evaluation tool based on teacher impact on student outcomes.

Each of the initiatives mentioned above contained several strategies for the district personnel to implement. These strategies have become the daily tasks outlined in the AIP which, pressured the teachers to change their practice and altered the school culture in the Valley Regional School District.

Hilltop Public School District. The second site in this study was located in a small diverse urban city in central Massachusetts. The Main School (Pre-K-4) and The Art Institute Pilot School (5-8) made efforts in the 2011-2012 school year to merge and become an “Innovation School”.

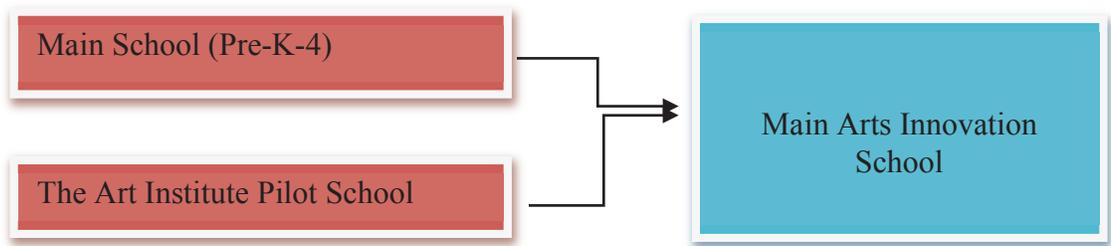


Figure 4.1: School Merger in the Hilltop School District

The newly merged Main Arts Innovation School has been designated as a Level 3 school in a Level 3 district. Like the Level 4 districts, they were expected to develop a turnaround plan; however, they do not receive the same intense intervention as the Level 4 district. The plan must address the implementation of the Department of ESE's Conditions for School Effectiveness.

An Innovation School will operate according to an innovation plan, which describes the areas of autonomy and flexibility and specific strategies that will be implemented in the school. At least one of the six areas of autonomy and flexibility must be addressed in this plan, and the applicant can determine which additional areas will be utilized in the short- and long-term. An innovation plan must include detailed information about the following:

- specific instructional, curricular, and assessment strategies that will be implemented to improve student achievement and school performance;
- allocation of fiscal and other resources;

- school schedule and calendar;
- specific recruitment, employment, evaluation, and compensation strategies for staff members, and if applicable, a description of proposed waivers from or modifications to collective bargaining agreements;
- professional development opportunities for all administrators, teachers, and staff members; and
- if applicable, proposed waivers from district policies.

The innovation plan must also include annual measurable goals that assess factors such as student achievement and school performance. In exchange for the authority to operate the school with increased autonomy, Innovation School operators will be held responsible for advancing student learning and meeting these annual benchmarks. Innovation Schools will receive the same per pupil allocation as any other school in the district, and its operators can also secure grant or other types of supplemental funding to implement the innovation plan. (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012)

The Main Arts Innovation School serves approximately 700 students, grades PreK-8. According to the Innovation School’s Prospectus, the purpose for the creation of the merged innovation school was:

...to increase student achievement through a standards-based, synergetic Pre K-8 curriculum that is data-driven, utilizes expeditionary learning and project-based units with an arts-integrated and thematic approach. Assessment will be standards

and performance based. Central to the mission and vision of the school is the belief that students need a sense of community –a sense of knowing they belong and where they are headed—Pathways. Students and their Families are at the center of the school, and the pathways developed will play a crucial role in student achievement and family involvement. The Pre K–8 Innovation Pathways School will use all of the Innovation School autonomies - curriculum, budget, schedule, staffing, professional development, and district policies – to build a comprehensive plan to improve student performance for all students.”

(Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012)

The newly merged school, the Main Arts Innovation School, previously operated as two separate schools with different academic missions; however during the time of this study the two schools were transitioning to a merged Innovation School under one administration. They're mission was to work to provide students in grades 5-8 with a rigorous arts centered education. The Art Institute was a small school with a governing board consisting of administrators and teachers working in the school. Main School functioned as a traditional urban diverse elementary lab school for a state university. It is housed in the same building and operates under the same administration as The Art Institute.

Policy Pressure and Change

Current state educational policies and regulations were developed and implemented to align with the US Department of Education's trajectory for raising student achievement as well as to comply with federal legislation. The passing of NCLB

summoned states to hold schools accountable for student performance. The MA Department of ESE created a framework for district assistance and accountability in order to comply with federal legislation and turnaround its lowest performing districts.

The first section describes the technologies used by state liaisons and district administration to pressure the teachers to raise student achievement scores and change their practice. The second section illustrates the outcomes of change as the participants began to change their teaching practice, respond to the pressure, and ultimately realize their loss of autonomy.

Technologies of school redesign. This section describes the technologies of governmentality used to redesign and turnaround the underperforming schools in this study. Coercive urgency and competitive pressure serve as the first two categories to demonstrate the application of force and the third is the use of surveillance to ensure that the state and administrative activities or initiatives are occurring in the schools.

Coercive urgency. In the state of Massachusetts, a Level 4 school district is required to develop and implement a state approved Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP). The school district must demonstrate success in meeting the benchmarks illustrated in the plan and boost student achievement in order for the Level 4 designation be removed from the district. According to the initial district plan feedback meeting minutes, the district would need to “...establish strong district systems, establish conditions for school effectiveness by focusing on teaching and learning and rapid improvement to student achievement.”

During the summer of 2011, half of the administration in the school district was newly hired including the superintendent, two new principals and a new assistant principal. It is important to report that the new principal of Mayberry Elementary and the new superintendent spent one year in their position and terminated their employment after the 2011-2012 school year.

The state educational reforms that were adopted to comply with the accountability outlined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) are clearly illustrated below. Meeting minutes from an October 28, 2011 Plan Feedback Meeting with state Turnaround staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and the Valley Regional School District administration including the superintendent, principals, and other administrators, and a union representative were obtained. The purpose of the meeting was for the ESE staff to give feedback to the district on their AIP which was due by December 30, 2011.

Document analysis revealed the state's use of discourse to force the implementation strategies that I have labeled as a coercive urgency. The district administrators indicated that all district faculty are stressed and exhausted from the early stages of the Plan implementation. Mary Davis, the principal of Mayberry Elementary School commented, "The challenges are time and stress. Teachers are breaking down into tears." ESE staff inquired into the opportunities and challenges to the district, and a principal remarked, "...I am exhausted. We are working pretty hard...The timeline is exhausting...The teachers are concerned because the children are suffering. There is too much clerical work; not as much time on lesson planning. They are feeling there is lots of clerical work."

The purpose of the plan was to completely redesign current teaching practices in the district. ESE appointed a plan monitor who was physically housed in Mayberry Elementary and served as a liaison to the school administration. The ESE liaison or Plan Monitor posited, “We talked about the need to delineate in the Plan what teachers do differently. What does it look like? What is different in the classroom that increases student achievement?” She stated that the district needed to inform ESE of the instructional strategies that were included in the Plan and suggested that the district create a matrix. The principal from one of the district’s schools responded, “We can do a matrix by December... that was the work the staff did today. The staff decides what they are. I didn’t include them because they haven’t been decided.” The Plan Monitor replied, “...Yes, it is an opportunity for teachers to have a voice, but as evidence, I need to know they are research-based.”

The superintendent commented that she is already seeing progress on one of the strategies; however, the Plan Monitor strongly suggested the administrators “push” themselves to convey the message to the teachers that “You know we need to do this.” She also indicated, “Send the message. You already see change and improvement. It is important for the teachers to hear that. You need that tension between a hand on the shoulder and a kick in the behind. They need inspirational messages.” She recommended rewarding staff for not using the word, “stress” and reiterated, “Every strategic initiative, every final outcome needs to be measurable and tied to student achievement...Acceleration means urgency.”

The Plan Monitor continued to push the district administration to review the plan and look for the “through-line”, which is the strategic objective to student achievement.

The superintendent indicated that the initiatives felt forced and contradicted her administrative style, “It is feeling top down and it is a cultural shift. To make it feel that way goes against my training. I am torn.” The Plan Monitor responded, “...It is like changing a tire while driving 80 mph. You have to manage the tension between urgency and hearing teachers’ voices. You don’t have the luxury of time.” This discourse is a threatening reminder to the district that there was no time and it was an urgent matter. The Plan Monitor further reiterated a coercive urgency in turning the school around. “I need to emphasize RAPID turnaround. It needs to be done quickly and done now.” This coercive discourse is an example of a technology of governmentality as the state is forcibly implementing new stand-alone systems that operate in a transparent manner and are publicly accessible.

Competitive pressure. The technology of governmentality used at Main Arts Innovation School to pressure teachers was to create competition. District leaders routinely gathered teachers from the three middle schools and compared their students’ growth percentiles on the state administered achievement tests and other district assessments. Maria, a participant in this study, indicated that they break down the data in many ways to see the gaps in the scores. “It’s broken down six ways from Sunday. You can get anything.” She felt pressured to change her teaching and revealed that the pressure also came from the public announcements of identified teachers with high student growth percentiles. “I think it’s only used publically in meetings positively. Praising, calling out a teacher, saying hey, for example over here, look what Tom did.” The message that was not visible in these announcements was the social positioning of teachers tied to test scores; therefore creating a competitive environment.

Maria believed that test scores should be a factor of teacher performance; however, she felt that it was not fair that all teachers could not be evaluated by student test scores. It is estimated that only 17% of teachers can be held accountable for their students' performance on state tests because that is the percent of teachers working in general education grades four through twelve. Maria shared the document that compared her scores to the other two eighth grade teachers in the district.

“When we sit down for ELA meetings, we can look at students' previous MCAS scores. So if you see kids that are jumping, then you know that either I did really well or that teacher didn't do so well. For example, when we looked at the ELA data from last year's MCAS, the teacher that had those students was in the room. And it's made very clear... people don't beat around the bush, 'these scores dropped'.”

Maria indicated that the public shaming caused the teachers to be competitive. “...this is something I'd never tell the kids, but it is in a sense you know, I don't want to say a competition but my name is attached to it.” In addition, she felt the pressure to not make The Art Institute look bad compared to the other schools in the district. In the passage below Maria described the data she received on her student growth percentiles for her classes compared to the other eighth grade classes in the district.

I get my two 8th grade classes and those are shown individually, and I also get (percentiles) for each individual student. And then I'll also get one just for my 8th grade, so the classes combined, compared to the other two middle schools, and then the fourth column is Hilltop Public. So they take all three and come up with that average for each standard.

The following section is a description of the third form of pressure or technology used to change teacher practice and shift the current teaching culture toward a frame of increasing student achievement.

Surveillance. In the Mayberry Elementary, the administrators implemented learning walk-throughs. According to the AIP, the purpose of the walk-throughs was to determine professional development needs based on the teachers' implementation of specific best practices; however, one participant, Ann, viewed the walk-throughs as a form of surveillance on teachers. "They observe what's going on, technically they say it's not you, they look for the mastery objectives and for agendas and they to look for student involvement." The Learning walk-throughs served as a form of surveillance but also as coercion to change practice.

Some of the best practices that were chosen by the district and illustrated in the AIP were Bloom's Taxonomy and Keys to Literacy, which essentially indicated the administration's definition of ideal teaching practices. Over time these walk-throughs will be naturalized and the ideal practices will become the norm; thus molding the "ideal teacher".

The second participant at Mayberry Elementary School, Ally, felt intimidated when the superintendent, principal and/or state liaison walked into her room unannounced because she didn't know the expectations. She revealed that they made her nervous because they would come in, write things on a clipboard and she wouldn't receive any feedback. "...others spoke out and they started telling them what they were looking for." Their expectations were communicated through mandated weekly newsletters from the principal and she made changes to her teaching. Some of the best

practices she assumed were using higher order questioning, posting mastery objectives and referring to them during the lesson, and ensuring that her students were actively engaged. She agreed that these were best practices, but they were difficult to implement in a short walk-through. The weekly newsletters and the walk-throughs were forms of surveillance and served as technologies of governmentality as this pressure caused the teachers to self-regulate and align themselves to the Accelerated Improvement Plan's definition of the ideal teacher. The next section illustrates the outcomes of change as the participants respond defensively, express fear, place blame, and finally recognize their loss of autonomy.

Outcomes of Change

The participants in this study expressed similar emotions of anger, apprehension, and discouragement while addressing issues of change in their teaching. The following categories of fear, blame, and responding defensively were evident across all four participants. Ann made an analogy of her teaching as eroding and changing over time to gaining weight. "I've gotten much more relaxed in some ways about my teaching... it's happening, it's gaining weight, it happens over time, I do much less independent project work that deviates from the curriculum than I used to."

When asked about specific examples of recent changes in her practice, Ann talked about the AIP as the focal point in her teaching, which is aligned with district goals and objectives for school turnaround.

So there are these plans setup and they tell you how you are going to achieve these goals and so, then you have objectives in the classrooms and with the curriculum mapping and how fast you are going to do certain things, it isn't all

based on curriculum, but it is based on scoring, it's based on teacher evaluation, it's based on curriculum in place... it's strenuous to the classroom.

There were also changes in practice cited at Main Arts Innovation School. Lauren commented, "Teaching is hard work". She frequently used progress monitoring by administering unit assessments, GRADE assessments, and Dibbles. This is the data that she is expected to use to modify instruction. She indicated that she shows every student where they are academically and tells them where she wants them to be.

Maria commented, "It's a lot of hard work, I didn't realize" when asked about her practice. She also cited the time commitment needed to do her job well and comply with the administration's expectations. These changes in the participants' practices have caused them to become resentful and unhappy. In the next section, I outline their feelings of being judged, blamed, and threatened in their teaching positions. All the participants in the study felt various levels of fear, being judged, and as a result they blamed the underperformance of their students on other teachers, students, and parents.

Fear. Ally indicated that she is being held accountable to write her lesson plans using the instructional strategies outlined in the AIP. She expressed fear of not correctly uploading her lesson plans to the online server "Because people have been written up and our principal seems very clear about the fact that we are checking on these things and they have to be done." She indicated that the new changes and expectation in her work were a huge time commitment and she worried that she would be reprimanded for not completing her work in a timely manner. She goes on to cite the threats made by her superintendent. "So, I know that this is what I have to do. We have a superintendent who has made it very clear that if you don't do those things, you're written up as

insubordinate, so you just have no choice.” She expressed that the consequences or threats of not being compliant are being written up for insubordination and eventually terminated.

Ally understands the difficulty of trying to find a new teaching job and that appeared to hinder her from job hunting. “Sometimes, I bite my tongue and just feel like you know, I need my job, I feel like teaching jobs aren’t that easy to come by right now.”

Maria at the Main Arts Innovation School believed that if their school’s test scores don’t increase then they would no longer be a school.

So what it comes down to is, if something doesn’t change, we’re not going to be a school. So the freedoms not being taken away necessarily, but we’re told, if you don’t follow something that’s proven, you won’t be here anyway. So there is more pressure this year, I’d say.

Defensive. In the following statement Ally states that she always needs to defend herself and justify the work she does with her students.

I love teaching, you know I love my days it’s just frustrating. I feel like right now I’m always defending myself as a teacher, like proving myself as a teacher, and that’s stressful. Right now also, I feel like along with that proving myself it’s all about data and documenting what I do in all these different ways, rather than coming up with these creative, effective lesson plans. I feel like my energy is not going toward what would really be best for the students. It’s all about proving that as a school you are doing what you are supposed to be doing.

Ann also felt that she needed to justify everything she does, “I feel like I have to justify it.... I have to justify what I'm doing.” She still teaches lessons or covers topics

that she likes; however, she finds a standard to connect it to as a way of justifying her practice.

Blame. Ally and Lauren both felt that there was a correlation between parental education and involvement with student achievement. In the following passage Ally compares families of neighboring town to the families of her students.

...you know kids come in already reading at home and come in completely literate from a home environment that is literacy-rich, whereas here we have this gap that we have to fill, and I have you know five kids who I never get homework from, no matter how many times you call home. And so, things like studying multiplication facts at home to master their facts by the end of third grade, where I'm supposed to be doing this deep inquiry thinking in the classroom and that sort of mastery is supposed to come from home. This year I do have a great parent involvement, but like last year 90% of my parents worked all the time. So, it's just a different, I think kids come in with a lower, not all kids, a high percentage of kids come in with a lower level of skills than in a community where parents have a higher level of education.

Ally also blamed the students' age commenting that third graders are not good test takers. The expectation is for them to show what they know, explain their thinking, and justify their reasoning.

Lauren questioned her students' priorities and blamed the cultural norms of their families. She informed me that they have the latest technology and gaming systems and they go on frequent trips to the Dominican Republic and to Disney World; yet they are

renting a house. She separated herself from her students by stating that she valued different things.

Maria blamed teacher mobility for the reason why her school is in a level designation with the state. She believed that teachers who were moved to new grade levels or subject areas do not know the content well. In addition, she believed that teachers become jaded the longer they stay in a position. She expressed that she would not be teaching for too much longer and hoped to leave teaching altogether, “I think that’s just personal that I need a change.”

The cultural shift in how teachers are supposed to think about teaching and learning has caused them to feel blamed, judged and defensive. Perhaps the biggest loss in this performance movement is the loss in teacher autonomy.

Loss of Autonomy and Control

Many of the participants felt that the current educational reforms were being done to them, rather than by them. Although the districts were aware of giving teachers a voice, it was silent and at best, limited. They had some autonomy in Mayberry Elementary, as they were able to create and develop their own curriculum maps. Also, at the Main Arts Innovation School there was teacher representation on the committee to develop the turnaround plan.

When asked about the new educator evaluation system, Ann seemed not interested. She has been teaching long enough to know that some things get implemented while some fade away. She is not fully invested in new policies or regulatory requirements.

Yeah, I don't know about it, I don't know much about it. I haven't been - I mean I'm following along to a degree, but that's one of those things where I say, you know there's nothing I can do about it, it's just going to happen.

This statement shows how Ann has adapted to a regulatory environment. She does resist, but she knows that there ultimately is no choice. When asked what advice she would give to a new teacher, she responded:

What do I tell the new teacher is, be prepared for a lot of paper work and really being responsible toward this curriculum and this state frameworks at this point in time and be prepared for it to change in five years, but enjoy the kids, try to think of as many as you can to be creative and have fun in there.

Ally, who is in her second year of teaching explained that they used scripted curriculum last year. Her math and reading lessons were literally read from a teacher manual, so this year, she feels that she has more freedom. She has also been allowed to create her own lesson objectives and assessments. "See I feel like this year we do have a little bit more respect in that aspect of being trusted as professionals and posting our objections in our way." It is interesting that the scripted curriculum was so naturalized into the culture of the school that she equates the new reforms with freedom. "And then, we're given a little more creativity on those best teaching practices....So, there are some good things and there are some not so good things going on."

In the past, Maria was an active participant on her school's governing board. Prior to the shift to an innovation school, The Art Institute was a pilot school. One of the paths that The Art Institute chose when they became a pilot school was freedom to make choices among the faculty and staff.

Yes, for two years I served on a governing board, so I did have input there, and then secondly we have a leadership team that is within the school and its just comprised of the teachers and the administration and that's truly where our voice is heard and where we decide.

In 2008, there were four Pilot Schools created in MA in an effort to turnaround underperforming schools. They were given grant money to extend the school day, determine their own curriculum, and added time for collaboration among the faculty. One of the reasons Maria cited for being happy in her job was that she had choice of curriculum materials and programs

Even though we follow district protocols and we still do district benchmarks we still have some autonomy. Technically, we do have it in curriculum. So other schools, by their principal and by their district they're told they have to do certain, um, certain styles. And we don't necessarily have to follow that, we can if we want, but we don't have to. For example at another middle school everybody 5-8 has to do John Collins all the time. And every school has that. But we don't have to follow something.

This coercive urgency that caused a cultural shift with the participants will be illustrated in the next section. In addition, I demonstrate how each of the two participants react and operate under the environment of coercive urgency. Ann, a seasoned veteran with more than thirty years of teaching experience has a very different way of coping in a highly regulated environment from Ally who is a new teacher. The coercive urgency in implementing the AIP and the pressure to raise student outcomes challenged the two participants to either accept or resist the top down interventions in their classrooms. The

tools I used to analyze the data are what Bourdieu referred to as field, capital, and habitus (Bourdieu, 1984).

The Struggle for Control

This part is organized into four case studies that illustrate each participant's struggle to stay and flourish in a regulated environment. I labeled the participants' struggle for autonomy and control as they self-regulate their behaviors and discourse reflected from their habitus, field and agency. The four participants represent Compliant, Cope, Fight, and Flight.

According to Bourdieu (1991), a person's habitus contains an unconscious repertoire of knowledge, beliefs, and experiences. "Habitus represents the idea that we all have dispositions to act and our actions are regulated by a set of durable and generative principles." (Gray & Whitty, 2010, p. 6) Habitus does not dictate particular ways of behaving or acting. More specifically, actions, ideas, and thoughts resonate with past experiences. Bourdieu explained that habitus evolves over time and continuously informs our thinking and our thinking informs the habitus.

According to Leander (2006), the *habitus* gives "substance to the "strategy" and "struggles" introduced. People have resources (capital) which grant them possibilities to act." (p.7) In this case the struggle for autonomy and control in teaching practice, is the capital; but, when guided by the habitus the behavior or practice emerges. Leander describes the habitus as,

dispositions and taken for granted understandings functioning as an intuitive guide to action and hence shape how they act...The *habitus* shapes "strategies" for accumulating capital and for reshaping fields...The *habitus* of some people

will make them reproduce their own disadvantaged positions while that of others will not. The *habitus* of some people will make them push for specific kinds of change. The *habitus* of others will make them resist it. (p.7)

A second analytic tool used to analyze the participants' perceptions is Bourdieu's idea of field. According to Bourdieu (1984), field is "The idea is that in order to make sense of the social world, it is useful to acknowledge that it is divided into relatively autonomous social sub-systems which follow their own "laws" and logic". (p.127) Field is the setting in which the participants' social positions or status are located. This is the area where they struggle for capital.

According to Leander (2006), "capital" can be defined by the position of the actors and their struggles in the field. "What capital is and how it is valued is itself defined by the field....Capital is what is recognized as a resource in a specific field." (p.6) The participants struggled for the freedom to teach what they believe are best practices. Likewise, their position or status in the school as it pertains to the number of years of teaching experience is the field. The inclusion of their disposition or habitus and field, whether close to retirement or just beginning shaped how they adapted, coped or resisted the pressure to change their practice and defined their struggle for capital or to retain their teaching autonomy in the classroom.

Figure 4.2 shows the participants' struggle for control initialized by the state and administration's pressure to improve student outcomes. The origin of this pressure is traced back to larger neoliberal ideologies of market economies as illustrated in chapter one. These ideologies create pressures on teachers to change and adapt to the state's

definition of an ideal teacher. This pressure also creates power relationships among the administration, teachers, and staff in the elementary schools.

The struggle is at the center of Figure 4.2 with the participants' field and habitus providing the basis of the participants' actions and response in the struggle. The struggle, or the capital, in the study is the participants' teaching autonomy. The field and habitus describe their career trajectory and disposition which are factors in their declaration of where they stand and how they regulate or generate their expectations and agency in their struggle.

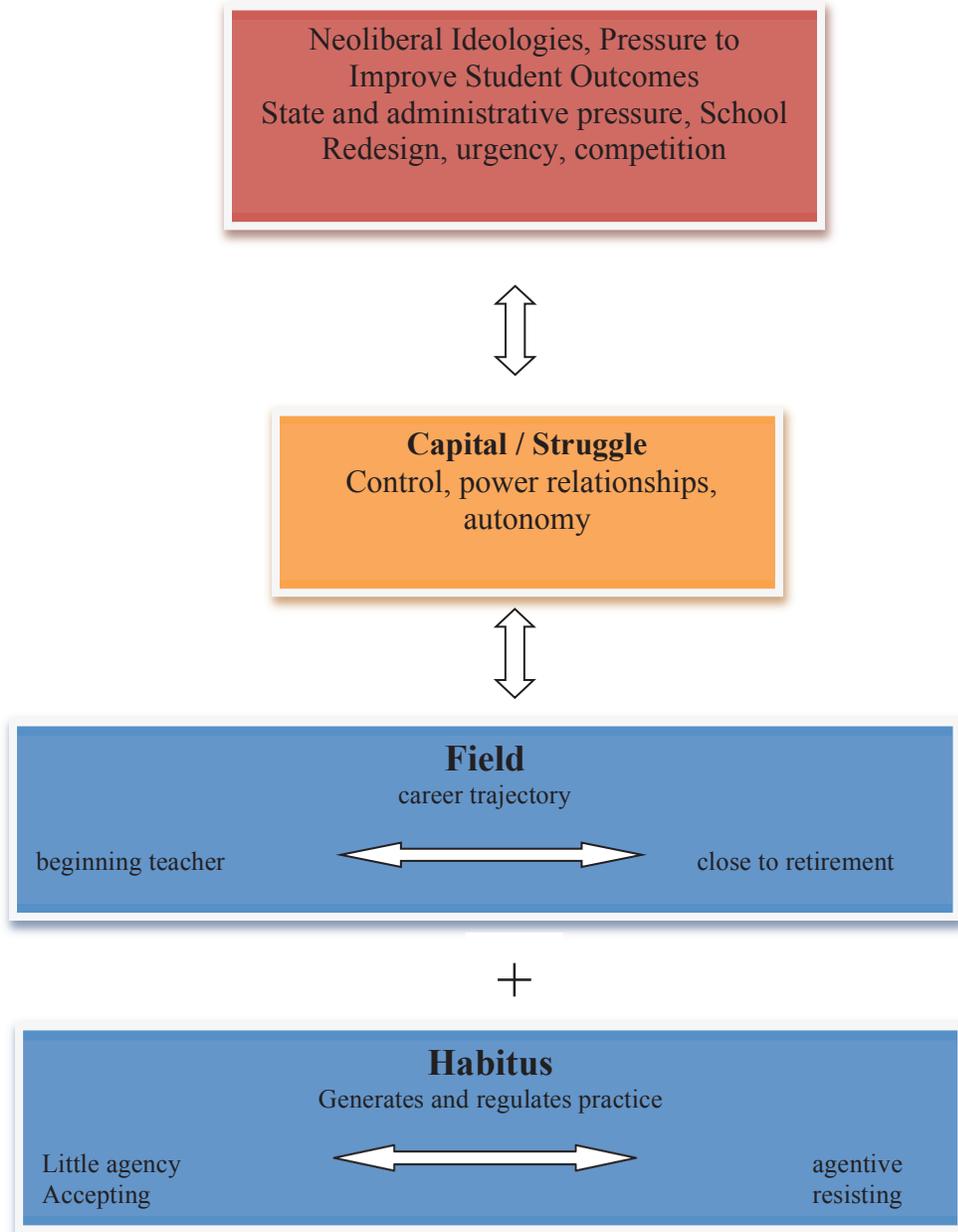


Figure: 4.2. Results from the Pressure to Change

Ann, fight. Ann has been teaching for more than thirty years and still enjoys it; however, she is not happy in her current position. “I can't say I'm happy as a teacher these days” As a middle-aged fifth grade teacher, Ann is planning to retire in two years. She has been living in the community for most of her adult life and has raised a daughter

there as well. The data showed that the pressure to change her teaching practice and her perception of the ideal teacher were in conflict. Ann voiced her resistance to the educational reforms and struggled with the pressure as it challenged her teacher identity. The themes that were most dominant in Ann's case were issues relating to change in practice, the math and literacy coaches, the loss of community in her grade level team, and good v. effective teachers.

Changes in practice. Ann expressed a vague understanding of the requirements of the AIP and current educational reforms. "Yeah, I don't know about it, I don't know much about it. I haven't been -- I mean I'm following along to a degree, but that's one of those things where I say, you know there's nothing I can do about it, it's just going to happen." Ann did not "buy in" to the reforms and she demonstrated reluctance to engage or participate in the mandated strategies. Initially she refused to admit that her teaching practice has changed. "I don't think there has been a change in my teaching ... little things, I don't count that as big changes just a new administration, we have to list objectives on the board now for each lesson." Eventually she admitted that there have been changes resulting in a loss of autonomy to make decisions regarding her practice.

The teachers in Mayberry Elementary are expected to upload daily lesson plans along with a formative assessment for every lesson. In addition, they are expected to post a mastery objective and reference it multiple times during the lesson. Interestingly, Ann did not view the mandated strategies in the turnaround plan as a way to change her practice and raise test scores, she perceived it as added paperwork and bureaucratic requirements that "are being done" to her. Ann is not afraid to voice her concerns to the administration "We need four lesson plans a day in four different subjects.... I went and

said, ‘you are killing us.’ The closer I am to retirement, the harder it not to say what I'm thinking.” Ann’s position in the field and her status as a veteran teacher with tenure enabled her to show resistance without fear of disciplinary action.

The observation data showed that although Ann posted strategic objectives on the wall, she did not verbally reference them during her lessons. In addition, the use of higher level questions was also not evidenced which further demonstrated her resistance to change or self-regulate her teaching behavior.

Coaches. Another mandated strategy in the AIP that challenged Ann was the utilization of math and ELA coaches. The purpose of the coaches was to assist the teachers with curriculum issues and to gather and use data to inform their practice. Ann felt that the coaches positioned her as a new teacher who didn’t know how to teach. “I don't need everything explained to me as if I were a brand new teacher.” She explained that the math coach does not have an elementary background; therefore, she dismissed him as not being qualified. Ann defensively stated that she didn’t think they were helpful and she didn’t need to change. When questioned about the coaches she seemed perplexed.

Well, I thought it was to give us resources, materials, information to do the mapping stuff to help us through that...to maybe kind of model some stuff that they found successful. Neither of them has an elementary school background; they are middle school and up. And so...we waste time meeting with them. I don't need somebody else's ideas to change, I need to know what to do with what I already know and I don't really need a coach.

Community. The Accelerated Improvement Plan also required that all grade level team time and faculty meetings be devoted to increasing student achievement. She complained that her team does not meet to collaboratively plan lessons or units anymore but is focused on uploading lesson plans online. In the level 4 school, the participants are expected to upload their lessons to an online system which is extremely time consuming and difficult to navigate. “The process online is difficult to navigate and the process takes so long that it’s not worth pursuing it” Ann admits to dividing the lesson writing with her fifth grade team members because it is simply easier. “We need four lesson plans a day in four different subjects....Sometimes I say, what makes you decide to go into teaching at this point in your life?”

The diminishing collaboration with her team and the loss of control over her time were areas of contention for Ann.

We were closer when we had more time to meet and to vary from the curriculum to do things like reading buddies or and when we had time as teams to work together across grade level times to work together and be together. We have less time to develop as a community and we sort of have to hope that everybody is doing it individually and then it will spread to the rest of the people. Our staff does not meet anymore, we meet once a month and it is always a set agenda and there is nothing discussed outside of what's been planned.

Clearly the administration’s control of the agenda, which ultimately controls the discourse during faculty meetings and team time, is a power struggle for Ann. The mandated lesson plans and daily assessments, the implementation of coaches, and the diminished time spent with colleagues was extremely problematic to Ann’s identity.

Good v. effective. Although not mutually exclusive, Ann was asked to define a good teacher and an effective teacher. She stated that a good teacher should know the curriculum well enough to be responsive to the students and make it relevant to them. On the other hand when asked to define an effective teacher; she used neoliberal discourses of outputs by defining effective as, “When kids are invested in the learning, participating in the learning, want to keep up and want to do it on their own.” It was interesting that Ann perceives “good” and “effective” as being exclusive from each other. She believed that the administration’s definition of a good teacher is a combination of both; however, she feels that they want teachers to follow a map to get there.

Ann’s label of fighter is shown in 4.3 as neoliberal ideologies of student performance and pressure to change practice caused an internal struggle over capital. Capital for Ann is the power struggle with the administration to maintain her teacher identity and resist change or a loss of autonomy. Her struggle for capital is mediated by field and habitus and is located in her actions and perceptions. Ann is categorized as a fighter because of her outward resistance to engage and participate in the strategies illustrated in the AIP. Ann clearly situates her perception of the “ideal” teacher within a context that is separate from that of the state. The elements in blue represent the factors in her struggle and the elements in green display her field and habitus. Of the four participants, Ann was the most outspoken and angry with the expectations and pressures from the administration. She expressed a nonchalant and *laissez-faire* attitude toward the importance of the AIP.

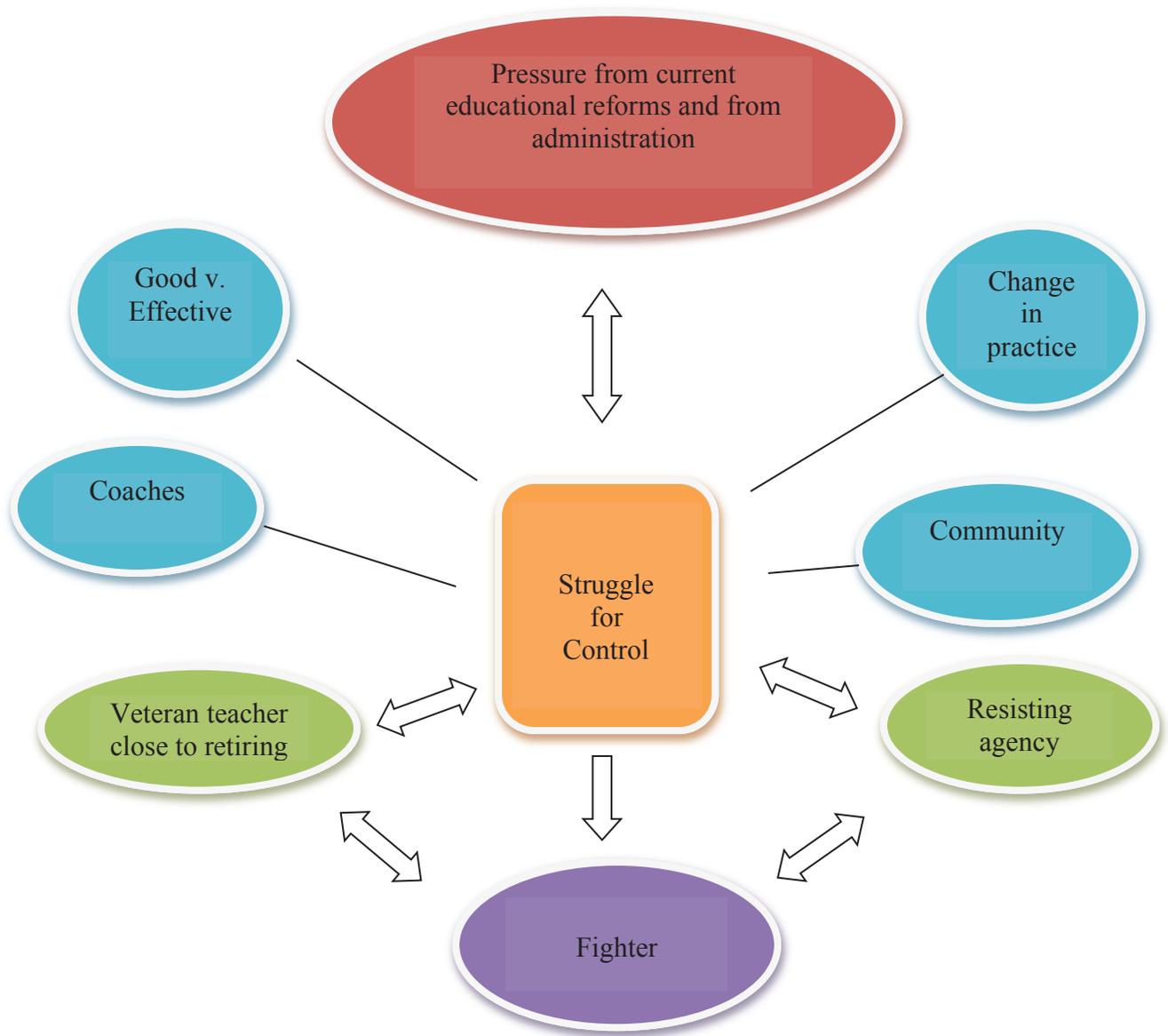


Figure 4.3: Ann's Struggle and Fight in a Regulated Environment

Ally, cope. Ally is in her second year of teaching in a third grade classroom at Mayberry Elementary. She is currently engaged and lives with her fiancé in her hometown which is a similar community in terms of size and socioeconomic status. She believes in teaching in a public school in this type of area. “So, I believe in the public

school system, I believe in teaching in this sort of environment, but I don't believe in what we've been put through this year, as teachers I really don't."

Time constraints. The struggle for Ally is the amount of time spent completing the paperwork that must be uploaded and submitted to comply with the AIP. As a new teacher, Ally wants to do her job well but it is very overwhelming to her.

I just -- it's really hard with the accelerated improvement plan, the amount of hours that I am putting into these lesson plans and ...this school is under a lot of pressure right now. I am happy during my days but I'm working a lot more than I was last year like I don't have time for myself, like I joke and say that I debated being a lawyer or a teacher and I didn't want a job that consumed my entire life.

Threats. Ally's status as a new teacher without tenure greatly silenced her and constrained her actions. She positioned herself as not having enough status to voice her concerns. When questioned about the rigorous state mandates, she felt her job was threatened.

I bite my tongue and just feel like you know, I need my job, I feel like teaching jobs aren't that easy to come by right now. So, I know that this is what I have to do. We have a superintendent who has made it very clear that if you don't do those things, you're written up as insubordinate, so you just had no choice.

The threats of disciplinary action and Ally's perception of low agency forced her to accept and comply with the mandated strategies. According to Foucault, these strategies will eventually become naturalized and she will change to align with the government's forced "ideal" teacher image as she naturally assumes the discourse and implements the strategies.

Good v. effective. Ally's habitus of a good teacher involves aspects of "care".

She posited that a good teacher has a good disposition, understands pedagogy and knows where her students are academically. She indicated that a good teacher engages students, creates a positive environment, and cares about teaching and her students. Like Ann, her definition of an effective teacher mirrored neoliberal discourse similar to the expectations of the AIP. "Lessons are clear, asks the students when you would use this and why, and has a wealth of resources." Interestingly, she also believes that the administration's idea of a good teacher is that "...objectives are posted, higher order thinking skills are used, and Bloom's Taxonomy is used". This juxtaposition of good and effective demonstrates her struggle of what she believes is an ideal teacher and the government's definition of the ideal teacher. In the next passage, Ally illustrates her inner conflict of her beliefs and the neoliberal ideology of student performance.

I think really right now all that people are looking at as far as 'are you a good teacher' is student progress, which I agree with that. Student progress does show that you are doing your job, but I don't think a lack of student progress shows that you are not doing your job.

The conflict of being able to cope with the demands of her teaching job and fulfilling her commitment to her identity as a good teacher is Ally's struggle. Figure 4.4 illustrates Ally's struggle to cope in and maintain control of her practice. For Ally, capital is her ability to balance the demands of the job and to maintain her beliefs of good teaching. Her field or her status as a new teacher along with her habitus have situated her in position of coping to survive and thrive in the classroom.

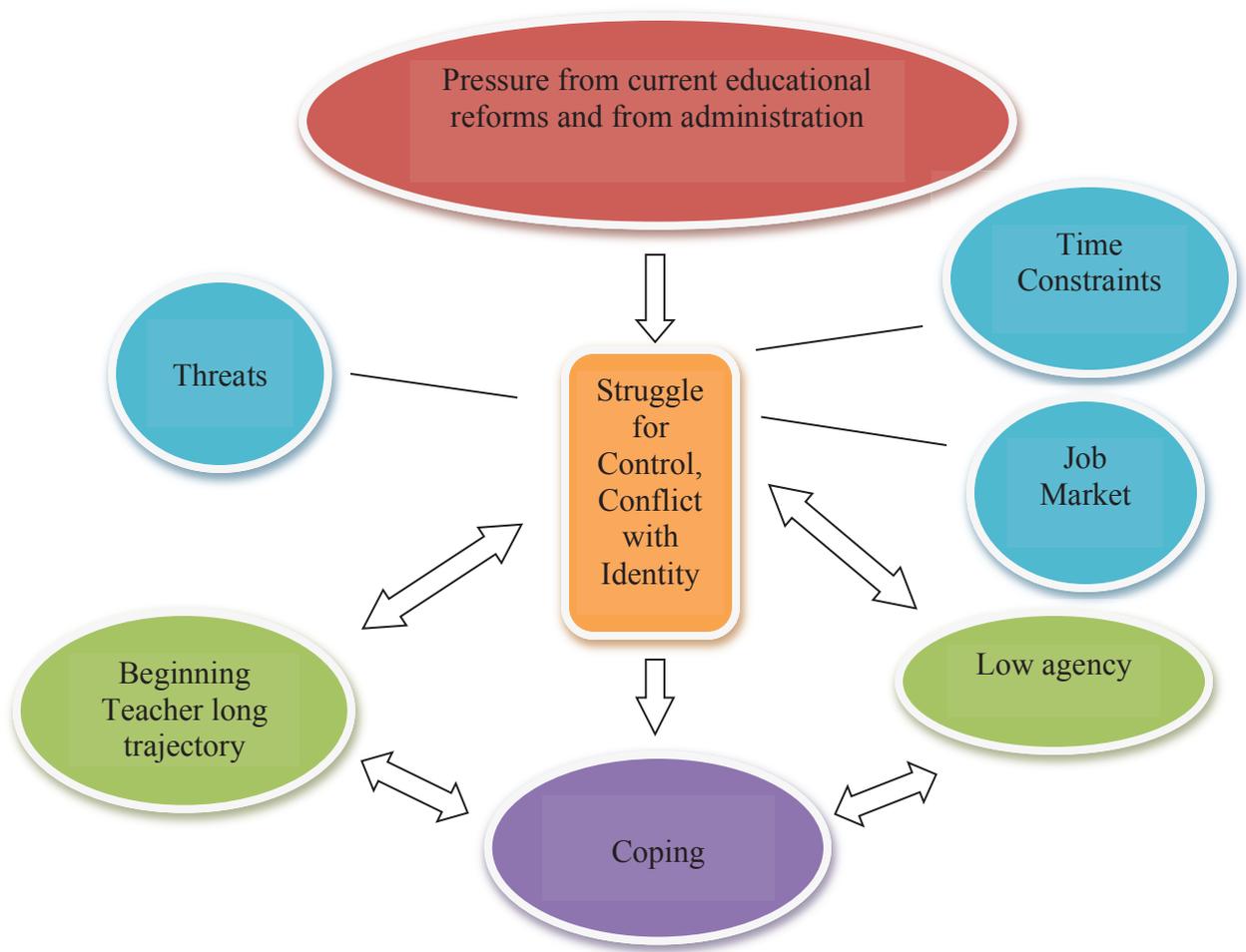


Figure 4.4: Ally's Struggle to Cope in a Regulated Environment

Maria, flight. Maria has been teaching for nine years in the Hilltop Public school district. She was raised in and currently resides in the same city where she teaches. She is the youngest of three with an older brother and sister. She stated that her family did not outwardly show their feelings and they maintained a tough exterior. “Even if we were rough housing, tears really weren’t shown. Even for emotional things, you didn’t show tears. You had to have a very, pardon me, strong outer shell.” This outer shell was apparent in the interviews and in classroom observations as she did not express much

emotion and displayed a very even affect. An outsider may judge her appearance and manner to be stoic and cold; however, her connection to her students and their interactions with her were very favorable.

Maria explained that her family engaged in traditional activities of family dinnertime and watching TV together at night. Some of the things her parents valued were honesty, trust, and respect. Maria's childhood was similar to students in school where she is currently teaching. "Um, I'd say it's similar to, more similar to what I was raised with at home"

Disillusioned. In the past Maria served on the governing board and was active in making decisions for her school and she expressed disappointment with the merger of the two schools. She and her colleagues worked hard to define the unique vision and mission of their arts based school. She believed that her school values individuality, which was apparent by the range of hair color in her eighth classroom. Maria felt that her school was different because the teachers were tolerant and allowed the students to be different.

This is not something that's in our mission or our vision, but I think it would come down to individuality. We are an arts based school and we do try to let the students express themselves in many different ways that, at other schools, you don't see....and as teachers we're very tolerant.

Maria was disappointed that her school did not meet the state expectation for student performance outcomes, which resulted in the need to develop a new turnaround plan. She expressed ownership and pride when speaking about the school she helped to create, yet felt defeated that it was losing its identity of an arts school. She also felt that

the students were being shortchanged and indicated that they were missing important content areas, like physical education, woodworking, etc.

Good v. effective. Maria defined good teaching differently from effective teaching. She described a good teacher as one who is prepared for class, evaluates his/her students and gives timely feedback. She believed that good teachers, “are pretty much in line with the district, but a good teacher also knows when they need to change their curriculum in order to meet the needs of their students” Maria assumed that the district doesn’t reinforce her perspective of an ideal teacher as she spoke of the importance of adjusting the curriculum to meet the students’ needs.

Conversely, her perception of “effective” takes on a neoliberal outcomes laden definition. “I would say number one is high productivity from the students.” It is interesting that her definition of good teaching is centered on the students’ needs, whereas, an effective teacher is based on their outcomes or performance.

Disconnected. Maria positioned herself outside of the teaching profession and from the other teachers in her school. She stated that she never intended to become a teacher and posited that she “just fell into it”. Maria spoke of her desire to work in a historical context like a museum but does not want to teach any longer. Maria also positioned herself as a competent teacher whose test scores were higher than the two other eighth grade teachers in the district. The merger between the two schools and the competition she felt with the other teachers were factors in her decision to leave. Maria expressed a disconnection with teaching and left the profession; therefore, I put her in the “flight” category.

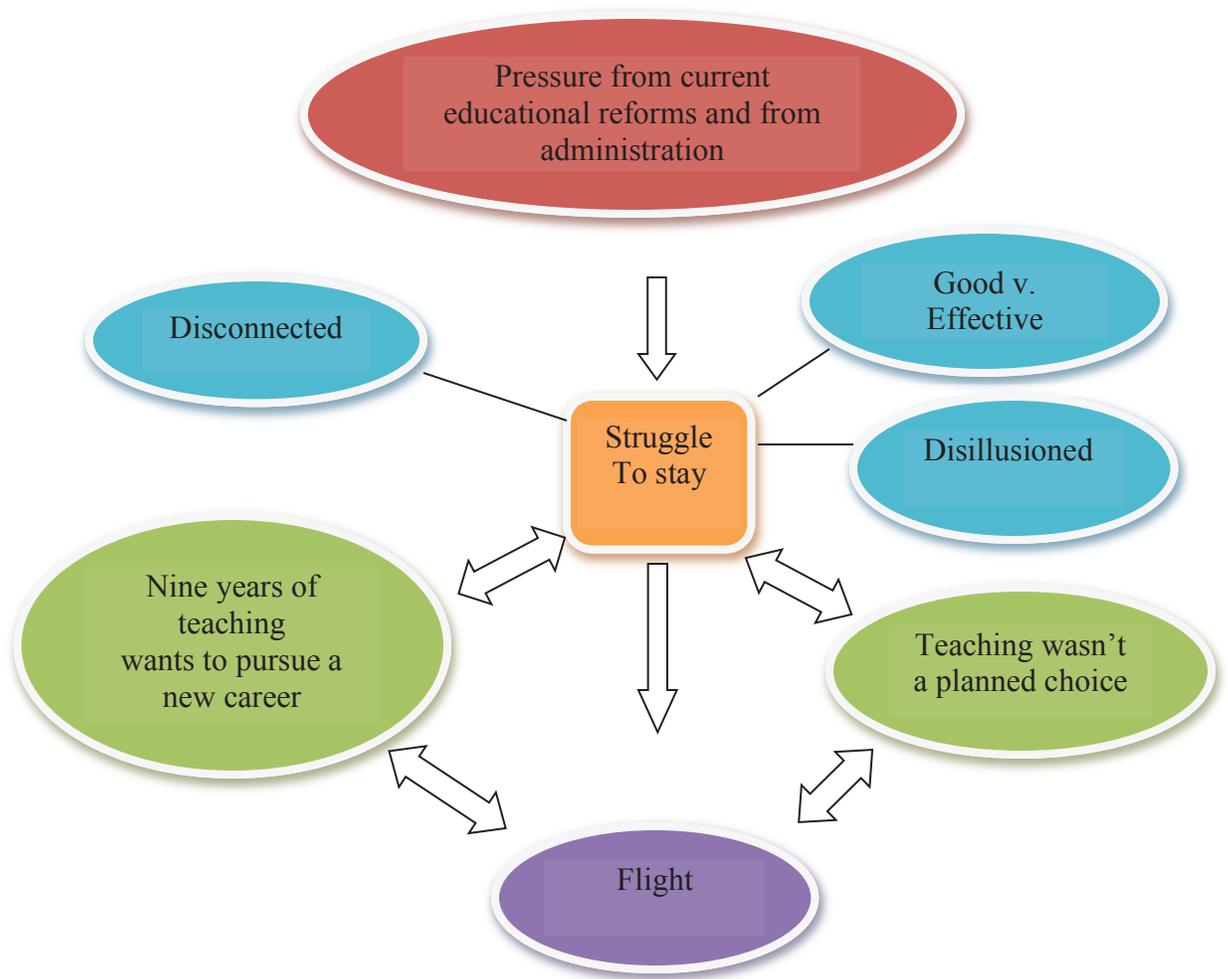


Figure 4.5: Maria’s Flight from a Regulated Environment

Lauren, compliant. Lauren is in her third year teaching; however, this is her first year in her current school. Her two years of teaching prior to coming to the Main Arts Innovation School were in a Level 4 district; therefore, she has experience working in a turnaround school. Lauren grew up in a middle class, patriarchal home in a wealthy suburban town. Her dad worked outside the home and her mother stayed home to raise her three children. She is the oldest child with two younger brothers. Lauren is a career changer; she began in the technology field and entered an educator preparation program about five years ago. Currently, Lauren is married and raising two daughters and a son.

In addition, she has chosen to buy a home and reside in her hometown, which has high socioeconomic status. Lauren was very outspoken regarding her traditional old fashioned values and she operationalized her habitus by engaging in discourse of hard work.

Hard work equals success. Many times during interviews, Lauren referenced her father's old fashioned views of women, family, and work. Much of his beliefs resided in the success of the boys in the family. "...my parents were a little lax and I think it was just more of a generational difference...that my dad thought, you know like okay the focus is more on my brother, he's going to succeed." She expressed some resentment for their lack of concern toward her future success and felt strongly that her daughters would not be subjected that way.

...cause you know my dad's generation the wives didn't go to college so it was more very old school. So I want my daughters to succeed. I want them to know they have a place in this world. And so you know my daughter wants to be a veterinarian and I say well then you really have to have good math skills. So I think I'm a lot stricter.

Lauren's positioning by her father caused her to consciously ensure that her daughters would understand their place in the world and they can have successful careers.

Lauren engaged in a dominant discourse of hard work equals success. "Just knowing they can absolutely succeed if they work really hard. I'm definitely stricter with academics than my parents were... with my 9 year old, what I have to be really conscious of not being too hard on her." Lauren demonstrated resistance to her parents' expectations; thus, reproducing and projecting similar values and career trajectories onto

her daughter. In the following passage, Lauren recognized that she may be reproducing her father's strong work ethic.

But I know my parents value hard work. My dad is definitely I would say, a workaholic and so I've kind of attributed that, that's something, and I'm sure I'm passing that on, especially to my oldest daughter, you know that's just how it happens.

Old fashioned. In the next passage the discourse of "old fashioned" was interesting as Lauren insinuated that most families do not participate in the same traditional routines as hers. Lauren's family engages in traditional routines of eating dinner together and doing things together as a family. Her definition of "old fashioned" is situated in a white-centered, dominant suburban discourse; however, within the context of her classroom, it was framed as outside of the norm.

We are old fashioned in the standpoint that we all sit together and eat dinner we turn the TV off. It's shocking when I hear what occurs in most homes, I guess in some ways I'm not even aware of it. So you know we're old fashioned in that stand point. We try to do things as a family, try to have interests together, and try to you know make some time even if things are extremely busy.

Another way that Lauren describes her family values is in the distribution of material goods. The attainment of material goods is situated in her discourses of hard working, deserving, and morality. She equated public assistance to people who are marginal, not deserving, and lazy as many of them don't work. The moral discourse assumes the "right" thing to do is to pay the mortgage and taxes. She also assumes that her students' families do not do either of these things.

...I don't have any video games in my home; I don't have a flat screen TV. Our priority is obviously paying our mortgage, paying our taxes. And you know, my husband has a contracting/construction business; you know we don't have a high income. So it's really interesting when the kids come in and say, I got an iPod Touch and I got this and I got that and you know they're getting free and reduced lunch. Or they're saying they went to Disney World. My kids haven't been to Disney World. It's really, really hard for me not to say anything. It's really hard. And they can tell, you know. But then I think well if they're renting, they don't own their own home, that's a priority for them, you know. When I was in Lowell, they all were going to the Dominican Republic, they were all going to Puerto Rico or they were going back to Cambodia...and you know how do they do that? There's a very big difference in what the priorities are and I don't think it's done like consciously like we don't care about that. It's just that that's what the focus is... that's what their communities are like.

When asked about the background of her students, she immediately responded in terms of social class. She labeled and separated herself from others and positioned her students' families as "other".

I have about four or five families that would be considered upper-middle class and then so they're obviously, unfortunately there is a correlation; they are in my highest reading group. They are my brightest math students. And then I have some that are more like middle class. And then there's a huge jump you know going down to students that are close to poverty level that are a single family, you

know single mom with children. I would say about a third of them are not working.

Again she reiterates the role of work, which is strongly valued by Lauren and according to her, in conflict with the values of her students' families.

Lauren operationalized her habitus by engaging and reproducing traditional beliefs and discourses of hard work and old fashioned values. She clearly illustrated the difference in her life with that of her students. She positioned them as "other" and perceived conflict between family cultures. I chose Compliance as a category to describe Lauren because her alignment with dominant traditional values in her habitus also influences her compliance in the neoliberal discourses and ideology of accountability. The following section, demonstrates her compliance and acceptance of accountability of student performance.

Good and effective. Lauren initially posited that a good teacher has a good disposition; however, by the end of the comment she talked about what students need to know to be successful on the state standardized test.

I would define a good teacher number one, is making sure they truly care for each of their students. That they have an extremely positive attitude to not become crass or, or, umm I don't know, cold-hearted. You have to really walk into a situation like this and really truly believe in your heart that you care for these children, even if they're not your own. And truly believe that they can do well regardless of what level they're at. That really is my philosophy. And um, so that to me is very important. And you know separate from that from a curriculum standpoint you obviously need to know the standards, you need to know what

resources are available within your district that you can use, what can you do to supplement. Because obviously there's no perfect program, you have to be supplementing. For example we are mandated to use Reading Street, which I don't particularly like. But we do have to use it. But I know that I have to supplement especially from the standpoint of what they're expected to know as fourth graders when it comes time for MCAS.

Observations in Lauren's classroom revealed that she was very focused on skill building and test taking strategies. For two years prior to her current position, she taught in a level 4 school and she implemented many of the strategies used there. Lauren believed that her recent tenure in an educator preparation program prepared her for the reality of schools in the US regarding accountability and performance. Her traditional values, patriarchal upbringing and experience working in a level 4 school caused her to not question or recognize her highly regulated environment.

Lauren appeared to resist her father's patriarchal beliefs; however, she seemed to overcompensate by reproducing them in the many references made regarding her daughter. Interestingly, the absence of references to her son further mirrored her father's treatment to her as a child and further illustrated her overcompensation. Also, Lauren believed that she has dissimilar parenting styles from her parents; yet, reinforced their traditional values. Figure 4.6 illustrates Laurens alignment with neoliberal ideology and her compliance and harmony of working in a regulated environment. The habitus of old fashioned, hard work and patriarchy puts her in conflict with her students' family values. Her habitus and field in conjunction with her experience in a level 4 school led her to not question the performativity culture in the school.

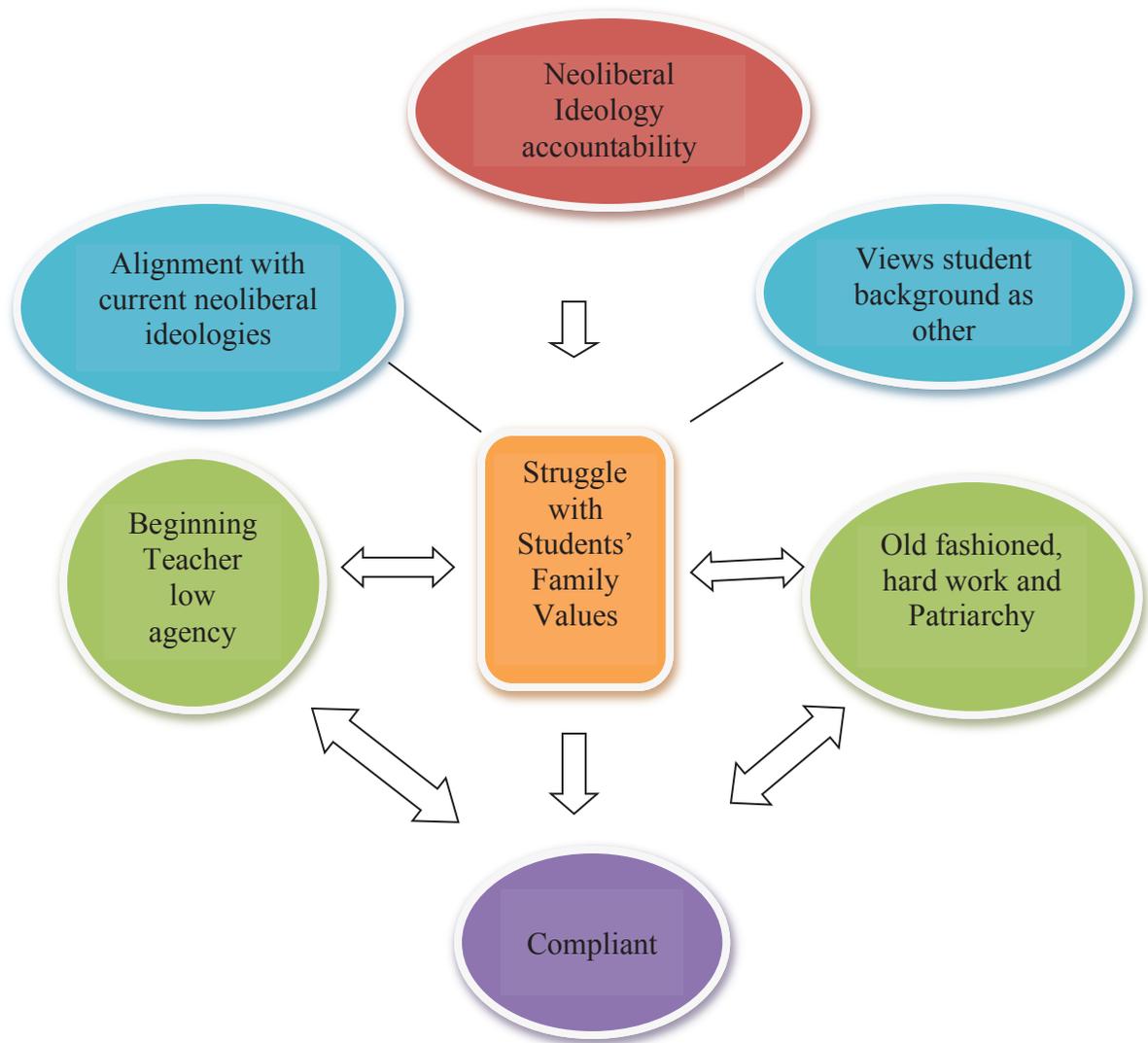


Figure 4.6: Lauren's Compliance with Accountability and Struggle with Students Values

Exclusion

Even though politicians have made efforts to improve education for all students, the laws and regulations focus on student performance and closing achievement gaps. As a result school districts have instituted neoliberal ideologies of competition and accountability, which have resulted in unintentional consequences for students with disabilities. Even though inclusive practice has become the goal in educating students with disabilities in both schools, there was evidence of exclusive practices. As noted in

Chapter 2, when inclusion is not done well, students feel socially isolated and excluded from their peers; therefore, inclusive practice must involve teachers who have had training and/or preparation in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

M.G.L. Ch 69, Section 1J: *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap Process for “Underperforming” Schools* mandates districts to develop and implement turnaround plans in order to close achievement gaps. These underperforming districts are required to address the achievement gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Although legislation includes students with disabilities, the main focus has been on student performance, not necessarily the needs of students with disabilities. The following section demonstrates an interruption of inclusive practice and an infringement on the rights of students with disabilities. In addition, it is framed within the realm of critical disability theory, which challenges the assumptions of inclusion and exclusion. More specifically, this postmodern frame looks for hidden and/or evident issues of exercised power and its impact on inclusive and exclusive practices. Although there were many changes in practice for the participants in both schools; there seemed to be little involvement or attention given to students with disabilities. The data showed that students with disabilities, who are some of the most needy students in schools, received classroom instructional support from untrained staff. As a result the students with disabilities were not getting what they need to flourish in an inclusive environment.

Paraprofessionals. As noted in chapter 2, the general education teacher’s engagement is critical to the education of students with disabilities. In Mayberry Elementary, neither Ann nor Ally was knowledgeable of the educational services and

needs outlined in their students' IEPs. According to Ann, roaming untrained paraprofessionals in the school performed all the inclusive services.

Paraprofessionals cover the services on the IEP...so there is a paraprofessional who comes in here to cover the requirements of the IEP. They come in to provide assistance in the classroom.

She stated that trained special education teachers were not teaching in general education classrooms or assisting the general education teachers. Ally also confirmed the role of paraprofessionals in her classroom.

I think that it's a problem in this district. A lot of the times our paraprofessionals are expected to meet the needs of students on IEPs, but they don't have the training that they need to meet those needs.

Ann and Ally indicated that there was some pull out services conducted by trained special education teachers; however, the classroom instructional support is done by paraprofessionals.

At the Main Arts Innovation School the students on IEPs were also receiving classroom instructional support by untrained paraprofessionals. Maria indicated that the new innovation plan requires more inclusion with special education teachers; however, during observations paraprofessionals pulled small groups of students out of the classroom. The classroom teacher did not supervise this small group of students and the paraprofessionals were not given any training. The regulatory qualifications for paraprofessionals to be considered Highly Qualified in Massachusetts are:

- A high school diploma or equivalent; **AND**
- An Associate's (or higher) degree; *OR*

- Completion of 48 credit hours at an Institution of Higher Education; *OR*
- Completion of one of the formal Massachusetts-endorsed Assessments
(Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010)

Both Ann and Ally expressed that their students with disabilities were not having their needs met. They indicated that their students required additional reinforcement of skills which they find difficult to do as a general education classroom teacher. Ally described the use of paraprofessionals in the classroom as just keeping students on task.

Yeah, it's really more like she kind of, I think for the one kid mostly it's kind of keeping them on task, it seems to be more of a task kind of thing and she'll help the other one a little bit, but she is more independent than the other students on IEPs.

When questioned why there were no inclusive services by trained special education teachers in the classroom they both suggested that it was the way it was in their school. The message that Ann perceived from the special education administration and staff is that the state is making it more difficult for a student to receive special education services. "The state is telling the district that they can't just go on an IEP. There are reams of paperwork to go through"

Needs ignored. One of the strategies adopted in the AIP was to implement a tiered system of support, similar to Response to Intervention (RTI). A tiered system of support provides targeted interventions and/or supports for students who experience academic and/or behavioral difficulties. Typically, it requires more documentation and a longer timeline in order to implement the interventions and assess the effectiveness. A tiered system of support is also used to identify students with disabilities for special

education services. A problem that Ann indicated is the possibility that some teachers may decide not to use tiered system because of the extra work involved in the process. In the following passage, Ann refers to a particular student in her room and admits to the problem of too much paperwork in the labor-intensive identification process.

I will admit that I have done that in past years but with this particular kid, maybe I'm on the other end, but I'm really ashamed that somebody didn't really push for her, because she is way behind and every year she only falls further and further behind, and she is going to be struggling like crazy next year, because she is already struggling like crazy this year.

Although current educational policy focuses on raising student achievement by closing achievement gaps among students with and without disabilities, the participants in this study believed that their students have largely had their needs ignored or partially met by teachers and the use of untrained paraprofessionals. In addition, the message perceived by the participants was to utilize tiered support to determine eligibility and not to directly refer them for special education services. The resistance or reluctance to use the tiered system coupled with the perception of longer timelines and additional paperwork acted a barrier for students with disabilities. These practices are a direct violation of IDEA as students with disabilities do not have their needs met.

Conclusion

The systems of accountability in both Valley Regional School District and the Hilltop Public Schools were implemented to control teaching practices in order to produce the desired outcomes in student performance. These findings are consistent with public sector reforms in the framework of New Public Management driven by neoliberal

ideologies. The state's newly created role of facilitator required these two schools to develop plans to outline a system that will produce high student achievement with the appearance of indirect state involvement. It is evident in the study that there was a great extent of state involvement.

Evidence of pressure, control, and surveillance was found at both sites in this study. In the level 4 district, the visible and obvious pressure from the state and the administration was coercive and troublesome to teachers. The state coerced the district to make major changes to re-structure or redesign their practices, discourse, and culture of teaching and learning. The pressure in the Mayberry Elementary School was framed as a coercive urgency as the district was required to rapidly turnaround student achievement in a short period of time. Likewise in the Level 3 district, the participants also felt pressured to turnaround their student achievement scores. This pressure had less "visible" state interventions; however, both districts were required to respond with a turnaround plan. The participants in the level 3 school indicated that their district utilized competition among the teachers to pressure them to raise test scores. This subtle competitive approach caused an internal struggle for the participants to be positioned as an "effective" teacher based on student growth percentiles on standardized tests.

The outcomes for teachers working in these highly regulated school systems led to feelings of fear, judgment, blame, and a loss of autonomy and control of practice. The degree to which the participants were able to adapt to this environment varied and was influenced by their habitus, field, and the capital they sought. Each participant positioned herself as compliant, coping, fighting, or surrendering by leaving the profession.

Exclusion was evidenced in both districts' use of paraprofessionals to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom. Untrained paraprofessionals were charged with supporting the schools' most academically needy students. In addition, the participants believed that their students were not having their needs met due to the roadblocks or barriers of identifying students with disabilities and implementing adequate services in the classroom for those on IEPs. The structure of inclusion in the general education classroom takes on many different configurations in the US; however, the hyper focus on student growth percentiles and closing achievement gaps has left many students with disabilities in the general education classroom without additional support from trained teachers. In essence, the US is moving backwards by nearly eliminating special education and placing the task to support all students to the general education teacher.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter will review the results in chapter 4 and discuss the common themes found with the participants. Chapter 4 illustrated the results of the impact of policy on teaching practice, the participants' ability to survive and thrive in a regulated environment, and the implications on inclusive and exclusive practices. The tools used to analyze the finding are illustrated and discussed in my theoretical framework and based on Foucault's theory of governmentality, Bourdieu's work on habitus, capital, and field, and critical disability studies. In addition, this study is situated in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

The vast changes in US society during the latter part of the twentieth century caused sweeping reforms thus altering the educational norms and discourse. The federal government's agenda strives to be a leader in the global economy and first in the world in education. The broader political ideology of using education as an investment to strengthen the economy and attain higher global status has shaped teaching and learning into a culture of performance. On a local scale, districts with low performing schools experience state government intervention to re-design and rapidly turnaround schools to improve student performance. The issue here is not whether some schools need assistance; many people would agree that reforms are needed. Additionally, the underlying question that this study did not propose to answer is whether these reforms are working. The issue is that current educational reforms appear promising in theory and in the regulations; however, these practices totally disrupt the daily operations and culture in the school. This study aimed to examine current Race to the Top initiatives within the

context of the classroom and through the perspectives of the teacher. In addition, it examined the impact of the changes on the inclusion and/or exclusion of students with disabilities.

As illustrated in Chapter 1, the New Public Management, based on neoliberal ideology, gives the appearance of little government interference and creates a new role as “facilitator of systems”. These independently run, stand-alone systems are designed by the government and have shifted an inputs model of governance to an outputs model of accountability and performance. As indicated in Chapter 1, the outputs are used as the inputs and are publically reported to display the performance of schools and teachers.

The strategies and initiatives outlined in the turnaround plans in both districts are technologies of Foucault’s theory of governmentality. This study found that the technologies used by the state to turnaround districts incorporated coercive discourse, labeling and competition, surveillance in the form of public shaming, and threatening consequences in order to redesign the operations, produce rapid turnaround of student achievement, and subvert the culture of the school.

The literature review in Chapter 2 identified a gap on the impact of current policy reforms on the daily practice of teachers. In addition, the literature outlined an ideological divide in the field of special education and the lack of advocacy from leaders in addressing the impact of policy on inclusive and exclusive practices. This study will help policymakers, teachers, and teacher educators better understand the challenges that current educational reforms present to teachers and students with disabilities.

Technologies of Governmentality

The two sites in this study were given labels of level 3 and level 4 indicating underperformance. Although the impact of the turnaround plans in the two schools was different, they both faced similar challenges to comply with the state expectation of raising student test scores.

In the level 4 district, the state's physical presence and the implementation of the strategies and initiatives in the AIP pressured the administration and the teachers to make drastic changes in school operations, teaching practice, and the school culture and discourse. Although the state allowed the district to choose activities to implement, giving the appearance of flexibility and autonomy, they were limited. Once the state reviewed, edited and finally approved the plan, the state liaison directly managed and facilitated the changes. The AIP represented a detailed self-governing system or stand-alone system of accountability. Although the AIP contained numerous strategies, the participants identified the ones that mostly interfered with their daily practice. Figure 5.1. illustrates a stand-alone system of accountability that includes the inputs of learning walkthroughs, newsletters, coaches, and evidence-based practices. This economic framework is widely used in the public and private sector in the US. "...the purpose of the input-output framework is to analyze the interdependence of industries in an economy." (Miller & Blair, 2009, p.1)

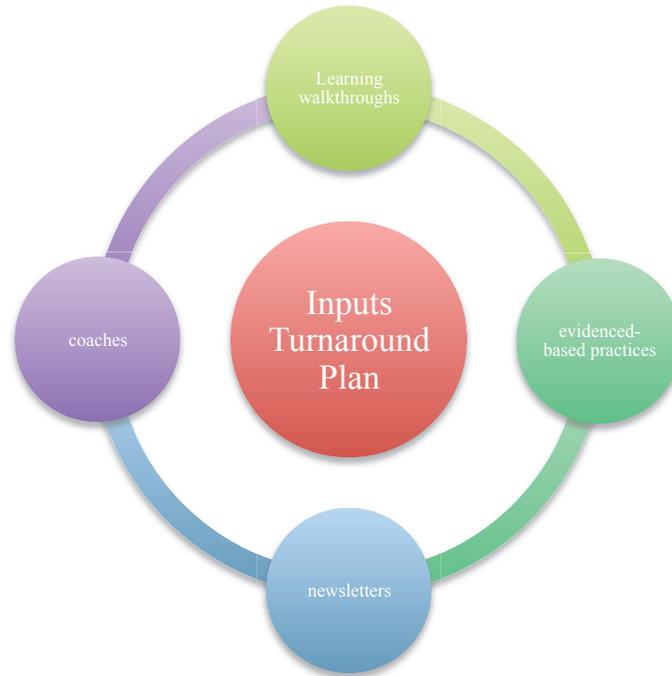


Figure 5.1: Stand Alone System of Accountability Based on Inputs

The learning walk-throughs initially intimidated the teachers; however, toward the end of the school year they became naturalized and accepted. The purpose of the walk-throughs was framed by the state as a way to determine professional development needs. This framing positioned the teachers as incompetent and monitored the implementation of the teaching strategies outlined in the AIP.

The administration collected data during the learning walk-throughs and reported their results to the teachers and the state liaison via weekly newsletters. These newsletters reported specific teacher behaviors and practices outlined in the AIP, for example, posting and referencing learning objectives throughout the lesson and/or using higher level thinking questions based on Bloom’s Taxonomy. Although this may be viewed as good practice, it defines the “ideal” teacher. The concept of the ideal teacher limits autonomy and shifts teaching to a streamlined or automatized process resulting in a

uniform teaching style; therefore, reinforcing the concept of teachers as trained technicians. Over the course of this study, the two participants engaged in these strategies and discourse, thus changing their practice. This process of changing behavior based on what's desired by the "ideal" is what Foucault describes as technologies of self. As illustrated in my theoretical framework in Chapter 1, Foucault believed that government creates self-governing individuals and this control is exercised through subjectification (Tremain, 2008).

Another initiative in the AIP was the implementation of coaches. In both schools the district hired ELA and Math coaches. The purpose of the coaches was to assist the classroom teachers in collecting and analyzing data as well as providing ideas and teaching strategies to improve practice. It was clear that Ann was not happy with the role of the coaches; she felt positioned and threatened.

I don't need everything explained to me as if I were a brand new teacher... I don't need somebody else's ideas to change, I need to know what to do with what I already know and I don't really need a coach.

These technologies of governmentality not only automatizes and streamlines teaching, it also controls the discourse in the classroom and shifts the culture of the school to run like a machine or planetary gear. On a broader scale this illustrates the system of accountability based on inputs and outputs as discussed in Chapter 1 and shown in Figure 5.2. This economic framework is based on neoliberal ideology as it gives the appearance of a transparent system that removes the responsibility out of the government's hands and places it on the system. In addition, this aligns to New Public Management, which shifts the role of government to facilitator.

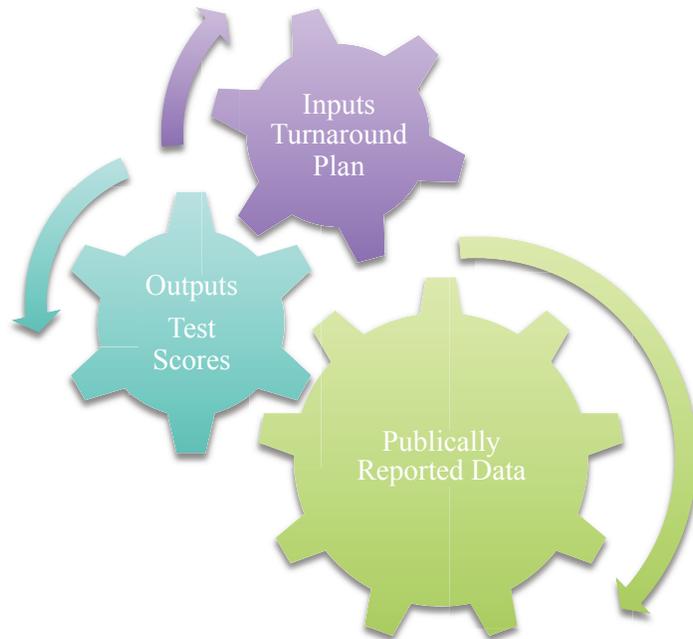


Figure 5.2: Accountability System Implemented in the Level 4 District

The inputs in this system are the numerous strategies and initiatives outlined in the turnaround plan that will produce the desired outputs or performance. After the outputs are publically reported, the data are used as an input to inform practice in the district, school, and in the classroom.

In the Level 3 district, the technology used to implement change was the creation of competition among the teachers. The level of state intervention was substantially reduced in the level 3 district compared to the level 4 district; however, there were obvious strategies used to create subjectivities of the teachers. These subjectivities enforced the process of technologies of self in an effort to conform to the “ideal” teacher. One of the strategies used by the administration was the public call-outs at district-wide faculty meetings to praise teachers with higher student growth percentiles. Although

some teachers were praised and singled out, this strategy made the participant in this study uncomfortable. This technology defined the “ideal” teacher solely on high test scores, thus subjecting teachers to a performance identity.

The second strategy and perhaps more disturbing was the review of test scores across grade levels with the teachers. Although Maria had higher student growth scores than the other eighth grade teachers in the district, she indicated that it was uncomfortable to have a seat at the table with her colleagues when the administrators reviewed the scores. These strategies clearly sent the message that student growth rates were highly valued, further defining the “ideal” teacher in this district. These practices interrupt teachers’ ability to create communities of practice by shifting the norms and producing competition among them. This is consistent with the research according to Cwikla (2007) whose study indicated that teachers need a common goal to create communities of practices in order to keep attrition rates low.

Teaching is Hard Work

A prominent theme among the participants’ perspectives regarding the work of teachers was that teaching is hard work. They defined the hard work as completing a lot of paperwork, long hours of preparation, and not feeling that their work was valued. Current educational reforms target teachers and places much of the responsibility in their hands. They are being held accountable to attain high student test scores and not on their ability to teach which led them to feel defensive.

Ann and Ally were mandated to coordinate all their lessons to the strategies and/or approaches in the AIP and they felt obligated to offer a justification when they veered off course. They were fearful of being singled out and labeled insubordinate.

During one of the observations with Ann, a guest speaker came in and spoke to her fifth grade students. Later she went to great lengths trying to justify the connection to the planned lesson.

They both also felt that the writing and uploading of lesson plans was extremely tedious and difficult. All the teachers in the school were expected to write 4-6 lesson plans daily and upload them to an online website. They complained that the system had glitches and it was difficult to navigate. They were told by the state and the administration that they must comply with the expectations or they would be terminated. Ally reiterated an analogy that was used in the AIP Feedback Plan Meeting. "...It is like changing a tire while driving 80 mph." This discourse was repeated to the teachers at an assembly by the state liaison and was meant to create, "... tension between a hand on the shoulder and a kick in the behind." Ally perceived this to be threatening which made her fearful.

The two beginning teachers, Ally and Lauren, blamed the students, the community, and/or the parents for low test scores. Ally's comment about the levels of students from wealthier towns entering school was interesting. She felt that she needed to work harder to bring her students' level of performance up higher as they entered at a lower academic level than students from wealthier towns.

...you know kids come in already reading at home and come in completely literate from a home environment that is literacy-rich, whereas here we have this gap that we have to fill, and I have you know five kids who I never get homework from, no matter how many times you call home. And so, things like studying multiplication facts at home to master their facts by the end of third grade, where

I'm supposed to be doing this deep inquiry thinking in the classroom and that sort of mastery is supposed to come from home. This year I do have a great parent involvement, but like last year 90% of my parents worked all the time. So, it's just a different, I think kids come in with a lower, not all kids, a high percentage of kids come in with a lower level of skills than in a community where parents have a higher level of education.

Ally does raise an important point as a national curriculum or the common core standards outline what every student must know or be able to do in order to be successful. The bar is higher for students with challenges like those who have disabilities or are not fluent English speakers, as well as those who enter school from homes where education is not valued. Ally felt that although the expectations and standards are determined, there is no easy road map to follow to get them there.

The high expectation for all students to be held accountable and be prepared for college or a career is admirable; however, not every student can reach the standards in the way the government proposes. The focus to close the achievement gap is difficult due to many social factors including poverty.

Like Ally, Lauren also blamed the families and the culture in her students' homes. Lauren's own personal culture and values conflicted with those of her students' families. Even though Lauren said that she wanted to work with kids with low socioeconomic status, she was not very understanding of her students' culture or challenges.

Ann and Maria, the two more experienced participants, seemed to blame the system. Ann gave a lot of push back to the administration and the state interventions whereas Maria blamed the administration for the mobility of teachers in the district.

Their experience and understanding of the broader social problems in the community caused them to look more critically at state intervention.

The major theme throughout this study was illustrated in Figure 4.2, which demonstrated the participants' struggle for control. They all struggled to hold onto control of their teaching or the operation of their classroom.

Struggle

It is doubtful that anyone would argue that change is difficult, whether that change was positive or negative. As reflected in Figures 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 each of the participants felt the pressure to change their practice. By using Bourdieu's theories of habitus, field, and capital, I was able to understand how they continue to survive and thrive in a regulated environment. The habitus of each participant combined with their field impacted the way they responded and assimilated to their environment.

As indicated in my theoretical framework Bourdieu (1984) described field as "The idea is that in order to make sense of the social world, it is useful to acknowledge that it is divided into relatively autonomous social sub-systems which follow their own "laws" and logic". (p.127) The social sub-system or status among the participants was determined by the amount of experience of each participant. The resource in the field or the capital sought was slightly different with each participant; however, essentially they were struggling to make their own choices and decisions in their classrooms and in their teaching. Ann struggled for control and was resistant to the changes; whereas, Ally was trying to find ways to cope and survive. Maria's struggle was more internal as she was disappointed and felt disillusioned that the school she worked so hard to create was being merged with another one. Her struggle was to stay engaged in her content area but no

longer wanted to teach in a public school district. On the other hand, Lauren's struggle was to teach in a community she does not understand. She had internal conflict because her conservative values conflicted with those in the community.

The struggle illustrated in Figure 4.2 with the participants' field and habitus providing the basis of their disposition, actions, and response to the struggle. In addition, their field and habitus situate them on a trajectory that impacts self-regulation and displays the amount of agency that each participant has in her school

High agency. The two veteran teachers displayed higher agency within the schools. Both Ann and Maria felt comfortable speaking out and did not fear losing their jobs. Ann's 30 plus years of teaching experience and professional status in the district served as her social position or authority among the teachers. She explicitly stated that she has been teaching in the district longer than most teachers, administrators and school committee members. This experience or authority gave Ann agency to resist and question the sweeping reforms in her school. Ann's capital was control of her teaching, classroom and identity of an experienced teacher.

Ann also struggled to find the time to collaborate with her fifth grade team. As discussed in the literature in Chapter 4, the use of a math coach and the forced curriculum worsened the working conditions in the school and interrupted the teachers' ability to create and sustain communities of practice. In addition, Cwikla's (2007) study revealed that teachers need a common goal to engage in communities of practice (Cwikla, 2007).

The second veteran teacher, Maria also seemed to struggle with control of her teaching. She had an active role when her school was a pilot school. She was on the governing board and felt that she was given autonomy to choose curriculum materials

and make decisions in their daily operations. The new turnaround plan did not allow her to voice her opinion, which made buy-in difficult. Maria wanted a change; yet, she wanted to remain engaged with teaching history. The district imposed a process of analyzing test scores among teachers was difficult and challenging to remain teaching in the public school.

Low agency. The beginning teachers Ally and Lauren, struggled to keep afloat and worried about their performance. Lauren's two years of teaching in a level 4 school helped her to regulate and assimilate in her environment. She began her position in Main Arts Innovation School with experience in a highly regulated environment. In addition, her patriarchal upbringing and her habitus of "hard work equals success" displayed her conservative or traditional values that, according to Brandes and Crowson (2009), would make her more compliant and conform to the expectations of the district.

Dominant accountability discourse. The word "effective" is commonly used in dominant discourse of current education reforms. An interesting finding in this study was the participants' perception of good versus effective. All of the participants describe a good teacher or good teaching using aspects of care and creating an environment where everyone belongs. In Figure 5.3, I bolded some of the main points in the participants responses of good teaching and effective teaching. When I asked the participants how they would define a good teacher or good teaching they used student-centered discourse like responsive, relevant to the kids, understanding pedagogy, respect, being prepared, changing the curriculum and caring. However, when I used the discourse of effective teaching or effective teacher, their answers also mirrored the dominant accountability discourses like investment, productivity, growth, data, and performance.

Good	Effective
<p>Ann: "I think a good teacher knows the curriculum to the degree that you can be responsive and reactive to kids in what they know what they want to know. I think a really good teacher can make things really relevant to the kids and make them want to be involved in it."</p>	<p>Ann: "When kids are invested in the learning, participating in the learning, want to keep up and want to do it on their own."</p>
<p>Ally: "I think first of all, a good teacher has an understanding of pedagogy. What is the best way to increase student engagement, how do you create a classroom environment that fosters that engagement, where students are comfortable and respectful of each other, that sort of thing. So, there's like that aspect to it and I think it's like that mutual respect where they see you genuinely care about them and then, they care about you."</p>	<p>Ally: "I think you need to have, like for each lesson, I think he needs to be clear, here's the point of this lesson, and having the discussion with the kids when would you use this, why. Even with mastering their multiplication facts, like we have the conversation all the time of why are we even memorizing these facts, like why does this matter? And then, having more than one way of teaching it, because you need to provide like a wealth of resources and then they need to choose what works best for them."</p>
<p>Maria: "A good teacher is somebody that is prepared for class every single day. They evaluate their students and give feedback quickly.... They... are pretty much in line with the district, but a good teacher also knows when they need to change their curriculum in order to meet the needs of their students...."</p>	<p>Maria: "I would say number one is high productivity from the students. It's one thing for the students to like you and enjoy you, but if you don't see growth in their work, which is where some of this data can come in, and the students want to come to school every day and they want to actually learn. There are some students that come to school because they want to be in your classroom, but if they're not doing the work, then you're still not being effective. So effectiveness definitely by data, and be it district-based or your own."</p>

Figure 5.3: Dominate Discourses of Good Versus Effective

Good and Effective

Lauren: "I would define a good teacher number one, is making sure they truly **care** for each of their students. That they have an **extremely positive attitude** to not become crass or, or, umm I don't know, cold-hearted. You have to really walk into a situation like this and really truly believe **in your heart that you care for these children**, even if they're not your own. And truly believe that **they can do well regardless of what level they're at**. That really is my philosophy. And um, so that to me is very important. And you know separate from that from a curriculum standpoint you obviously need to **know the standards**, you need to know what **resources** are available within your district that you can use, what can you do to supplement. Because obviously there's no perfect program, you have to be supplementing. For example we are mandated to use Reading Street, which I don't particularly like. But we do have to use it. But I know that I have to supplement especially from the standpoint of what they're expected to know as fourth graders when it comes time for **MCAS**."

Figure 5.4: Lauren's Definition of Good and Effective

Lauren, on the other hand, when asked to define a good teacher and an effective teacher blurred the two and defined them as mutually inclusive. She began with a student-centered response and finished by using dominant accountability discourses.

The data showed that three of the participants perceived accountability separate from good teaching, where as, Lauren does not. This also demonstrated that they have conflicted ideas of what is good and effective. It was interesting that none of them perceived effective with aspects of care or creating student-centered classrooms.

Lauren's conservative values of hard work and old fashioned traditions made it difficult for her to understand the challenges her students faced at home. This is consistent with the research of Brandes and Crowson (2009), which posited that cultural conservative attitudes value conformity, security, and tradition, where as social dominance orientation indicated the feeling of one's in-group as superior to out-groups. They also stated that people holding cultural conservative values and social dominance

orientation tend to have negative beliefs toward students with disabilities and oppose inclusive practice of all students. Although Ally and Lauren indicated that students with disabilities should be included in the classroom, they held lower expectations of their students than the more experienced teachers.

Inclusion and Exclusion

As illustrated in the literature review, critical disability theory is a postmodern frame that highlights hidden and/or visible issues of inclusion and exclusion of people with disabilities. In addition, it looks at practices of exercised power and its impact on inclusion and exclusion. Both schools in this study claimed to use an inclusive model of special education; however, inclusive structures vary greatly in schools. There are no regulations that mandate how special education services should be delivered in the classroom; however, the literature is expansive. The ideology of inclusion in this study aligns with the current research on the view of special education in the US. One reason that schools are moving toward a full inclusion model was the adoption of the common core standards. Perhaps as the country moves toward a national assessment of the common core standards it will continue to increase; however, it is concerning that the structure of the services and the aligned IEPs to the standards can exclude students with disabilities.

IEPs based on the Common Core Standards. The revisions made to IDEA in 2004 included the participation of students with disabilities on standardized tests. Moreover, an expectation was also added for students to have standards-based IEPs. Essentially all the goals and objectives must be written based on the common core standards. This is a juxtaposition of the basic tenets behind IDEA and the IEP. Students

may have social and emotional needs addressed on their IEP; yet, there are no standards addressing social and emotional needs. In this study all the students with social or emotional needs were not placed on an IEP and were not considered to be eligible for special education.

Another conflict in standards-based IEPs is the assumption that all students will benefit from the same outcomes. The concept of a standards-based IEP conflicts with the procedural rights in IDEA of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and individualization. When schools provide only grade level instruction to students with disabilities without more differentiation, it conflicts with the principles in IDEA. These practices are consistent with the literature outlined in Chapter 2 that show the results of a study by Norwich (2010), which found that there is a prominent dilemma in either teaching differentiated instruction or the common curriculum for students with disabilities. Teachers understood that there was a common curriculum yet wanted to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students (Norwich, 2010). Lingard, Mills, and Hayes (2006) found that teachers were supportive to difference yet offered insufficient intellectual “demandingness”. They posited that mandated curriculum restricted professional practices and discussions among teachers (Lingard, Mills, & Hayes, 2006). The participants in this study also struggled with meeting individual needs and deviating from the planned lessons for the day. The inability to differentiate or change the curriculum to effectively teach students with disabilities engaged them in exclusive practices.

Ann admitted that she does not like to make changes in a lesson because she must go back to the uploaded lesson plan on her computer and edit it to show the changes. She

found the process to interrupt student learning and was less likely to divert from the lesson plan. Even though inclusive practice has become the goal in educating students with disabilities, it does not mean that there is an absence of exclusive practices. When inclusion is not done well, students feel socially isolated and excluded from their peers. The participants at the level 4 school were overwhelmed with the amount of paperwork and clerical tasks and little differentiation was observed in the classroom.

Overused and underserved. Another common theme in this study was the over usage of paraprofessionals to support students with disabilities. In both schools the students with disabilities were receiving most of their content with the general education teacher; however, the participants felt that they were not getting what they need to be successful. The special education teachers did not co-teach or provide any services in the classroom. Most of the remediation was done by the general education teacher and the paraprofessional.

Ann recognized this as a problem, which also led her to believe that students' needs are not being met.

I think that it's a problem in this district. A lot of the times our paraprofessionals are expected to meet the needs of students on IEPs, but they don't have the training that they need to meet those needs.

Another commonality in both schools was not only an over reliance on paraprofessionals but also that they receive no training to teach or support students with disabilities. The least trained individuals in the schools are servicing the schools most needy students. Not having their needs met and the over reliance on untrained paraprofessionals instead of trained teachers is an exclusive practice.

Conclusion

The current educational reforms of accountability outlined in RTTT and NCLB have greatly impacted teaching practice. In districts labeled underperforming, state intervention implements a focused, deliberate shift in the school operation, culture, and practice. These strategies or technologies create streamlined automatized teaching practice that is under constant surveillance.

These reforms affected each participant in similar; yet, different ways. They all were engaged in some kind of struggle that was rooted in and driven by their habitus, field, and desired capital. The beginning teachers pushed back on the communities in which they worked and felt pressured to align themselves with the state and district trajectory. The veteran pushed back against the system and the state interventions. The struggles that each participant described affected their identity as a good teacher.

This study also identified areas of inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities. Although the two schools engaged in a context of inclusion, there were two areas that identified exclusion. Both schools claimed to have inclusive classrooms; however, the physical presence of students with disabilities alone is not good inclusive practice. Placing students in the general classroom without the appropriate support leads to exclusion of students, as their needs are not met. Moreover, the overuse and over dependence on untrained paraprofessionals to meet student needs in the classroom was evidenced in both sites. The revamping of IDEA to include standards-based IEPs excludes students with disabilities because it does not address their needs; it is in conflict with the meaning of an Individualized Education Program. Instead, it addresses the government's ideology of education as an investment in order to compete globally and be

first in the world in education.

The results of this study align with the literature that outlines the dual system of special education and general education. Although the districts are making efforts to become more inclusive, the ideology of “us” and “them” still exists with the participants in this study. According to the research, attitudes and beliefs reside in the habitus and are negotiated utilizing field and desired capital. The results of this study will add to the body of literature that critically explores the inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities. In addition, it will inform teacher educators on the outcomes of educational policy on daily teaching practices.

In the final chapter, I will provide an overview of the study by revisiting the theoretical framework, the research, and the methodology. In addition, I will illustrate my concluding thoughts, suggestions for future research, and the implications on policymakers and teacher educators.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the study and the possible implications it may have on teacher education and educational policy. In addition, suggestions for future research will be outlined as well as the conclusions I have made based on the results in chapter 4.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to fill the gaps in the literature by exploring the impact of policy on daily teaching practice and on the inclusive and exclusive practices of students with disabilities. Moreover, this study sought to examine how teachers adapt to the current educational regulations through their own perspectives.

In Chapter 1, I illustrated my theoretical framework of Foucault's theory of governmentality situated in accountability systems in the US and operationalized through technologies of legislation, discourse, and funding. These technologies utilized by the government include the concept of the New Public Management, which takes on the role of "facilitator of systems", thus creating systems that operate with little government interference. The reason for the new role in government is its agenda of using education as a tool to compete in a global economy; hence, using education as an economic strategy. The analogy of planetary gears was used to describe these government-designed, independently run, stand-alone systems that have been implemented to shift an inputs model of governance to an outputs model of accountability and performance. Foucault's analogy of a panopticon was applied to exhibit accountability systems as a form of surveillance of schools, teachers, and students.

The consequence of focusing solely on outputs largely ignores the need for inputs. Equity in funding, poverty, and cultural norms has been ignored, as they are difficult to quantify, regulate, and standardize. The goal that every student will be able to compete in a global economy frames the discourse in education and controls the trajectory of the role and function of schools in America.

In the review of the literature, I identified a gap in the research that examined the impact of policy on daily teaching practice and its influence on the inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities. Even though lawmakers have made efforts to improve education for all students, the laws are focused on teaching practice and student outcomes. Current reforms have instituted neoliberal ideals of competition and accountability that have resulted in intentional and unintentional consequences for students with disabilities.

As noted in the literature in Chapter 2, there is juxtaposition between a common curriculum and individualized instruction. Norwich (2010) concluded that teachers were faced with a prominent dilemma in teaching differentiated instruction in a common curriculum for students with disabilities. The results in this study align with Norwich's findings of conflict between sameness and individualized instruction. Although the participants in this study wanted to help the students with disabilities, they felt that they were not getting what they needed from their special education services.

This study further supports Lingard, Mills, and Hayes (2006) claim that found that teachers were supportive to difference; yet, offered insufficient intellectual "demandingness" to students with disabilities. They posited that mandated curriculum restricted professional practices and discussions among teachers (Lingard, Mills, &

Hayes, 2006). These barriers to differentiate the curriculum to effectively teach students with disabilities engaged them in exclusive practices.

The participants in this study clearly reinforced the dichotomy of general and special education. Two fundamental problems that excluded students in the general classroom are the ideological divisions within the field of disability research and the dual system of general and special education in schools. The origins of special education resulted from the failure of general education to include all students, which constituted an entirely separate system. Inclusionists and special educationists divide the research field and the lack of unity hinders a response to the current educational trajectory in the US. This review revealed that exclusive practices exist in policy, teaching practice, and in teacher education. Although educational reforms, such as IDEA, NCLB, and Race to the Top have been implemented to include students and improve achievement, it has interrupted inclusive teaching practices and has infringed on the rights of students with disabilities. The US is currently engaged in centralizing education by creating national policy and accountability systems, researchers and educators in the field of special education need to take a unified stance to inform policymakers by advocating for best practices in educating students with disabilities.

The methods used in this study, outlined in Chapter 3, utilized effective measures to investigate the daily lives of teachers and their interpretations and understandings of the world around them. This qualitative design was an ideal choice as it sought to answer the research questions based on contextual data, perceptions, and lived experiences. According to Merriam (2009), “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what

meaning they attribute to their experiences.” (p.5)

In this multi-layered study, I collected and analyzed data across two settings and made contextual comparisons among participants. The two sites chosen for this study were labeled Level 3 and Level 4 schools that indicate “underperformance”. These labels sparked state mandated interventions for rapid turnaround of student achievement. The state’s goal for the Level 4 school, Mayberry Elementary, was to provide direct intervention by redesigning the whole operation of the school and implementing a stand-alone system that would produce publically reported outcomes. The second site in this study was located in a small diverse urban city in central Massachusetts. The Main School (Pre-K-4) and The Art Institute Pilot School (5-8) made efforts in the 2011-2012 school year to merge and become an “Innovation School”. The newly merged Main Arts Innovation School has been designated as a Level 3 school in a Level 3 district. Like the Level 4 districts, they were required to develop a turnaround plan; however, they do not receive the same intense intervention as the Level 4 district. The systems of accountability in both districts were designed and implemented to control teaching practices in order to produce the desired outcomes in student performance.

These two sites were chosen because underperforming schools have a greater amount of government intervention. The impact of educational policy is more visible; however, it would be interesting to perform the same study in a Level 1 and Level 2 district. It would be interesting to examine teacher perspectives on educational policy when there is less government intervention.

The methods chosen in this study, interviews, document analysis, and observations, were used to examine how the participants operationalized their habitus,

field, and capital in order to adapt to a highly regulated profession. The document analysis and observations were instrumental in developing the interview questions particularly to examine participant perception on the inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities.

This study assumed a postmodern critical disability frame as it highlighted hidden and/or evident issues of exercised power and its impact on inclusive and exclusive practices. Foucault's theory of governmentality asserts that power is operationalized in small, everyday, taken for granted ways. The data collection methods chosen for this study were used to examine the impact of surveillance and/or systems of accountability on the participants' daily practice and to uncover hidden practices of inclusion and exclusion. Qualitative research methods of interviewing participants, observing in the setting, and analyzing relevant documents were the most effective ways of obtaining the data to answer the research questions.

Concluding Thoughts

Two of my research questions addressed how current educational policies shape teaching practice and how teachers adapt in a highly regulated profession. The results of this study showed a negative impact on my participants' practice. The districts in this study were labeled underperforming resulting in the state's forced shift in the school operation, culture, and practices. The government used tools or technologies to shape the conduct of individuals in order to suit its own purposes. These strategies or technologies of governmentality created streamlined automatized teaching practice that is under constant surveillance.

Systems of accountability. The systems of accountability in both Valley

Regional School District and the Hilltop Public Schools were implemented to control teaching practices in order to produce the desired outcomes in student performance. These results are consistent with public sector reforms in the New Public Management driven by neoliberal ideologies. The state's newly created role of facilitator required these two schools to develop plans to outline a system that would produce high student achievement test scores leading to the appearance of indirect state involvement. These systems are constructed to show transparency in accountability as a way to shift blame and responsibility away from government and onto those operating in the system.

As indicated in Chapter 1, an ideological principle of neoliberalism is to minimize government involvement and weaken regulations in the market. Through a neoliberal lens, federal regulations are viewed as a barrier to the freedom of the market to function independently and vigorously. The utilization of neoliberal practices meets societies' demand for better products, hence greater student achievement. These accountability systems, although involved in the initial stages of development and implementation, would eventually appear to operate with little government regulation.

Technologies of pressure, control, and surveillance were evident at both sites in this study. In the level 4 district, the visible and obvious pressure from the state and the administration was coercive and troublesome to teachers. The state coerced the district to make major changes to re-structure or redesign their practices, discourse, and culture of teaching and learning. The pressure in the Mayberry Elementary School was framed as a coercive urgency as the district was required to rapidly turnaround student achievement in a short period of time. Likewise in the Level 3 district, the participants also felt pressured to turnaround their student achievement scores. This pressure had less

“visible” state interventions; however, both districts were required to implement a turnaround plan or an accountability system. The participants in the level 3 school indicated that their district utilized competition among the teachers to pressure them to raise test scores. This subtle competitive approach caused an internal struggle for the participants to be positioned as an “effective” teacher based on student growth percentiles on standardized tests.

Subjectification. Neoliberal discourses were used by the state in an attempt to change the culture of the Level 4 school. Discourses can change the culture of a population by the constant reproduction by politicians, media, and school leaders. Eventually it becomes naturalized into a commonsense understanding. The use of the neoliberal discourse of ‘effective’ asserts the concept of the “ideal” and is defined as producing outcomes of high student test scores. The state’s pressure to control the discourse had the power to subject people in certain identities and change the norms in the school as it produced a practice for the participants to self regulate themselves in order to conform to the “ideal teacher”.

The state sought to change the culture by changing the discourse and getting the participants to change their teaching practice. As illustrated in Chapter 1, Foucault (1977) stated that as individuals internalize discourse; it subsequently controls their behavior because they self-govern themselves and it becomes naturalized into their culture. In addition, he posited that the government doesn’t necessarily have control over people but it exercises control through subjectification; which, become technologies of the self. It was clear that the participants in this study understood that they needed to be effective teachers as defined by the state. The process of self-regulating their behavior

was evident through the implementation of the strategies outlined in the turnaround plans such as, the use of Bloom's Taxonomy, objectives written on the board, assistance for literacy and math coaches, etc. The strategies were controlled by the administration and the state through surveillance of the lesson plans that were submitted weekly and during the learning walk-throughs. The neoliberal discourses were used and reinforced through weekly newsletters and staff meetings.

Struggle. The outcomes for teachers working in these highly regulated school systems led to feelings of fear, judgment, blame, and a loss of autonomy or control of teaching practice. The degree to which the participants were able to adapt to this environment varied and was determined by their habitus, field, and the capital they sought. I designed Figure 4.2 and Figure 6.1 to display the relationship of the participants' inner struggle to stay in a highly regulated profession.

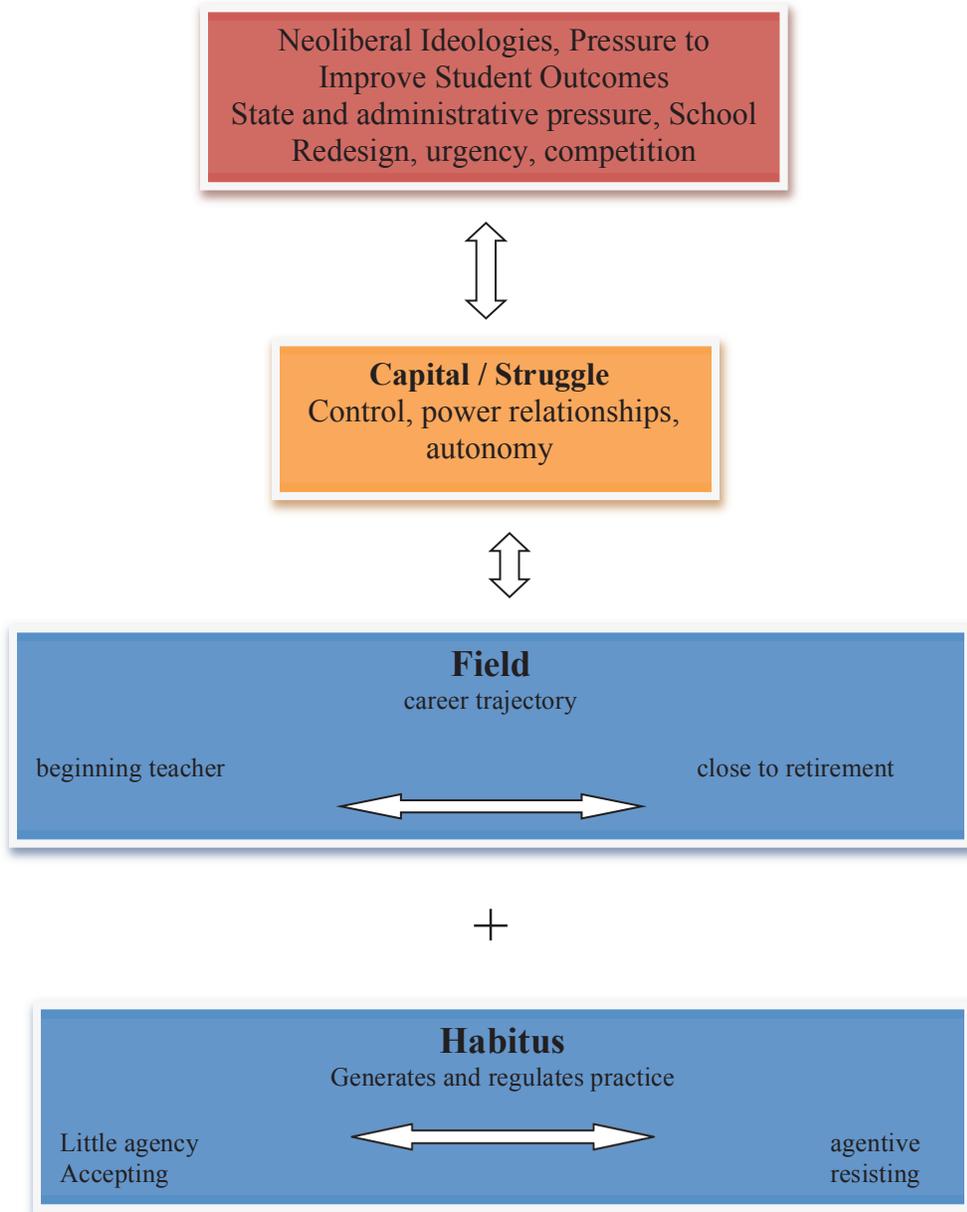


Figure 6.1: Results from the Pressure to Change

The data showed that the pressure to change Ann’s teaching practice and her perception of the ideal teacher were in conflict. Ann voiced her resistance to the educational reforms and struggled with the pressure as it challenged her teacher identity. The themes that were most dominant in Ann’s case were issues relating to change in

practice, the math and literacy coaches, and the loss of community in her grade level team.

Ann was labeled “Fighter” because the hyper focus on student performance and the pressure to change practice caused an internal struggle over capital. Capital for Ann was the power struggle with the administration to maintain her teacher identity and resist change or a loss of autonomy. Her struggle for capital was mediated by field and habitus and located in her actions and perceptions. In addition, Ann displayed outward resistance to engage and participate in the strategies illustrated in the AIP. She clearly situated her perception of the “ideal” teacher within a context that is separate from that of the state. Of the four participants, Ann was the most outspoken and angry at the expectations and pressures from the administration. She expressed a purposeful lack of knowledge of the details in the AIP. This purposeful lack of knowledge illustrated her resistance to buy in and adopt the strategies.

On the other hand, Ally’s conflict was being able to cope with the demands or pressure to be seen as an “ideal” teacher and fulfilling the commitment of good teaching to herself. The results of this study showed Ally’s struggle to cope and maintain control of her practice. For Ally, capital is her ability to straddle demands of being accountable to a system or being accountable to herself. Her field or her status as a new teacher along with her habitus of good teaching have situated her in a position of coping to survive and thrive in a regulated profession.

Maria positioned herself as a competent teacher whose student test scores were higher than the two other eighth grade teachers in the district. The merger between the two schools and the competition she felt with the other teachers were factors in her

decision to leave teaching. Maria expressed feelings of disillusionment and a disconnection with teaching; therefore, I put her in the “flight” category. Her decision to leave the profession was based on her unhappiness of staying in a field where she had a diminished voice. Maria had mixed feelings on teaching and the demands of accountability, which led to her not wanting to teach anymore.

Lauren’s struggle was not situated in the ideology of current educational reforms as she is in alignment with it. Her struggle is contextual and is aimed at the population she teaches as well as the cultural norms of the families and the community of her school. Lauren operationalized her habitus by engaging and reproducing traditional beliefs and discourses of hard work and old-fashioned values. She clearly illustrated the difference in her life with that of her students and positioned them as “other”. I chose Compliance as a category to describe Lauren because her alignment with dominant traditional values in her habitus also influenced her compliance in the neoliberal discourses and ideology of accountability.

Lauren was an interesting participant and perhaps represents many other middle-aged, white teachers teaching in a diverse community. Her habitus of old-fashioned, hard work and patriarchy puts her in conflict with her students’ family values. Her habitus and field in conjunction with her experience in a level 4 school has led her to not question the performativity culture in the district.

New system of accountability. Returning to my analogy of planetary gears and accountability systems, I have chosen to summarize and display a gear system that displays the results of my study. In Figure 6.2, the largest gear shows the results of applying pressure to control teaching and learning to produce higher test scores thereby

raising the status of the US in a global society and strengthening the economy. This system illustrates the impact on teachers as they felt defensive; therefore, blaming others. The last gear shows the participants' struggle as one resisted the changes, one fought to cope in her environment, one left teaching, and the last one complied with the accountability demands. These initial struggles will most likely be resolved when the new reforms become naturalized and are viewed as normal.

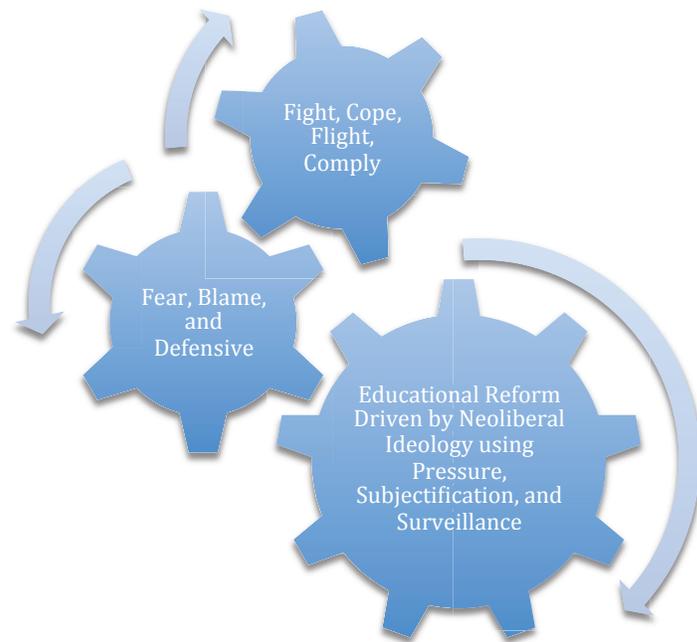


Figure 6.2: Accountability System Showing the Impact of Policy on Teachers in this Study

Exclusion. My last research question examined the impact of educational reforms on teachers' practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction. Current educational policies require universal growth and accountability to standards. Students with disabilities who are fully included in the general classroom are

presently held to the same expectation of meeting grade level standards. The concept of sameness or “one size fits all” creates unrealistic goals for students. In Massachusetts, student growth percentiles are used as indicators of effective achievement. A student’s growth percentile measures his or her achievement gains by comparing scores to an academic peer; in other words, growth models compare students to others with similar achievement levels. Even though each student will be compared to his or her similarly achieving academic peer, academic profiles of students with disabilities vary greatly making this method questionable.

Evidence of exclusion was found in both districts in their use of paraprofessionals to support students with disabilities in the classroom. The least trained staff in the schools was charged with supporting the most academically needy students. In both schools the participants felt that the paraprofessionals provided the special education services and cited little interaction with special education teachers. In addition, the teachers perceived that the districts’ trajectory was to increase inclusion; however, the use of untrained paraprofessionals defeats the purpose of inclusion by not supporting students effectively in the classroom. Simply placing students in the general education classroom without appropriate support leads to ineffective inclusion ultimately resulting in the exclusion of students’ needs.

The process of identifying students with disabilities was a barrier in the level 4 school. The district moved from a pre-referral process to a model that utilized a response-to-intervention (RTI) process. Ann chose to not initiate the process of identification of a struggling student because she felt it required too much paperwork and too much time. When a district adopts an RTI process, they need to offer extensive training for faculty

and implement it with fidelity. The participant's clear misunderstanding of the process and lack of training ultimately led to exclusive practices by not giving the students the services he or she needed to succeed in the classroom. The responsibility of the district to identify students with disabilities (Child Find) is a major tenet in IDEA. An area of future research may be to explore whether the US is moving backwards by diminishing special education services and placing the task to support all students onto the general education teacher.

Implications on Teacher Education

Even though policymakers have made efforts to improve education for all students, these reforms are focused on narrow outcomes. New Public Management and neoliberal ideals of competition and accountability have resulted in intentional and unintentional consequences for students with disabilities. As evident in the literature, the field of special education is ideologically divided and the effects are reflected in policy and teaching practice. This study is a call to all professionals in the field of education to direct their efforts toward shifting the education trajectory away from a global economic agenda and toward an inclusive community of learners where everyone gets what they need and feels like a legitimate member of the classroom. We must shift the focus of narrow outcomes to widen the expectations in education to include areas such as, civic engagement, ethics, art, culture, etc. Currently reforms are underway and policymakers need to be informed by a united field of teachers, researchers, and teacher educators.

Secondly, the structural and cultural divisions within education departments produce and reinforce the concept of a dual system of general and special education in schools. The moral and ethical components of a democracy are compromised by

pervasive segregation in educational institutions. Educational reform in inclusion needs to begin with changes in the education program structure in colleges and universities where future teachers are learning best practices in teaching and learning. This structure should allow a streamlined, integrated program of study in all education programs by offering merged or integrated programs that lead to dual licensure. Schools and classrooms are integrated and diverse; therefore, teacher education programs within colleges and universities should reflect what is currently happening in the field.

The dual system ideology of inclusionists and special educationists in the literature divide the research field and this lack of unity is reflected in school structure. This also plays a role in the divide in schools where this has been hotly debated over the years. Future research is needed to examine how to best bridge the two sides to prepare pre-service teachers, inform in-service teachers, and cultivate shared understandings in the field.

Lastly, inclusive practice has become the trajectory in educating students with disabilities; however, it does not mean that there is an absence of exclusive practices. The purpose of this study is not to advocate for full inclusion of all students as this is a blanket statement and further reproduces the ideology of “sameness”; however, every effort should be made to promote inclusive practice with pre-service teachers. When inclusion is not done well, students feel socially isolated and excluded from their peers. It may be that teacher educators are addressing inclusive practice; however, many pre-service and beginning teachers struggle in how to best meet students’ needs. The literature shows that change must be context specific and must begin with the deconstruction of deficit discourse and beliefs of pre-service teachers. Even though they

enter the field with prior beliefs and attitudes, studies have shown that changes can occur. Teacher education programs should offer substantive, high quality field experiences with space to deconstruct meanings and learn about practices that lead exclusion. Teacher educators must assess pre-service teacher dispositions and address those who do not meet high standards.

Future Research

In order to have more comprehensive reform that improves student achievement, policymakers need to look at eliminating exclusive practices. Students need to feel that they belong in the classroom for effective learning and improvement. Currently there is a gap in the literature on the response to the impact of policy on teaching students with disabilities. Currently, policymakers are deciding how to best measure student growth on test scores and how best to evaluate special education teachers using student growth percentiles. Researchers and educators in the field of special education need to take a unified look at the wider social and structural changes that can possibly lead to effective educational reform. Further research in the area of changing policy to strengthen inclusive practices that improve student achievement is vital. Policymakers and special interest groups continually seek to improve education by controlling teacher practice, yet the consequences lead to the exclusion of struggling students. Gaps in the literature revealed an absence of a wider social and structural change that can possibly lead to effective educational reform.

The research suggests that the focus on outputs of student achievement narrows the curriculum and shapes teaching practice resulting in the exclusion of students with disabilities. In addition, fundamental problems were identified in the literature exclude

students from accessing and participating in the general curriculum. The first is the deep ideological division within the field of special education and the second is the dual system of general education and special education. Given these exclusive constructs in schools, there are significant gaps in the literature that fail to address the process teachers experience to adapt to a regulatory environment and to understand how policy shapes practice and perpetuates exclusion. Further studies on teacher attrition as a result of policy changes would enhance the literature and inform policymakers and teacher educators.

In the future, the federal government has promised to re-write or make extensive changes to No Child Left Behind. Once the changes have been made, it would be interesting to revisit the same data sources to determine whether these current interventions have worked and whether the trajectory has remained the same. The new educator evaluation system in Massachusetts would be interesting to examine as it has direct effects on teaching practice. By the fall of 2013, teachers in the Commonwealth will be evaluated on student growth percentiles. Every district must either adopt the educator evaluation model system developed by the Department of ESE or create one for approval by the Department. As teachers are held more accountable for student performance, it would be interesting to examine how teaching evolves and how teachers adapt to their environment.

As noted in my concluding remarks, another area of future research may be to explore whether the US is moving backwards by diminishing special education by placing the task to support all students onto the general education teacher. A new way to explore best practices in special education could be to look at how paraprofessionals can

be utilized effectively. Perhaps specific and focused training for paraprofessionals should be examined as a method for promoting effective inclusion.

Lessons Learned

As a novice researcher, I learned many lessons while partaking in my first major research project. This research offered insight into the internal struggles that teachers face on a daily level. Some of the participants offered deeper reflections to the interview questions; for example, Ally was reflective and insightful of the issues. Ann, on the other hand, offered a very narrow view of the issues and a short response. One thing I would do differently is to spend more time with the participants and dig a little more into their belief system. In future research projects I would very much like to engage in ethnography and spend a lot of time in the field.

Another lesson learned was the unexpected discrepancy among the participants on the understanding of the turnaround plans, current educational reforms, and general administrative expectations. One change that I would make in my next study would be to use participant journals or written responses in addition to the interviews. A written response would be helpful to examine their understanding as well as to compare a planned response with the spontaneous responses given in an interview. In addition, written responses would have helped to examine habitus and delve deeper into the participant beliefs on teaching and learning.

Another thing I would do differently in the future is to collect data from additional sources from people involved in the decision making for students with disabilities, like a special education administrator. I missed the contextual history, evolution, and status of inclusion and exclusion that would have been helpful to understand the role of

paraprofessionals in more depth. The lens of this study was through general education teachers' perspectives; however, their understanding was limited.

A significant lesson learned while collecting and analyzing data was that Foucault's theories of governmentality and technologies of self fell short in examining how the participants were adapting to a highly regulated environment. Although initially, I knew that I would need to see how they operationalized their habitus to understand their perspectives; the use of Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital filled the gaps and helped me to determine how they made decisions about their teaching practice. Capital was useful in exploring their motivation while field helped to understand their status and trajectory in their teaching careers.

There were also some changes made to my project that were different from the proposed research project. Initially, I wanted to do a comparison among urban, suburban, and rural settings and include six beginning and experienced teachers. As I began to gather participants, it was difficult to find beginning teachers in the same setting as the experienced ones. I decided to drop the suburban setting and focus on the urban and rural schools. During the data collection it became apparent that the nature of the town was less important compared to the Level designated by the Department of ESE. As the information regarding the turnaround plans began to unfold, I realized that there were differences in the amount of state intervention in the Level 3 and Level 4 schools, thus impacting teaching practice.

Conclusion

The goal of this qualitative study was to examine the impact of educational policy on teaching practice and the inclusion and exclusion of students with disabilities. The

results clearly illustrate a negative impact on daily teaching practice. The turnaround plans that were adopted at both schools outlined specific activities and methods to improve test scores. Although some of these activities reflected best practices, it is not clear if they will improve student achievement.

Using a Foucaultian lens of self-regulating behavior as a result of surveillance, this study identified specific ways teachers governed their conduct to be the ideal teacher as defined by policymakers. The surveillance in a panopticon seeks to give the subjects the appearance of constant supervision. The participants in this study policed their behavior and the panopticon was achieved as they “guarded” their own self. When power is exercised and teachers self govern themselves to be valued members in the school by aligning their practice accordingly, they are no longer accountable to themselves or to what they believe is good teaching based on their habitus.

This study will contribute to the literature on how policy shapes the daily teaching practices in underperforming schools. The participants in this study struggled to survive and thrive in their regulated environment. Each participant operationalized their habitus, field, and capital to acclimate to their changing roles as teachers.

The structure of inclusion in the general education classroom takes on many different configurations; however, the hyper focus on student growth percentiles and closing achievement gaps has left many students with disabilities in the general education classroom without additional support from trained teachers. This qualitative study provides a rationale for the educators in all fields to rally for reforms that foster democratic ideals and inclusive community.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date:

Research Questions

1. How do current educational polices situated in neoliberal ideology, like NCLB and Race to the Top Initiatives, shape teaching practice?
2. Does policy like, NCLB and initiatives under Race to the Top, impact teachers' practices of including or excluding students with disabilities in classroom instruction?
3. How do teachers respond and adapt to teaching in a regulated environment
 - What was the family dynamic like?
 - Did you fight a lot with sibling? Divorce? Death? Lots of yelling in home? Any abuse?
 - Were you raised religious?
 - Did you go to religious services regularly? Frequently? Occasionally? Rarely? Never?
 - Do you currently engage in religious services? Did you or do you bring your children to services?
 - Was religion more important in your family as a child than today?
 - What were some of the things your parent(s) valued?
 - What was important to them?
 - What are some of the things you value and try to pass on to your children?

- When faced with a difficult situation or a conflict at work with a colleague or principal, how do you usually handle it?
- Do you tend to go with the flow or do you resist the status quo? In what ways have you done that?
- Would you say that the culture of the school is similar to how you were raised? Are they somewhat different? Very different?
- Do you feel like you can express your opinions at work? Are they validated?
- What kinds of things do you do to fit in with the other teachers or administration?
- Have you ever been spoken to or criticized for expressing your opinions? What usually happens? Have you heard of other teachers expressing their opinions? How does that go?
- What kind of an impact do you think you make on your students? How much of an influence do you think you have on them?
- Think for a moment of advice you give to teachers in various stages of development.
- What would you tell a candidate in a prep program?
- What would you say to a completer looking for a job?
- What would you say to a first year teacher?
- What would you say to a teacher with 5-10 years of experience?

Policy and Accountability

- How important is accountability in your school? In your classroom?
- How do you see the role of accountability in your daily practice?
- How do you know what is expected from you?

- Who tells you? Who helps you? How is it framed?
- What are the most surprising/ challenging expectations?
- How do you know when new policy initiatives are being implemented?
- Who tells you about it? How is the information given to you? How is it framed?
What do you tell yourself about the new policy initiatives?
- Do you feel like you're given enough information regarding what's going on in the district? Do you want more information?
- Do you do any digging of the topics or rely on admin for information? Media?
Why or why not?
- How do you perceive accountability is portrayed?
- Have you been to any websites? Who do you depend on?
- How is the information framed?
- Tell me about the teacher's Union? Is it strong, compative?
- Do MCAS scores or teacher evaluation ratings impact your teaching?
- How or in what ways? Have your assignments changed? Do you or the teachers in the school examine data?
- In an ideal world what would you eliminate from your daily teaching practice?
What would you add?
- Do you think current policy is making education stronger? Do you think students are learning more?
- Last time you mentioned that you had to justify everything you teach if you veered off your curriculum map. Why do you feel that way?
- Who are you justifying to?

- What are the consequences?

Students with Disabilities

- What are your experiences with people with disabilities?
- What do you think students with disabilities need in terms of support?
- How would you say your comfort with disability is on a scale of 1-10, 1 being very uncomfortable?
- How many students are on IEPs in your classroom? What kind of services do they receive?
- How many special education teachers are in the building? What are their roles? Paras?
- How are the students on IEPs in your classroom doing?
- Do you feel that the services they are receiving are working? Are they benefiting from them?
- How do you handle the coming and going of students in the classroom? Do you feel they are missing anything or do they figure it out?
- How do you feel about including students in your classroom?
- Do you think they should have more pull out services? More services in the classroom?
- How do you think students with disabilities in an inclusive setting should be evaluated on the same standards as general education students?
- Provide an example from your teaching or from a personal learning experience that informed your understanding about children with disabilities.

- Do you have any concerns about teacher evaluation and being held accountable for student outcomes?
- Do you feel that you need ‘specialized knowledge’ to teach students with disabilities?
- What do you need to know or understand?
- How do you think students with disabilities in an inclusive setting should be evaluated on the same standards as general education students?
- How do you manage the academic levels in the classroom?
- How do you reach the students on IEPs?
- What messages are you receiving pertaining to students on IEPs?
- Where are these messages coming from? How are they framed?

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Students

- How engaged are students in their work?
- Do they seem happy? Focused? Involved?

Relationships

- Do people speak respectfully to each other – adults *and* children?
- Is cooperation and kindness evident? Good humor?
- How much communication and conversation is happening?
- Are children encouraged to make decisions? Are they given choices?
- How are conflicts handled? Are children taught strategies for handling conflicts themselves?
- Is everyone included? Do children invite others to join in? Does the teacher help them include others?

Classroom Environment

- Is the classroom environment comfortable and kid friendly?
- Is the classroom clean, organized and cared for?
- Is the layout and furniture flexible for different types of learning?
- Can you tell by looking at the classroom what they have been studying?
- Do you see children's work on display? Is it creative and original?
- Is it a rich, stimulating place to be? Is it joyful?
- Would *you* enjoy spending your day in the classroom?

Classroom Materials

- Are there manipulative materials for the children? (blocks, counting objects, things from nature, maps, games...)
- Do you see materials for creative arts project?
- Are there lots of books in the rooms?
- What is the role of technology in the classroom?

Student Activities

- Is there a balance of large group, small group and individual activities?
- Do adults ask interesting, open-ended questions that encourage thinking?
- Do teachers allow enough wait time for children to answer thoughtfully?
- Do students ask thoughtful questions? Do they listen to each other?
- Are there examples of in-depth projects?
- Can children move around? Are they invited to learn with all their senses and with their bodies?
- Are children given choices and allowed to follow their passions?
- Do activities allow for children's different ability levels?

APPENDIX C

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS BINDER SECTION 1 DOCUMENTS

Data Collection Log Sheet

Number	Title	Date	Author / where it came from	Purpose of the document	What does it mean?	How do you feel about it?
example	Staff meeting agenda	1/6/11	Principal	Teacher evaluation	Informs staff of the evaluation process	Nervous, relieved, happy, angry
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

Additional Notes

Number:	Notes:

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS BINDER, SECTION 1, STUDENT WORK

Data Collection Log Sheet

Number	Title	Date	Author / where it came from	Purpose of the document	What does it mean?	How do you feel about it?
Example	Multiplication worksheet	1/6/11	Teacher	Reinforce multiplication skills	It will be used as an assessment on report card	Nervous, relieved, happy, angry, impartial
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

Additional Notes

Number:	Notes:

APPENDIX E

MEMOS

Memo 5

June 29, 2012

I have completed the initial coding on my four participants. I extracted the codes and the evidence (quotes) and created initial coding documents on each participant. After I assembled the four documents, I color coded each one to find common themes. The 8 codes are:

- Hard
- Resistant
- Blaming
- Surveillance
- Change
- Autonomy
- Threats/Justify/Defend
- Upbringing/Habitus

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO PRINCIPAL

October 16, 2011

██████████ Elementary School
██████████, MA ██████████

Dear Ms. ██████████,

My name is Denise LaFrance and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, studying teacher education and school improvement. I am writing this letter to respectfully request permission to perform my dissertation research at ██████████ Elementary School.

I am proposing to study teachers in urban, suburban, and rural classrooms. I will be examining beginning and experienced teachers' perceptions of current educational policy and its impact on their daily teaching practice. In particular, I am interested in how their teacher preparation programs have prepared them for the realities in the classroom and how their experiences and trainings have shaped their engagement with students with disabilities. ██████████ and ██████████ have agreed to participate with your permission. I am familiar with your school and some of your faculty as I have supervised pre-service teachers for UMass there in the past. I hope to start collecting data and visiting your school in January 2012.

My proposed methods will consist of 2-3 semi-structured interviews with one beginning and experienced teacher in each setting, 3-5 observations in each classroom, and analysis on mutually agreed upon documents. The documents will have any identifying information removed and all interviews and observations will be recorded and transcribed. The participants will have the opportunity to check the transcriptions for factual accuracy and they will be given the right to see any materials at any point during the study. A signed consent form from each participant will be attained prior to the commencement of the research. Because my participants are teachers, I do not plan to have any interaction with students and I will not videotape, photograph or interview students. All identifying information regarding the city, school, teachers, students and/or administrators will be kept confidential and all participants will be assigned pseudonyms in the written dissertation.

I would like to schedule a brief meeting with you to introduce myself and address any of your questions or concerns. Thank you for considering my request to perform research at ██████████ Elementary School and I look forward to speaking to you soon. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also if you would like to speak to Sally Galman, Ph.D., my dissertation chair and advisor at UMass, she is available at sally@educ.umass.edu or 413-545-4247.

Thank You,
Denise LaFrance
128 Willard Rd
Ashburnham, MA 01430
deniselafrance@ymail.com
978-827-1130

APPENDIX G

CONSENT LETTER



Informed Consent

My name is Denise LaFrance and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in the Teacher Education and School Improvement Program. For my dissertation, I plan to study the impact policy has on the daily life of teachers. In addition, I will also examine the impact policy has on inclusive and exclusive practices of teachers on students with disabilities.

As a participant you will need to agree to-

- a. Be involved in two to three semi-structured audio-taped interview for approximately one hour in length.
- b. Be observed for 5-10 audio-taped lessons on mutually agreed upon dates.
- c. Provide written responses to questions posed by researcher.
- d. Share mutually agreed upon documents.

The information shared during these lessons will be kept confidential and the audio-tape will be destroyed after I have analyzed it. The information shared in the interviews and observations will be shared in my dissertation and may also be included in manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication. I will use pseudonyms for the school and the participants to protect confidentiality.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to and you are free to decline to be involved in the study or to withdraw your permission at any time. You are free to participate in the project or not without prejudice. You also have the right to review any materials at any time and a copy of the results will be furnished upon your request.

You have been given 2 copies of this consent both of which should be signed if you wish to participate. One copy should be kept for your records and the other for my records. Your signature below includes that you:

- a. Read and understand the information provided.
- b. Willingly agree to participate.
- c. May withdraw your consent at any time.

If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me at (978) 549-3989. You may also contact my Dissertation Committee Chair:

Sally Galman, Ph.D.
123 Furcolo Hall
School of Education
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
413-545-4247
sally@educ.umass.edu

Researcher's signature

Participant's signature

Date

Date

APPENDIX H

LIST OF CODES

Initial Codes

1. Re-structuring the field
 - a. Coercive urgency
 - b. Competitive Pressure
 - c. Surveillance
2. Perceptions of Threat
 - a. Change in Practice
 - b. Threatened, Defensive / justify, blame,
 - c. Loss of Autonomy
3. Response to threat
 - a. Fight - Ann – Habitus, Field, Resistant, retiring, Seasoned Resister, Fight
 - b. Flight - Maria – Habitus, Field, secure, competitive, wants out, Flight and Ally- Habitus, Field, new to profession, Flight
 - c. Naturalized - Lauren – Habitus, Field, compliant, unquestioning, Trained Technician, Compliant
4. Exclusion of students with disabilities

Axial Coding

Codes	Description
Hard Work	Time, new expectations, paperwork, changes in curriculum, online component
Resistant	Needs to justify everything, resists changing her ways, finds ways around change, no buy in, doesn't care to learn about it, entitled, negative feelings towards teaching
Blaming	Students, special ed, state, process of online component, parents, district admin, district school structure, paraprofessionals ,no support at home, teacher mobility,
Surveillance	Walk throughs, public shaming, competition among teachers, lesson plans uploaded online
Change	Coaches, collecting and using data, staff meetings, stricter rules for special education, paras providing special ed services, paperwork, assessments,
Autonomy	This is happening to them, loss of autonomy, more freedom this year compared to last, loves teaching because she has freedom, served on governing board
Defensive/Threats	Need to justify everything, threats from administrators, fear of not uploading lesson plans
Habitus	Retire in 2 years, beliefs about good teaching, effective teacher, social class compared to kids they teach, new to profession and worried about not finding another job, patriarchic family, values, religion, believes there are bad teachers

The changes brought about by neoliberal practices have caused a loss of autonomy, more work for teachers, and plenty of changes in practice. Teachers feel defensive because of the threats and surveillance that they resist, accept, and blame others.

Categories	Codes	Description
Practice	Hard Work	Time, new expectations, paperwork, changes in curriculum, online component
	Change	Coaches, collecting and using data, staff meetings, stricter rules for special education, paras providing special ed services, paperwork, assessments,
	Autonomy	This is happening to them, loss of autonomy, more freedom this year compared to last, loves teaching because she has freedom, served on governing board
Habitus and Field	Resistant	Needs to justify everything, resists changing her ways, finds ways around change, no buy in, doesn't care to learn about it, entitled, negative feelings towards teaching
	Blaming	Students, special ed, state, process of online component, parents, district admin, district school structure, paraprofessionals ,no support at home, teacher mobility,
	Defensive	Need to justify everything, threats from administrators, fear of not uploading lesson plans
Control	Threats	Need to justify everything, threats from administrators, fear of not uploading lesson plans
	Surveillance	Walk throughs, public shaming, competition among teachers, lesson plans uploaded online

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