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Change in Teacher Efficacy As a Result of Collaborative Literacy Coaching

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I've been a teacher in education for over thirty years and this is the very first time a district has come to me and said, "Mary Kate, we would like you to be better at your craft and here is how we are going to help you. You don't have to do it on Saturday and you don't have to do it in the summer. You don't have to do it after you've worked all day. We are going to let you meet with a professional, and other colleagues for three hours once a week. The first hour you are going to talk about teaching and strategies. The second hour you're going to try it. And here is the crazy thing, the third hour you get to come back and talk about what you have learned." Never in my teaching career have I had that opportunity. (Mary Kate, First Interview, October 11)

Introduction

Mary Kate, Margaret and Chloe (pseudonyms) were given this opportunity for an entire school year in their small midwestern school district. The purpose of this study that tells the story of their experience is twofold: (a) to focus on the changes to teacher efficacy for literacy instruction that resulted from collaborative coaching, (b) to identify the specific aspects of coaching that impacted teacher change.

Efficacy in this case is the belief held by a teacher that she could positively impact student learning (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

The journey for Mary Kate, Margaret, and Chloe began when a school district in a predominately rural, farming community received a small grant to help fund literacy professional development. One of the authors, Lee, was invited to meet with district administrators because she had previously done professional development for the high school staff. Initially, the district wanted to create a literacy coach position and was interested in employing Lee to work full-time with its middle and secondary teachers. Instead, Lee proposed that her salary be used to support implementation of a yearlong collaborative literacy coaching (CLC) initiative.

The definitions for a literacy coach and literacy coaching used here zero in on *coaching* as it pertained to providing professional development to adults (Toll, 2005, 2009). The title *literacy coach* defined a reading specialist who performed the roles and responsibilities of a coach interested in the improvement of students' reading and writing skills (Bean & Eisenberg, 2009;

International Reading Association, 2006). This study used a type of literacy coaching model designed for working with groups of teachers in which the literacy coach facilitated a collaborative process and served as a co-learner, rather than an expert. As in Richardson's (1994) staff development research, Lee, the coach here, started with a general idea for the content and process for the collaborative coaching initiative and then released control so the participants could shape the direction of the content and process. This was different than a more typical "expert" literacy coaching approach or traditional professional development model in which the content is pre-determined by the literacy coach or professional developer. Instead, as a literacy coach functioning as a co-learner, Lee worked "as one of many experts in a collaborative process" (Richardson & Anders, 1994, p. 205) to ask questions, share resources and expertise, and seek relevant answers. This approach also included modeling the use of theory and research to ground Lee's thinking. Additionally, considerable time was allowed for discussions around research, theory, and practice. (Richardson, 1994).

The collaboration was built into a weekly, three-hour literacy coaching cadre, the framework of which was borrowed from Boston Public School's Collaborative Coaching & Learning (CCL) approach (Neufeld & Roper, 2002, 2003b). The weekly, literacy-coaching cadre blended inquiry, classroom experience, feedback, and a knowledge base. Various components of the design above were noted in other, successful

coaching initiatives and reviews of models. Examples of those are, Biancarosa, Bryk and Dexter's Literacy Collaborative (2010); Lovett, Lacernenza, DePalma, Benson, Steinbach and Frijters' PHAST PACES (2008); Matsumura, Garnier, Correnti, Junker and DiPrima Bickel's Content Focused Coaching (2010); Neuman and Wright's early literacy practices (2010); and Sailors and Price's Cognitive Reading Strategy Instruction (2010).

The goal of this model was for teachers to become more reflective and empowered around their literacy teaching and their students' literacy learning. This study contributed to the literature on middle and high school literacy coaching and its impact on content area teachers' sense of efficacy for literacy instruction.

Literature Review

Literacy Teaching

A look at a contemporary view of literacy teaching with middle and high school students and the terminology related to working with this group, is warranted. In the late 1990s, the position statement of the Adolescent Literacy Commission called for a change in the thinking about the role of the adolescent within literacy (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999). Rather than view the adolescent as an outsider looking in at texts armed with strategies to access print, researchers realized that the reader should be at the center of literacy processes and practices, and they recognized that the reader, context, and text all create meaning together (Stevens, 2002). There was a subsequent shift, then, from the use of

the term “content literacy,” with its focus on strategies, to the use of the term “adolescent literacy,” with a greater focus on the student (Conley, Freidhoff, Gritter, & Van Duinen, 2008). Adolescent literacy “subsumed” the categories of content literacy and secondary reading (Bean & Harper, 2009). This adolescent student may need basic literacy skills, content instruction, critical reading and critical literacy practices. Additionally, planning appropriate instruction for English learners, working with readers who struggle, and motivating adolescents to want to read, introduced the need to more fully understand multiple literacies. This broader lens of adolescent literacy was used to view reading and writing in this study. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy were needed to face the challenges this broader perspective generated.

Teacher Efficacy

For decades, researchers have recognized that teacher beliefs have a powerful impact on teaching and learning (Fenstermacher, 1978; Kagan, 1990, 1992; Nespore, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Readence, Kile, & Mallette, 1998; Richardson, 1994, 1996).

Teachers’ sense of efficacy, also referred to as teacher efficacy, is a construct of teacher beliefs and has been linked to teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). It is a future-oriented belief about an individual’s level of confidence in a given situation. In the present study, the term *teacher efficacy* (TE) is used more broadly to reference both *personal sense of teacher efficacy* (PTE, personal impact

on student learning, Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) and *general sense of teacher efficacy* (GTE), the ability to influence student learning, regardless of challenges (Tschannen-Moran, et al., 1998).

Teacher efficacy plays an important role in educators’ willingness to change and is a strong predictor of their change efforts within professional development initiatives (Guskey, 1988; Smylie, 1988). It is particularly important to the present study and literacy coaching of middle and secondary content teachers because these educators have historically resisted literacy teaching (Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1983; O’Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). High school teachers have cited beliefs, including their lack of confidence in literacy instruction, among their reasons for an absence of literacy strategy instruction (Barry, 2002; Cantrell, Burns, & Callaway, 2009; Gee & Forester, 1988; Hall, 2005; O’Brien, et al., 1995).

Furthermore, with so many diverse learners and adolescents who struggle with reading, more needs to be known about the ways in which professional development efforts can change secondary teachers’ efficacy beliefs for literacy teaching. Teacher efficacy has been linked to coaching (Henson, 2001; Ross, 1992; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009) because coaching often involves identifying and sometimes changing a range of existing beliefs, including teacher efficacy beliefs, in order to support new practices. More recently, teacher efficacy has been specifically linked to literacy coaching and implementation of content literacy (Cantrell & Callaway,

2008; Cantrell & Hughes, 2008). Takahashi (2011) highlighted the importance of context in efficacy development. She demonstrated that strong efficacy beliefs were co-constructed and reinforced during teachers' collegial practices.

Literacy Coaching

Coaching is not a new approach to professional development. Variations of the coaching model have dated back to the 1930s (Hall, 2004). However, the coaching process was reinvigorated by educators' "frustration with traditional workshops and the need, under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, to find more effective means to enhance instruction and learning" (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007, p. 1).

Coaching is an excellent method for literacy reform and indeed, reform is needed (Sturtevant et al., 2006). Numerous organizations have distributed policy and position papers calling for change in working with the adolescent reader (Alvermann, 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Kamil, 2003; Moore, et al., 1999; National Council of Teachers of English, 2006; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2005). Literacy coaching is considered a vehicle for literacy reform that is grounded in high-quality professional development which would be "long term and ongoing" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004, p. 4). Other components of effective professional development embodied in literacy coaching and recommended by researchers were, "Grounded in inquiry and reflection; Participant-driven and collaborative...Connected to and derived from teachers' ongoing work

with their students" (International Reading Association, 2006, p. 3).

Early literacy coaching studies examined coaching in action in urban school districts across the country (Neufeld, 2002; Neufeld & Roper, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). Three of the studies reported by Neufeld and Roper detailed the pilot and first two years of the Boston Public School's Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) reform initiative and informed this study's original coaching design. Several elements key to successful coaching have been consistently mentioned across the literature. For example, reported in the studies above were such factors as the need for a collaborative culture, use of demonstration lessons, reading of professional literature, interaction of colleagues within inquiry groups, and observation, practice, and reflection to improve instruction (e.g., Neufeld, 2002).

Another model and body of research that informed this study was presented by Stephens, et al. (2007) in the South Carolina Reading Initiative (SCRI). In this three-year collaborative effort, literacy coaches were provided with packets of readings and participant notebooks. The readings contained professional articles and descriptions of instructional strategies that were studied by coaches and teachers. Coaches were asked to hold bimonthly study groups with the teachers. Additionally, coaches were expected to spend four days in teachers' classrooms helping them practice what they were learning. Survey and case study findings at the end of this study concluded that

coached teachers more consistently followed best practices.

Biancarosa and Snow (2004) reported that professional development delivered as “sustained, job-embedded coaching” maximized the likelihood that teachers would translate newly learned skills and strategies into practice (p. 3). It was time to see if these and the other recommendations gleaned from the research literature as key to successful coaching held true. It was time to begin our nine-month experiment in teacher change.

The Study and its Methodology

Modeled after the Boston Public School’s Collaborative Coaching & Learning (CCL) initiative (Neufeld & Roper, 2002, 2003a) and South Carolina’s Reading Initiative (Stephens et al., 2007), the CLC design used here consisted of one required component and three optional components. The required component included participation in a literacy coaching cadre that met weekly for a three hour session during the school day. The session incorporated reflection and inquiry, classroom application with self-reflection or feedback from coach and colleagues, and theory with content knowledge building. Teachers generally preferred not to be observed by Lee, the literacy coach, but to try activities on their own and then reflect and discuss. The optional components included an after school study group, one-on-one coaching, and extended professional development (“field trip”) opportunities. The one-on-one coaching, and extended professional development grew out of participants’

needs and interests. These two aspects required either substitute teacher coverage or use of teachers’ planning periods. Lee’s monetary support offset the substitute teacher coverage, and paid for professional texts, teacher stipends, and conference fees. Administrators allowed data to be collected in exchange for Lee’s services. The types of interactions and contact hours with participants are presented in Table 1.

As the literacy coach, Lee wore multiple hats. She functioned as an active participant within the literacy cadre, as well as one who collected and analyzed data. The researcher-observer activities of the coach were known to the cadre members, but were subordinate to her role as a participant in the CLC. However, teachers were not always comfortable with Lee’s role as a co-learner and wondered if she should interact in a more didactic fashion. One of the participants said to Lee, “because you are not telling them, ‘this is what I know,’ they think you don’t know anything.” (Chloe, Interview, October 6). Also, just as Lee’s role crossed boundaries between teacher and learner, other boundaries in this qualitative research blur. Therefore, although the authors have attempted to organize information into sections for purposes of clarity, the reality is, of course, far messier.

Participants

The three classroom teachers who served as case study participants with Lee were, Mary Kate, Margaret, and Chloe. Mary Kate was a 25-year veteran teacher and former reading specialist who had briefly retired but then

Table 1
Time in Field with Case Study Participants

Type of Contact	Time Frame for Contact	Frequency of Contact	Length of Contact	Total Hours of Contact
Observation	October, January, & April	3 times per participant	90 minutes per observation	4.5 hours each
Interview	October, January, & April	3 times per participant	60 minutes per interview	3 hours each
CLC Cadre	September - May	Weekly for a total of 20 weeks	3 hours per session	60 hours each
Optional After School Study Group	September - May	10 meetings over 9 months. Approximately 1 per month	2 hours per session	20 hours each
Optional One-on-One Coaching	September - May	Mary Kate = 6 Margaret = 16 Chloe = 7	1 hour per session	Mary Kate = 5 Margaret = 16 Chloe = 7
Optional Extended PD Opportunities	September - May	5 opportunities occurring between October-April	Shanahan = 4 Wilhelm = 8 Classroom Visit 1 = 3 Classroom Visit 2 = 3 KRA Conference = 8	Mary Kate = 20 Margaret = 23 Chloe = 20

returned to the profession to teach seventh-grade social studies. Margaret, who was beginning her seventh year of teaching, taught language arts and other core subjects to sixth-grade students. Chloe was a first year teacher employed to teach English, speech, drama, and debate in grades 10-12.

Purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used to identify these three participants from a group of 16 teachers initially interested in intensive professional development.

Participants were chosen based on: (a) willingness and consent to participate; (b) approval of building principal; (c) scheduling opportunities;

(d) maximum variation of grade, content area, and teaching experience; and (e) responses on an Initial Questionnaire. All of this information was organized in a matrix.

The Questionnaire was developed by Lee as a way to get to know each of the 16 teachers. It allowed her to gain insight into classroom literacy practices, procedures and materials used, and to better understand each teacher's beliefs about reading and learning to read. It contained 44 open-ended questions. Some example were: "Describe how you teach reading in your content area." "Approximately what percent of class time do students spend reading?..."

writing?" "If students struggle with reading, I can do something about it. Agree or disagree? Explain." Prior to questionnaire use, items were reviewed for clarity and relevance by two literacy professors. Teachers typed responses to these questions directly onto the questionnaire, at their convenience, and emailed them to Lee when completed. Individual classroom observations and individual interviews were subsequently conducted to see if there was a match between what teachers said they did and what they actually did.

The Follow-up Questionnaire developed by Lee contained 47 questions and was completed by the three participants chosen for the study. Many of the items were the same as those in the Initial Questionnaire in order to identify changes in practices and stated beliefs. Items different from those on the Initial Questionnaire focused on the effects of the CLC (e.g., "Describe how, if at all, participation in the CLC impacted your ability to support student learning...your classroom teaching...were most helpful"). Again, observations and interviews allowed authors to determine if participants' words and actions were in sync. Most of the larger pool of 16 teachers were found to have a positive *general* sense of efficacy (they thought teachers could and should influence learning regardless of challenges). However, most had a negative or neutral *personal* sense of efficacy because they stated that they lacked knowledge or confidence related to the integration of literacy strategies in their discipline.

Research Design

This was an emic (insider's perspective), multiple participant case study in which Lee spent hundreds of hours over the course of 9 months interacting with these teachers. Doing this allowed her to better understand the impact of the CLC initiative from the participants point-of-view and to see how their perspectives influenced their behavior (Creswell, 2003; Maxwell, 1996; Merriam, 2001). Data sources included transcripts of weekly cadre discussions with agendas, field notes, classroom observations, individual teacher interviews, initial and follow-up questionnaires, and reflection journals. In the end, however, teachers were not willing to part with their journals. They felt their reflections were too personal, or perhaps too embarrassing to share. Despite knowing that she risked losing rich data, Lee felt it was more important to respect participants' privacy and maintain their trust. Therefore, Lee did not use reflection journals. Other information collected was analyzed using a constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study was grounded in both constructivist and socio-cultural theory. In other words, the learners actively constructed their knowledge in an environment of "shared work activities among a community of practitioners" (Takahashi, 2011, p. 734).

Materials used (e.g., professional texts, articles, and videos) were both recommended and requested and emerged out of classroom needs and concerns. This was a true collaborative: Lee and the participants all had input. This active involvement helped the

three teachers ask and answer their own questions about literacy instruction, therefore impacting their sense of efficacy for literacy teaching.

Findings and Analysis

Changes in Efficacy by Case

The following presents an overview of each of the three cases included in this study and examination of the changes in efficacy for literacy teaching that occurred during the nine month CLC. The discussion begins with Mary Kate, the most experienced of the participants.

Mary Kate: Seventh-grade social studies, veteran teacher

Although Mary Kate valued literacy instruction across all content areas and had experienced previous success as a reading teacher, she lacked confidence in her ability to incorporate literacy in a social studies class. On the Initial Questionnaire, she stated:

Even though I am an experienced teacher, having worked as a language arts teacher and remedial reading teacher—and with success—when asked, “How do you teach someone to read?”—I really cannot answer that question. I am not familiar with the research and the strategies that specifically target literacy teaching and instruction. (Initial Questionnaire, September 10)

From the very beginning of the CLC, Mary Kate expressed her desire to learn. Her epiphany occurred when she realized that she needed to transition the use of modeling and think alouds

she had implemented as a reading teacher, to her current social studies classes.

As a result of ongoing discussion and reflections, Mary Kate used a variety of new approaches. She showed students how to use strategies together as a routine. She told them, “my goal is to give you lots of different strategies and maybe one will work better or go with your style of learning” (Cadre, February 14). Mary Kate was influenced by Chris Tovani’s video (2006) on *Thoughtful Reading* to work with students to regularly establish their own purposes for reading (Cadre, April 18). She accomplished this by having her students create their own fact sheets on the countries they studied rather than providing that information for them. She also concluded that she needed to use a wider range of resources such as “bringing in those other kinds of text—newspapers and those kinds of things” (Third Interview, April 24), and not just rely on the textbook with “some fancy-CD/DVD thing” (Cadre, April 18). She felt that the coaching and cadre sessions with discussions and readings were critical because content teachers did not come to the classroom with enough preparation:

I think all teachers can impact students’ literacy learning if all teachers are given information, support, and encouragement to make that impact. The minimal amount of literacy training and education given in teacher training programs is not enough to prepare teachers for students’ reading needs and when they have students that

cannot read the book, they do not know how to assist those students. (Interview, May 22)

In the end, Mary Kate realized that, while a bit unsure initially, she did know more than she thought: “I think that what I’ve learned through the literacy cadre and the coaching and discussion and sharing has really validated some things that I’ve always thought but had never really [implemented]” (Second Interview, January 12). Because Mary Kate began with a greater level of knowledge and confidence than the other two cases, her epiphanies were not as frequent or profound and therefore the discussion of her particular case is shorter than the next two. Nonetheless, Mary Kate ended the yearlong professional development expressing increased confidence in her PTE beliefs for literacy teaching. Change did occur.

Margaret: Sixth-grade core subjects, mid-career teacher

When the Cadre meetings began, Lee asked the group to read an article by Ivey and Broaddus (2000) titled, “Tailoring the Fit: Reading Instruction and Middle School Readers.” She then asked each of the three participants to articulate their students’ needs, or what must be done to tailor their “fit.” Margaret said she believed her students needed instruction in reading, writing, spelling, language, and literature, but did not know how to get all these components into the 50-minute timeframe she was allotted. She felt that time was probably her biggest enemy. Additionally, she was concerned about students who could

not read their content texts, those who told her they did not *want* to read, and those who were not mature enough to read independently—who were “still crawling on their knees under their desks and running around the room” (Cadre, October 11). Margaret wanted to motivate her students to read by allowing some choice, and also help them become responsible for their own learning. She wanted to focus on the student, as in the Conley et al. (2008) view of adolescent literacy, yet felt pressure to prepare all of her students for success on the state reading assessment. More pressure came from her sense of duty to “cover” prescribed material in the district-adopted literature series in order to keep up with her team members.

However, Margaret wanted to move away from her team’s “status quo approach” because she felt that things were done because, “that’s the way they’ve always been done” and not because they had anything to do with students’ needs or best practices. She knew that instruction meant more than “assign and assess” (Cadre, October 11). On the Initial Questionnaire, Margaret acknowledged that she did not know as many literacy strategies as she would like, but expressed interest in learning more. She was ready to make changes in her classroom.

In the Ivey and Broaddus (2000) article, Margaret noticed the authors’ favorable mention of *Words Their Way* (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston, 2007), a developmental spelling, phonics, and vocabulary program. She requested that Lee help her access and implement the program. To

complement this program, Lee also recommended Writing and Reading Workshop, a comprehensive approach to writing and reading, formalized by Nancie Atwell (2002).

Frustrated with her current spelling program, Margaret embraced *Words Their Way* (WTW). She liked many aspects of this system and began to see changes in spelling outcomes fairly quickly. She explained,

I think they are doing better because they understand how the patterns go... and they are [also] learning what the words mean...And they're thinking about it more and they are talking about it in their groups...I am so excited because last week and this week, the lowest grade I gave on their spelling tests was a "B." The week before, when I was still doing the old spelling, I had three "Fs". (Second Interview, January 24)

Margaret also talked about the benefits of moving from whole class instruction to small, flexible, ability groups that were a component of *Words Their Way*. Doing this helped Margaret understand how to target instruction based on individual student needs. During her Third Interview, she said:

I have more time to give each one of those kids... I'll pull them back and I can see where there are holes...I can see that Jeff has holes in his language and I know that Brian has problems with sounds. I am amazed at how many kids don't know sounds...And I wouldn't know that

doing our regular spelling where they're all lumped together...They are so low but that's where they are and that's where we're going to have to meet them and try to take them from there. (Third Interview, April 24)

All of the disparate parts that Margaret previously found "totally separate" and "just floating around wherever we could fit it in" (Third Interview, April 24) were now becoming a cohesive whole. This allowed Margaret to see progress. Between her own reading, and coaching from Lee, problems were being solved: "And they're all growing! Like when we talked about them not having descriptive paragraphs...And you [Lee] said, why don't you read them some descriptive things and take it from there to their drawing? Well, we've done that." (Second Interview, January 24)

Margaret saw students "writing more" and that they "love[d] to share their stuff" (Second Interview, January 24). Margaret's personal growth appeared as significant as that of her students. She explained,

I'm burnt out but I'm excited. Because this part with my class is going so well and I've had fun teaching it...I'm reading the writing book...I'm doing the spelling...I was up at three in the morning. There are not enough hours to do everything I want to do. (Second Interview, January 24)

This additional work and planning did not go unnoticed by Margaret's

team members and other colleagues who questioned the time and effort Margaret spent making instructional changes and being out of the classroom each week in order to participate in the CLC cadre. Margaret countered: “And my response is, ‘But I’ve learned ways to be a better teacher and that ten times balances out that little extra prep time that I had to do or that group [CLC cadre] time’” (Cadre, April 18).

In addition to criticisms from colleagues Margaret faced structural barriers to her efforts at change. In a spring interview she shared her frustration: “I was about ready to cry because I went to see Matthew [principal] and he was trying to get me a block of time and it’s not going to be able to work” (Third Interview, April 24). Margaret was “mad” because she had attended a conference presentation and training on *Words Their Way*. She read about WTW and Writing and Reading workshop. She “worked with my literacy coach to come up with a new class schedule and worked with my co-teachers” (Follow-up Questionnaire, June 20). She implemented these programs successfully, based on spelling scores and writing products, and was prepared to teach the programs to her co-teachers, who “said that they would try and change with me” (Third Interview, April 24). Now, however, this new and effective system would not fit the schedule. Undaunted, Margaret decided, “I’m still doing it next year no matter what” (Third Interview, April 24).

Margaret had moved away from the assign and assess pattern that she disliked. Her students engaged in many

different types of writing and were allowed to “pick which one you want me to grade” (Third Interview, April 24). She was therefore able to help her students become more independent and responsible for their own learning. The key to Margaret’s increased PTE for literacy teaching lay in her students’ success.

“I think that it was so easy for me because I was already wanting to change those things but you don’t know how to go about some of them” (Cadre, April 18).

“It [CLC initiative] absolutely impacted my ability! I am much more confident in how to teach reading. I wish I had this opportunity when I was a first year teacher” (Follow-up Questionnaire, June 20).

Chloe: 10th-12th grade English, speech, drama, debate; first-year teacher

Fresh out of college, Chloe was hired to teach high school speech, debate, drama, and English. Her outlook in English education was shaped by the fact that she, herself, was a former struggling reader. However, she used her personal struggles to relate to and empathize with her students. One of Chloe’s biggest obstacles proved to be interactions with her colleagues and to a lesser extent, the time factors that plagued others. As a “newbie” Chloe felt like an outsider who was not welcomed or supported by her colleagues. She believed they criticized her for not having all the answers to her classroom challenges. Chloe said that in her school, the most experienced teachers were assigned the high-achieving, college-bound students and

the least experienced teachers given the neediest students. Therefore, she was given all of the “at-risk kids.”

The lack of collegial support impacted her confidence in a number of ways, including but not limited to, her PTE for literacy teaching. “I just go home and cry,” she said early in the school year. However, she expressed determination and commitment to succeed when she said, “I already told my Mom, ‘They’re not going to make me hate teaching, because I love kids and I love what I’m doing’” (First Interview, October 6).

Chloe willingly shared the information that she, like the other two participants, did not know much about literacy strategies, and that she had a lot to learn. Also, like the others she believed it was her job to motivate or “spark” her students, who at the high school level, did not read because requirements were “horrible books that are boring.” (Cadre, September 6).

Chloe’s questions about working with literature were almost startling in their earnestness. At the beginning of the CLC she did not know how to incorporate literacy instruction. For example, she asked, “Because kids are at so many different places in the book, how do you do the discussion [when] you don’t want to hear the ending?” (Cadre, September 8). She asked about the best way to support comprehension:

Is it silent and then reaction papers?
Is it silent and discussion? Or is it group?
Or is it me reading to them and then them giving me a reaction?
Letting them read to me? Or

partner reading, and stuff like that?
(First Interview, October 6)

Then during the next week’s cadre session, Chloe wondered what makes a good reader? She asked, “What do we know about competent readers? How do they do it...is someone born with it or is it something they gather over time?” (Cadre, September 15).

Chloe experienced a turning point after attending a presentation by Timothy Shanahan. This excursion, which was one of the CLC field trips, was important for Chloe, not only for the new information she gained, and the ideas and questions it prompted her to explore, but because it put her in contact with members of the middle school CLC cadre. These teachers became collegial, helpful mentors, who were only one school building away from her. Additionally, answers to some of her questions came from Shanahan’s remarks. For example, actually teaching students to read, rather than reading the material to them was one key point he made. He also suggested pairing kids up and having them take turns reading to each other and then reacting to the text.

Chloe tried to get students to work with her in small groups, but she said, “They won’t come over here. They won’t decide for themselves it’s something that they don’t understand” (Interview, January 30). She tried having students read independently at the beginning of the school year, but she claimed, “These kids hate to read.” They told her, ‘Screw you’ (Cadre, December 15). However, she blamed the adults for student failure as much as

student unwillingness to take the help offered. She saw no “rhyme or reason” to what was taught or when it was taught. She recognized that student learning was not transferring across grade-levels and tasks. Chloe believed that the lack of clearly defined curriculum (scope, sequence, and pacing guides) interfered with student learning and created a barrier to instruction and gaps in student skills. “Where did they learn to write? They tell me, ‘Oh, I don’t remember learning what an introduction is.’” She said she sometimes felt like she was doing students an injustice giving kids “all these higher level thinking questions” because, as sophomores, they “can’t even write a complete sentence...can’t even spell beautiful.”

Chloe continued to tap into student interests. She said she noticed they were interested in “technical writing.” She pushed a tough love philosophy, making it clear to students, “I’m not telling you, you have to *like* to read, in here, but you *have* to read.” (Second Interview, January 30).

In addition to the professional development field trips, Chloe found answers in the readings (e.g., Keene & Zimmerman’s, 1997, *Mosaic of Thought*), in the modeling done by coach Lee, and in Cris Tovani’s (2006) video clips. Chloe said, “I learned something. You actually have to sit up and model...I notice that me modeling everything we do, they think is so cool” (Cadre, January 26). Chloe concluded that it was critical she get the students “actively engaged” (Cadre, January 5).

To more thoroughly engage Chloe’s students, Lee shared her personal

collection of Shakespeare resources, and helped Chloe create a *text set*. Chloe also had students do book talks to get them involved. She reported back,

I have a good teaching moment...I have one student has never read a full book in his life and [he] read a book and gave an oral...book talk and he was so excited about the book...it was *Rifle* by Gary Paulsen...I looked at his reading log and his questions and it was unbelievable the questions that he was asking. (Cadre, March 9)

Chloe saw another student become engaged by using text connections. She witnessed the adolescent reader at the center of the literacy process (Stevens, 2002) as her student described her need for text-to-self connections to aid comprehension. The student told Chloe,

I’ve always read, you know I do my homework, but I never realized what I was missing out on reading until I started reading and actually making text connections and now I really focus and I get into it and I understand it. (Cadre, March 9)

Chloe was energized by student success, which appeared to contribute to her teacher successes, and increased her personal efficacy for literacy teaching. She believed she made the right decision to incorporate strategy instruction. She reflected:

I took two or three weeks to kind of get it together...I did make the right

decision...I'm taking it bit by bit and I'm starting my kids with making connections and asking questions...and I do think the modeling does work. (Cadre, March 2)

By the end of the initiative, Chloe learned and used a range of literacy practices, including ways to teach students how to read different types of text, how to do a close read of difficult text, and more. She found a "cool chart" by Wilhelm (2001) that provided information about good readers. All students kept this reference in practice folders. Seeing the positive effects of her additional learning, Chloe decided to go back to school and work toward her reading specialist license.

Aspects of CLC Impacting Change

Teachers identified four particular components of CLC that impacted their efficacy development: collaboration, time, resources, and access to a coach. These four components emerged as themes from the data collected.

Collaboration

The first of these components was the practice of collaboration. Teachers found it necessary to collaborate with co-workers, or, in Chloe's case, teachers in the middle school building when her high school co-workers were not supportive. She said,

Because I was trying things out in the literacy cadre I was an outsider and everyone left me out and did not include me into their supplies or ideas...I really overcame this by meeting and going to lunch, workshops whenever I could with

the middle school cadre to survive. (Follow-up Questionnaire, June 25)

Margaret also enjoyed seeing what was happening outside her school building, and believed the chance to observe and visit with other teachers helped bring her literacy practices "up to date." Participants stated they valued an informal-Thursday-night study group that developed, to "get together and talk and just discuss different things" (Margaret, First Interview, October 11). As a result of these collaborative relationships, participants had access to other thinking partners to help solve problems, generate new ideas, share resources, and more. Collaboration with colleagues within a context that valued all participants as co-learners, regardless of experiences and expertise was important. This allowed for conversations about literacy-related beliefs and knowledge within a safe environment, and encouraged participants to achieve their individual goals and enhance their efficacy beliefs for literacy teaching. It allowed participants to ask even the most basic questions about literacy development and instruction without the fear of ridicule.

Time

A second theme that emerge was time. These teachers constantly talked about time. They felt that it was important to have adequate time to read, watch instructional videos, observe colleagues and learn about strategies or routines they could use in their content classrooms. Teachers needed time to schedule in the new programs and materials they wanted to

try and the time to implement them. They wanted time to tweak and adjust, time to practice the techniques in the “safety” of their own classroom without anyone else judging. Teachers wanted time to reflect on what they learned and they wanted time to discuss the outcomes with other professionals. The CLC was designed to provide participants with the time to do these things.

First of all, time was provided for teachers, via substitute teacher coverage, to attend five “field trips,” or extended professional development activities. The salary that Lee gave up, which would have been paid by a grant the district received to hire a coach, was used, in part, for conference fees and substitutes so participants could attend these events. These professional development activities included a workshop, presentations, a State Reading Association Conference and visits to out-of-district classrooms to observe teachers. Teachers were saved a tremendous amount of time because Lee found classroom resources and materials for them. Educator time was further “valued” through the stipends paid to teachers to attend after school study groups. The three participants were afforded additional opportunities to discuss, in a Thursday evening study group that Lee organized. As Margaret noted, “This is kind of like making us have time for it out of our day” (Interview, October 11). Finally, one of the critical times carved out of each school week for participants to discuss, reflect, and practice was the three-hour CLC Cadre.

While there was certainly never enough time to do all of the things teachers wanted to do, reviewing the number of hours in Table 1 that participants spent in extended professional development activities, being coached one-on-one, in after school study groups and with their colleagues in weekly cadres, was, as Chloe noted, “a once in a lifetime opportunity” (Follow-Up Questionnaire). However, given willing administrators, taking time for teacher growth could become commonplace.

Resources

Participants all talked about the importance of resources. They appreciated having instructional materials, professional resources, and a variety of professional experiences made available—conferences, workshops, classroom observations, cadre meetings, and study groups. As Margaret noted, previously she did not have “access” to all of the materials that Lee provided, and she, herself, did not even know “where to look” to find them (Cadre, February 28). Mary Kate especially appreciated the ideas she took from such resource opportunities as conference presentations. This veteran was pleased to reconceptualize her definition of literacy after attending a conference session by Rick Wormeli. Mary Kate concluded, “If we are literate in our subject we can access, analyze, evaluate and create...who wouldn’t want their kids to be able to do that?” (Cadre, January 5). As Mary Kate broadened her ideas about literacy, she broadened her use of print. “I mean, it doesn’t have to be a printed book to have literacy” (Cadre, October 11).

Additionally, she increased her use of literacy strategies as she brainstormed with her coach and colleagues: “Well, maybe we can even incorporate read alouds in our social studies class” (Cadre, September 27).

A Coach

Finally, having access to and the support of a literacy coach was noted by all participants as making a significant difference. Even though she was a veteran teacher and former reading specialist, Mary Kate depended on coach Lee to answer such questions as:

How do I reach students at the middle grades who lack word attack skills? How do I motivate the student who says, “I hate to read?” How do I teach the student whose home environment has no print material? (Initial Questionnaire, September 10)

Lee intentionally positioned herself as a co-learner and emphasized this role with participants. Not only did a co-learner stance fit with her personal beliefs about coaching and adult learning, but she also felt it would ensure her trustworthiness because she functioned in the role of a supportive colleague, rather than an evaluator. She respected the fact that all participants brought knowledge to the table. She chose to sit shoulder-to-shoulder with them and question, study, struggle and learn in order to collaboratively change existing beliefs and practices.

She stressed throughout the nine months of the study that theirs was not an “expert” model, but rather a collaborative process in which all would

ask questions, share resources and expertise and seek to find answers to relevant issues. Although it sometimes frustrated participants that she regularly asked questions rather than provided answers, participants grew to believe that she trusted them to be as capable or better than she at finding solutions to their own problems, in their unique classroom settings.

Another reason Lee’s co-learner approach was a far less common model, was because most coaches were not comfortable in this role. In their study of coaching in more than 5,200 Reading First schools, Deussen, et al. (2007) concluded that “while coaches dedicated long hours to their jobs,” they averaged “only 28 percent of their time with teachers” (p. 3). Similarly Roller’s (2006) study found coaches spending even less time (approximately 15 percent of a 40-hour work week) working directly with teachers. Deussen, et al. (2007) found this lack of collaboration with teachers due to “Meetings, student interventions, documentation...working with data” (p. 3). These researchers understood that some of the coaches’ committed time was the “result of demands placed on them by the school, district, and state” (p. 3). “But for others,” Deussen et al. (2007), reported, “it was a way for coaches to avoid coaching teachers because they did not feel comfortable or appropriately qualified to do so” (p. 3). Lee was comfortable not having all of the answers and solving problems with, instead of, for the teachers. A critical component of the coach’s role, as Lee demonstrated in this study, was working directly with teachers.

Finally, working with Lee often incorporated all of the components of time, resources, and collaboration. On her Follow-Up Questionnaire, for example, Margaret noted, “Changing what I taught and rearranging my class schedule was a big challenge. I worked with my literacy coach” (June 20). Margaret told Lee, “you’ve helped me put it all together” (Third Interview, April 24).

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine if participation in a yearlong Collaborative Literacy Coaching initiative could impact middle and high school teachers’ efficacy beliefs for literacy teaching. Participants reported positive general efficacy beliefs (they believed they were responsible for student learning) but low or negative personal efficacy beliefs for literacy teaching at the beginning of the study. In other words, teachers in this study lacked the confidence necessary to implement literacy teaching within their specific content areas, within the context of their particular classrooms, or with struggling learners, even though they believed that literacy teaching was important. This scenario is evident in the literature as well. According to a review of teachers’ beliefs about content literacy conducted by Hall (2005), inservice teachers believed that literacy teaching was important, but they felt that they were not qualified, and they questioned their ability to teach reading. Lack of confidence in literacy instruction has historically been identified by teachers as among the reasons for not using literacy strategies

(Barry, 2002; Cantrell, Burns, & Callaway, 2009; Mallette, Henk, Waggoner, & DeLaney, 2005). However, the three teachers in this study were willing to learn and try out new literacy practices.

Lee, like Tschanen-Moran and McMaster (2009), concluded that the process of influencing teachers’ self-efficacy was complex and not straightforward. She also concluded that regardless of background, all three cases benefitted from ongoing, job-embedded professional development. By the end of nine-month’s participation in CLC, participants reported that they experienced increased confidence for literacy teaching. This is an indication of change in personal efficacy beliefs. The coaching provided various forms of support for teachers as they gained mastery experience with new techniques. According to Bandura (1997), support and scaffolding contribute significantly to increasing efficacy. A positive cycle began: teachers tried new techniques and materials, students made progress, teachers felt more successful, efficacy increased, more techniques were attempted. Four components of this CLC that especially impacted efficacy development emerged: collaboration, time, resources and access to a coach. These findings align with those of Cantrell, Burns and Callaway (2009) and Cantrell and Hughes (2008), who concluded that coaching, collaboration, and opportunities to practice new literacy strategies were important to the development of teachers’ efficacy beliefs.

Specifically, the Interantional Reading Association's Commission on adolescent Literacy stated that adolescents "deserve access to a wide variety of reading materials that they can and want to read" (Moore, et al., 1999, p. 4). This point highlighted the importance of using a range of texts when focusing on the development of adolescents' attitudes, interests, and motivations to read. Participants in this study stated that their students were unmotivated to read and as teachers they wanted to learn ways to help students improve their attitudes about reading and increase their interest in reading for pleasure. As Chloe said, "I was given the resources I needed when I needed it" (Follow-Up Questionnaire, June). Additionally, access to a range of professional reports, articles, and books, such as the RAND Report (Snow, 2002), helped participants understand the contemporary view of comprehension theory and specific ways text could be used to support comprehension strategy instruction.

Researchers (e.g., Sturtevant et al., 2006) recognized that time—time to learn, time to practice, time to refine, time to reflect, and time to discuss was essential as teachers worked to implement new practices.

Cantrell et al. (2009) also found that teachers valued literacy instruction, saw themselves as both literacy and content teachers, and although they encountered barriers trying to implement new strategies, they felt that professional development with coaching and collaboration supported their teaching efficacy and implementation efforts. Like other coaches, Lee gave

her time and expertise. Unique to this study, she provided additional resources and experiences with her own paycheck. All of these factors led to teacher buy-in and to CLC success.

In the end, teachers still struggle with issues of time and scheduling. Perhaps that was why the administrator in this study preferred that Lee function as an "expert" who would come in and present teachers with best practice rather than provide them the time to discover it for themselves. However, it is this time-consuming, messy practice of discovery that allows educators to say at the end of the day, as Margaret did, "I'm burnt out but I'm excited...I've had fun teaching" (Second Interview, January 24).

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