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Identity, Power, and Conflict in Preschool Teaching Teams

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
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Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Identity, Power, and Conflict in Preschool Teaching Teams

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Despite the common occurrence of teaming in preschool classrooms, very little research has explored the experiences of teachers working in such a context. Due to a high turnover of preschool teachers and a recent change in the educational requirements of lead teachers in Head Start, it is anticipated that the number of young and inexperienced lead teachers is likely to increase. The purpose of this case study research is to illuminate the teaming relationships between young, recently qualified lead teachers and their assistants working together within one classroom. Over the course of a school year, interviews and observations were conducted of two Head Start teaching teams. Five major themes were revealed through data analysis: understanding of roles; organization of work; use and resistance of power; development and management of conflict; and support from within and outside the team. Analysis across the findings of both cases showed that identity and power played a central role in team functioning. The teachers' identities, perceived threats to their identities, and their understanding of the power differential played a significant role in the way the teams organized their work, the way the teachers viewed their roles within the team, and the conflict and support they experienced. Conclusions of the study are discussed through the lens of identity process theory and elements of Bourdieu's theory of power and practice. Implications for teacher professional development and the need for increased institutional support for teaming in preschool is presented.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

Introduction

Relationships within the classroom ecology can impact student learning. For example, the relationships among students within a classroom (Risi, Gerhardstein, & Kistner, 2003), and the relationships between teacher and students within a classroom (Cornelius-White, 2007), have been found to influence student growth. Furthermore, recent research suggests that these relationships impact one another, that is, the relationships among students impact the relationships between teacher and students and vice versa (Kindermann, 2011). Given the association among these different relationships within the classroom, it can be argued that, in classrooms where two teachers work together, the teacher-teacher relationship may also be an important feature of the classroom ecology (Hall-Kenyon & Rosborough, 2016).

Even though two-teacher classrooms are prevalent in early childhood education (ECE; Shim, Hestenes, & Cassidy, 2004), little is known about the relationships between teachers working as a team in this context. A limited number of studies suggest that teaming could be important as it may influence teacher well-being (Oplatka & Eizenberg, 2007), teacher behavior (McNairy, 1988), and the quality of the educational environment (McCormick, Noonan, Ogata, & Heck, 2001).

Factors Affecting Teaming

Although little is known about teaming in ECE specifically, studies of teaming in various contexts suggest that teams are influenced by a wide variety of interacting factors. Some of these factors are internal to the team and others are external to the team.

Internal factors. Internal factors include both personal characteristics and team characteristics. Some important personal characteristics include the cognitive ability and

personality of each team member (Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount, 1998), and personal communication skills (Fitzgerald & Theilheimer, 2013; Sileo, 2011). Important team characteristics include team communication patterns (Pentland, 2012), the ability of team members to address and resolve conflict together (Snell & Janney, 2000), and congruency in ways of working, personal and cultural beliefs (Edmondson & Roloff, 2009; Harrison & Klein, 2007), and team role understanding (Boyd & Pasley, 1989; Devecchi & Rouse, 2010).

Compatibility between teachers regarding some of these internal factors is important, as clashing educational philosophies, conflicting approaches to teaching, opposing child care beliefs, and incompatible personal characteristics can be a challenge for teams (Malone, Gallagher, & Long, 2001). With the highly variable ECE teacher workforce, including teachers with vastly different levels of education ranging from high school graduation to a graduate degree (National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team, 2013), and various "pathways into the early childhood workforce" (Phillips, Austin, & Whitebook, 2016, p. 140), the likelihood of teaming teachers together with different experience and backgrounds is high.

External factors. ECE teaching teams may also be influenced by external factors, such as organizational structure. The way in which a team is organized, for example, may affect communication (Edmondson & Roloff, 2009) and conflict management (Thomas, Thomas, & Schaubhut, 2007) within the team.

National and local policy reform is another external factor with the potential of influencing the way teamed teachers work together in the classroom. Whilst the purpose of such reform is to improve the quality of education, which is a desirable and important goal, it is also important to consider potential unintended consequences that may arise (van den Berg, 2002). For example, recent policy reform in Head Start (HS), the largest preschool program in the USA,

stipulated that by 2013 at least 50% of lead teachers (LTs) were to have a bachelor's degree (Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, Public Law 110-134). Increasing the education requirements of teachers would likely improve the education provided to young students (Darling-Hammond, 2000), however, it could also change the composition of teams, which may influence team dynamics (Bullough, Hall-Kenyon, & McKay, 2012). A high turnover of ECE teachers (Cassidy, Lower, Kintner-Duffy, Hegde, & Shim, 2011; Lower & Cassidy, 2007) creates a continual need for new teachers. As LTs in HS are now required to hold a bachelor's degree, many of these new teachers will likely be young, inexperienced, and just out of college. Recently qualified teachers are faced with additional stress that comes from dealing with a new situation (Rieg, Paquette, & Chen, 2007). Experienced ATs can act as mentors to inexperienced LTs (Oplatka & Eizenberg, 2007). It may, therefore, make sense to pair recently qualified LTs with more experienced ATs, who already know the policies and procedures of the educational institution. However, when the AT in a teaching team has more classroom experience than the LT, an interesting power dynamic may arise that could be difficult for teamed teachers to negotiate (Oplatka & Eizenberg, 2007; Souto-Manning, Cahnmann-Taylor, Dice, & Wooten, 2008).

As LTs and ATs work together, tensions may emerge and negotiations must be made within the team. As in all relationships, LTs and ATs position themselves and those with whom they work based on their understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and relationships (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). The negotiation of positions can be fraught with misunderstanding and tension, which may have a negative impact on the teachers in the team and the children in their care.

Purpose of the Study

Very little research has been devoted to an examination of teaming in ECE. As ECE classrooms usually consist of at least two teachers (Shim, et al., 2004) and as teaming may affect both the wellbeing of teachers (Oplatka & Eizenberg, 2007) and the education of their students (McCormick, et al., 2001), "research is needed to capture the complex dynamics of power, authority and status within the [teacher – teaching-assistant] relationship" (Devecchi & Rouse, 2010, p. 96). Exploring the nature of teaming relationships in ECE may provide insights into ways in which the experience of ECE can be improved for both teachers and their young students. The purpose of this study is to explore how young, female, educated preschool teachers and their assistants, working in a hierarchically structured team, manage their day-to-day working relationships

Research Question

To explore teaming issues for young, educated, female LTs and their ATs working in ECE this study set out to answer the following broad research question: What is the experience of young, educated, female LTs and their assistants working together as a team?

Organization of the Study

This qualitative case study will continue in chapter 2 with a literature review of teaming issues. As little is known about teaming in ECE, literature from a variety of contexts will be used. The importance of the quality of the teaming relationship will be discussed, followed by a discussion of a few factors that have the potential to influence the functioning of teams. Chapter 3 will discuss the methods used to both collect and analyze data and the efforts made to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Chapter 3 will end with a detailed description of the context of the study including the setting and the participants involved. Chapter 4 will begin with a

description of the experiences of Team 1, followed by a description of the experiences of Team 2, and will end with a discussion of the assertions made based on an analysis across the findings of both cases. Finally, chapter 5 will present the conclusions made, followed by the implications of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The most common teaching structure in ECE involves two teachers working together with one group of students in one classroom. This may be because some studies have suggested that two-teacher classrooms provide higher quality care and education than one-teacher classrooms (Shim, et al., 2004). Despite the prevalence of teaming in ECE, there has been very little research focusing on the nature of teaming as an important aspect of an early childhood educator's work life. This study will explore teaming relationships within an early childhood setting, specifically preschool, with an emphasis on the ways in which teaming impacts teachers. Due to the sparseness of literature focusing on teaming in this context and the common nature of teaming problems across fields, teaming literature from a variety of educational settings (ECE, elementary, secondary, and special education) as well as literature from other fields (such as business and nursing) will be presented.

This literature review will first briefly discuss the quality of teaming relationships. It will be followed by an exploration of factors that have been found to affect teaming.

Quality of Teaming Relationships in Early Childhood Education

Although a few benefits to teaming in education have been identified like personal support and improved discipline (Malone, et al., 2001), such benefits are reliant upon the quality of the teaming relationships. It can be argued that developing and maintaining effective teaming relationships in ECE is important. For example, Wagner and French (2010) found that when teachers within teams worked well together, preschool teachers were more likely to engage in professional development than when teachers did not work well together in their teaching teams.

The quality of the teaming relationship can also affect teacher wellbeing. Both positive and negative relationships were illuminated in Oplatka and Eizenberg's (2007) qualitative study exploring the experiences of first-year kindergarten teachers in Israel. They found that supportive ATs provided "emotional support, positive feedback, protection [against criticism and negativity from others] and counseling" (p. 346). However, LTs with an unsupportive AT reported being very lonely, stressed, and unhappy.

Another qualitative study highlighted the impact a co-teacher can have on the behavior of her partner teacher. McNairy (1988) conducted an ethnographic study exploring the working relationship between two co-teachers with differing philosophical beliefs and teaching styles. She found that the mere presence of one co-teacher significantly impacted the behavior of the other co-teacher. The whole demeanor of her research subject would change: she was withdrawn when her co-teacher was present, lively and enthusiastic when she was absent. Furthermore, interactions with her students increased markedly with her co-teacher's absence. Of course, it is entirely likely that the behavior of teachers could also be influenced positively by the presence of another teacher.

Exploring teaming issues for two HS teaching teams working in the same center, Bullough (2015) noted two very different experiences for the teaching dyads. One dyad, made up of an experienced LT and a newly hired assistant teacher (AT) worked well together. The AT had no previous experience in HS, and joined the team with enthusiasm and a desire to learn from her LT. The LT mentored her AT, pointing out how she could improve, giving her more responsibilities throughout the year, until the two teachers were able to share all of the daily classroom duties. The other teaching team, however, consisted of two experienced teachers with vastly different views of what good teaching entails. They experienced frustration and work

dissatisfaction which led to "parallel teaching rather than team teaching" (p. 415). The LT of the team said, "it is like butting heads every day" (p. 419) and commented that the children experienced confusion as the two teachers' deep-seated beliefs in what constitutes good teaching and childcare led them to address behavior issues differently.

Clearly, teaming can result in both positive and negative outcomes depending on the quality of the teaming relationship. A variety of factors influence the relationships between team members and consequently affect the outcome of the teaming experience.

Factors That Affect Teaming

Teaming in education is a complex phenomenon, influenced by factors both internal and external to the team (Bullough, 2015). Internal factors include personal characteristics and interpersonal skills of individuals comprising the team. External factors include the social, political, and organizational context of the team. These factors are highly interrelated. Interpersonal relationships are at the center of teaming. How teachers interact and work with one another ultimately determines the effectiveness of the team. However, personal, social, political, and organizational factors have a strong influence on interpersonal relationships.

Internal factors that affect teaming. As teams are made up of two or more individuals, team dynamics are largely dependent upon personal characteristics, interpersonal issues, and the skills of those individuals. Team members need to have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the required tasks, and they need the interpersonal skills required to work effectively with others (Levi, 2014).

Cognitive ability of team members. An important predictor of successful teams is the cognitive aptitude held by individual team members. Examining 51 teams working in a variety of industrial settings, Barrick et al. (1998) found a correlation between the team's mean general

mental ability (GMA) and team viability defined as "the capability of team members to continue working cooperatively" (p. 377). They also found a relationship between the maximum GMA score of team members and social cohesion. Although this study was correlational and therefore does not infer causation, other studies have also obtained results suggesting that the cognitive ability of team members may influence the functioning of teams (Heslin, 1964; Hill, 1982; Stevens & Campion, 1994; Tziner & Eden, 1985; Williams & Sternberg, 1988).

Personality of team members. Individual personality traits such as extraversion, conscientiousness, spontaneity, enthusiasm, pessimism, and a host of other personality characteristics can also have an impact on how a team operates (Hogan, Raza, & Driskell, 1988; Wagner, Neuman, & Christiansen, 1996). Bell (2007) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between personality traits and team performance. Personality characteristics, including "agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience," (p. 600) correlated positively with team performance.

In addition to the potential influence of cognitive ability and personality characteristics on team function, specific interpersonal factors relating to skills possessed by individuals within a team can also impact teamwork. A few interpersonal factors that can affect teaming at work have been identified in the literature: communication, role ambiguity, and conflict management.

Effectiveness of communication. Being able to communicate effectively with team members is a key component to successful teaming (Sileo, 2011). Fitzgerald and Theilheimer (2013) conducted a qualitative study of three HS Centers examining team building through professional development. The importance of communication for team building was a recurring theme. They specifically noted the importance for team members to feel known and recognized by their colleagues and supervisors. Similarly, in a study of teachers in England, an open-ended

questionnaire was used to explore the skills teachers felt they and their teaching assistants needed to form effective partnerships. One of the key themes that arose from the study was the teachers' perceptions of the need for better communication (Bedford, Jackson, & Wilson, 2008). Poor communication skills can result in role ambiguity, a lack of trust, misunderstandings, conflict, and ultimately a breakdown in relationships. In describing her successful working relationship with her partner teacher, Thornton (1990) explained that effective communication was central. She stated that even after working together for three years, team members still "work hard to keep the channels of communication open" (p. 43).

Investigating effective team building in various business settings, Pentland (2012) found that the pattern of communication within a team is more important than the content of communication. Specifically, he found that in effective teams all team members speak up and listen to others approximately equally. However, also from the perspective of business, Edmondson and Roloff (2009) noted that "speaking 'up' in a hierarchical setting is challenging" (p. 197) for members lower in the hierarchy. Thus, speaking up can be a problem in an ECE setting where teams are organized hierarchically. Detert and Edmondson (2006) suggest that for individuals to speak up in such environments, they need to believe speaking up will be worthwhile, that is, they will be listened to and their ideas will be taken into consideration. They also need to feel psychologically safe, or that there will be no negative personal consequences for expressing their opinion. Both factors could be important determinants of ATs communicating or failing to communicate with their LT.

Competence in communication skills varies. Some people choose to stay silent, not because of concerns about being well received, but because of concerns about their ability to communicate effectively. For example, some people have a "tendency to become highly

emotional or overly-aggressive while speaking up" (Detert & Edmondson, 2006, p. 21). It is widely recognized that using spoken words is not the only way of communicating. Facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice are equally, if not more important than the spoken words (Detert & Edmonson, 2006; Snell & Janney, 2000). Additionally, Thornton (1990) asserts that another important aspect of effective communication is the skill of listening to and considering the other's perspective and not taking disagreements personally.

It is important that teamed teachers have the opportunity to develop and refine their communication skills not only for their own benefit, but also for the benefit of the students with whom they work (Jones, Ratcliff, Sheehan, & Hunt, 2012). Being able to openly share ideas to improve both teaching and the teaching environment may improve the quality of education students receive.

Understanding of roles. The understanding and acceptance of individual roles within a team is important for effective team functioning and appears to be a common problem in education (Moran & Abbott, 2002; Riggs & Mueller, 2001; Takala, 2007). It is especially problematic for teaching assistants, as Ratcliff, Jones, Vaden, Sheen, and Hunt, (2011) argues. In examining the roles and responsibilities of teachers and teaching assistants in early childhood classrooms, these authors discovered that both teachers and teaching assistants had a good grasp of the role of the teacher but not of the teaching assistant. According to Boyd and Pasley (1989) LTs and ATs in an ECE setting could be particularly susceptible to role ambiguity when less experienced LTs work with more experienced ATs and their responsibilities in the classroom seem largely to be the same.

Role confusion may occur when roles are not clearly defined or when the way to fulfill a role is largely unknown (Boyd & Pasley, 1989; Newstrom & Davis, 1993). In their observations

of lead and assistant teachers in British secondary schools, Devecchi and Rouse (2010) concluded that effective collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants required roles and responsibilities to be clearly defined and communicated.

The provision of formal job descriptions and performance expectations can help alleviate role confusion to some degree (Newstrom & Davis, 1993). However, teaming roles are complex and the creation of formal job descriptions does not completely eradicate problems of role ambiguity. Even when roles are well defined, the nature of teaching and working with children requires a high degree of flexibility, a point underscored by Devecchi and Rouse (2010). In a study of British secondary schools these authors noted that although teachers and teaching assistants had clearly defined roles, they were often "observed exchanging roles and responsibility for the children" (p. 96). Teachers and teaching assistants swapped roles and responsibilities throughout the day and throughout the class period. Devecchi and Rouse (2010) suggest that "finding a balance between knowledge and power rather than following strictly defined roles and responsibilities seemed to be most relevant to the teams" (p. 97). This is important, considering the emphasis often placed on having set and clearly defined teacher roles and responsibilities. Seemingly, flexibility in those roles is valuable in creating effective teaming relationships.

Moreover, even if roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in formal job descriptions and performance expectations, individual perceptions can still differ. The fluidity of roles and responsibilities between teacher and teaching assistant as described by Devecchi and Rouse (2010) could further compound these varying perceptions. Ratcliff and colleagues (2011) concluded that teachers and teaching assistants needed to discuss role expectations and classroom activities more openly to achieve greater understanding and agreement.

The misunderstanding of roles within a team can be a major problem. In ECE, as well as in the business world, role ambiguity has been found to lead to job dissatisfaction and reduced organizational commitment (Boyd & Pasley, 1989; Newstrom & Davis, 1993). Furthermore, role ambiguity within teams may lead to conflict.

Development and management of conflict. Conflict has been described as a "situation in which people's concerns—the things they care about—appear to be incompatible" (Thomas, et al., 2008, p. 149). Conflict occurs in many different work environments and occurs for a variety of reasons. Indeed, Valentine (1995) stated that "Conflict is the central problem in organizational life" (p. 142). Wherever there is an organization of two or more individuals, issues of power and differences arise which are likely to result in conflict. In a classroom where two or more teachers are working closely together, it is not surprising that conflict is likely to develop.

Difference as a source of conflict in teams. A major source of conflict is differences between individuals. When examining a variety of teaming contexts in business, Edmondson and Roloff (2009) found that "The challenge of collaborating across differences (e.g., gender, expertise, or status) is … substantial" (p. 193) They went on to say, "Individuals have been found to prefer homogeneity over heterogeneity due to a preference for the perceived similarity in values, attitudes, and beliefs" (p. 195) with their team members. When teachers with vastly different personal characteristics, educational experiences, and perspectives are placed together and required to teach alongside each other for extended periods of time, there are great opportunities to learn (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2008); however, conflicts are likely to arise.

A wide variety of differences in teams have been examined in relation to team functioning, such as differing personal characteristics and traits, differing educational

background, differing educational philosophies and practices, differing work ethics, and unequal power relations (Bullough, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Larkin, 1999; Malm, 2004; Malone, et al., 2001; McCormick, et al., 2001; McNairy, 1988; Sosinsky & Gilliam, 2011). In exploring teaming issues for two HS teams working in the same center, Bullough (2015) partly attributed teaming difficulties experienced in one of the teams to "differences in fundamental beliefs about teaching, learning, and the teachers' identities" (p. 147). To discover which differences are particularly relevant to team functioning, Mannix and Neale (2005) examined several types of differences in the literature, such as differences in knowledge or skills, differences in values or beliefs, personality differences, and demographic differences. They found inconsistent results and suggested that "a careful consideration of the moderators at work in particular organizational contexts, a focus on underlying mechanisms explaining the effects of diversity, and an exploration of new ways to understand and measure diversity" (p. 43) were needed.

    Types of conflict. Conflict in the workplace has been classified into four types: task conflict, relationship conflict, process conflict, and status conflict (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). Task conflict refers to disagreements directly pertaining to the task being performed and can often be beneficial to team performance as it results in team members sharing information and insights in an effort to reach the best solution (de Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2011; Jehn, 1995, 1997). Relationship conflict involves disagreements based on interpersonal issues, such as "different values, preferences, and priorities" (Bendersky & Hays, 2012, p. 330). Process conflict is related to disagreements concerning logistical issues including the division of tasks between team members and times and locations of meetings. Status conflict encompasses disagreements arising due to team members' hierarchical positions relative to one another (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). In a study of teams of MBA students, Bendersky and Hays (2012) found that status

conflict occurred more frequently than the other three conflict types. It occurred by itself, but was more often combined with one of the other three types of conflict. Although all types of conflict increase dissatisfaction within team members, status conflict is believed to be particularly destructive to team performance, social cohesion, and team viability (Bendersky & Hays, 2012).

Conflict management. As conflict is unavoidable in organizational life, the way in which conflict is addressed and resolved is important. Although sometimes given slightly different names, five main approaches to managing conflict have been identified: avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, and collaborating (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Avoiding conflict involves the parties concerned choosing not to address the conflicting issue. Accommodation involves one of the parties backing down to the wishes of the other. Competition occurs as the wishes of one of the parties are forced on the other. Compromise involves both parties discussing the issue and negotiating an outcome that both agree to but will require both parties to concede some of their desires. Collaboration engages the parties in finding a solution that will be equally beneficial to all involved. It is increasingly recognized that each approach may be the most effective at different times, depending on the nature of the conflict and those involved (Pines, et al., 2014). Johnson (2008) suggests teachers need to be able to use all five approaches and be able to determine which approach would be most effective in different situations.

Little research has been devoted to examining team conflict resolution in an educational setting; however, several researchers have studied conflict resolution in nursing and there is a vast literature focusing on conflict management in business settings. Research reveals a few factors that influence the way in which individuals handle conflict at work, including

individualistic versus collectivistic cultural worldviews (Boonsathorn, 2007; Sadri & Rahmation, 2003; Ting-Toomey, et al., 1991), status within an organization (e.g., Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Thomas, et al., 2008; Watson, 1994), and gender (e.g., Sadri & Rahmation, 2003).

Conflict management strategies have been found to differ depending on whether those involved are from an individualistic or collectivistic cultural background. Research suggests that people from an individualistic culture, such as the United States, tend to use a more competitive style in dealing with conflict, whereas people coming from a more collectivistic culture, tend to use more accommodating and avoiding styles (Boonsathorn, 2007; Sadri & Rahmation, 2003; Ting-Toomey, et al., 1991). For example, Sadri and Rahmation (2003) found that economics students attending a university in California who were from a foreign country were more likely to use avoidance than their fellow American students. Additionally, Asian-Americans at this school were more likely to use avoidance than white Americans.

Status within an organization is also a factor that influences conflict management style. Thomas, et al. (2008) used archival data of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (1974, 2002) which included demographic data and forced-choice items to determine a participant's conflict-management style. Thomas and colleagues (2008) randomly selected 400 participants (200 males and 200 females) from six organizational status levels: entry level, non-supervisory employee, supervisor, manager, executive, and top executive, giving a total number of 2400 participants. They found that both collaborating and competing increased as organizational level increased and that avoiding and accommodating decreased as organizational level increased. Compromising had a curvilinear relationship with organizational level, with entry-level employees and top executives least likely to use this strategy. Evidence from this study suggests that those with higher status positions in a company are more likely to use

collaborating and competing strategies to resolve conflict, whereas employees with lower levels of status in a company are more likely to use avoiding and accommodating strategies. Similar results have been obtained in other studies (e.g., Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002; Watson, 1994).

The influence of gender on the use of different conflict management strategies has shown mixed results. Shockley-Zalabak (1981) found no difference between men's and women's choice of conflict management strategies. Other researchers, however, found that women were more cooperative in resolving conflict than were men (Rahim, 1983; Rubin & Brown, 1975). Chanin and Schneer (1984) found that men preferred collaboration and women preferred compromise. Sadri and Rahmation's (2003) study examining conflict resolution strategies of economics students in California found that men preferred competition and women preferred avoidance. Similarly, Thomas, et al. (2008) found that men scored higher on competing than women with a moderate effect size of 0.32, and that men and women scored equally on collaborating. Women scored higher on the other three approaches (avoidance, accommodating, and compromise), however, the effect size for each was small. These mixed results may suggest the complex interrelationship of several characteristics influencing conflict management styles that need further investigation.

Several studies in the nursing profession suggest that the most common conflict management approach used among nurses is avoidance, followed by accommodation (Dyess & Sherman, 2009; Jackson, et al., 2011; Pines, et al., 2012; Sofield & Salmond, 2003; Valentine, 1995). Though Mrayyan et al. (2008) found that the preferences of Jordanian nursing students were collaboration and accommodation and Sportsman and Hamilton (2007) found that nursing students preferred to use compromise.

As nursing is largely a female profession, Valentine (1995, 2001) attributes the high use of an avoidance approach to what Elliott (2002) stated as "The emotional core of feminine identity," which is "relational" (p. 109). She suggests that women often choose to avoid conflict as a means to maintain relationships. Preschool teaching bears some similarities to nursing in that the majority of preschool teachers are female and both nursing and preschool teaching are seen as nurturing, caring professions. The voicing of conflict can be viewed as "the antithesis of 'caring,'" according to Valentine (1995, p. 146). Although there is little research focusing on conflict amongst teachers, Friend and Cook (2010) suggest that special education and general education co-teachers have largely been "uncomfortable addressing conflict" (Conderman, 2011, p. 222).

The tendency to avoid conflict in the workplace can lead to greater difficulties. In describing his experiences working in a secondary Montessori school, Fisher (2003) described the frustration that arose due to the development of conflict with his partner teacher. He explained that it was not until they were willing to openly discuss disagreements and difficult issues that their working relationship was able to develop and they were able to work effectively together.

The avoidance of conflict not only prevents the development of successful working relationships but also often results in stress (Jordanova, 1981). As part of a study of effective teaching teams, Snell and Janey (2000) noted that "Effective teams don't necessarily avoid conflict. Instead, they minimize conflict, recognize it when it occurs, and establish strategies to address it" (p. 13). Addressing and resolving conflict is vital in developing effective partnerships between teachers working as a team (Knackendoffel, 2007).

Each of these interpersonal factors are closely linked with one another. For example, good communication skills are necessary in conflict resolution. Role ambiguity may be lessened with effective communication skills and role ambiguity likely leads to conflict. Thus, none of these factors influences teaming in isolation. As well as internal factors affecting teaming, the functioning of teams is also influenced by external factors.

External factors that affect teaming. External factors that affect teaming include issues relating to the organization of the institution and the social and political context in which the institution exists.

Organization of early childhood education institutions. The way in which ECE classrooms are organized and power is assigned can impact teaming. Shim and colleagues (2004) found that a co-teacher structure, where teachers are considered equal in status, resulted in higher quality classrooms than a hierarchical structure. However, because it is more expensive to employ two LTs (co-teaching structure) than one LT and one AT (hierarchical structure), many preschools are organized around the hierarchical structure. Studies in other settings suggest that teams functioning with a flat structure, where team members are considered equal in status, is more effective than a hierarchical structure, where different levels of power are assigned within the team (e.g., Claver-Cortés, Zaragoza-Sáez, & Pertusa-Ortega, 2007; Cummings & Cross, 2003). Indeed, in the business literature, the very nature of a team often assumes a flat structure as opposed to a hierarchical structure. As previously indicated, a hierarchical power structure can impede communication between team members (Edmondson & Roloff, 2009).

However, even within flat structured teams, "[h]ierarchies can emerge" (Gunn & King, 2003, p. 191). McNairy (1988) found the emerging of a hierarchy within an ECE classroom

when observing two co-teachers. The more experienced of the two teachers assumed the role of LT, which strained the teaming relationship as her co-teacher rejected her informally assigned position lower in the hierarchy.

Teaming is also influenced by the absence or presence of particular practices that make it easier for teachers to work effectively together. Malone et al. (2001) found that time constraints and the inability to get together for planning impacted teaming negatively, as did a lack of training specifically focusing on developing teaming skills. Additionally, from exploring ECE communities of practice, Kuh (2012) suggested that an ethos of autonomy, openness, and sharing contributed to effective collaboration. Thus, providing both the necessary time and training, and creating a more open and sharing culture may improve the experience and outcomes of teaming in ECE.

Low status of early childhood education. Just as the culture within ECE organizations impact teaming, so does the broader socio-political climate in which ECE exists. ECE has long been regarded as having a low status in society in many westernized countries. Using focus groups, Hall and Langton (2006) found that the position of teachers in New Zealand was low on the professional status hierarchy and teachers in ECE were perceived to have the lowest status within the education sector, a finding that likely would also be found in other countries. Attendance in ECE is not compulsory for young children in the US and for a long time the value of ECE was not widely recognized. Although there is increasing recognition of the value of ECE to society in terms of economics (Logan, Press, & Sumsion, 2012), teachers are still poorly compensated in terms of both pay and benefits (Ackerman, 2006; Boyd, 2013; Lower & Cassidy, 2007; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Conditions such as low pay and low benefits may increase a teacher's personal stress, and may also contribute to the high turnover prevalent in ECE (Boyd,

2013; Lower & Cassidy, 2007). The high turnover of ECE teachers can affect teams negatively due to an "increased workload" and "increased stress" as new teachers need to be shown the routine and need time to become familiar with the policies and procedures of the ECE institution (Cassidy, Lower, Kintner-Duffy, Hegde, & Shim, 2011, p. 10).

The ECE preschool workforce is largely made up of women, including many who do not have a university degree (Herzenberg, Price, & Bradley 2005). Those preschool teachers who do have a degree often leave low paying jobs in preschool to work in elementary schools, where they receive a better compensation package (Abbott v. Burke, 2000). Those who choose to stay in preschool, despite the poor compensation, are often motivated by what they perceive as "emotional" and "ideological rewards" (Murray, 2000, p. 156), or they view their work as a calling (Torquati, Raikes, & Huddleston-Casas, 2007). Survey and interview data revealed that many teachers in a HS organization were motivated to work for HS due to a "deep service ethic" (Bullough, et al., 2012, p. 323), or the "family friendly work" (p. 329). Some teachers, however, expressed considerable dissatisfaction in their work, but continued because they needed the money to support their families.

Partly due to its low status, ECE was, until recently, the sector in education "least controlled" by policy makers (Madrid & Dunn-Kenney, 2010, p. 399). However, as a result of the increasing recognition of the value of ECE to society in terms of economics (Logan, Press, & Sumsion, 2012), ECE has become increasingly targeted under the political spotlight. The neoliberal politics affecting elementary, secondary, and higher education, are now actively involved in shaping and controlling ECE. According to Ball (2003) these neoliberal reforms in education affect "interactions and relations between colleagues" (p. 224).

Neoliberal reforms in early childhood education. Neoliberal reforms, put in place to improve the quality of ECE, have resulted in work intensification for preschool teachers (Ball, 2003; Bullough, Hall-Kenyon, McKay, & Marshall, 2014). Standards are set to which ECE teachers and students are expected to perform and teachers have become subject to increased surveillance and monitoring through target setting, reviews and appraisals, evaluations, and inspections. (Ball, 2003; Bullough, et al., 2014; Madrid & Dunn-Kenney, 2010; Williamson & Myhill, 2008). Teachers experience increased pressure to achieve ever-higher standards and heavier workloads, resulting in feelings of incompetence (Bradbury, 2012), stress, fatigue, and burnout (Ball, 2003; Bullough, et al., 2014). One early childhood teacher stated "maybe … [policy makers] need to make [the standards] a little bit more achievable, so it's not a constant situation where we're always feeling like we're a bit crap" (Bradbury, 2012, p. 181).

In line with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), feelings of incompetence and a lack of professional autonomy, along with poor professional relationships are likely to impact teaming and teaching negatively (Bullough, 2015). Feelings of autonomy, that may be lost with the top-down approach that has come with neoliberal reforms, has been found to impact effective team functioning. For example, the formation of effective teams in a study of sixth grade teacher PLCs was partly a result of team members being able to "direct their own collaborative efforts" (Hallam, Smith, Hite, Hite, & Wilcox, 2015, p. 204). Kuh (2012) found that barriers to forming effective communities of practice in ECE included the requirement of "top-down curriculum implementation and paperwork" (p. 26) as well as "the stresses of daily life" (p. 28) increasingly found in many ECE settings.

As the literature demonstrates, teaming is complex with multiple interrelated factors influencing how teams function. Context is important to teaming. Macro-level factors such as

organizational structure and educational reforms and micro-level factors such as personality and communication skills affect the work of teachers and teams. As teams are commonplace in ECE and as a dearth of research examining teaming for preschool teachers exists, in-depth research is needed to gain some insight into how teaching teams are functioning.

Purpose of the Study

Although the literature reveals pieces of information about teaming in a variety of settings, what is missing is a broad understanding of the teaming relationships that develop and are negotiated between partner teachers in a hierarchical ECE context. As there is very little research examining teaming issues for preschool teachers, a qualitative case study approach was used to explore the complexity inherent in teaming relationships between preschool teachers working in a hierarchical setting (as these are the most common teaching assignments). The purpose of this research is to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the nature and complexities of teaming relationships between young, educated, female LTs and their ATs. Illuminating some of the issues of teaming—a significant aspect of an early childhood educator's work life—may be beneficial for preschool teachers negotiating their position within the classroom every day, for administrators and supervisors supporting teamed teachers, and possibly for informing policy and practice relating to teaming and early childhood educator professional development.

Chapter 3

Methods

A case study approach was used to address the following research question: what is the experience of young, educated, female LTs and their assistants working together as a team? According to Stake (1995), a case study is "a specific, a complex, functioning … integrated system" (p. 2). The integrated system of this study included two classrooms which were part of the same HS organization. The system was bounded by both space and time. Two teaching teams within their preschool classrooms were studied in-depth from near the beginning to the end of the school year. The goal was to understand and illuminate some of the issues that are present for teamed ECE teachers.

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Chief Operations Officer of Education of Sure Steps Head Start (SSHS; all names are pseudonyms) in the summer of 2013 and from the university's Institutional Review Board. Additionally, written consent for participation in the study was obtained from the teachers involved.

Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling was used to select participants for the study. This is particularly suitable for case study research because of the need to explore a case that will maximize opportunities to collect data that will most likely answer the research questions (Stake, 1995). The current research study is part of a larger project on ECE teacher wellbeing. The focus for the current study, however, is teaming issues that arise for young, female, educated LTs and their assistants. I therefore had three main criteria in selecting my research participants: the LT of the classroom had to be female, have a bachelor's degree, and be between 20 and 30 years old. The decision to select female teachers was because the majority of preschool teachers are female.

The decision to select teachers with a bachelor's degree was because of the recent HS policy change requiring LTs to have a bachelor's degree. Although the age range selected as a criterion for participation was somewhat arbitrary, it was simply used as a guide to ensure the participants selected were "young" and had few years of teaching experience.

To find possible participants, data sets collected from a previous study (Bullough, et al., 2012) were consulted. A survey had been completed by 122 HS teachers in attendance at a program-wide professional development. Surveys were checked to identify teachers meeting the selection criteria. The Chief Operations Officer of Education of SSHS was then contacted to verify that these teachers were still working at SSHS and to get contact details for them. In line with high turnover trends in ECE (Lower & Cassidy, 2007), of the 11 teachers that were identified from the survey data as meeting the selection criteria, only one of them was still working at SSHS in a LT capacity. She was contacted via e-mail to determine her interest in participating in the study. She said she would like to participate, as did her AT. The LT was named Karen and the AT was named Laura. Together they made up Team 1.

As another team was needed, the names and contact details of other possible participants who met the selection criteria and who had joined SSHS since the collection of the survey data were obtained from the Chief Operations Officer of Education. With the anticipation of the federal review making this a high-pressure year for SSHS, the Chief Operations Officer of Education gave the names and contact details of only three teachers she believed would be able to handle the added pressure that may be caused from participation in the study. Each of these LTs was contacted and asked if they would be interested in participating in the study. Of these three teachers, two responded positively. Interviews were conducted with each of these teachers to gain background information and to assess their suitability for the study. Both teachers

seemed equally suitable apart from one factor. One of the teachers worked in a HS located on a housing complex for university students, whereas the other teacher worked in a HS classroom located on the campus of a local elementary school which included a more typical HS population. The second of these teachers was selected because she was working in the HS classroom of a regular community, which would likely better illuminate issues applicable to a wider range of teachers. The AT with whom she worked also consented to participate and together they made up Team 2. The LT was named Carly and the AT was named Sandra. Six weeks into the school year the AT in Team 2 was switched to Heather. Heather worked as the AT in Team 2 for the remaining seven and a half months of the study.

Data Collection

To determine the methods used for data collection and analysis, Stake's (1995, 2006, 2010) recommendations were used along with complimentary suggestions from Merriam (2009) which were found to be more explicit than Stake. In comparison to Stake (1995), "novice investigators who are planning to conduct a qualitative case study can find Merriam's account noticeably more useful and beneficial in terms of the guidelines for data collection" (Yazan, 2015, p. 144).

Data collection consisted of observations and interviews. For data collection to be effective, I first had to gain rapport with my research participants. To establish rapport Merriam (2009) suggests, "fitting into the participants' routines, finding some common ground with them, helping out on occasion, being friendly, and showing interest in the activity" (p. 123). I used each of these strategies as I conducted data collection, which began with observations of teachers in their classrooms. For example, I discussed with them my experience of being a preschool teacher and was able to empathize with their working lives; I occasionally helped them sweep

the floor or put out milk on the tables at mealtimes; I went to their homes to conduct interviews, and got to know the teachers on a personal level as I took interest in them and their families.

As it took longer than expected to find study participants, observations began on September 26, 2013, about one month after the school year had begun. Observations took place throughout the rest of the school year approximately once every one/two weeks while the teachers and students were in session. A total number of 23 observations were conducted of each team. The final observation took place on Tuesday May 13, 2014. Most observations lasted between three and three-and-a-half hours (a preschool session). Approximately 70 hours of observations were conducted in each classroom. (See Appendix A for a data collection timeline for each team.) It is desirable in qualitative data collection to reach a saturation point in which very little new information is obtained through further data collection (Merriam, 2009). Although data collection in this study was constrained by the school year, it was anticipated that a saturation point would be reached after one school year of observations.

Handwritten notes were recorded frequently throughout the observation session about the setting, the activities, and behaviors of the people present. Interactions between teamed teachers, between teachers and children, and between teachers and other adults in the classroom were included in the observation notes. Previous observations, interview data, and the research literature were used to inform observations, however, no formal protocol was used. "Progressive focusing" allowed the issues to "become progressively clarified and redefined" (Parlett & Hamilton, cited in Stake, 1995, p. 22). Thus, changes were made, resulting in the adjusting of observational foci throughout the data collection period. To begin with, for example, issues relating to general teacher wellbeing were the focus of the observations. Soon into the study,

however, issues of teaming came to the forefront. Therefore, incidents that may illuminate

teaming issues became important observational foci.

One concern with using observation as a data collection method is the presence of the

observer. As an outside participant, I affected the behavior of those being observed, particularly

in the beginning. However, due to the lengthy data collection period, teachers began to relax and

act, to some degree, as they would normally. This was apparent when other adults came into the

classroom during an observation and I would see behavior change as a result of their presence.

As stated by Merriam (2009), my presence "may elicit more polite, formal, or guarded behavior,

but … this cannot be sustained" (p.127) over a long period of time. However, during an

observation at the end of March, I had the following conversation with the family advocate (FA)

for Team 1:

> FA: Do you think you change things when you're here?

> Me: Of course—I'm sure I do! I wish I could just be a fly on the wall. Do you think I

> do?

> FA: Yeah—things are better! (Team 1, Obs 17)

Based on the observations of the FA, even close to the end of the study, my presence was

influencing the teachers' behavior. Thus, data collected through observation may have been

biased positively for Team 1.

Interviews for this study began in mid-October, just a few weeks after observations had

begun; a second interview was scheduled in November; a third interview took place in March;

and the final interviews were conducted in May, shortly after school ended. Three of the four

teachers participated in these interviews. Due to teaming complications in Team 2, the AT

changed shortly after the October interviews. The new AT in Team 2 was exceptionally busy

with a second job and a sick family member and thus felt she did not have the time to be

interviewed until the end of the school year. Thus, interview data collected from Heather

comprised her reflections of the year as opposed to how she was feeling throughout the year.

She only participated in two interviews: one at the end of May and one at the beginning of June.

Additionally, Karen had been interviewed as part of a prior study and Carly had been

interviewed just prior to data collection for this study to determine her suitability to participate.

These interviews were included as data for this study.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, in which questions and possible probes were

determined before the interview took place. Interview questions were informed by previous

observations and interviews and by the literature review. Open questions were asked to enable

participants to share their perspectives and feelings on the topics discussed. Probing questions

were also asked to obtain a deeper understanding of the relevant issues and to clarify meaning.

Interviews were conducted in any place that was convenient for the interviewee. Karen and

Laura both preferred to be interviewed in their homes, Carly chose to be interviewed at school,

and Heather chose to be interviewed in the food court of a shopping mall. Each interview took

between 30-75 minutes. Interviewees received a $30 gift card for each interview in which they

participated. Upon completion of each interview any further thoughts or insights I gained were

recorded in a research journal. Interviews largely took place between the researcher and the

individual teachers involved in the study; however, others were interviewed as was deemed

useful. Team 1's education specialist was interviewed in November 2013 and the teaching coach

of Team 2 was interviewed in February 2014. All interviews were audio recorded and then

transcribed. Interview questions used for each interview can be found in Appendix B.

Data Analysis

Informal data analysis commenced as soon as data collection began. As stated by Merriam (2009):

> A qualitative design is emergent. The researcher usually does not know ahead of time every person who might be interviewed, all the questions that might be asked, or where to look next unless data are analyzed as they are being collected. Hunches, working hypotheses, and educated guesses direct the investigator's attention to certain data and then to refining or verifying hunches. (p.169)

Informal analysis continually took place as I tried to make sense of the case through observation and interview. During this period, I discussed my data and my preliminary analysis with members of my dissertation committee. Upon completion of the data collection period, a more intensified process of data analysis ensued (Merriam, 2009).

Data analysis is essentially a sorting and classification system (Stake, 2010). Formal analysis began as codes relating to teaming, which were taken initially from the literature, were applied to both interview and observation data. Additional codes emerged from the data themselves as I read and re-read my field notes and interview transcripts. These codes were grouped together according to meaning. As patterns emerged with the repetition of codes throughout the data, categories were created, a process Stake (2005) names "categorical aggregation" (1995). Data segments with codes relating to a particular category were placed within that category. As data analysis continued, codes and categories were refined and renamed to more accurately reflect the emerging understanding of the teaming experiences of the lead and assistant teachers being studied. Each category and code was given a definition, which changed somewhat during analysis as categories and codes were reworked and refined (Merriam, 2009).

Each data segment within a code was assigned an analytic code to increase understanding of what was going on within each code. Categories, codes, and analytic codes were further examined to find ways in which they were interrelated with one another. Themes were created for each case based on the interrelationship between these categories and codes. (See Appendix C for a list of all categories, codes and analytic codes.)

As well as finding patterns in the data, Stake (1995) also recommends "direct interpretation of the individual instance" (p. 76). In my analysis, I therefore looked for single meaningful occurrences that illuminated teaming issues for the preschool teachers.

After the data had been analyzed and the descriptions written of the two schools, an analysis across both cases began, using Stake's (2006) cross-case analysis method. Stake's (2006) cross-case analysis method is essentially designed for larger research studies incorporating multiple cases and involving several researchers. This study involved only two cases and one researcher (I, personally, collected and analyzed all the data). It was, therefore, not necessary to follow every step that Stake suggests, as I was well familiar with each case. In his book, Stake (2006) includes several worksheets to aid in the cross-case analysis, some of which were particularly beneficial in comparing the cases. Completed worksheets can be found in Appendix D.

To begin with, the "themes" that had emerged from the data were listed on Worksheet 2. After writing the case descriptions for both teams, some of Worksheet 3 was completed which included a brief synopsis of each case, the findings for each case, and the relevance of each case for each theme. The extent to which each theme was evident in each case was determined with the completion of Worksheet 4. The findings for each case were then listed on Worksheet 5 and determined to what extent each of those findings were relevant to the cross-case themes.

Tentative assertions were created and recorded on Worksheet 6 based on the strongest findings across the two cases. These tentative assertions were compared against each other to find overlaps, and revisions were made accordingly. Further modifications to the assertions were made as additional insights surfaced throughout the writing process.

Trustworthiness of Study

One of the primary concerns in qualitative research is the trustworthiness of the findings of the study. Steps were therefore taken to increase the credibility and dependability of this research.

First, triangulation was used to increase both credibility and dependability. Three types of triangulation were used: methodological triangulation, data source triangulation, and investigator triangulation. Methodological triangulation was achieved using both observations and interviews. Interviews were used to clarify and elaborate on information gained from observations and observations were used to confirm information gained through interviews. Data source triangulation was achieved, as multiple examples of the same idea were found throughout the data. Finally, investigator triangulation was used as I shared my data and my interpretations with dissertation committee members and received feedback (Stake, 1995).

Another important method to increase the reliability of the study was to keep a research journal in which I recorded contact information, research meeting notes, and my reflections, questions, and decisions regarding the study (Stake, 2010). During every stage of the study, I recorded thoughts and ideas I had, and decisions I made pertaining to issues related to teaming and the codes and categories developing in the data. During the analysis and writing phases of the study, looking back through the research journal supported the development of my thinking around each of the categories, codes, individual case findings, and cross-case assertions.

Keeping a research journal throughout the duration of the study also increased the transparency of my interpretations and assertions.

Another strategy used to increase the credibility of the study included spending sufficient time collecting data. This was important as it enabled the research participants to get to know me and become used to my presence in their classroom. As a result, they were less likely to put on a performance and more likely to be themselves. What was observed was therefore likely to become more authentic (Merriam, 2009).

Although a formal negative case analysis was not conducted, throughout data analysis and writing, I continually asked myself whether there were any alternative perspectives and explanations of my data (Stake, 1995). I looked for examples that may have been contrary to my assertions. Findings and assertions were discussed with committee members to gain greater insight into possible alternative explanations.

The ethical treatment of participants was important during all stages of the study. The purpose of the study and voluntary involvement was explained to participants at the beginning of the study. Data shared by participants were not shared with anybody other than the research team. Although conducting member checks are a valuable part of a qualitative study (Stake, 1995) and were initially planned for this study, it was decided, for ethical reasons, that member checks would not be used to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Each of the teachers participated in interviews during which they were assured confidentiality of the information they provided. As the report included data in which both teachers in each team had revealed how they felt about and viewed their partner teacher, and as these data were important to the ways the teams functioned, sharing this information with the other teacher would not only be breaking confidentiality, but could be potentially harmful if teachers were still working in SSHS.

Other measures were taken to ensure ethical treatment of participants. These included being sensitive to the feelings of teachers during both observations and interviews and using pseudonyms in the final written report.

Transferability

A further concern with qualitative research is the ability to generalize assertions to others. The purpose of this study was not to generalize assertions, but to illuminate issues faced by preschool teaching teams. Illuminating these issues may provide valuable insight to preschool teachers, administrators, and pre-service and professional development organizations. The assertions presented may enable preschool teachers to identify with and make connections with their own situation. Making their own personal connections may help them consider their own teaming relationships and ways to improve them. Administrators and teacher supervisors may also be able to make connections and transfer some of the study assertions to their personal roles and responsibilities in helping preschool teachers deal with and negotiate their teaming relationships. Finally, illuminating teaming issues faced by preschool teachers may be beneficial to pre-service education and professional development organizations to provide preschool teachers with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to better negotiate their teaming relationships. To increase the likelihood of transferability, I collected rich, descriptive data during data collection. I also used rich, detailed description in the final report to enable readers to understand the context of the study that may help them make connections with their own situation (Stake, 2010).

Context of This Study

Included in this section are specific details concerning the context of the teams participating in this study. The context will be described at three levels: federal HS (macro

level), SSHS, the local HS organization involved in this study (meso level), and finally the two classes where the teaching teams worked (micro level).

Macro Level: Federal Head Start

Originating in 1965 as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty, HS is the largest preschool program in the United States with a federal budget of $7.6 billion in the 2013 fiscal year and serving 932,164 children (Office of Head Start, n.d.). HS not only provides preschool education to children of families largely living below the poverty line, but also provides nutritious meals, health care, and family support. As in other educational environments, HS teachers experience surveillance and monitoring through evaluations and inspections, and increasingly heavy workloads and demands on their time (Bullough, et al., 2014).

Although HS is federally funded, it is locally organized. To determine whether HS organizations are performing at a required standard, each local HS organization is subject to a triennial federal review, in which inspectors from the Office of HS conduct an intense week-long evaluation of the HS unit. Classrooms are inspected, teachers are observed and evaluated using CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System, LaParo, Pianta, & Stuhlman, 2004), employees are interviewed, and paperwork is examined. A positive outcome secures federal funds for a further period.

CLASS observations, used during federal reviews to evaluate the quality of education provided by teaching teams, consist of three domains: instructional support, emotional support, and classroom organization. Each domain consists of several dimensions set on a 7-point scale. Teachers rated poorly on a dimension receive a low score, and teachers rated highly effective on a dimension receive a high score for that dimension. The scores across the dimensions are averaged to give each teaching team a score for each of the three domains. Scores are then

averaged for each domain across the local HS organization and are used by the Office of HS to determine program quality. HS programs that score below the established minimum on any of the three CLASS domains, or programs scoring in the lowest 10% (unless they have a score of 6 or more on any of the domains) are required to compete with other Head Starts for funding.

Adding to the stress that results from constant monitoring and a heavy workload are the frequent policy changes HS teachers face. One education specialist in a HS program described the program as "constantly changing … standards and rules and resources" (Bullough, et al., 2014, p. 60). As stated in the introduction, a recent policy change in HS, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-134) has resulted in changes in educational requirements for teachers. This law requires 50% of LTs to have a bachelor's degree and ATs to have a child development associate (CDA) credential. It was believed that these changes could affect the dynamics of LTs and ATs working within the HS Program. Teachers who previously held the lead role in a HS classroom may be required to step down to an assistant position if they were unwilling or unable to complete the requirements to get a bachelor's degree. Bullough et al. (2014) found that some LTs had chosen to step down to an assistant teaching position because of their increasingly heavy workloads. As the retention of teachers in many preschool contexts is low (Lower & Cassidy, 2007), it is anticipated that lead teaching positions may increasingly be filled with young, inexperienced, just-out-of college teachers (Bullough, et al., 2012).

Meso Level: Sure Steps Head Start

One HS organization located in the Western United States is Sure Steps Head Start (SSHS), which serves approximately 2,300 children and their families each year. Children attend one of about 70 preschool classrooms located throughout two counties. In framing the

context of the study at the meso level the organizational structure of SSHS will be outlined followed by a portrayal of the director of SSHS, the federal review, and planning and paperwork requirements. Finally, a description of the pay structure will be presented.

Organizational structure. SSHS is organized hierarchically, with several levels of power, authority, and responsibility. At the bottom of the hierarchy in the education strand of SSHS is the AT who works in a classroom with a LT. LTs and ATs report to one of 12 education specialists who report to one of two Education Child Coordinators (ECCs). These ECCs then report to the ECE Manager, who reports to the Chief Operations Officer of Education, who reports to the director of SSHS. There were also links across the different strands of HS. For example, teachers worked alongside a FA who had the responsibility of working with the families of the preschool children, providing a link to social and health services.

Director of Sure Steps Head Start. Megan Roberts had over 20 years of experience in ECE as an early childhood teacher, as an ECE university instructor, and as the director of SSHS. In addition to a bachelor's degree in Family and Child Development and an ECE teaching license, she had a master's degree in Family Development and Social Policy. Megan was a board member of a few non-profit organizations fighting poverty. She received a "Social Entrepreneur of the Year" award by a large multinational corporation as she sought opportunities to improve SSHS and the local community. For example, as she needed healthy meals for the children attending SSHS, she set up a kitchen and hired chefs to work with and train local community members in the culinary arts. As a result, healthy meals were provided for HS children, food products were created and sold to the general public, and community members received valuable training and qualifications. Under Megan's direction, SSHS had been named a "Quality Initiative

Program of Achievement" by the National HS Association. Megan had high standards and high

expectations of her teachers. For example, whereas the Office of HS only required 50% of all

LTs to have a bachelor's degree, Megan required all her LTs to have a bachelor's degree.

Megan believed social programs, such as SSHS, should be run like a business. One member of

staff who had transferred to SSHS from a HS in a different state commented, "SSHS runs like a

Fortune 500 company" (Eaglerock, Obs 15). Megan went to great lengths to provide high

quality services at SSHS as she applied for grants, organized fundraising events in the

community, appealed to local businesses and organizations for financial support, and ensured her

teachers were prepared for their triennial review. As a result of Megan's work, SSHS may have

been somewhat different to many other local HS organizations.

    Federal review. The year data were collected for this study was also the federal review

year for SSHS, which involved a weeklong examination of the program, ensuring they were

meeting HS's requirements. The pressure of passing the federal review was high. Since the

"Designation Renewal System" was introduced in 2011, failing the review could mean SSHS

would need to compete with other providers for the funding, resulting in increased monitoring

and greater pressure on employees of SSHS. The outcome of the federal review could

potentially have such an impact on the survival of SSHS, Megan and her management team

made sure all employees were ready for it. When asked what she had done to prepare for the

federal review, Karen, the LT of Team 1, observed, We went to training, after training, after

        training, after training … [W]e went to this big, long training and, I mean, I swear every

        training we've had so far has been about Federal Review. Federal Review was a topic

        even when I was hired two years ago. And it was two years away for the Federal Review

        … and so it's just sort of always been engraved in our minds. So really, we're always

prepared for it. (Karen, Int 3) In addition to trainings, to help prepare the teachers for the federal review and to determine any necessary changes, SSHS management conducted an internal review once a year, similar to the federal review. Teachers were observed and classrooms inspected. As CLASS was used by the Office of HS as a measure of program quality, three coaches were hired by SSHS and trained in CLASS to work alongside education specialists to specifically help teachers increase their CLASS scores. They each worked with about 10 teaching teams that were new to SSHS or simply needed extra help in raising their CLASS scores. Some particularly high performing teachers were named 'master teachers' and were observed by other teachers as an example of high-quality teaching, of which to aspire.

   Planning and paperwork. As well as pressure from the federal review, SSHS teachers also experienced a large amount of planning and paperwork: child attendance and meal tracking records, parent involvement records, assessments and documentation, and lesson plans. To plan lessons, management had purchased curricula materials for the teachers at SSHS to use: The Creative Curriculum (Dodge, Colker, & Heroman, 2002); Second Step (covering social and emotional objectives; Committee for Children, 2011); Talking about Touching (covering personal safety objectives; Committee for Children, 2001); and The Great Body Shop (covering health objectives; The Children's Health Market, 2013). SSHS outlined several learning objectives to be addressed each month. Based on these objectives, teachers created weekly plans outlining activities for the week: lessons to be taught in whole group and small groups and also educational foci for each of the interest areas in the classroom; for example, the music, dramatic play, and literacy areas. Lesson plans were sent to the teaching team's education specialist every Friday to check they met HS requirements. Once approval was given, plans were posted on the classroom wall and could be used. The Creative Curriculum objectives were aligned with an

assessment system used by SSHS: Teaching Strategies Gold (Lambert, Kim, & Taylor, 2010).

Within the assessment system, each objective was divided into several dimensions. Each child

was given a score on a scale on each dimension. Documentation outlining what the child did to

get that score was also included in the assessment. Teachers were required to have a minimum

of seven pieces of documentation per child per checkpoint, of which there were three per year

(September- November, December-February, March-May). Education specialists checked that

their teachers had completed the required documentation at the end of each checkpoint. By the

end of the year, teachers completed documentation for all children for all dimensions. All

children moving to kindergarten the following year were also assessed on "pre-k skills" (an

assessment provided by a local school district) at the beginning and end of the school year.

Other paperwork required of teachers at SSHS included daily child attendance and meal

tracking records, and parent involvement records. Parents signed their children in and out of

school every day and the teachers recorded which children had meals at school. As one teacher

stated: "we have to mark who's been eating and who's not and it has to correlate with the sign in

and out book. Apparently, a lot of teachers have been doing it wrong and there's been a lot of

errors, … we almost lost our grant" (Karen, Int 4). Parent involvement records were also

important for SSHS. Parents were given forms to take home to record any work they did with

their children. At the end of the month they returned them to the classroom and teachers

forwarded them to SSHS office personnel along with records of in-class parent involvement.

The more time the parents worked at home with their child or in the class, the more funding

SSHS would receive in grants from federal HS.

Planning and paperwork took a significant amount of a teacher's time. Although children

did not attend school on Friday, presumably giving teachers time to complete planning and

paperwork and to prepare the classroom for the children, several Fridays were taken up with trainings, meetings, home visits, and parent teacher conferences. Thus, paperwork often spilled over into the teachers' home lives. One teacher stated, "I've put in … 55, close to 60, hours this week. Just getting ready for the [federal] review and parent teacher conferences that were yesterday, and lesson planning" (Carly, Int 2).

Pay structure. Working over 40 hours per week was not unusual for LTs in SSHS. LTs were paid on average approximately $18 an hour, based on a 40-hour week, compared with ATs who were paid an average of approximately $14 an hour. However, a few years prior to this study, the pay scale for LTs was changed from an hourly wage to a salary. This meant that LTs were required to work until the work was done, rather than work a 40-hour week as they had previously done (Bullough, et al., 2014), which could mean a longer working week for LTs. ATs, however, remained on an hourly wage and were prohibited from working more than the prescribed 40 hours.

The different pay structures for teachers also meant that the sequestration order from federal government, during the 2013/14 school year, resulting in the biggest budget cut in the history of HS (National Head Start Association, n.d.), affected the teachers differently. ATs at SSHS experienced a forced day off without pay, which could be particularly challenging for teachers already on a low hourly wage. As LTs were paid a salary, this did not affect them.

Micro Level: Classrooms and Teaching Teams

As stated previously, SSHS had approximately 70 preschool classrooms for children aged three to five. The setting for this study was in two of those classrooms: West Blair and Eaglerock. The context of each of the teams will be described separately.

Classroom 1: West Blair Head Start. To understand the context of Team 1, the physical setting of the HS preschool will be described as well as a typical day in the preschool. This will be followed by a description of each of the teachers responsible for the class: Karen (LT) and Laura (AT). These teachers made up Team 1.

Physical setting. West Blair preschool was located in an old mobile unit on the site of an elementary school in a residential area. The mobile unit consisted of two separate classes which were linked by a short corridor housing two child-sized rest rooms. Immediately walking in through the door, on the left-hand side of the classroom, was a small walk-through area lined with children's labeled coat pegs on one side and low shelves on the other side. At the end of the passageway was a home role-play area followed by a small makeshift office created by screens which was where the FA worked. A workbench and sink for the teachers and a child-sized sink lined the next wall. The rest of the classroom included a computer area, a small library, a painting and construction area, a carpet area for whole group learning and activities, a music area, a sandbox, and a few small tables and chairs. Several child-sized shelves containing various games and activities, such as blocks, toy vehicles, and writing, drawing, and crafting materials separated different areas of the classroom. The walls were decorated with photos of the children, notices for parents, children's artwork, and a variety of posters. The classroom was lit by fluorescent lights and four windows—two on the front wall and two on the back wall— lined with curtains, giving the classroom a homey feel.

Outside, at one side of the mobile unit was a small, enclosed play area for the children. The climbing and sliding play unit sat on a bed of wood chips. Along the front of the area was a strip of lawn and a shed containing outdoor play equipment. The outside play area backed onto a field belonging to the elementary school. A small wooden fence and gate separated the mobile unit from the outdoor play area and a tall chain-link fence surrounded the entire site containing the elementary school, the HS mobile unit, and the play areas and fields.

Apart from sharing a site, the only connection West Blair HS had with the school concerned the preparation of food. The elementary kitchen staff prepared food for the children of West Blair HS and one of the four HS teachers collected the prepared food during the day.

A typical day. The West Blair daily morning schedule can be seen in Table 1. A small group of three- to five-year-olds stood outside on the long, rickety metal ramp stretching parallel to the preschool classroom with their caregivers. When the doors opened at eight o'clock, the children hurried in, put their coats on their pegs and washed their hands while their caregivers signed them in on the daily roll. Some caregivers left the classroom immediately after sign-in; most stayed to supervise their child write their name in their name book which had been set out on one of the tables. Some parents then read a story to their child while some chatted with other parents, the teachers, or the FA. More children and parents arrived over the next 15 minutes, the time allotted for school arrival. Most parents left by 8.15, with one or two occasionally staying to help with breakfast set-up or for circle time activities.

Karen, the LT, cleaned the tables and set up breakfast while Laura, the AT, sat on the carpet with the children. The "Listening Song" got children's attention before jobs for the day were given out and circle activities began which included whole-class instruction on the class topic. When breakfast was set up, children were dismissed from circle to take their place at one

of the three tables. They began eating while Karen completed the meal-tracking roll, one of the

few jobs that she reserved for herself. Karen and Laura sat with the children at different tables

and engaged the students with discussion.

Table 1

West Blair Daily Morning Schedule

Time	Activity
8.00 am	Children arrive
8.15 am	Whole group circle
8.30 am	Breakfast
8.45 am	Breakfast clean-up
8.50 am	Whole group music and movement. Brush teeth
9.00 am	Whole group instruction
9.15 am	Small group instruction
9.30 am	Free choice
10.00 am	Tidy up
10.10 am	Story time
10.25 am	Outside play
11.00 am	Lunch
11.15 – 11.30	Children leave

After cleanup, Laura returned to the carpet with the children for about 15 minutes of

singing songs from a CD such as "My Mother is a Baker" and "If You're Happy and You Know

It." At the same time, Karen finished cleaning up breakfast and then signaled to Laura to send

four children at a time to brush their teeth. After the completion of tooth brushing, Laura taught

the children social-emotional skills, such as taking turns or resolving conflict, before children were split into two smaller groups divided by age. Karen taught the younger group and Laura taught the older group with activities such as identifying letters, cutting along a line, or creating patterns by stringing colored Cheerios onto yarn. The group work lasted either as long as the activity took, or as long as the children could focus—usually about 10 minutes.

Following small group instruction, students were free to choose activities from around the classroom, such as blocks, arts and crafts, computer work, sand box, play dough, games, and the home corner. Children moved freely from activity to activity. During this time Karen and Laura would engage with children in various activities, assess individual students, supervise bathroom use, or do paperwork. Towards the end of choice time the "five-minute-helper" turned the light off and announced to the class that they had five minutes of play left. The classroom soon became somewhat chaotic as play equipment was put away and children returned to the carpet. A story from Laura was followed by approximately 30 minutes of outside play with the next-door class. During this time, Karen would go across to the school's kitchen to get lunch, bring it back to the classroom and begin setting it out. After outdoor play, children returned to the classroom, washed hands, and ate lunch before being signed out by their caregiver between 11.15 and 11.30.

After the students left and the classroom was clean and tidy, Laura put out name writing books for the afternoon children while Karen spent her lunch time with her son at her babysitter's house across the road. The schedule was repeated with a different group of 17 children in the afternoon, but the teachers' roles were reversed: Karen leading the class and Laura preparing food and doing cleanup. The order of activities varied a little throughout the year as changes were made to improve the experience for students and teachers.

Team 1 LT: Karen. As with all the teachers in HS, Karen dressed casually for work, wearing trousers, a t-shirt, and a red apron which indicated her position as LT (the ATs wore a blue apron). Karen qualified for the LT position because of her college degree in Family Consumer and Human Development. Karen was proud that she had her bachelor's degree and referred to her education frequently throughout the year.

Karen's education added to her strong sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy. She was confident; she liked who she was, and she connected easily with people. She described herself as friendly, welcoming, and happy: "I think that I'm an open book …. I feel like I'm approachable.… If you need to talk to me about something, I'm here" (Karen, Int 4); "I'm generally a positive, happy person…. I find things to enjoy in life" (Karen, Int 5). This disposition was very evident during observations and interviews. She was always welcoming to others, including myself. She openly shared her personal joys and challenges. She was clearly happy with the way her life was evolving and even when challenges arose, she viewed them positively: "There's hard times … like when my dad lost his job or when my husband lost his job.… But … things always get better. They always seem to find their way out … Yes, I'll have hard times, but those only make you better" (Karen, Int 1).

Karen's positivity extended to her perceptions of her work in HS. At 24-years-old, Karen had been working for SSHS for one and a half years at the beginning of the study. The only previous experience she had teaching in ECE was the teaching she did in her university's preschool as a program requirement. Despite Karen's limited teaching experience, she was very confident in her ability as a teacher: "I feel like I know what I'm doing. I'm confident—I'm more confident this year than I have been at any time" (Karen, Int 2). Her confidence was such that she believed she could be a "master teacher," a position given to a few teachers judged by

SSHS management as excellent LTs. After talking about her teaching team's relatively high CLASS score in instructional support, she stated: "I will probably be a master teacher if I stay around longer than a year" (Team 1, Obs 17). With her confidence, Karen possessed a strong identity as the LT: "I am the lead. I'm getting the pay for the lead. I got the education to be the lead" (Karen, Int 4). She believed that her university degree made her more knowledgeable than her AT.

Despite her strong identity as LT, Karen's primary identity was as a mother. Karen was married and had a son who turned one during the study. She frequently talked about her son and her role as a mother: "[Landon] is my foremost responsibility! I am foremost a mom! I'm a nursing mom!" (Karen, Int 3). Throughout the year, Karen often referenced her preference to be a stay-at-home mom rather than be a teacher at SSHS and the struggle she felt in having to work: "… just being away from my baby is one of my greatest [challenges]. I'd rather just be home with this cute little kid every day … I mean, ultimately I'm a mom first" (Karen, Int 2).

Consistent with many young, religious, married women, Karen had planned on giving up her work as a preschool teacher to become a stay-at-home mom with the arrival of her baby (see Bullough, et al., 2012; Colaner & Giles, 2008). However, her family situation did not allow that. With her husband still in college, Karen was the main breadwinner in the family. She stayed at SSHS for the pay and benefits: "I've made it clear to Head Start that if I'm not at West Blair next year, they probably will not have me back and I will find a different job to get insurance" (Karen, Int 4). She planned on leaving SSHS as soon as her husband was in a position to be the sole financial provider for the family.

Karen saw these two sub-identities (mother and teacher) as complementary to one another. She mentioned several times how her teaching style had changed for the better since

becoming a mother: "[H]aving Landon has made me a better teacher because I go with the flow. … If they're acting absolutely crazy … and I can see they need to be outside, I'm like, 'Okay, let's clean up! Let's go outside!" (Karen, Int 2). She hoped to one day combine the two roles by having a preschool in her home; however, her role as mother would always come first:

> I love working with children. I absolutely love it. But when I have kids of my own, that's going to be my number one priority, is taking care of my family…. And if staying at home and having a preschool in my house is going to be what's best for my family, that's what I'm going to do. (Karen, Int 1)

For now, her job allowed her to work in close proximity to her son's babysitter who lived across the road from the preschool. It was convenient for dropping him off and picking him up before and after school, and it allowed her to spend lunchtime with him every day. Essentially it maximized the amount of time she was able to spend with him as a working mom.

The location of West Blair HS was not only beneficial to Karen for its proximity to her son's babysitter; it also increased her sense of belonging. Karen was very familiar with the area. Her parents lived close by and she had attended West Blair elementary school as a child. As a high school student, Karen had worked as a janitor at the elementary school and her mom had recently worked there as a kindergarten teacher. Consequently, Karen felt she had "rapport with the school" (Karen, Int 1). She knew the school secretary, the principal, and a few of the parents of the children in her class prior to the start of the school year.

Team 1 AT: Laura. Laura, the AT, was 36-years-old and single—she had never been married and had no children, which, according to Karen, was something that Laura had hoped for. Laura described herself as hardworking, a quality that was evident during observations. Talking of her family, she said: "All of us are … hard workers" (Laura, Int 4).

Although she consented to participate in the study, Laura seemed a little guarded at times. She was always polite but sometimes reluctant to open up in interview, and occasionally, it felt like she did not really want me in the classroom. However, at other times she was pleasant and discussed both school and non-school topics with me.

At the beginning of the study, she had been working at HS for 12 years. She began working as an aide for a HS located close to the college she attended while she was seeking a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Of her experience as an aide she said, "… I just loved it. It just fit! And I'm like, 'This is what I'm supposed to do. This is where I fit. This is where I belong'" (Laura, Int 1). Being a preschool teacher was a huge part of Laura's identity. She felt that it was who she was, and it provided a place of belonging for her. Laura's motivation to work as a preschool teacher was her love for young children. She said, "Sometimes I'm encouraged to find another job that would pay more or that would let me not have to commute …, but then I think about leaving the kids and I just can't. … I need kids. I just love the kids" (Laura, Int 1). Her love for the children was evident in her interactions with them throughout the year. During observations, Laura was often playing with the children and expressing her love for them as they expressed for her their love. For example, during one observation, "Laura moved to the carpet to do music time. Some of the children rushed over and threw their arms around her: 'I love you,' they said. 'I love you too!' Laura responded" (Team 1, Obs 3).

With her sense of belonging and love for the children, Laura changed her major to ECE soon after beginning work as an aide in a preschool. Of her college education, Laura said: "I did two years' general education. … [A]fter that I did two years' early childhood education. So, I did get an associate's in early childhood education. … I would have a bachelor's, but I didn't

finish one of my classes" (Laura, Int 1). Laura had one math class that she found difficult and did not complete, so was never awarded her degree, which she later came to regret.

After working in the HS program close to her college for three years, she moved to SSHS where she worked for a few years as an AT, then for two years as a LT. After a particularly difficult year as a LT, she chose to return to her prior position as AT:

> I had an assistant who was kind of out to get me. I feel like my supervisor kind of took her side…. I just did not feel like I had any support that year. I had very difficult children that I didn't know what to do. I had some hard parents that were doing some very difficult things to handle. (Laura, Int 1)

Since then she had worked as an AT for three years. Laura's experiences in not finishing her bachelor's degree and in reverting back to a position as an AT after being an LT suggest a lack of self-efficacy. She felt things were too challenging and so instead of persevering with a mindset that she could achieve, she chose to withdraw from the challenges.

Laura had faced several challenges in her life. Although she loved working with young children in preschool, her own school life was not so pleasant: "I got teased constantly in elementary school by kids and teachers…. It was really hard" (Laura, Int 1).

Another school challenge related to her academic ability. Although she described high school as much more enjoyable: "I had a lot of really good friends," she said, "I tried really hard, but I struggle. Even trying really hard [I] was about a C/B average" (Laura, Int 1).

Laura also suffered from health issues at different times in her life. She had back surgery immediately after high school and although she had lived independently for several years while working at SSHS, she moved back home to live with her parents due to health problems and for financial reasons:

I moved back and forth a couple times. The first one was because my rent started going up more and I just couldn't afford it anymore … so I moved back here…. Then we decided that my parents would buy a condo and I would rent the condo from them, so we did that…. Then I started getting these headaches and ear problems and dizziness, and it went on for about five years or so. It just got really bad … I was getting these attacks with it where I couldn't move because I was getting so dizzy … and it was making me sick … so I moved back here. (Laura, Int 1)

Although Laura no longer suffered from that particular health issue, she had never "gotten around to moving back out" (Laura, Int 1). Consequently, she had a 45-minute commute to work every day. She would leave her house at 6.30 each morning, arriving at school at about 7.15—35 minutes earlier than Karen, the LT, and 45 minutes before opening the doors to the children. She organized classroom materials and collected the children's breakfast from the on-site school kitchen.

Perhaps one of Laura's greatest challenges at the time of the study was a feeling of despondency. Her life had not turned out the way she had hoped. In her final interview, when asked about her aspirations for the future, she said, "If you'd asked me ten … years ago … I would have had a completely different answer…. Now, … I honestly don't know…. This is so not where I expected my life, so now I have to wait and see where it goes" (Laura, Int 4).

Classroom 2: Eaglerock Head Start. As with the portrayal of Team 1, a description of the context of Team 2 will follow, including the physical setting and a typical day. Each of the teachers in the team will then be described: Carly (LT) and Heather (AT).

Physical setting. In many ways Eaglerock preschool was very similar to West Blair. Two classrooms were housed in an old mobile unit on the site of an elementary school. The

school building was set back on a busy road. The front entrance of the elementary school was

close to the HS mobile unit. The HS classroom had much larger windows than West Blair,

which meant the inside was much lighter and brighter. The interior layout was similar to West

Blair: coat pegs for the children by the door, a makeshift corner office for the FA, the same types

of activity areas for the children, and low shelves containing games and activities separating the

various areas. The only major difference was that the space was smaller and consequently felt

more cramped. Outside, however, was a different scenario. Between the building and the busy

road was a large, spacious field, used only by the two HS classes. Sliding and climbing

equipment was much more abundant than at West Blair and was surrounded by a large grassy

area for the children to run around on.

   Eaglerock HS had different connections with the on-site elementary school than West

Blair. Eaglerock HS was given a time slot every Tuesday in the school library. The children sat

on a rug while the school librarian read them two or three stories. The children loved their

library time. They were very attentive, and often asked to hear the story again. Time in the

school gym was also given to Eaglerock HS every Monday. However, in the cold winter

months, when they were unable to play outside, the Eaglerock HS classes frequented the gym

much more often.

   A typical day. The Eaglerock daily morning schedule can be seen in Table 2. Like West

Blair, the teachers at Eaglerock assessed how well the schedule was working throughout the year

and adjusted it accordingly. Although Eaglerock started school 15 minutes later than West Blair,

a typical day in the two classrooms looked similar. The classes engaged in the same types of

activities though in a slightly different order. Perhaps the greatest difference between the two

classes was that Eaglerock usually spent a lot longer than their required 30 minutes outside.

They would often be outside for an hour or more because, according to Carly: "It's too confined a space inside for all of the kids" (Team 2, Obs 8).

Table 2

Eaglerock Daily Morning Schedule

Time	Activity
8.15 am	Children arrive, write name, and eat breakfast
8.30 am	Brush teeth, puzzles, and books
8.45 am	Whole group
9.00 am	Outside play
10.00 am	Back to class
10.05 am	Whole group
10.20 am	Small group
10.30 am	Free choice
11.00 am	Tidy up
11.05 am	Story
11.20 am	Lunch
11.30 – 11.45	Children leave

Team 2 LT: Carly. Carly was 26-years-old and had recently moved back to the area to be closer to family. When asked what she thinks makes a fulfilling life, the first thing she said was, "being around your family" (Carly, Int 1). Although single, she hoped "to get married … and have children" (Carly, Int 1). In the meantime, she lived alone in an apartment.

Growing up, Carly loved school so much that "from kindergarten all the way through 12th grade, [she] never missed a day of school" (Carly, Int 1), an accomplishment of which she

was very proud. Her love of school motivated her to become a teacher: "I loved school so much.

I think that's why I love to teach because I had such a good time learning from my teachers and I

knew that's what I wanted to be—is a teacher" (Carly, Int 1).

After completing high school, Carly moved away from home to attend college. She had

begun working on her degree in Elementary Education, but after problems in the program, she

decided to switch majors to Family Life and Human Development and Early Childhood. At the

same time, she began working for HS as an AT. After completing her bachelor's degree, she

was promoted to a LT of a single class where she also had the responsibilities of an FA.

However, she said, "I've always known I wanted to be a kindergarten teacher—always. And I

feel like that part of me is missing," (Carly, Int 1) and so she planned on going back to school for

a year to get her elementary teaching certificate.

Carly described herself as hardworking and liked to get tasks completed ahead of time

whenever possible. Talking about her time at university she said, "I loved to be on top of my

projects. Sometimes I'd get projects done a week or two in advance because I like to be

prepared (Carly, Int 1). She also described herself as friendly, non-confrontational, and kind:

"The thing with me is—like my personality—I get along with everyone so it was easy for me to

make friends and keep friends (Carly, Int 1); "Even if there is an issue, I always address it in a

kind way" (Carly, Int 4). Yet, despite her ability to "get along with everyone," she had problems

getting along with her first AT. This was perhaps because their work ethic seemed to differ,

according to Carly:

> I just felt like I was doing things by myself and … she was always late all the time and …
>
> she wouldn't follow my lesson plans. She would just do whatever she wanted. And I
>
> approached her numerous times about following my lesson plans, coming to work on

time, helping me out, and she just never did. So, that's when I reached out to my

supervisor and I asked if we can make a change. (Carly, Int 2)

Carly felt a lack of connection with her AT. Not only did they disagree with matters concerning

work, but they were also different in age, a feature shared by Carly's previous team at her

previous HS.

The person I was working with [at my old HS] … was 40 years older than me and we

didn't get on very well. We kind of clashed. Sandra is 30 years older than me….

Sometimes we just don't see eye to eye on things. And we just think differently. I'm

from a different generation than she is, so, we think so differently at times, but I think

we're trying to make it work. (Carly, Int 1)

Just a couple of weeks later, however, Carly emailed Claire, her temporary supervisor requesting

a change which was granted.

Although Carly had confidence in her teaching: "I'm already a master teacher" (Team 2,

Obs 7), she didn't quite have the confidence of Karen. Approaching parents, for example, she

sometimes felt "nervous" (Team 2, Obs 8) about sharing sensitive issues and said that

"sometimes it's awkward" (Carly, Int 5) when dealing with parents. Nevertheless, Carly was

always very welcoming and very polite. She seemed to feel a responsibility for visitors in her

classroom and described her role as, "kind of like being a talk show host. You really have an

audience and you have to get around and you have to talk to all of them" (Carly, Obs 5). When I

was in the classroom for observations, she often spent periods of time chatting with me.

Team 2 AT: Heather. After six weeks of working with her first AT, Carly had her

assistant changed to Heather, the AT who had been working in the adjacent classroom. Heather

was 31 years old. Like Carly, Heather's family was important to her. She described belonging

to a close-knit family: "My family—whole family—are just all really involved—like my extended family. Like, you do something and they're all there for you" (Heather, Int 2). Heather had a close connection and a strong sense of belonging with her family. Her greatest desire was to get married and to have her own children: "I just want to be a mom!" (Team 2, Obs 11).

Heather studied ECE at college and "almost got [her] bachelor's degree" (Heather, Int 2), which was put on hold due to health issues. She just needed to do her student teaching to complete it. She had a desire to return to university to reach that goal and get her teaching license.

She was new to HS and new to teaching preschool. She had worked as an aide for 10 years in special education classrooms in the school district. Being new to preschool and new to the classroom six weeks into the school year, it took Heather a little time to get used to her new situation, though her confidence increased as the year went on. She was, like Carly, welcoming in a polite way. Her interactions, even with the children, were very limited to begin with and it seemed that she was more comfortable tidying and cleaning the classroom than playing and engaging with the children during free choice time.

The year was particularly difficult for Heather, not only because she was in a new job, a new environment, with new responsibilities, but after finishing her work at SSHS, she would leave to go straight to the office of a construction company to work for a couple of hours. Additionally, she cared for a sick family member for part of the year. Her sister was so sick that Heather, at one point, thought she might have to give up her job at SSHS to take care of her nieces and nephews.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the nature and complexities of teaming

relationships between young, educated, female LTs and their ATs working in ECE. Case

descriptions will be presented for each team and will be organized thematically around the major

findings, which emerged during data analysis. The experiences of the teachers in Team 1 will be

discussed first, followed by the experiences of the teachers in Team 2. The chapter will end with

a discussion of the assertions made based on a cross-case analysis of both teams.

Team 1: Team Functioning in the West Blair Site

The West Blair teachers were Karen (LT) and Laura (AT). The experiences of Team 1

will be discussed through six sections: roles and responsibilities, the power differential, differing

priorities, communication challenges, team support, and the end of the year.

Roles and responsibilities. At the beginning of the 2013 school year, Karen and Laura

were brought together as a teaching team. Although teachers in SSHS could submit requests as

to with whom and where they would like to teach, upper management ultimately made the

decision. Until the school year began Karen and Laura had never worked together. Thus, the

two teachers were required to figure out their roles and responsibilities within the team.

Job descriptions. SSHS provided job descriptions to both LTs and ATs; however,

Amber, Team 1's supervisor, believed the descriptions were a little nebulous and pointed out that

they were not always relevant to the make-up of the team. When asked whether there were

guidelines for lead and assistant teachers' responsibilities, she responded:

> It's kind of vaguely written out in their job descriptions … for the lead it's more like they
>
> are to mentor their assistant, but if you have an assistant who's been here for 20 years and

you have a lead who's been here for three months, then it's kind of like … the assistant

will be more of a mentor to the lead…. It doesn't specify the assistant just does cleaning.

It doesn't specify the assistant doesn't have to do documentation, or anything like that.

So it's kind of very vague. (Amber, Int 1)

She further acknowledged that some LTs were "micro-managers that want to take care of it all"

and some ATs are "happy with just being an assistant" (Amber, Int 1). Flexibility within job

descriptions was necessary to accommodate different levels of teacher experience and

preference. This was found to be beneficial in other teaching situations where lead and assistant

teachers worked together (see Devecchi & Rouse, 2010). Consequently, the organization of the

work was ultimately to be decided by the teachers within the team.

Work organization. The work of Team 1 was evenly split down the middle: Laura

taught every morning, Karen taught every afternoon; Karen planned the activities one week,

Laura planned the activities the following week; children were split into groups, with each

teacher responsible for teaching, documentation, parent teacher conferences, and home visits for

the children in their group. Each teacher had clearly defined responsibilities. Apart from a

couple of duties that Karen reserved for herself (taking the roll at meal times and completing end

of month paperwork), and a couple of obligations Laura preferred to leave to the LT (dealing

with upper management and awkward parent situations), each teacher took an equal share of the

work responsibilities. The team supervisor felt that "teams work better if they're split down the

middle and it's equal responsibility" because "[i]t's a lot of pressure for one teacher to do…. We

have a lot of expectations that make it hard" (Amber, Int 1).

With the heavy workload at SSHS, splitting the work greatly increased efficiency.

Instead of sitting together to plan activities for the following week, the teachers took turns.

Instead of conducting home visits together, the teachers went separately. Although this increased efficiency, it was not conducive to the cohesiveness of the team. LTs and ATs having time to plan together is a valuable activity for developing team relationships (Groom, 2006; Kuh, 2012; Sosinsky & Gilliam, 2011). However, it takes more time (Malone, et al., 2001).

Despite efforts to make the heavy workload more manageable by splitting it, work intensification experienced in HS (Bullough, et al., 2014) made it impossible to contain work within a 40-hour workweek. A recent change in the pay structure at SSHS meant that ATs were forbidden to work more than 40 hours a week, but LTs were required to work until the work was done (Bullough, et al., 2014). Karen, the LT, tried not to take work home with her, though she would on occasion:

> Some Thursdays I'll bring [work] home. My husband has a class on Thursday nights and he's gone until about 9.30 and [Landon] goes to sleep at 8. So I bring my lesson plan home or documentation I need to put in [to the computer] and I'll do that on Thursdays so that on Fridays I can leave earlier…. So I do bring some work home, but not anything compared to what I did last year. I brought home a lot last year before I had him….
>
> [Now] I work my 40 hours a week and that's all I'm working. (Karen, Int 2)

However, this was not always possible. During the final observation both teachers said they had worked over the weekend. Karen had worked seven hours and Laura had worked five hours.

Although Laura, as an AT, was not supposed to work over 40 hours per week, she frequently did. She often took work such as documentation home. She also seemed to work longer hours in the classroom than Karen—arriving earlier, staying later, and working through part of her lunch break. Karen usually arrived at school about 30 minutes later than Laura, spent

her lunch break with her son at her babysitter's house across the road, and left school shortly

after the children did—about 15 minutes before Laura.

Neither SSHS nor her LT expected Laura to do so much work—she volunteered to do it.

In her final interview, Karen said:

> At the beginning of the year [Laura] was like, "what do you expect of me?" And I said,
>
> "well I expect some documentation going in," and she was like, "well I would like to help
>
> with lesson plans." And I said "ok," and she's like, "we would do every other week last
>
> year" and I said, "ok that's fine." … There were a lot of things that she just put on
>
> herself, like getting things for the classroom and things like that. (Karen, Int 5)

Although Laura said she "didn't mind" doing the extra work in her final interview, at the

beginning of the year she had claimed that she didn't like it. When asked about how she felt

about her job she said: "I still love the actual teacher part and being with the kids…. There's

always other stuff that comes along with the job that's not always as great" (Laura, Int 1). When

asked what it was that she did not find enjoyable, she said:

> Well just all of the requirements that you're supposed to do and, you know, lesson plans,
>
> documentation, all the federal guidelines you're supposed to follow. Just all the other
>
> stuff that doesn't come with just being with the kids…. [T]here's just a lot of stuff … that
>
> you're not going to love and you just do it and it's part of your job. (Laura, Int 1)

Laura's job description stated that she was to "Assist in preparing weekly planning forms" and

that she was to "Assist … in tracking the children's growth through observation, portfolio

documentation, developmental checklist, and assessment data." However, Laura went beyond

her required workload, working over 40 hours per week because she saw it as part of her job.

Overarching roles. The extra work Laura voluntarily took on may have been linked to a more fundamental challenge for the team: the way the teachers understood their relative position within the team and their overarching roles (i.e., their general purpose within the classroom). Laura saw her role as nearly the same as that of the LT. This was manifest not only in the work she did, but also in her view of how a teaching team should function: "I don't see the lead as my boss or my superior. I see the lead as my teammate" (Laura, Int 1). This was unlike Karen, who, with her strong sense of identity as the LT, kept a hierarchy within the team:

> Ultimately I am the LT and I have to step up and be a LT and put my foot down
>
> sometimes because I am the lead. I'm getting the pay for the lead. I got the education to
>
> be the lead…. I'm not necessarily Laura's supervisor, but I do pull a bit more rank than
>
> her because of my position—because assistants only have their associate's degree; leads
>
> have their bachelor's—so I have more education. (Karen, Int 4)

Although Karen was happy to share the workload with Laura, she was not willing to share her power. Laura believed their roles were equal and that teamwork meant having equal status. Karen, however, did not see this status equality. The teachers' opposing expectations of the power differential within the team led to status conflict, which had dramatic implications for the way in which the teachers worked together throughout the year, a topic that will be discussed in greater depth in the next section.

Laura viewed herself as a good teacher and felt just as capable as Karen in creating lesson plans, leading the class, assessing and documenting children's abilities, and preparing the classroom for the children. She had more experience than Karen and almost as much formal education. When asked about her thoughts on the change in HS policy requiring LTs to have a bachelor's degree, Laura said:

[I]n Head Start it's all about the paper and not about the experience, which is sad. I am glad that leads have to have a bachelor's…. but I also know that experience [is] a big deal too…. As much as I really do think that education should be a part of it, … I think the experience is just as important…. [M]y knowledge comes from some of college but a lot of experience. So both … experience and background knowledge is basically what you get from me. (Laura, Int 4)

Laura identified herself as a good, capable, experienced teacher, even though she did not have the bachelor's degree required for an LT position by SSHS.

Laura saw her identity, as a highly capable, competent teacher being challenged by HS policy and by her LT. Laura was only one class short of her bachelor's degree, but the change in requirements for LTs suggested that Laura was not as capable as Karen. Furthermore, Karen believed that her degree meant that her teaching knowledge and abilities exceeded Laura's:

Laura may have more years of experience than I do, but I have more education than she does. A lot of people believe experience outrides education, but I had two more years of learning different teaching strategies, different approaches, and what is most current. I graduated in December 2011, so I have the most current research and theories. I learned those. I know about the preschool common core, all that stuff. (Karen, Int 4)

Karen saw herself as superior to Laura in terms of education and thus ECE knowledge. Amber, the team's education specialist, noted:

I'm learning with Karen that she likes to be the upper hand. She likes to say she's had more schooling and so she knows more. She likes to talk about herself a lot and thinks that she knows more, but Laura's been with us longer and knows more. (Amber, Int 1)

Despite Karen's estimation that she had greater knowledge than Laura, she did acknowledge both to me and to Laura that she thought Laura was good at her job. However, when asked about some specific duties, Karen saw a deficiency in Laura: "there were some things in the lesson plan that … were more day care preschool than Head Start developmentally appropriate" (Karen, Int 5). Indeed, Karen believed that the thing that Laura probably valued in her the most was: "my knowledge because I did teach her quite a few things about developmentally appropriate [practice] that she didn't necessarily have before" (Karen, Int 5).

Although Laura did not see this deficiency in herself, she was very much aware of her position within the hierarchy. During her first interview, when asked about how she saw her role in HS, Laura responded:

> I know that [mine and Karen's] role is very important and that we're the heart of the
> program. Me, as an individual … I feel very little as an individual…. I'm at the bottom
> of the totem pole…. If I went and quit, Head Start would go on. (Laura, Int 1)

Her official role as AT seemed to influence the way she viewed herself. As stated by Bronfenbrenner (1979), "Roles have a magiclike power to alter how a person is treated, how she acts, what she does, and thereby even what she thinks and feels" (p. 6). Laura was at the bottom of the hierarchy and as a result felt insignificant, as many ATs do (e.g., Barkham, 2008; Robins & Silcock, 2007).

However, with her experience and her education, Laura felt like she was better and more qualified than her official role suggested. This dichotomy in her teacher identity likely influenced why she voluntarily took on more responsibility than was required: she wanted to feel like and prove that she was more than just an AT. This was key to the way the team functioned. Research suggests, "that group members thought to be capable of contributing more

to the group's goals or observed engaging in generous, self-sacrificial behaviors are conferred higher status" (Bendersky & Hays, 2012, p. 328).

   Role confusion.   The role confusion experienced by Laura is common among ATs. Ratcliff et al (2011) found that both LTs and ATs were confused about the role of the AT. Nursery nurses in English preschools, a position very similar to ATs, were uncertain "as to what sort of job (in terms of status, responsibility etc.) they have" (Robins & Silcock, 2007, p. 38).

   Role confusion concerning the AT position in SSHS may have been related to the nature of the work. The AT and LT were essentially engaged in the same day-to-day work responsibilities. The confusion may therefore be partly because the job of the LT and the AT "overlap" (Robins & Silcock, 2007, p. 37), thus creating a perception of equality. It was clear from the job descriptions that the LT did have additional duties: to "mentor and guide the classroom assistant," set "clear expectations and … boundaries for the team," and communicate them well to team members (LT Job Description). The LTs' job description assumes that the LT knows more than the AT, a belief ascribed to by Karen. However, this is not always the case. Laura had been working at HS for 10 years longer than Karen. Amber, the team supervisor, believed that Laura knew more about SSHS than Karen: "I'm not sure [Karen's] so comfortable that Laura knows more about the program than she does" (Amber, Int 1).

   A complex relationship seemed to exist between the identity of the teachers, the way they chose to organize their work, and the way they understood their respective roles and positions within the classroom. The teachers' identity, as well as the roles SSHS prescribed them, heavily influenced their work organization and the way they understood their classroom roles. The way they understood their roles seemed to influence the way they organized their work. The work they did and their assigned roles in SSHS seemed to influence their identity. The teachers'

personal and professional identity, and their perceptions of their overarching roles and position within SSHS, were central to team functioning. It seems that not only does teacher identity influence teacher behavior in the classroom (van den Berg, 2002), but it also influences the way in which teachers work together in a team.

The power differential. The power dynamic between the two teachers was an important factor in the way the team functioned. Power has been defined in a number of ways, including "the capacity of individual actors to exert their will" (Finkelstein, 1992) and the "degree to which an individual can favorably influence his or her overall environment, … another person, … [or] satisfy his or her own desires" (Coleman, 2014, p. 139).

The lead teacher's use of power. The team's uneven distribution of power was evident as decisions concerning classroom activities were made. During an observation in early October Karen, the LT, was seen to influence the environment according to her will:

Laura wanted to get out watercolors for the kids.

Karen: Let's do it tomorrow. We can introduce it in group-time.

Laura: I don't think we need to introduce watercolors.

Karen: I think with three-year-olds we do.

Karen began talking to some kids playing with blocks … Laura went and got the playdough out "Ok - who wants to play with play dough?" (Team 1, Obs 3)

This type of exchange occurred several times: Laura would make a suggestion and Karen would veto it. Karen saw herself as more educated and felt that she knew more than Laura, and knew better what was best for the children.

Karen held the power within the team by virtue of her position in the hierarchical structure. French and Raven (1959) labeled this type of power as "legitimate power." Where P is

the person being influenced and O is the holder of power, legitimate power is defined as "that power which stems from internalized values in P which dictate that O has a legitimate right to influence P and that P has an obligation to accept this influence" (French & Raven, 1959, p. 159). Karen's assignment within SSHS gave her overall responsibility for the classroom and the ability to exert her will on the work environment. As illustrated in the previous section, Laura, the AT, disagreed in many ways with the hierarchical structure. She did not "see the lead as [her] boss or [her] superior" (Laura, Int 1), however, she did defer to the hierarchy to some degree. She recognized that "the lead is responsible for what happens in the classroom" (Laura, Int 1); there were some challenging responsibilities that she was happy to leave for the lead; she would mostly comply to Karen's wishes, albeit often grudgingly; and she acknowledged that she, as the AT, was "at the bottom of the totem pole" (Laura, Int 1). Thus, even though she disagreed with and fought against the hierarchical structure within the teaching team, Laura recognized that there was a hierarchy and that Karen, her LT, was higher up than she was.

Karen used her assigned power to make decisions regarding small classroom occurrences, such as the watercolor incident shared above, but also in structuring the teachers' work. When it came to organizing home visits, according to Laura, "Karen said, 'We're doing these separate. We're dividing and conquering'" (Laura, Int 3). Although Karen claimed her motivation for conducting home visits separately was for the comfort of the parents, she also acknowledged the increased efficiency for the teachers:

> I feel like when there's more people, it's overwhelming…. You have a child, especially if
> your child's problematic, and you have two … maybe three people sitting in your house
> talking to you about your child. How would that feel? To me that feels like bullying, so
> I would rather have it be a one-on-one situation. It usually ends up being that one person

talks and the other one doesn't, and they're just sitting there in silence…. It's awkward!

It's just a waste of time…. We only had a few weeks to get them done, so why do them

together and spend every single Friday, plus the two days they designated getting them

done and not having any time to do documentation or anything like that? (Karen, Int 4)

Efficiency was particularly important to Karen since less time working meant more time with her

son. When asked how she felt about it, Laura said, "I didn't particularly like that because I

honestly didn't feel like I had a say with that at all. Honestly, I don't like doing them by myself"

(Laura, Int 3). Karen's decision was not in line with Laura's preference—she did not want to do

home visits by herself, but because Karen was the LT, Laura felt she had no choice in the matter.

With the pressure of a heavy workload, Karen, who held legitimate power, chose efficiency over

accommodating her AT's preference.

  The power struggle. Although Laura recognized the official hierarchical power structure

within the team, she resented Karen's use of power. She felt that Karen used her position to

elevate herself above Laura. Just after her second interview, Laura told me:

  Karen uses her rank a lot—she uses the fact that she's the lead teacher and [I'm] only the

  assistant teacher…. She uses it to make herself feel superior, which makes [me] feel

  inferior. (Laura, Int 2).

Laura resisted the power structure in a variety of ways. As the following incidents indicate,

Laura complained about Karen's decisions, sometimes verbally and sometimes silently through

her body language, she ignored Karen's requests, she told Karen what to do, she criticized Karen

and she often made comparisons between the two teachers, suggesting her own superiority. At

the end of October, Karen was getting ready for an evacuation drill when the following incident

took place:

Laura wanted to have a bit more time for free choice. "But we're going to have a really long time outside," she complained. Karen said it was a nice day and they wouldn't have that much longer outside. Laura didn't say anything. She turned the clean-up song on. The kids began tidying up. There was a lot of tension between the teachers. Karen asked Laura to help the kids get their coats on for the evacuation drill. Laura ignored her. She tidied the music CDs and straightened up shelves. Karen asked her three times to help the kids before she did. Laura said quietly, "It's too orchestrated." (Team 1, Obs 4)

Karen had made the decision about the logistics of the evacuation drill herself. Laura did not agree with Karen's decision and so, after expressing her opinion (which was rejected by the LT), withdrew from engaging with the children, began ignoring Karen, and started doing her own thing. This type of behavior from Laura was evident on a number of occasions.

On another occasion, just after returning to the classroom from outdoor play Laura told Karen what to do:

The children sat on the carpet as Laura read them a story. Karen was getting lunch ready with Alan putting out the napkins. Amber came in ... Chris was messing around. Karen came over and moved him to a new spot on the floor. Laura stopped reading and said to Karen, "I think you're supposed to be sitting on the floor and helping me." Karen responded, "No, I have to get lunch out. This is the only time I can do it." Karen went back to putting out lunch. Laura continued with the story. (Team 1, Obs 4)

During an observation towards the end of the year Laura blatantly defied Karen. It was the beginning of free choice time. "Karen talked to Amber about their end-of-year celebration. Laura said they needed to water the plants. Karen responded, 'I don't think they need watering yet.' Laura said 'Ok!' She got the jug, and watered them anyway" (Team 1, Obs 20). Although

a seemingly insignificant matter, Laura sent a strong message of resistance to the power structure as she refused Karen's authority and exerted her own will on the situation.

Laura frequently criticized Karen and made comparisons between her and Karen, insinuating that she was a better teacher. Referring to CLASS scores Laura said, "When they would observe Karen and I, I was the one that made those scores go up" (Laura, Int 4). One morning, when Laura was leading whole group time, she asked the children, "Why are you happy? Is it because you're at school or because you're with your favorite teacher? (Laura laughed.) Just kidding!" (Team 1, Obs 8).

Inclusion of the assistant teacher in decision-making. Perhaps in response to Laura's resistance to the power structure, Karen would often appear to try to include Laura in decision-making. Laura planned the classroom activities every other week, completed assessment documentation for the children, and led the class every morning. During parent teacher conferences, Team 1 had Gina, a Spanish translator, helping them with parent communication. During a break in appointments the following took place:

Gina asked what she could do.

Laura: What do you want Gina to do Karen?

Karen: What would you like to do Gina? I don't know.

Gina: Do you want me to change the art stuff—restock it?

Karen: That's Laura's baby—you'd better ask her.

Gina asked Laura.

Laura: No. Do you want to clean down the shelves? (Team 1, Obs 19)

However, Laura's power in making these decisions was subject to Karen giving permission. It was Karen's job to check and correct Laura's plans and documentation as she saw fit: "I go over

Laura's lesson plans and make sure that they are where they need to be, that we are getting everything incorporated that we need to…. At the end of the checkpoint I go in, as the LT, and I actually finalize where [the children] are at" (Karen, Int 2).

Karen also frequently asked for Laura's opinion on a variety of issues, from whether she thought it would be okay for me to observe during the federal review week to whether they should join with the next-door class when there were few children at school. During an observation in mid-December, the following conversation took place:

Karen: Laura, what do you think about going on a walk right now?

Laura: Whatever!

Karen: Is that okay with you? (Team 1, Obs 9)

Although Karen asked Laura's opinion, at this point in the year Laura was resigned to doing whatever Karen wanted. Laura said, "At the end I really just didn't state my opinion on anything…. I feel like [Karen] just kind of did what she wanted and I was just kind of there to assist, in a way" (Laura, Int 4). Laura's view that her opinion didn't really matter to Karen may have been correct to some degree. When asked what she would do if Laura said she did not want to go on a walk, Karen responded:

A lot of times I would say, you know what, we're going to…. I'm sorry you feel that way but these kids haven't been outside for two days because … the playground's covered in snow. We're going to go outside and go on a walk. (Karen, Int 5)

Thus, Karen's questions and apparent inclusion of Laura in the decision-making may have simply been attempts to pacify Laura.

Although Karen often appeared to include her AT in decision-making, there were also times when Karen would remind Laura of her superiority in both knowledge and power. Karen

would correct Laura on inconsequential matters. For example, "At the beginning of story time, Karen corrected Laura on the pronunciation of the author's last name. Laura replied that she'd never heard that name pronounced like that" (Team 1, Obs 1). Karen may have been reminding Laura of her legitimate power during an incident that took place shortly after Laura had defied Karen's power by watering the plants, as mentioned above. It was Laura's turn to lead the class.

> 9.59: Karen asked Laura, "Do you want to tidy up now or do five more minutes? It's up to you." Laura didn't respond. She went quiet for a couple of minutes. Karen began talking to me. Katy gave Laura a hug. Laura's whole attitude changed. "Oh you're so cute!" Another child then gave Laura a hug. Karen tidied up the stick building activity. She then went and talked to some kids about the caterpillars in the butterfly home.
>
> 10.09: Karen said, "Ok I'm going to do the five minute warning. Who's the five minute helper?" She got Katy over and helped her announce that they only had five minutes of play left. (Team 1, Obs 20)

Karen asked Laura whether she wanted to clean up now or in five minutes—a strategy the teachers frequently used with the children: give them two choices. Although the motivation for Karen's question is not clear, Laura seemed to take it as a display of power. She resisted Karen's power by ignoring her completely, resulting in Laura's withdrawal for a couple of minutes. In the end, Laura chose to not deal with cleanup at all. Ten minutes had gone by, at which point Karen took over and directed the children in cleaning up.

The clash in the teachers' perceptions of power resulted in status conflict within the team, which has been identified as being particularly damaging to teams. Status conflict is "disputes over people's relative status positions in their group's social hierarchy" (Bendersky & Hays, 2012, p. 323) and may be manifest in a number of ways, such as "telling others what or how to

do something, … insulting or interrupting others, … undermining or devaluing another's contribution, … or accentuating one's own contribution" (Bendersky & Hays, 2012, p. 327-328), all of which were seen in Laura's resistance of the power structure. Although the study of status conflict described by Bendersky and Hays (2012) involved participants working together in a non-hierarchical system, status conflict was very evident within this hierarchical team. Laura felt powerless because of the hierarchical structure and the way Karen used her power. To regain some sense of power, Laura ignored Karen, disagreed with her, told her what to do, did the opposite of what Karen said, and criticized her.

Sources of conflict. The experience of Team 1 was characterized by conflict. The power differential in the team was one major source of conflict, but other sources were also evident. Particularly pertinent were the teachers' primary reasons for working, their perceptions of what the job should look like, and negativity.

Primary reasons for working. The teachers in Team 1 had different primary motives for working at SSHS, which impacted their perceptions and the focus given to different aspects of their work. The teachers were similar in one way: when asked for similarities between herself and Laura, Karen said, "[W]e both love the children…. Both of our goals were to see the children learn and grow" (Karen, Int 5).

Even though Karen loved the children and wanted to see their success, her greater priority was her son. She mentioned a number of times that she was only working at SSHS to help support her family until her husband finished college. She would have preferred not to work outside of her home at all: "At first it was really hard because I was leaving Landon after a whole summer of being home with my baby, and that's what I ultimately want to do" (Karen, Int 2). She talked about him frequently at work; she showed pictures of him to the children; she

organized her work so she could spend as much time with him as possible; and she even invited him into the class as a special guest so the children could meet him.

Laura's main motivation for working at SSHS was because she loved working with the children. Teaching was a much greater part of Laura's life, and teaching at SSHS provided her with a feeling of belonging—a fundamental psychological need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Teaching preschool was central to who Laura was. She often talked about how much she loved the children with whom she worked, and even though she sometimes thought about leaving to find a job that would pay more or that was closer to where she lived, she said, "I think about leaving kids and I just can't…. I need kids. I just love the kids" (Laura, Int 1). Unlike Karen, Laura didn't have a greater priority. Teaching in HS was Laura's primary focus in life.

Perceptions of what the job should look like. The teachers' differing priorities and their reasons for working at SSHS may have influenced their perceptions of what the job should look like. The teachers' differences in this regard resulted in team conflict. Subtle signs of this conflict surfaced at the beginning of the second observation, which took place in early October:

> I [the researcher] arrived at the preschool. Everything was locked. I rang the bell but nobody answered…. I rang the bell again and Laura came and answered the door. I said hi to everybody. Patricia, their FA, was in the office. Laura was busy, getting things ready for lunch. Karen was sitting on one of the tables talking to everyone about her baby and how he seems to have another earache…. I asked Laura how she was doing. She said, "Alright." She didn't sound convincing. I said, "Just alright?" "Yeah!" she responded. Just as we were having this conversation the next-door LT (Mary) came walking through. She overheard and made a comment saying that it was because Laura seems to do everything—like when they're outside. Karen responded to that by saying it

was because all of the kids love [Laura] so they all go to her. Mary said that it was

actually because Laura just notices more than Karen does and then asked Laura, "Is that

what it is? That you're doing most of the work?" Laura said that was part of it. Karen

told Laura she [Laura] needs to tell her [Karen] about her frustrations. (Team 1, Obs 2)

This incident highlights two important matters that affected the way the team functioned: Laura's

feeling that she was doing most of the work and Laura's reluctance to talk with Karen about the

challenges she felt. The first of these will be discussed here; the second will be discussed in the

next section.

Laura's perception that she was the one doing most of the work with the children was a

recurring theme. Later in the year, when asked what her greatest challenge at work was, Laura

responded, "That I do still feel like I'm the only one with the kids…. [While Karen is doing]

paperwork, talking with Patricia, talking with Amber, talking with the teachers next door"

(Laura, Int 3). During observations, it was evident that both Laura and Karen worked with the

children during free choice. However, Karen would often steal moments to complete paperwork,

answer the phone, and converse with other adults. In an interview, Laura acknowledged Karen's

work with the children:

I wouldn't say it's constant because today she played Ants in the Pants with the kids….

I'd just say … averaging it out, I would feel like I'm the one always with the kids and she

just kind of hits and misses. (Laura, Int 3)

Observational data suggest that Laura was more consistent in working with the children during

free choice and outdoor play than Karen.

The teachers' differing work priorities were evident when they were each asked in

interview whether they thought their partner teacher was good at her job. Laura stated:

> She's really good at communicating with the kids. When I actually see her with the kids, she is really good when she wants to be…. I just wish I had seen it a lot more. I've seen her be a really good teacher. I just wish it was more on a normal basis and not just when people are there observing her. (Laura, Int 4)

Laura felt that time in the class should be spent with the children and frequently commented on Karen's preoccupation with other things. During one observation, "Karen was talking to Patricia. Laura was shaking her head, clearly not happy. 'They do this all day long' Laura remarked. 'We're supposed to be with the kids'" (Team 1, Obs 8). Laura's view of teaching was of loving and nurturing and being with the children.

When asked whether she thought Laura was good at her job, Karen stated: "Yes, I think she is…. She's very good at getting things done. She's very good at documentation, very good. She's very good at taking on responsibility" (Karen, Int 5). Completing paperwork correctly and on time was valued and seen as the mark of a good teacher by supervisors at SSHS (Bullough, et al., 2014) and as Karen was responsible for her team's paperwork, this was a high priority for her. Additionally, getting the required paperwork completed within school time was important to Karen, as she did not want her job to impinge on her home life.

The teachers' comments about one another highlight their disparate views of the job. Laura was more concerned with teacher-child interaction, whereas Karen was more concerned with the completion of paperwork.

According to their job descriptions, Karen and Laura's jobs did differ somewhat. Although there was a great overlap in their work duties, Karen had overall responsibility for the classroom and the work they did. Thus, when Karen spent time on end-of-month paperwork in the classroom, it was because it was her responsibility to make sure it was completed correctly

and on time. Talking with Patricia, the FA, and other classroom visitors may also have been

partly a result of the LT's overall classroom responsibility. The FA was responsible for working

with the families of the children in the class. During free choice time one day Laura asked Karen

why she had been talking to Patricia. Karen responded: "Patricia had an email from a parent

who wanted to come and see us. We were talking about when would be a good time" (Team 1,

Obs 8). Karen believed that some of the work that took her away from the children had to be

done during class time:

> As the lead I have paperwork I have to do and sometimes it has to be done when the kids
>
> are there…. [Laura] has all these little stigmas of things that you don't do when you're
>
> with the children, but it has to be done. (Karen, Int 4)

Although the job description specified the LT's responsibility to complete and submit paperwork

on time, it did not specify when such tasks were to be performed. Amber, the education

specialist, suggested that it should not be done during class time:

> Karen informed me that she likes to be more of the … step back and observe teacher….
>
> That's when teachers kind of step in the background and do paperwork or don't get really
>
> involved in engaging the kids, which is fine every once in a while…. But with our
>
> CLASS protocol, it's all about teacher-child interaction. And so we're always supposed
>
> to be in there, constantly communicating with the kids. (Amber, Int 1)

Generally, Fridays were set-aside for teachers to plan activities, document children's progress,

prepare the classroom, and complete paperwork. However, Fridays were also used for meetings,

trainings, and other activities, such as home visits.

The conflict that arose because of the teachers' differences in how they saw the job was

significant. The differences were a problem for Laura. Karen was not fulfilling her

responsibilities in the way Laura thought she should and it resulted in a great deal of resentment. However, Laura's view that Karen was not doing her job properly was also an opportunity for Laura to feel superior within the team. As Karen was not investing her whole time in working with the children and Laura was, this may have made Laura feel like she was a better teacher than Karen, thus strengthening her feelings of self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Negativity. As Karen was the LT and had the power to run the class in the way in which she chose, Karen's experience with conflict was different to Laura's. The conflict experienced by Karen was with the negativity that came from Laura because of the problems Laura felt in the team.

Although not evident during classroom observations, Karen began feeling the strains of the teaming relationship after Christmas. When asked what the worst thing was about working with Laura, she responded:

> The negativity. I went on my Christmas vacation to Alaska and when I came back we had to go set up the classroom again … Laura was like, "Let's meet up and do it! …" so we met up and just the hour I was with her to set up the classroom, I came back and I went to pick up Landon at my parents' house, and I was just like, "Whoa." And I didn't realize how much it had been affecting me until then. (Karen, Int 4)

Laura's negativity was a great challenge for Karen throughout the remaining five months the team worked together. She felt it was damaging for both her and the class:

> That negativity is hard, because I'm a happy person. I try not to complain about things … but the more that I'm with her, the more I find myself complaining to my husband and to my mom. It's negative and it's not fair for me to come home negative. (Karen, Int 4)

Of the adverse effects it had on the children, Karen said: "[B]eing negative completely changes a classroom environment … I don't feel as if my kids learned as much this year as they could have because of the negativity" (Karen, Int 5). Karen blamed Laura for the problematic year and for the effect it presumably had on the children.

The Christmas break also saw a turning point for Laura, who had said that at first she tried to suppress her negative feelings towards Karen, because: "I was still kind of happy with the job and loved being there and loved the kids and everything," but "from Christmas on, it made the switch in my head and [my feelings toward Karen] turned to a negative thing, which wasn't good" (Laura, Int 4). Laura also acknowledged the effect her negativity may have had on her teaching: "I just felt like I was more negative this year than I've ever been. I don't like that about me…. I don't think this is a good teaching year for me personally. I've had much better years" (Laura, Int 4). When asked what she would do differently if she had to work with Karen for another year, she said:

> There's so many things that I know that I should do differently and need to do differently, but then I think about things that have gone on and I'm just like… but I don't know how to not be frustrated about that or I don't know how to not be bugged by that. I know that there would be things that needed to change, but I just feel like saying to myself, "I don't know how to change that." (Laura, Int 4)

Laura did not like the negativity within herself, but she did not know how to change. Laura felt trapped. She was a part of a team that she didn't like. She didn't like her own behavior that was a result of being a part of the team, and she couldn't find a way out.

Conflict within teams has commonly been linked to a variety of differences in values, beliefs, attitudes and status (Edmondson & Roloff, 2009). Their personal and professional

identities led to differences between the teachers' primary reasons for working and differences in how they viewed teaching seemed to be a central cause of conflict within Team 1, a finding similar to Bullough (2015): "differences in fundamental beliefs about teaching, learning, and the teachers' identities" (p. 147) led to teaming difficulties.

Communication challenges. Team communication was a challenge throughout the school year. As a result, the conflict between Karen and Laura was never resolved.

Reluctance to communicate directly. Laura had difficulty verbally communicating her thoughts and feelings concerning the challenges she was experiencing in the team. In the incident described at the beginning of the previous section, Mary forced the brief conversation and Laura only participated when she was asked a direct question. If Mary had not brought up the issue, Laura would have remained silent, though still demonstrating in her manner, facial expressions, and off-hand comments that she was annoyed. Karen commented on the frustration she felt about Laura's refusal to talk about her grievances:

> When Patricia [the FA] was there we would … have monthly team meetings and during those team meetings one of the questions they would have us ask was are there any team issues and … we knew that she had issues with us but she'd never say what they were. So that's part of why things never got resolved…. [W]e'd sit there and I'd wait for her to say something and I'd kind of bring something up but I wouldn't direct it straight to her…. I'd try and bring it up in like a round-about way and be like, well I've noticed we have this issue going on, you know and, … she would state over and over, I don't like confrontation, I don't like confrontation, so it's hard to talk to someone who doesn't like confrontation. (Karen, Int 5)

Even when directly asked about challenges she was experiencing, Laura felt that she could not talk, a problem she recognized:

> I know I haven't handled things very well, and that's partly my bad because that's where my personality comes into play. I can't confront people. I just kind of show it in my body language and emotion, which is not good. I wish I was different in that respect. (Laura, Int 3)

She believed she was unable to discuss the difficult issues, and so she showed her feelings by other means:

> Fortunately my eyes and body language show it to [Karen] a lot. So she'll be like, "Is everything okay?" and I'll be like, [whispers] "Fine." She's like, "You can tell me," and I'm like, "I know I can tell you." But I still can't. I still can't tell her. (Laura, Int 3)

Laura wanted Karen to know that things were bothering her, but she felt like she could not share what they were.

Reasons for communication challenges. The reason Laura felt like she could not discuss her concerns with Karen is not known for certain. She had difficulty identifying the reason herself. Detert and Edmondson (2006) examined "how individuals [lower in the hierarchy] think about speaking up at work" (p. 2). To promote open dialogue, they found two important conditions for people lower in the work hierarchy: feeling "psychologically safe," (p. 5; i.e., that there would be no negative consequences for speaking up) and feeling that speaking up will be worthwhile (i.e., that their ideas and suggestions will be listened to and taken into consideration), both of which were an issue in Team 1.

Psychological safety may well have been an issue for Laura, who felt a threat to her identity as a competent teacher and valuable member of the team. Consequently, she had little

trust for Karen. After voicing her opinions at the beginning of the year and having them rejected, Laura may have not felt "psychologically safe," (Detert & Edmondson, 2006, p. 5) and as a result she chose silence. The negative consequences Laura may have felt in voicing her opinions were rejection of her ideas and concerns, lowered self-efficacy and self-esteem, and a feeling of being cast aside. "At the end," Laura said, "I really just didn't state my opinion on anything" (Laura, Int 4).

When asked if she knew why she did not want to discuss the issues with Karen, Laura responded:

> Because I know how she is. I know it wouldn't work…. I feel like she might try for a little bit and then just not do it anymore. Then part of it is I don't think she would see half of it has anything wrong with it. She'd be like, "Well, somebody has to do that," or "Well, I needed to do that," you know? She would come up with an excuse for it. There would just be no point in bringing it up because there wouldn't be any way to resolve it. (Laura, Int 4)

Laura's observation that Karen would "come up with an excuse" was confirmed in the observations and in an interview with Karen. During one observation at the end of October,

> I asked Laura about home visits. She said she normally prefers to do them with the lead teacher but that doesn't seem to be working. She said it loud in front of Karen so she could hear. Karen said that upper management wants them done by the federal review. Laura said they know that's not possible. Karen said, well we're almost doing it. (Team 1, Obs 4)

Laura dropped a comment for Karen to hear and Karen immediately came up with a justification for her choice. As Karen was always able to justify her actions, Laura felt there was little point

in discussing her issues, because nothing would change. Clearly, there was a communication problem. Issues were not discussed and resolved, and resentment grew.

Unresolved conflict. Laura's inability to confront her issues with Karen meant that conflict within the team was never resolved. Laura avoided dealing with conflict by not discussing the issues with her LT, but she often made it very clear that she was annoyed about something, as the following description from Karen suggests:

> When I came back from nursing Landon she was not happy. I didn't know what was wrong so I kind of asked her and she was like, "Oh it's nothing," and I'm like, "Okay." Then at the end of the day she was even more mad. She was really upset about something…. So I asked her! I flat out asked her. I know she doesn't like confrontation, but I asked her and I said, "I'm not meaning this in a confronting way, I just want to know if I did something to offend you. Are we okay?" And she's like, "We will be in time," and I said, "Okay, what do you mean by that?" and she's like, "I'll work through it myself." (Karen, Int 4)

Although Laura avoided resolving the conflict by not discussing the issues with Karen, she did not avoid the conflict. Her non-verbal body language showed to Karen that she was upset. The conflict likely intensified as Laura demonstrated her annoyance, but refused to address it through verbal communication.

The damaging effect not speaking up can have on teaming relationships (Fisher, 2003), the challenge of communication within teaching teams (Bedford, et al., 2008), and the difficulty in communicating within a hierarchy (Detert & Edmondson, 2006) have been addressed in the literature. Each of these were evident in the experiences of the Team 1 teachers.

Team support. Support was extremely important to both Karen and Laura because of the challenges they experienced within the team. The majority of the support they experienced came from outside of the team: from the next-door teachers, the FAs, and the education specialist. However, the teachers did, on occasion, support and help one another.

Support from within the team. Despite the team's tensions and difficulties, small moments of support, kindness, and consideration were occasionally evident. Towards the end of the year, "Karen couldn't find one of her stamps from home. Laura responded, 'I'm sorry—I'll keep an eye out for it'" (Team 1, Obs 20). A one-off incident demonstrated not only Laura's support for Karen but also her view of equality in their roles:

> Karen finished reading the story…. [T]he kids were laying around not listening. Karen
>
> said, "Ok! I'm waiting." Laura came over and asked them what they were supposed to be
>
> doing. She told them to "sit up, stop talking, and scoot up." (Team 1, Obs 14)

Even though Karen was leading the class, Laura took over behavior management for a moment.

It was this type of support that Laura wished she had more of from Karen. One day during whole group time, Laura said to Karen, "I think you're supposed to be sitting on the floor and helping with discipline" (Laura, Obs 4). Indeed, there were times when Laura was having behavioral problems with children during whole group time and Karen was doing paperwork or talking to another adult in the classroom. For example, Laura was leading the group: "'Ok— listening body everyone!' Chris was rolling around the floor. Karen was working on paperwork while waiting for Laura to finish" (Team 1, Obs 20). However, observational evidence suggests that Karen did support Laura during whole group time on a few occasions. For example, during an observation in March, "Karen went and moved some of the kids. 'Please listen to what Miss Laura has to say.' Karen sat down on the carpet with the kids" (Team 1, Obs 15).

Karen also supported Laura in other ways: "Karen said she's started kicking Laura out at 3.45, which is when she leaves. Laura said the traffic is much better now. She was leaving at 4pm before" (Team 1, Obs 11). Much later in the year, just after the class had gone outside for outdoor play, this exchange took place:

Laura: I need to take 5 minutes.

Karen put her arm around her: Of course! I told you to take some time at lunchtime. Did you?

Laura went inside: I just need 5.

Karen: Don't worry about it!

Mary: Take ten! (Team 1, Obs 22)

In both of these incidents, Karen showed consideration towards Laura; however, by telling Laura what to do, she was still demonstrating her power, the very issue that was a source of conflict for Laura.

Support from outside the team. Team 1 was characterized more by conflict than support. For this reason, support from outside the teaching team became very important to both teachers.

Amber, Team 1's education specialist, was charged with both supervising and supporting the team. Laura, particularly, valued the support she felt from Amber. "I like her. Doesn't she seem awesome? … She knows what it's like…. And she's just so laid back and as long as things get done she doesn't care how it gets done…. She has our back" (Laura, Int 2). Particularly important was the personal emotional support Laura received from Amber. When asked what she had done to cope with the difficulties and tensions she had felt in the team that year, Laura immediately responded:

My weekly vent to Amber. Once a week she came and Karen would leave during lunch to go see Landon…. Amber would come over and we would sit for about 20 minutes and she would just let me get it all off my chest. (Laura, Int 4)

Laura saw Amber as a great support and ally. She talked with Amber about the challenges she felt with her partner teacher. She trusted her and felt her backing: "Amber completely agreed with me on everything" (Laura, Int 4). Laura's sense of power grew when she felt the support of Amber in the classroom. Amber had been in the classroom during the two times Laura blatantly challenged Karen's power: the time she told Karen she should be sitting on the carpet helping with discipline and the time she watered the plants after Karen had said they did not need watering. Shortly after the plant-watering incident, the children were sitting on the carpet for story time with Laura. One of the children, who was often disruptive during whole group time, had requested that Amber sit with him, so she did. Karen was doing other things: talking to David (the FA), caring for a child with a nosebleed, putting out napkins for lunch, and then talking to David again. At the end of the read aloud, Laura took the children for outdoor play. When they got outside "Amber followed closely behind Laura and said quietly, 'That was a really good read aloud Laura—I just wish you'd had some support behind you'" (Team 1, Obs 20), referring to Karen's lack of support.

At the same time, Karen also felt like she had a good relationship with Amber. In her final interview, shortly after school had finished, when asked to rate her relationship with Amber, Karen said:

Amber has been texting me, asking me how my move went, asking how things are going…. Landon has had many falls. He has a black eye…. Amber called me to ask me how Landon was…. Amber and I have a pretty good relationship. (Karen, Int 5)

The communication between Karen and Amber was good. As stated by Amber: "[Karen's] always in communication with me. I think she feels comfortable telling me how she's feeling, whether it's good or bad, or what's working, what's not working" (Amber, Int 1).

Amber also had an important role in supporting Karen as the LT: "If there were things that were in a confronting manner that probably needed to be addressed I would go to Amber about them because I knew that [Laura] would just shut down" (Karen, Int 5). Amber would then relay the message to Laura. As Laura respected and trusted Amber, she would accept the message more readily.

Amber was interviewed in November, at which point she said, "[N]either one of them, [Karen or Laura], have come to me and just been like, 'I can't stand the other person. [S]he is just driving me crazy'" (Amber, Int 1). When asked what she would do if Karen or Laura came to her and told her that the teaming situation was not working, she said:

> I think if Laura comes to me about Karen, I would want to hear what Laura had to say….
> And then I'd talk to Karen … get her perspective of things without throwing Laura under
> the bus…. If I could just talk to Karen and kind of resolve it that way…. That would be
> great, but if we needed to pull the team together like we've had in the past. One sits on
> one side and one sits on the other side and they give each other a chance to speak, that's
> when we'd pull in an ECC [Education Child Coordinator]—if it was such a situation
> where it just couldn't be resolved. (Amber, Int 1)

The situation for Team 1 never got to a point where Amber felt like she needed to pull the teachers together and talk about the issues. The classroom was still functioning, the teachers were still teaching, and the negative effects of the teachers' relationship could be covered up

when federal reviewers and other visitors came to the class. Amber's goal was to simply get the teachers through to the end of the year, at which point a switch could easily be made.

As neither teacher had requested Amber's help in solving the teaming problems directly, nothing was done in that regard. Amber put the problems down to Karen and Laura being "two different people. Their teaching styles are just different" (Amber, Int 1). However, a difference in teaching styles was not the only challenge for Team 1. There were other differences that went much deeper—their identity, who they were as people, how they viewed their jobs, and their understanding of how a team should function. Perhaps Amber did not have the skills necessary to identify and address the challenging issues. The education specialists were former teachers who had been promoted within SSHS. Although Amber did recognize one of the major issues for Laura, she said she did not know how to address it, or even if it would be appropriate to:

Karen likes to always … butt in and not give Laura the responsibility and the trust, whereas Laura can handle it just fine. I'm not sure how to tell Karen, like to back off because, ultimately, if something goes wrong it's the lead's fault. (Amber, Int 1)

As the supervisor of the team, Amber could have chosen to take an active role in helping the team overcome their teaming challenges. However, Amber's approach to supporting the teachers seemed to be helping the teachers individually cope with the challenges they faced with one another, rather than supporting the teachers in resolving those challenges together. In describing how she supported the teachers, she said:

I'm pretty easy to talk to…. I try to check in with each of my teachers independently and say, "How are things going? How are you doing? Do you need anything from me? Is anything going on that I need to know?" (Amber, Int 1)

Amber's main focus in Team 1 was helping Laura overcome her personal challenges: "My job is to … point out the positives to [Laura]—more of the things she's doing well … I try to praise Laura" (Amber, Int 1). At the same time, she maintained a good relationship with Karen. However, in telling the teachers what they wanted to hear and giving them what she thought they needed as individuals, the teaming challenges were neglected and never resolved. Amber's support of the teachers individually promoted conflict avoidance and even compounded the conflict. Although Amber's support was important to Laura in helping her get through the year, Laura came away from her "weekly vent to Amber" (Laura, Int 4) feeling completely justified in her negative feelings towards Karen. Laura's feelings of frustration with Karen grew, and her belief that she was right drove a deeper wedge between the teachers.

Amber recognized the key to effective teaming as, "Communication … and trust and everybody kind of being on the same page" (Amber, Int 1). Yet she did little to encourage and promote the trust and communication that was so severely lacking in Team 1. Amber's support was at an individual level rather than a team level. Supporting the teachers in a space in which they explore their individual and teaming issues can be beneficial to team functioning (Fitzgerald & Theilheimer, 2012), though this may require greater understanding and expertise than is commonly held by an education specialist.

Relationships with and support from others besides their supervisor were essential to both team members. Within the work environment, Laura's relationships with the children were extremely important: "I loved my kids and I know they loved me" (Laura, Int 4). Laura's love for the children was clear. She was frequently observed supporting them through their own emotional challenges. However, there were also times when it seemed that the children were a support to Laura, like the time described previously when Laura was able to snap out of her brief

withdrawal after two of the children came and gave her a hug. As stated earlier, Laura said in her first interview, "I think about leaving [the] kids and I just can't…. I need kids." (Laura, Int 1). Laura's relationship with the children was an important part of her identity.

Laura's relationship with the children and with Amber was important in her ability to cope with the challenges she felt in the team, and, although she didn't feel close to Mary, the next-door LT, there were times when Laura talked with Mary about her team frustrations. For example, during outside play one day, "Mary and Laura were talking together about how home visits are always done as a team" (Team 1, Obs 12). Amber, Mary, and the children promoted Laura's psychological need of a sense of self-efficacy, belonging, and self-esteem.

Within the work environment, Karen became close with Angie, the AT from next-door. By the end of the year, Karen and Angie were driving to SSHS trainings together, requesting to teach with one another the following year, and planning lunches together during the summer break. Karen also got along well with Patricia, the team's original FA, and David, Patricia's substitute for the final two months of the school year.

Karen's relationships with others at work, however, may have been a problem for Laura. Karen spoke of Laura's jealousy over her relationship with Angie:

> We would go … for our mandatory half hour [outside] and then nothing. It was sometimes pulling teeth to get her to go on a walk. I'd be like, do you want to go on a walk? Are we going to invite the other class? Well we can, yeah. It's always a good idea to invite the other class, you know. And, no, if we're going to invite the other class, I don't want to go…. She got very, very jealous of Angie and [my] relationship and our friendship. (Karen, Int 5)

Karen also claimed that Laura was jealous of any relationships she had with the children:

I see the jealousy when another kid comes up to me and gives me a hug because then

she's calling that kid over to get a hug. I've heard it from past teachers that she's been

with, that she gets jealous of your life if you have one. She's told me many times, "My

life is work and TV." (Karen, Int 4)

Amber confirmed Laura's jealousy: "I've heard that [Laura] gets kind of jealous if the children

like the other teacher more" (Amber, Int 1). Karen believed that jealousy was at the root of

Laura's negativity.

Laura felt a division not only in the work of Team 1, but also in relationships, to a point

where sides were being formed. During Laura's final interview, when asked about her

relationship with Patricia, David, and Angie respectively, Laura said, "[Patricia's] much more on

Karen's side"; "[David's] awesome! … Where I go back and forth … is he's really close with

Karen"; and "[Angie] and Karen are like two peas in a pod and did their own thing." As Karen

talked with her friends at work, Laura no doubt felt excluded, and her sense of belonging

diminished. Laura's perception was that Karen had Angie, Patricia, and David on her side and

Laura had Amber, Mary, and, to some degree, the children on her side. Bendersky and Hays

(2012) point out, "Another distinctive feature of status conflicts is that they frequently involve

multiple members of a group, either as allies or as bystanders" (p. 328). Although the teachers'

allies were not working within the teaching team, they were a part of an extended team and they

did provide the teachers with much needed support.

The end of the year. Before the year had come to a close, both teachers had asked

Amber, their education specialist, to make sure they would not have to work together again the

following year. When asked what she would change in the team if she could, Laura stated, "I

would change the whole team…. Amber's working on it for me…. I told her that I don't want to

work with Karen and [Amber's] like, 'I don't blame you.'" (Laura, Int 3). Karen stated, "We already know that we will not be together next year. I've talked to my ed specialist and I've told her I can't do it. I can't handle the negativity…. I can't handle the complaining" (Karen, Int 4). The teachers were very happy to know that they would not be working together a second year. During the final observation that took place during the final week of school, Laura said to Karen: "You're really happy!" Karen responded, "I am! It's been great working with you, but Angie and I have wanted to work together" (Team 1, Obs 23).

Based on interview data, Karen did not feel it had been "great" working with Laura. It seems that one of the reasons the team was able to stay intact for the year was because Karen mostly ignored Laura's criticism and negativity. Although she would usually justify her decisions when Laura questioned them and defend herself when Laura criticized her, Karen was never unpleasant about it and she did not openly show offense towards Laura. Even though it made for a negative environment, the teachers did not discuss the grievances they had with one another. By not discussing their issues, they were able to persevere through an unhappy year.

Both teachers felt trapped in a team that they didn't want to be in. They were both counting down the days before the summer break: "I [the researcher] asked Laura how she was. … She responded, 'Oh, just two months to go.' Karen chipped in: 'Only 38 working days after today!'" (Team 1, Obs 16). Their biggest relief was knowing that they would only have to endure each other until the end of the school year. When asked what they would do if they were placed together for a second year, Karen claimed she "would probably find another job for insurance" (Karen, Int 5)—she only needed a job for the health benefits. Laura said she would "already be asking for a transfer" (Laura, Int 4). For Karen and Laura, the solution to the teaming issues was simply to switch teams, rather than work at addressing the issues. In SSHS,

where teams are changed frequently from year to year, this was a viable option. The teachers'

lives and, according to Karen, the children's learning were affected negatively as a result of their

teaming.

Although both teachers viewed the other as good at her job, the discrepancy in Karen's

and Laura's view of their roles was never resolved. They never really understood each other.

Laura saw Karen as being "power-hungry" (Laura, Int 4) and someone who "thinks she knows

everything" (Laura, Int 3). Karen saw Laura as someone who was "negative" and "jealous"

(Karen, Int 4). Neither teacher understood how her behavior was influencing the behavior of the

other teacher. Laura's negativity caused challenges for Karen, but it seemed to be compounded

by the teachers' differing priorities and views on the hierarchical power differential. Likewise,

Laura never saw how her negativity and criticism pushed Karen away to finding friendship in

others, leaving Laura feeling excluded, which further amplified her negativity. Karen never

really understood Laura's longing to be valued and seen as more than just an AT. In essence, the

teachers never really came to understand and appreciate each other as people. Each was

concerned about her own status within the classroom and as the teachers never talked about their

challenges, conflict was ever-present until the teachers parted ways at the end of the school year.

Summary. The teachers of Team 1 endured a challenging year working together.

Central to the functioning of their team was the teachers' identities—the way they saw

themselves as teachers and the way they understood their roles in relation to one another.

Whereas Karen saw a distinct power difference between their roles (she held the decision-

making power for the team and Laura was there to assist her), Laura believed their roles to be

more equal in terms of power. The way they saw their roles and their identity influenced the

way they organized their work. As Laura believed she was equal in ability to her LT, she was

happy to split the work down the middle and do almost the same work as Karen. As Karen wanted more time to be with her son, she was happy to give Laura half of the work. This work organization further perpetuated Laura's understanding of their equality.

However, as happy as Karen was to give Laura half of the work, she was not willing to share the power that came with her role as LT. As a result of this difference in the way the teachers saw the power differential, the team was characterized by conflict. Karen used her power and Laura resisted it by complaining about Karen's decisions, ignoring Karen, criticizing her, and even occasionally doing the opposite of what Karen asked.

The in-team conflict was further intensified by a lack of effective communication. Laura claimed to be unable to discuss the issues that were bothering her and instead dropped occasional comments and used facial expressions and body language that let Karen know she was annoyed about something. There was little trust in the team. Laura said that there was no point in discussing things because she knew it would make little difference as Karen always justified her choices.

In addition to this lack of communication, there was also a lack of structural support. Any support the teachers received from their supervisor was given at an individual level and was detrimental to team functioning, exacerbating the conflict rather than solving it. Consequently, the teachers were relieved when the year finally came to an end, knowing they would not have to work together again.

Team 2: Team Functioning in the Eaglerock Site

Carly was the LT for Team 2, with Sandra as the AT for the first six weeks of school and, at Carly's request, Heather as AT for the remainder of the school year. The experiences of Team

2 will be presented through six sections: roles and responsibilities; challenges; conflict; communication regarding conflict; the team relationship; and hopes for the future.

Roles and responsibilities. As discussed in the previous case, to accommodate the variation in experience and preference of the teachers within a team, SSHS allowed some degree of flexibility in the teachers' roles and work duties within the classroom. The way the work was organized within the team and the way the teachers understood their roles was important to the way the team functioned. Team 2's experiences with roles and responsibilities will be discussed in three sections: overarching roles, work organization, and confusion in day-to-day responsibilities.

Overarching roles. Carly and Heather agreed on their positions in the hierarchy: Carly was the LT and was in charge of the classroom, and Heather was the assistant—her job was to support Carly. When asked what she thought the AT's role in the classroom was, Carly responded: "To assist me…. [She] is under the direction of what I need for her to do in the classroom" (Carly, Int 4). Heather viewed the role of AT in the same way as Carly did. When asked what she thought her role in the classroom was, she said:

> I think just anything that the lead needs me to do…. I feel like it's my responsibility to … do whatever is lacking, I guess. So it would be different things at different times. Like if the teacher has to step out then I'm the teacher…. If she is super overwhelmed, then I need to step in and help where needed. So I think it varies…. I think you just have to be really flexible and whatever needs to be done that's your job. (Heather, Int 1)

Work organization. Based on observational data, the teachers largely did the same work during the school day. They took turns leading the class and preparing meals. They both cleaned, completed paperwork and documentation, disciplined children, and shared information

about children with parents. Carly did not assign specific work responsibilities to her AT.

Talking about completing end of month paperwork, Heather said, "Whoever had a second to do

it would do it. That's kind of how we worked it." (Heather, Int 2). Heather described the same

scenario for completing documentation. During observation, both teachers were seen pitching in

to get their jobs done. At lunchtime one day, Heather was preparing the room for the afternoon

class. She went to take out the morning children's names from the jobs chart: "'Oh, it's all done.

Thanks Carly!' 'No problem!' Carly responded" (Team 2, Obs 15). Another time, on the last

day of the month Carly went to complete the end-of-month paperwork for the morning class.

"Carly asked Heather: 'Did you do the morning one?' Heather said that she had. 'When did you

do that?' Carly asked. 'When Esther was interviewing you—I took it into Julie's room,' Heather

replied. 'Great—thanks!' Carly said" (Team 2, Obs 19).

The teachers' similar way of working made their system of "whoever had a second to do

it would do it," successful for the team. Carly said: "We are both organizational neat freaks. We

like to stay very organized and clean…. We like to get things done…. We always have that

motivation within ourselves—just get this done, get this done, and then we can relax" (Carly, Int

5). Similarly, Heather said, "We are both … so organized and clean…. We got our paperwork

stuff—we started working on it from the first point we could! We got it done early so we

weren't stressing at the end" (Heather, Int 1). Carly and Heather liked to get work done at the

earliest opportunity, whether children were in the classroom or not. Aside from the immediate

needs of the children and the schedule; such as preparing lunch, brushing teeth, teaching whole

or small group, or dealing with behavioral issues; the teachers would often be cleaning things or

completing paperwork.

Even though the teachers largely did the same work, there were some responsibilities that were distinct to each teacher. Carly always created the lesson plans, and Heather always dealt with dirty diapers. When asked whether she changed diapers, Carly said, "No, I refuse to…. I had my assistant do it" (Carly, Int 3). Carly commented a few times on her belief in equality between herself and her AT. She may have seen the teachers as equals in terms of who they were as people, but in terms of who they were as teachers, there was a definite hierarchy: Carly was very much in charge.

The LT's greater responsibility was reflected in the teachers' job descriptions and the pay structure. As the LT was paid salary, and the AT was not, any work that was not completed during the 40-hour workweek became the sole responsibility of the LT, as stated by Heather:

> I always felt like Carly's role was more of the stuff that we couldn't do while we were in the classroom because … she's paid differently than I am. So, like the lesson planning— I felt that ultimately that was her responsibility and like checklists and stuff. I felt like I should help with them but if we didn't have time for them [during the work day] that ultimately it laid on her. (Heather, Int 2)

Heather had no desire to take on any extra responsibility. However, she felt that occasionally working outside school hours was expected of her:

> I think that it was not so much either Carly or Julie's fault that I worked more than my hours. I felt like that was just a Head Start thing…. [T]hey just expected a lot of us…. We were supposed to get everything done on Fridays but if you have meetings and your classes are not ready [you couldn't]…. I know both Sandra and I were both like "we were here until almost 5 o'clock last night … and we were here early to move." … I don't

think [Julie and Carly] understand … that we are paid by the hour so we're not getting paid. (Heather, Int 2)

When asked whether she thought Carly expected her to work extra hours, Heather said:

Yeah. In the mornings, I think that she did. And what was kind of frustrating is sometimes she'd be like "oh we're coming in at 7" and then I would come in and she wouldn't be here. That was really frustrating [laughing]. (Heather, Int 2)

Unlike Heather, Carly was required to work more than 40 hours as needed. When asked how long her working week was, Carly replied:

I would say the extra hours that I've put in this week—I'd say a good extra 15 hours…. So I've put in … 55—close to 60—hours this week. Just getting ready for the review and parent teacher conferences that were yesterday, and lesson planning. (Carly, Int 2)

Thus, like Team 1, "work spilled outwards into the teachers' home lives" (Bullough, et al., 2014, p. 61). It was not possible for them to get the work done within a 40-hour workweek.

Confusion in day-to-day responsibilities. Although the teachers were clear on their overarching roles, Heather expressed confusion about her specific day-to-day duties:

At Head Start I felt like I didn't know if … I was supposed to just clean up or play with the kids or if I was supposed to teach groups, … so I think that there I got kind of confused on my role. Sometimes I thought well is this Carly's job or my job?… So I just tried to do everything. I guess that's what I'm supposed to do—I don't know! (Heather, Int 1)

Even though Heather was clear that her role was to assist Carly, she was not sure of the duties specifically expected of her position by SSHS, a situation that is common for ATs working in a variety of preschool organizations (Ratcliff, et al., 2011; Robins & Silcock, 2007).

Heather's confusion over work responsibilities may have been related to a few factors. The way the work was organized in the team may have been one source of confusion. Other than teaching every other day, Heather was given little direction as to what Carly expected of her. It seemed Heather was expected to recognize what needed doing and just help out.

Heather's inexperience working at SSHS may have contributed to her confusion. Heather had worked as an aide in special education for the local school district for 10 years. She mentioned several times that working at SSHS was very different from the school district:

Head Start has … a different way of doing things from the school district. [L]ike their CLASS training and … their procedures of how they do things. I felt a lot of time they were like, "You did that wrong" … and I'm like, well for the school district I handled it perfectly so if you would tell me and they would never really tell me. (Heather, Int 1)

The differences between the school district and SSHS, coupled with a lack of direction from SSHS, may have contributed to Heather's confusion about her classroom responsibilities.

Heather's confusion about day-to-day responsibilities may also have been compounded by the change in teams that took place early in the school year. Heather had initially worked with Julie, the LT in the adjacent classroom, for the first six weeks of school. When asked what she thought were her responsibilities as an AT, she commented that a teacher's roles and responsibilities could vary depending on the composition of the team: "from working with Julie and Carly the job looked different" (Heather, Int 1). Heather's experience working with Julie and Carly differed somewhat based on the way the two LTs chose to organize the work within the team. For example, in Julie's class, the LT taught in the morning and the AT taught in the afternoon, whereas in Carly's class, the LT taught on Mondays and Wednesdays and the AT taught on Tuesdays and Thursdays; Carly tended to get paperwork completed ahead of time,

whereas, according to Heather, Julie left it until the last minute; Julie included Heather in lesson planning, whereas Carly did not. In both Julie's and Carly's classrooms, the decision of how the work was organized was made solely by the LT. Heather simply did as she was asked.

When work responsibilities are flexible, as they were at SSHS, clear communication in determining roles and responsibilities within teams is important. When asked whether she and Carly had discussed her work responsibilities, Heather said:

> No…. Julie did sit down with me and told me what she expected of me and then when I got to Carly's I [thought], well [Julie] expects me to do this, Carly probably does too—[Carly] was just glad if I helped I think. It took me a few weeks, honestly, to kind of get into the rhythm of what I thought she wanted me to do. I wish we would have … sat down and talked about what she wanted me to do. (Heather, Int 1)

Although Heather had said that she and Carly had not discussed her responsibilities within the team, Carly, in her final interview, said that they had:

> We kind of talked about our expectations, like what I expected, so just kind of laying that out in the beginning kind of made it easier for us to do things together and our roles. We just talked about it … She was just kind of like, "Whatever you want me to do, I will do it" type thing. So yeah, it was awesome! (Carly, Int 5)

The time and content of that discussion between the teachers concerning roles and responsibilities are unknown. What is known, however, is that even if Carly believed their roles and responsibilities had been made clear, Heather still felt some degree of confusion.

Challenges. Although the teachers worked well together as a team, the first few months of the school year were immensely challenging, particularly for Carly. Even though Carly had worked for two years in a different HS, she was new to SSHS. Since "[T]he support needs of

new-to-system teachers are not remarkably different from the support needs of first-year

teachers," (Odell, 1986, p. 29) Carly was in need of high levels of guidance and support. Like

many teachers during their first year of teaching (e.g., Halford, 1998; Joiner & Edwards, 2008;

Schaefer, Downey, & Clandinin, 2014), she often felt overwhelmed in her new teaching

assignment. When asked in her November interview what she was currently working on, Carly

responded, "Just getting through the year. That's all I want to do. I just want to get through the

year and re-evaluate if this is really what I want to do" (Carly, Int 3). As a result of her

experiences in the first few months and reflective of the high attrition rate of beginning teachers

(Guarino, Santibañez, & Daley, 2006; Schaefer, 2013), Carly was having serious doubts about

whether she wanted to work at SSHS.

　　Both teachers at some point in the year began looking for a new job. During an

observation in late October,

> Heather is hoping to leave soon. She said she should find out this week if she has a new
>
> job working for the school district as an aide at a school for children with disabilities. On
>
> her second day working at HS she called up the school district to see if they had a job.
>
> The person she spoke to said she would call her if something came up. (Team 2, Obs 4)

Looking retrospectively over the year, Carly said, "I made it! Honestly, with so much stress that

went on the first … four months of school, I really thought I wouldn't come back. … I really

thought I was going to quit. I really was on the job hunt" (Carly, Int 5).

　　The challenges experienced by Team 2, particularly in those first four months, came from

children's behavior and the teachers' lack of knowledge in navigating the paperwork and

protocols of SSHS, issues frequently cited as reasons for leaving the profession within the first

year on the job (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Here follows a discussion of the children's behavior, the paperwork and protocols of SSHS, and the effect on the team.

    Children's behavior. One of Team 2's biggest problems in the first few months was children's behavioral issues, a common challenge for new teachers (Flores & Day, 2006; Kiggins, 2007; McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006; Onafowora, 2004; Putman, 2009). Three boys in the afternoon class were particularly challenging. One was habitually mean and violent towards other children. For example, during one outdoor play time the following took place:

> Carly was telling me, [the researcher], how frustrated she was with Alex. "He bullies
> James every day and he's mean to others." She's talked to his Dad who said that he has
> problems with him at home. She said she's "pissed off." She doesn't know what else to
> do with him…. Alex hit Ethan. Carly called them both over to talk to them…. [A little
> later] James ran to Carly because Alex was chasing him. Carly put her arm around James
> to protect him…. Off playing again, Alex pushed James. Carly called Alex over to talk
> about it. As soon as Alex left, James and Alex raced to the dinosaur and started fighting
> over it. "It's like talking to a freaking brick wall!" Carly exclaimed exasperatedly.
> There was lots of pushing and shoving from Alex with James…. [Shortly after] Alex
> jumped on top of James. Carly ran over and pulled Alex off James. She made Alex sit at
> the side for a minute. (Team 2, Obs 3)

Carly talked to me frequently about her frustration with Alex. Immediately after outside play, the class went to the school library where the following took place:

> The children were in the library sitting on the carpet quietly while the librarian read a
> story to them. Alex was standing by the door crying. He had been put there because he
> had scratched and kicked Ethan. Carly talked to me again about how she was so, so

frustrated with him and doesn't know what to do. She said she's ready to be done…. She

feels Alex needs extra help that she can't give him. (Team 2, Obs 3)

In her short two-year teaching career, Carly had never experienced such discipline issues as she

had with Alex and did not know how to deal with them. Alex, she felt, needed help that went

beyond the abilities of a general education teacher.

Carly's first AT was of little help. One of Carly's complaints about Sandra was

specifically her lack of help in this area:

She didn't have behavior management skills…. I tried to help her with [that], but I feel

like if you've been here for as long as she has, that's something that you should have

gotten down the first couple years of your teaching experience. (Carly, Int 4)

Heather, Carly's second AT, was less experienced than Carly in working with preschool children

and so, although Heather was willing to step in and help when she could, she didn't know the

most effective way to deal with Alex's behavioral issues either.

Because of her behavior management challenges, Carly felt extreme frustration. At the

end of the year, she said,

I think the greatest challenge … is dealing with children that have certain behaviors that I

cannot control and they cannot control themselves. That's always been a learning curve

for everyone, especially an educator, when you can't control a child as much as you want

to. (Carly, Int 5)

Many beginning teachers struggle with behavior management (Chambers & Hardy, 2005;

Kaufman & Moss, 2010; Kiggins, 2007; McNally, I'anson, Whewell, & Wilson, 2005).

Featherstone (1992) commented that as teachers struggle with managing behavior they become

"more authoritarian, more conservative, and less child-centered" (p. 2). Carly's desire to

"control" children's behavior contrasts with currently held beliefs that the most effective behavior management strategies emphasize "constructivist or learner-centered behavior" (Kaufman & Moss, 2010, p 128). The notion of controlling children's behavior, however, is a commonly held view amongst beginning teachers (Bromfield, 2006; Huntly, 2008; Kaufman & Moss, 2010; Putman, 2009). Peters (2012) found that although many beginning teachers feel competent in managing children's behavior, they do not know how to do it effectively. Their understanding largely focuses on behaviorist techniques and thus they are less likely to be able to manage more severe behavioral challenges (Peters, 2012), as was the case with Carly.

> Besides Alex, there were other students with whom Carly experienced problems.
> I have Antonio, I have Alex, and Andreas that are crazy. And then I have two kids in
> diapers…. I don't understand how they feel like we can manage everything—diaper
> changing—while managing these three boys that are crazy when they're together. I
> mean, it's just chaos! (Carly, Int 3)

Carly felt like she seriously needed help. After several appeals to her supervisor for help, Carly was given extra support in preparation for the upcoming federal review. Debbie, an LT, was placed in Carly's classroom to help with Alex's behavioral issues. Carly was grateful and relieved. Concerning her federal review CLASS observation, Carly reported, "I had Debbie … stay right with him … the whole time and I moved him off the rug so he couldn't hit anybody. He didn't start acting out until [the federal reviewers] left so … phew! Nailed it!" (Carly, Obs 3). Debbie was specifically assigned to watch Alex and help guide his behavior, easing the team's immediate classroom challenges. However, as HS regulations require two adults to be with the children at all times, Carly was also able to take advantage of Debbie's presence to ease her paper workload. When asked about how child assessment was going, Carly said, "It's good.

I'm trying to be better at documenting and just taking more time out—now that I have a third person in the classroom—just taking more time to step out and document" (Carly, Int 2).

Unsurprisingly, Carly was disappointed when the help from Debbie was removed shortly after the federal review:

> I got an email … from Claire, my supervisor, saying that today would be [Debbie's] last day…. I emailed Claire and I said I think that she needs to stay in our classroom, because yesterday was crazy…. They said that she was here for Alex. Why isn't she staying here for Alex? … I feel like they only put her in our classroom for the review…. Just to make us look good in front of the reviewers…. I need someone permanently in there with Alex. (Carly, Int 3)

Carly was probably correct. As the federal review is of such high stakes for local HS organizations, Debbie was probably placed in Carly's class to help them through the review. Once the review was over, Carly was left feeling exasperated, realizing that she and her AT would, once again, be left alone to deal with the problems in their classroom.

However, within three weeks after a parent complained to SSHS management about Alex punching her daughter and giving her a bloody nose, Alex was removed from Carly's class and placed in a behavioral preschool unit. During the observation immediately following Alex's removal from her classroom, Carly told me the following:

> Amy's mom complained to HS…. Carly got an email over Thanksgiving to say Alex was being moved to a behavioral unit in the school…. She was cheering when she got the email. "Yesterday was the first day without him. It was so nice!" (Team 2, Obs 9)

That same weekend one of the other challenging children left, so from the end of November things got considerably easier for the teachers in this area of their work. They still experienced behavioral problems, but the intense stress of those first few months considerably lessened.

Paperwork and protocols of Sure Steps Head Start. Carly and Heather also initially faced challenges navigating the requirements of SSHS. This was a result of three factors: both teachers were new to SSHS, neither of them had received any training, and their assigned education specialist, who had gone on maternity leave the previous year, decided not to return to work.

During the process of hiring a new education specialist, Claire, one of the Education Child Coordinators (ECCs), a hierarchical level above the education specialists, supervised Team 2. Claire was doing her own job of ECC as well as acting as education specialist for Carly and Heather (and possibly others), with the added pressure of preparing for and going through a federal review. It was not surprising that Carly commented that Claire was slow to respond to her requests: "[W]hen Claire was my supervisor sometimes it would take her days or weeks to get back to me about things, and I needed answers right away" (Carly, Int 4).

With no education specialist, Carly and Heather did not know how to do many aspects of their job. As the LT had overall responsibility for the team, Carly, particularly, felt pressured. When asked, at the beginning of November, how things were going, Carly responded, "It's still really stressful and I'm still trying to understand all of the paperwork. It's just different than the other Head Start I was working for…. There's definitely still a lot of frustration" (Carly, Int 2). In the same interview, when asked whether she had experienced any surprises at SSHS, she said:

> [T]he paperwork is definitely a surprise and I think communication…. Everyone assumes
>
> because I've been in Head Start before that I understand who I give my paperwork to…. I

> don't understand why people think that I should know all this because I don't…. [M]y supervisor's even told me she assumed that I knew [Teaching Strategies Gold] already, so that's why she didn't give me extra support and help guide me in it…. I've reached out to my old colleague…. She got the same job as me; we came up here [from another HS] together. So we just work together on our lesson plans and other things. She learns from [her assistant] and then she teaches it to me…. Her assistant has been in the program for a while, and so she knows the program. (Carly, Int 2)

Learning on the job was the norm in SSHS. Teachers were not given a formal introductory training like Carly and Heather expected. In the absence of an education specialist, Carly's support in navigating some of the paperwork came from an LT who was also new to SSHS, but who could learn the job through her AT, a common situation in HS when an inexperienced LT is paired with a more experienced AT (Bullough, et al., 2012). Although it was the LT's job to mentor their assistant, the employment of new, inexperienced LTs in HS often called for this responsibility to be reversed. Carly's first AT had worked at SSHS for 14 years and would be expected by SSHS to mentor Carly, however, at Carly's request, her AT was changed and Heather, her new AT, had even less experience working for HS than Carly.

It wasn't until after Christmas that the situation improved for Team 2, when they were finally assigned an education specialist to supervise and support them:

> Lisa became our supervisor in January. That's when things got better, because those first four months of school was so hard…. I didn't know what I was doing. Nobody told me how to do things. When I had questions, they weren't answered…. I felt like I was left out in the dark. (Carly, Int 5)

Although Carly and Heather continued to experience challenges, they were much more manageable with the help of Lisa, their education specialist. The importance of supportive mentors for beginning teachers has been highlighted in the literature (e.g., Blomberg & Knight, 2015; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1993; Huling, Resta, & Yeargain, 2012).

Effect on the team. For the first four months of the school year, Team 2 was in survival mode. During free choice time there was not a great deal of interaction with the students, as the teachers cleaned, completed paperwork, and dealt with behavioral issues. They seemed to take on a supervisory role as opposed to the teaching role expected by SSHS. Outside play time was almost always extended to an hour, twice SSHS's prescribed half hour. During one exceptionally long outdoor play time, a substitute teacher, assigned to help the teachers for a couple of days, asked why they were outside for so long. Heather said, "For us it's survival!" (Team 2, Obs 8).

Being left alone to cope without an education specialist is an unusual and undesirable circumstance at SSHS. Despite having Claire, the ECC, act as supervisor, Carly was not getting the help and support that she felt she needed. In her supporting role as AT, Heather was important to Carly. It was their shared experience of feeling alone and unsupported by SSHS that united them as a team.

Conflict. Team 2 experienced conflict with almost every other person with whom they worked: three different FAs, their CLASS coach, the ECC who acted as their temporary supervisor for the first four months, the teachers in the adjacent classroom, and even employees from the school with whom they shared a site. Although both teachers described conflict with these people during observations and interviews, it was never directly observed. Most of the conflict reported by the teachers stemmed from one of three sources. First, the teachers felt

conflict or competition with the next-door teachers. Second, the teachers perceived a lack of support from almost everyone with whom they worked. Third, the teachers were particularly sensitive to criticism from others.

   Team's criticism of next-door teachers. The reasons for the contention Team 2 reportedly felt with the next-door teachers were not always clear. Carly and Heather both criticized Julie (LT) and Sandra (AT) on several occasions (though their criticism of Sandra decreased considerably later in the year). For example, during outdoor play one day Heather and Debbie criticized Julie for her time management skills: "Julie's problems are her own making— she brings them on herself—she's not good at time management" (Team 2, Obs 6). During another observation, Carly said "Yesterday she [Carly] had to do some paperwork in the classroom while Heather brought the kids out with someone else. Julie and Sandra's class next door was going wild" (Team 2, Obs 14). In her final interview, Carly was asked to rate her relationship with each teacher. Of Julie, she said, "I don't think she has the teaching skills to lead the classroom…. Every time I've gone over to her classroom, it's always chaos and it's unorganized." (Carly, Int 5).

   During observations, the four teachers seemed to be quite pleasant with one another. There was no suggestion of any kind of rivalry between the two teams. However, when talking with one another or with me, Carly and Heather often criticized Julie and Sandra. This may have been related to the challenges Carly was facing. Her inability to do her job the way she wanted to may have left Carly feeling inadequate. Consequently, her identity as a competent teacher may have been challenged. Criticizing Julie and Sandra for their poor teaching skills and chaotic classroom may have been a coping mechanism for Carly to deal with her own inadequacies.

Lack of support. The teachers felt a lack of support, not only from SSHS as discussed previously, but also from people with whom they worked on a day-to-day basis. The teaching team worked with two different FAs: Tatiana, who worked with the families of children in the morning class, and Michelle, who worked with the families of children in the afternoon class. Michelle was replaced halfway through the school year with Janice. Tatiana and Michelle both spoke Spanish, and as over half of the parents of children in Team 2's class spoke Spanish, they were an important support for Carly and Heather in parent communication. The FAs were also able to support the teachers in other ways. For example, HS had a strict rule that there were to be two teachers with the children at all times. When talking about Janice, Heather said: "The afternoon FA is great—she's only been with HS since January. She's really helpful—she comes into the class to help if one of us needs to slip out for a few minutes" (Team 2, Obs 14).

However, the support Carly and Heather expected from their FAs was not always forthcoming. Carly's difficulty in navigating the paperwork led to conflict with Michelle. During one observation, for example, Carly stated:

> [Michelle] yelled at me again last week because my supervisor told me to give her (Michelle) some stuff to input into the computer. Michelle said she didn't have time. I told her I didn't know how to do it and she isn't the only one who has too much to do. (Team 2, Obs 8)

Carly was overwhelmed with unfamiliar paperwork and her request for help was denied. Conflict continued with Michelle's replacement, Janice. Although Heather had reported how supportive Janice was when she first came to SSHS, before the year was up, the team reported problems. Heather said, "We had a really hard time with Janice. Janice is a very nice lady, but she did nothing for us and we were constantly doing her work" (Heather, Int 2). Carly reported

the same thing: "I had a conversation with Lisa (the education specialist) about [Janice] because she wasn't coming to the classroom…. I ended up doing a lot of her work…. Like referrals and talking to families about their family goals" (Carly, Int 5). Janice was assigned to work at two different sites. She spent most of her time at the other site, leaving Carly and Heather without the support they needed.

Tatiana, the morning FA, was the most visible of the three FAs: she was there for the whole year, and she was often seen in Carly's and Heather's classroom talking to parents and to the teachers. But Carly and Heather also experienced conflict with her: "Carly said that Tatiana has been really rude lately…. They had problems with some of their parent meetings that were scheduled with some Spanish-speaking parents. Tatiana didn't show up" (Team 2, Obs 14). The teachers perceived the support of the FAs to be vital. Carly and Heather needed as much help as they could get in dealing with the challenges they were facing as first year teachers at SSHS, such as parent communication, paperwork, and even personal issues such as taking a few minutes out of the classroom to use the restroom. The FAs provided the solution to some of these challenges. When Carly and Heather felt they were not receiving the necessary support from their FAs, their stress increased and they felt unable to complete their own responsibilities effectively. Furthermore, when Janice failed to come to the classroom when she was supposed to, Carly and Heather felt a responsibility in doing some of her work, thus adding more tasks to their already heavy workloads.

Carly and Heather also spoke of a lack of support from elementary school personnel. Of her experiences with the school, Carly said:

It's been so stressful dealing with [the school]. They're very rude…. Just the services

that they are supposed to provide for us—even janitorial services—they don't do it. The

janitor even told me that some days they don't clean because there's other things more important than cleaning our classroom. (Carly, Int 4)

As self-identified "organizational neat freaks" who like "to stay very organized and clean" (Carly, Int 5), having a clean classroom was important to both teachers.

Another important service provided by the school was the use of the school gym. Gym time was shared between the two HS classes, which they had once a week for the morning classes and afternoon classes. During the cold winter months, instead of going outside to play for an hour (which the teachers felt was necessary as their classroom was so small and cramped), the two HS classes would go to the school gym—far more frequently than their allotted time. Heather said, "HS has the gym once a week on Mondays. We try to use it at other times when it's free, but they've been a bit rude. I think they don't want us to use it" (Team 2, Obs 10). The support that Team 2 hoped to get from the school was not always given.

Although Julie and Sandra were in a different team from Carly and Heather, their classes shared an outdoor space. One day in early February, Carly and Heather were particularly fed up:

> Heather was picking up garbage from the children's outdoor play area while the children played…. Heather complained that it was supposed to be Julie and Sandra doing it today as Carly and Heather had picked it up yesterday in the rain…. Carly came out and picked up garbage with Heather. They were both talking about how frustrated they are…. Carly said, "I'm tired of having to take up everyone else's slack." (Team 2, Obs 14)

This final comment from Carly suggests that she felt like Julie, Sandra, and everyone else were slacking in their duties, leaving Carly and Heather with more work to do.

Criticism from others. Another category of conflict for Carly and Heather was criticism from others. Rosa, the CLASS coach, was one source of perceived criticism and conflict for the

team. As the teachers were new to SSHS, they were assigned a CLASS coach. The purpose of the CLASS coach was to help the teachers increase their CLASS scores. Rosa described her experience coaching Carly:

> With Carly I think there's a little bit of a misconception on what coaching is, and I'll take the blame. Perhaps I didn't convey that in the right manner … in the beginning of the year. It really wasn't a knock or a negative thing. It was simply to offer support. So I think I've been getting a little bit of resistance. (Rosa, Int 1)

From comments made by Carly, it seemed that she felt like she was already a good teacher and did not need coaching. For example, when asked about how she was feeling about the upcoming federal review, she claimed, "I'm not nervous" (Carly, Int 2) and when asked about the possibility of being observed in CLASS she said, "I think it'll be easy cheesy" (Carly, Int 2). Carly's concern regarding the federal review was not with CLASS scores, but with one child's behavior. As part of the coaching, Carly was asked to observe a master teacher, who was seen by SSHS to have exemplary teaching skills. Carly said, "I told my supervisor I don't like the idea [of master teachers] … I'm already a master teacher" (Team 2, Obs 7).

Carly described her experience with the coach as having little benefit to her. One particular conflict arose shortly after Rosa had observed her during one of their sessions, as described by Carly:

> [Rosa] asked me what are my weaknesses and what skill did I think I should work on … I said … maybe I could work on this and this, I don't remember specifically. She's like, "Well I think you could work on learning Spanish." … And that really offended me. I said, "Nowhere in my job description does it say I have to know Spanish." I definitely took that personally, because I thought that was an attack on my teaching. (Carly, Int 5)

Although it was routine for new teachers to receive CLASS coaching at SSHS, it seemed that

Carly felt that her identity as a competent teacher was being challenged. She felt she was being

told that she was not good enough and that she needed help to improve. Carly felt, however, that

she didn't need a coach. She needed a supervisor—someone to help her understand and navigate

the paperwork and protocols of SSHS. As important as CLASS was for the federal review and

consequently for the survival of SSHS, Carly felt like it was not helping her in her current

situation. It simply added greater stress and pressure to her already challenging circumstances.

In her final interview, Carly said:

> I don't value [Rosa's] job at all…. [H]er job would be better suited with our supervisor.
>
> … [T]hat's something that the supervisor is more equipped to handle. She sees us more
>
> often and she understands our classroom and the partnership of the team. (Carly, Int 5)

The job of the coach was once a part of the responsibilities of the education specialists; however,

because HS placed so much emphasis on CLASS scores, coaches were hired and specially

trained to focus intensively with teachers on CLASS.

> According to Rosa, Heather's participation in coaching was very different from Carly's.

She said:

> Heather has been incredibly open and very excited about CLASS, about anything that we
>
> talk about, any way to improve in her field. We … go out and observe teachers…. I've
>
> gone out with Heather a couple of times and she's just absorbed it. She really loved it
>
> and often asked questions and really wants to grow. (Rosa, Int 1)

Heather's perception of the coaching, however, was not so positive:

> She never came! She came like twice and then tried to come like two weeks before
>
> school was out. So most of the time she just left us alone and she was supposed to

videotape me while I was teaching and we were supposed to go over that. She never did

it…. I think Rosa—no help at all! (Heather, Int 1)

Heather's negativity towards Rosa's coaching was in direct contrast to Rosa's positive

perceptions of Heather's experience.

In addition to the criticism the team felt from Rosa, Carly felt criticism from other HS

staff. Carly reported that Julie, the next-door teacher, "yelled at [her] a couple of times" for

something she said she "was not a part of at all" (Carly, Int 5). She also said that her afternoon

FA, Michelle, criticized her for not knowing how to handle the SSHS paperwork. She said, "I

don't understand how someone can be so critical of someone who doesn't know that much of the

program yet…. I've definitely been upset over it" (Carly, Int 1).

Both Carly and Heather felt criticized by SSHS. Heather said, "I felt a lot of times they

were like, 'You did that wrong' or 'You handled that situation wrong.' … I felt like I was set up

to fail" (Heather, Int 1).

The team also felt criticism from the teachers and staff of the elementary school. Carly

said, "I've never been to a school that's been so unprofessional towards us … they make

everything difficult for us" (Carly, Int 4). Towards the end of the school year, "Heather told me

[the researcher] that they cleaned out the shed on Friday…. It was mostly trash so they put it in

the dumpster and got in trouble from the school" (Team 2, Obs 18).

Carly and Heather frequently felt criticized for doing the wrong thing and seemed to feel

that everybody else was making their working situation more difficult. They appeared to be

sensitive to anything that could be construed as criticism, and some of the above evidence

suggests that they felt victimized. Onafowora (2004) found that when new teachers are

experiencing intense challenges in their early days of teaching, they often tend to blame others in

an effort to maintain their own positive view of self in their new profession, which may partly explain the criticism that Carly and Heather felt from others outside their team.

However, considering the teaming experience, it is important to note that when it came to conflict with individuals outside of the teaching team, Carly and Heather always agreed with each other. Amid their pressure and stress they became united, and an "us against the world" attitude formed. When asked what she thought some of her high points during the year were, Heather said, "I think just that we made it through, which we didn't know if we would … both of us together made it through the school year" (Heather, Int 1). Carly and Heather formed a united front as they experienced conflict with others outside of their team. Perhaps this is not surprising, as Heather understood her purpose was to support Carly. Her support extended beyond their regular day-to-day work duties to supporting Carly in her conflict with others. Carly, with so much pressure as the LT, needed allies to help her through the challenges of teaching. Her AT was one of those important allies who supported Carly through her battles.

Communication regarding conflict. As the LT, Carly took the lead in dealing with conflict. Approaches to managing conflict usually involved digital communication, confrontation, or communicative avoidance. As was the case with the conflict discussed in the previous section, data for addressing the conflict came exclusively from teacher reports.

Digital communication. Within the first four months of teaching at SSHS, as has already been discussed, Carly experienced a lot of conflict related to the frustration of not knowing how to do her job. This type of conflict was often resolved via email with Claire, her temporary supervisor. Carly emailed Claire to request a change in her AT, to seek advice in navigating the paperwork of SSHS, and to request help in dealing with some of the children's behavioral issues. She also contacted Claire when the help she had received was being removed: "Debbie's been

great. She's been very helpful. I'm trying to force her to stay. I'm … writing as many emails as I can to whoever's gonna listen. I need Debbie in the class" (Carly, Int 3). As mentioned earlier, however, this sometimes caused Carly greater frustration, as Claire was often slow to respond.

  Confrontation. Carly was also quite confrontational at times, particularly when she felt attacked in some way. When Rosa, her CLASS coach, suggested that she learn Spanish, Carly's response was confrontational:

> I said, "I don't feel like it's my job to do that. If there's so many Spanish speaking
>
> children …, they need to be in a Spanish speaking classroom with a teacher that speaks
>
> Spanish." … [I]t's not my responsibility to learn another language. (Carly, Int 4)

Similarly, after having gone to Lisa (Team 2's education specialist) to discuss a problem they were experiencing with Tatiana (their morning FA), Lisa called a meeting that included herself, the two teachers, and Tatiana. Carly described the incident as follows:

> I just told [Tatiana], I said, "I feel like I told you what I wanted to do for our home visits
>
> and how I wanted the afternoon class to be scheduled and how I wanted the morning
>
> class to be scheduled. I told you how I wanted it to be scheduled and I feel like you
>
> weren't listening to how I wanted it, and you did it your way," type of thing. I mean
>
> that's not her job. Her job is to help me the way I want to run things…. I realize
>
> sometimes I get antzy because I'm not a confrontational-type person. (Carly, Int 4)

Heather described the same incident as follows:

> We went to Lisa and told her we are doing the FA's job and it is kind of overwhelming
>
> for us and so she had a little meeting with all of us together and afterwards Tatiana was
>
> like, "Please don't do that again. Just come to me." … So we just went to her from then
>
> on and she handled it very well…. We thought the meeting with Lisa went not so good

and she was like, "Please never do that to me again. I hate that," and we were like "Ok!"

… It became so one-sided—like us attacking her almost with how Lisa set it up. I felt

bad for Tatiana in the meeting … and we both backed down. (Heather, Int 2)

Although the two teachers' perspectives on the meeting differed a little, it seemed that even

though the confrontation was uncomfortable, Carly and Heather were able to resolve the conflict

with their FA. Carly and Heather had been feeling conflict with Tatiana for a while until this

meeting took place. By talking about it, they were able to resolve things, and the teachers had a

more positive experience afterwards. In her final interview, when asked about her relationship

with Tatiana, Carly said, "We just had that little tiff in the school year … but she's great!"

(Carly, Int 5) Similarly, Heather said, "I think we had a rocky time with Tatiana for a while….

[O]nce we got that worked out we had a really good relationship" (Heather, Int 2).

    Communicative avoidance. Although Carly reported confronting the conflict in the two

prior incidents, her more common strategy seemed to be avoiding communicating her true

feelings. For example, Carly's attitude toward coaching from Rosa was negative, which led

Rosa to ask Carly whether she wanted coaching or not. Regarding this, Carly said:

There's times where I feel like [Rosa] doesn't need to be here at all. I mean, she's asked

me that. I'm really nice about it and I say, "No, you're great!" But really I'm [thinking],

"I wish you wouldn't come." But I don't know… I just don't know how to say it without

hurting her feelings. (Carly, Int 4)

Carly's inability to tell Rosa what she really thought led Rosa to thinking that Carly "actually

really does want coaching…. She agreed that she would like to continue" (Rosa, Int 1). Carly

used communicative avoidance here. She didn't want coaching, but she didn't know how to tell

Rosa, so she didn't, and instead gave her a false impression.

There were many other conflicting incidents Carly described but did not discuss with the relevant parties. Instead, the issues were discussed within the team, allowing the teachers to vent about their challenges and avoid the discomfort of addressing them directly.

Although there is little research examining how ECE teachers deal with conflict, it is not surprising that teachers in an ECE setting have difficulty addressing conflicting issues. A few researchers found that avoidance was used extensively in the nursing profession (e.g., Dyess & Sherman, 2009; Jackson et al., 2011), a caring, nurturing, and predominantly female profession, like teaching preschool.

Perceived team relationship. Although both teachers spoke of lots of conflict with others, there was little evidence of conflict between the two teachers. The team was characterized by support and appreciation. When asked why she had asked for Heather as her AT, Carly said:

> She's very productive…. I knew that's what I needed because I was very stressed. I needed someone that was gonna be way on top of things like I am. And is willing to help me no matter what I need. She's willing to do it without griping about it. (Carly, Int 4)

Although Heather claimed to not always know what was expected of her, she was somebody who would work hard to help Carly get work done during the workday. Teachers don't always get to choose their partner teacher in SSHS, but it seemed to make a positive difference for both teachers in the team. Although it is unknown what would have happened if the teachers had remained in their original teams, Heather remarked, "The only reason I lasted this long was because they switched me over to work with [Carly]" (Heather, Int 2).

Similarities and differences. The teachers attributed their ability to work well together to the similarities they saw in one another:

> We have the same views on things, like education and routines … [O]ur religious point of views are the same. It's kind of like we're both in the same boat. We both don't have children, we're both trying to date. We're kind of on the same level and I think that makes our team even better because we're on the same page with a lot of things. (Carly, Int 4)

Similarly, Heather said:

> We both had the same personalities…. I don't think I've ever worked with someone that thought the same way I thought…. It's nice that we had the same moral standards…. [W]e didn't have to argue about which way things should go because we always seemed to be on the same page. (Heather, Int 1)

The teachers' similarities were a way for them to connect and relate to one another, which gave them a sense of belonging at work. Edmondson and Roloff (2009) found that people have "a preference for being with others who are perceived to be similar in values, attitudes and beliefs" (p. 49). Carly's and Heather's perception of their many similarities likely contributed to their ability to work together successfully.

In contrast, Carly found differences between herself and Sandra, her first assistant. Carly believed that because of the large age gap between the teachers, "[We] don't see eye to eye on things. And we just think so differently" (Carly, Int 1). Carly did not expound on the way the two teachers thought "so differently;" however, an observation and something that Heather said gives a glimpse into what it may have been. When talking about what she thought Carly expected of her, Heather said:

She expected me to teach … [B]efore I came over she said "I want you to teach every

other day. I don't want to teach every day. I get sick of it." It was really hard for her

when she was with Sandra and she was teaching every single day. (Heather, Int 2)

Furthermore, during the first observation, evidence suggested that Sandra was not very interested

in teaching. Carly had split the children into two groups. She was teaching one group and

Sandra was teaching the other group. Sandra finished six minutes before Carly and sent her

students to free choice. Carly struggled for the next six minutes to keep her group engaged in

their learning. As a much older and more experienced AT, perhaps Sandra preferred to take care

of the more traditional AT tasks, such as food preparation, tooth brushing, and cleaning. Carly

also said that Sandra "didn't have behavior management skills" (Carly, Int 5), which was a huge

problem for her given the students in the class. Similar to other HS teachers (Bullough, 2015),

fundamental differences in their views of ECE, including their behavior management and their

roles within the classroom, was a challenge for Carly during those first six weeks.

   Within-team support. Carly and Heather frequently supported one another with

organizational issues, such as completing end of month paperwork and preparing materials for

class. They also supported one another with behavior management issues, one of the deficits

Carly saw in her first AT. During the first observation with Heather as Carly's new assistant,

   Antonio was being silly and defiant. He threw his fork into the bucket of milk. Carly

   told him to take the fork out of the bucket. Antonio refused. Heather took over. She

   picked up the bucket. "Take the fork out of the bucket." She insisted that he couldn't

   pour his leftover milk into the bucket until he took the fork out. She stood and waited

   holding the bucket. It took a minute or two but eventually he complied. (Team 2, Obs 3)

Heather was a support to Carly and seemed sensitive to her needs. Carly commented, "At times

I don't have to tell [Heather] what I'm thinking—she already knows" (Carly, Int 4).

Carly also supported Heather with behavior management issues. This was apparent on

several occasions when Heather was leading the class. For example, the following incident

happened as Heather was reading a story to the children while they sat on the carpet. A few

behavioral issues had already taken place:

> There was a lot of noise and messing around on the carpet. Carly came over to help with
>
> discipline, then went back to help set up lunch…. Children were still messing around.
>
> Carly moved Erin and Andrew to somewhere else on the carpet. Carly was standing by
>
> the shelves separating the carpet area from the table area. "Ok Heather I think you need
>
> to stop." Heather agreed: "Yep." Carly moved Isaac to a spot near me. Carly talked
>
> about appropriate behavior. She sent Jonathan to the library. H: "Ok kids – Are you
>
> ready to hear the story?" C: "I think you should just sit there." Carly talked to the
>
> children about showing respect to Heather. "I don't like it and Heather doesn't like it."
>
> Children sat quietly on the carpet still a bit fidgety. C: "Heather, maybe you should talk
>
> about rules when sitting on the rug." Heather talked about rules. (Team 2, Obs 6)

Carly was supporting Heather with discipline issues during a whole class story reading. When

the children were still not behaving despite Heather's efforts, Carly intervened. Although this is

a story of support, it's important to note that this is also a story of power. Carly told Heather

what to do: "I think you need to stop," "I think you should just sit there," "Maybe you should

talk about the rules." Carly was very much in charge in Team 2.

The power differential. Although conflict was never observed within the team, a few

issues regarding the power differential surfaced during Heather's interviews at the end of the

school year. Heather's comments suggested that there were some minor conflicting issues, but they were never voiced—Heather kept them to herself. She described the following situation:

> There was one day that I was irritated with [Carly] and that was it…. It was the last week of school. We were going to go out and clean toys and she was sending them back. I was [thinking] "you're kind of undermining me" and I was like "rrrr" for about 15 minutes and then I thought well if she wants to do it a different way okay. (Heather, Int 2)

Heather, momentarily, felt annoyed that Carly was telling the children to do something different than Heather had already told them. She felt like she didn't have a voice, as Carly's power within the team was very apparent. This only happened once throughout the eight months Carly and Heather had worked together, and Heather got over it quickly, probably because she accepted Carly's power as LT and her own position as AT.

Other issues relating to Heather's lack of voice in the team were also discussed in Heather's end-of-year interviews: "I wish she would have involved me a bit more in lesson planning. I'm grateful she did it I guess, but … I would have liked to have been a bit more involved and had more of a say" (Heather, Int 1). When asked if she'd ever mentioned her desire to help with lesson planning, Heather said:

> Well she always did it with her friend, Ruth, … and I did talk to her a couple of times: "Bring it in on Friday and we'll do it together" but she would be just like, "I don't even want to do that—I just want to have it done," which I understand because I have the same personality and so I was fine with it. (Heather, Int 1)

Although Heather seemed to be accepting of the way Carly organized the team throughout the school year, hints of discontent were visible in her final interviews. Heather, perhaps, was not as happy in her role as it seemed. She wanted to have more input in the daily activities.

Despite both teachers acknowledging their many similarities, Heather also recognized some differences. For example, she said, "I love Carly to death, but I feel like our ways with challenging children was definitely different and so I think in that way we were kind of pushing against each other which made it hard" (Heather, Int 1). Up until Heather was interviewed in the summer, it appeared that the teachers agreed on everything. Carly commented, "We agree on a lot of the same things, strategies to use…. For the most part we pretty much agree on everything" (Carly, Int 4). A lack of observational evidence and no mention of these issues in Carly's interview suggest that Heather's perceived differences were never discussed. Heather was silently carrying some challenges of her own—differences between the team members of which Carly may not have even been aware. Why Heather chose to stay silent is not clear. It may have been because Heather simply accepted that Carly was at liberty to run the classroom the way she chose. Maybe Heather did not care enough to mention her concerns—she had a busy life after school that she was more concerned about. Or perhaps she wanted to maintain a strong relationship within the team and wanted to avoid any conflict—there was plenty of that with people outside of the team. Heather's feeling of her lack of voice in the team was not evident until her end-of-year interviews, after the team had been dissolved.

Hopes for the future. Carly and Heather had got through a challenging first year at SSHS. Their teaming had been an important factor in their survival. However, their year together had come to an end. In their final interviews they both discussed their aspirations for the future.

Next year. Early in the year, amidst the pressure, the stress, and the conflict, both teachers had commented that they were looking for a new job. However, by the end of the year, they had both decided to stay at SSHS another year. In her final interview, Carly said, "Now that I've made it this far … I'm not saying that I'm not going to keep my options open, but I am willing to come back and try again and see how the next school year goes" (Carly, Int 5).

At the end of the school year, Carly was assigned to teach for two weeks in the SSHS Summer School, where she would get to assist her education specialist working in a lead teaching position. Carly said, "For two weeks I'll be at their summer program…. The first week Lisa's going to be teaching. I'll be able to be with Lisa and see how she teaches. I think it'll be good for me" (Carly, Int 5). At this point in the year, Carly was open to the possibility of watching and learning from others to improve her own teaching. She was "excited to be with Lisa" (Carly, Int 5), possibly because she had spent five months developing a relationship of trust with her. Carly valued the difference Lisa had made to her experience in SSHS.

Despite the support Carly and Heather had been to one another, the two teachers would not be working together the following year. Even though they had both expressed interest in working with the other again, neither teacher had requested it in their letter of intent. When asked whether she had asked to work with Heather again, Carly said, "No, I didn't think of putting that in there and she didn't for me either. So maybe they just assumed that … we didn't want to be together" (Carly, Int 5). The fact that the teachers had previously said that they wanted to work together again and that neither of them had thought to request it is somewhat curious. Based on Heather's surprising revelations in her end-of-year interview, maybe their team was not as ideal as it appeared to be. Indeed, when asked what the worst thing about Heather was, Carly replied very quickly, "Sometimes she can be negative … [about] kids'

consistent bad behaviors, or parents that she finds annoying—things like that" (Carly, Int 4).

Similarly, when asked what the worst thing about Carly was, though Heather struggled to answer

the question, she said, "You know—I think that probably the worst thing about her was she was

kind of hard on Julie and Sandra and I wish she would have kind of stepped back and thought—

they're not bad" (Heather, Int 1). Although they never volunteered the information themselves,

both teachers were aware of things that bothered them about the other teacher.

Despite acknowledging a weakness in Heather, Carly still expressed a high opinion of

her. When asked what her hopes were for the following year, Carly said, "I am hoping that—

first and foremost—that I have a really good, helpful, equally as awesome assistant as Heather"

(Carly, Int 5). In talking about her hopes for the upcoming year, Heather said, "This year, I think

I want to … spread my wings and kind of do things more my way and I don't know if we were

together I'd feel more restricted," (Heather, Int 1). As mentioned previously, Heather wanted to

be more involved in lesson planning and she wanted to have more of a say in the teaching and

management of the classroom. She felt that her style of teaching was different from Carly's:

> We have a different teaching style—I noticed that! I'm more of a like—let's put this into
>
> a game and try to make things really fun…. Whereas I think with Carly it's just like—this
>
> is what we're supposed to teach them so let's just do it. (Heather, Int 1)

Thus, even though the teachers were able to work well together for their first year with SSHS,

Heather felt like she would like to grow as a teacher and be given more responsibility. She

realized that might not happen if she remained with Carly. However, not knowing with whom

she would be teaching was a cause for concern: "I'm super nervous … because nobody knows

who I'm working with. Everyone I've asked, nobody knows who she is" (Heather, Int 1).

Neither Carly nor Heather knew with whom they would be working the following year, and both

teachers knew that no matter what challenges arose, having a supportive partner teacher with whom they got along could have a significant impact on their experiences.

Beyond next year. As far as aspirations for the future, Carly expressed an interest in promotion within SSHS: "I don't know yet if [I want to be] a supervisor, because I don't know what that all entails… But I would definitely like to move up the scale and be out of the classroom" (Carly, Int 5). Carly knew that she didn't want to remain as a HS teacher for too much longer, but felt happy continuing to work with SSHS.

When asked what her aspirations for the future were, Heather responded, "I think I plan on me staying another year. I don't know for sure. I want to go back to school hopefully next year" (Heather, Int 2). Her aspirations to stay with SSHS were not as strong as Carly's, though she was willing to give it some more time. Heather had begun a bachelor's degree in education several years earlier, but had left due to health reasons. She said she would like to go back to school to complete her degree. When asked if she would have any desire to return to HS as an LT, she said, "No—I don't want to work for Head Start—not at all…. I think that I would just apply to the school districts. I'm probably going to go into special education" (Heather, Int 2). For Heather, working at SSHS was just a job to keep her going until she moved over to what she really wanted to do. For Carly, however, by the end of the year her work at SSHS had turned into more of a career, with possibilities of moving up the ladder.

Summary. Heather and Carly had a challenging year as new teachers at SSHS. Even though Carly could have kept Sandra, who may have been more knowledgeable in terms of the practices of SSHS, she chose an AT who knew as little about SSHS as she did. Carly preferred to work with a teacher with whom she shared more characteristics: they were similar in age, similar in life circumstances, and similar in ways of working. These similarities enabled the

teachers to connect and relate to one another, and their similar understanding of their roles supported a harmonious teaming relationship. Both teachers acknowledged and accepted Carly's authority to lead the class. Heather's supporting role was important to Carly as they experienced demanding challenges in their first four months together, including managing children's behavior and not knowing how to do their job in terms of SSHS's paperwork and procedures.

These challenges resulted in a threat to Carly's identity. Not knowing how to do her job and having problems with children's behavior management threatened her feelings of self-efficacy. To cope with this identity threat, Carly blamed others for making her job more difficult. As a result, she experienced conflict with almost every other person with whom she worked. Carly also relied on the support she received from her teammate, as her battles became Heather's battles.

Although there had been no evidence during the school year of any in-team conflict, it became apparent after the school year was over, that Heather may have been struggling somewhat with a sense that she had no voice in the team. Heather had chosen to comply with her role as assistant, which resulted in a smooth teaming relationship. However, Heather's own identity was threatened as her desires to contribute more fully to the team were suppressed.

Cross Case Analysis

In answering the main research question: How do young, educated, female teachers and their assistants experience teaming, five themes emerged from the data across both cases: understanding of roles; organization of work; use and resistance of power; development and management of conflict; and support from within and outside the team. Through a cross-case analysis, as described in Chapter 3, six assertions were developed, which are essentially conclusions that "can be made with some confidence" (Stake, 2006, p. 14). The five themes are

part of one or more of the assertions and identity emerged as an important factor, which was woven throughout the five themes. Each assertion will be presented here along with a discussion of that assertion.

Assertion 1. The teachers' understanding of their overarching roles (general purpose in the class) in the team was influenced by their assigned hierarchal position in the team and by their teacher identity, which was shaped by their educational and work experience. The two teams greatly differed in the way each partner teacher understood her overarching role. The teachers in Team 1 disagreed with one another in their understanding of their roles, whereas the teachers in Team 2 agreed with each other. This difference between the two teams led to a very different teaming experience.

Karen and Carly, the LTs of both teams, saw a hierarchical team structure with the LT role above that of the AT. The LTs were assigned overall power and responsibility within their team due to their position in SSHS, and they believed their role was to lead and direct the team and the class. Thus, within the bounds of HS policy, the LT took the lead in making decisions concerning the class.

Laura, the experienced AT of Team 1, disagreed with this view. Although she recognized that the LT had overall responsibility for the class, she believed that the role of LT and AT should be much more equal in power and responsibility than the belief espoused by her LT. Laura did not believe her role was to assist the LT. She believed her role was to teach, love, and nurture the children. Laura placed greater emphasis on the word 'teacher' in her job title. She saw herself as a teacher just as much as the lead.

Heather, the AT of Team 2, agreed with the LTs understanding of their overarching roles. She believed her role was to assist and support the LT. From her job title, Heather assigned

greater emphasis to the word 'assistant', as opposed to 'teacher'. Although she was involved in teaching responsibilities, Heather believed that her primary role was to do whatever her LT needed her to do. If Carly needed her to teach, she would teach, or if Carly needed her to answer the phone or to change diapers that is what she would do.

The teachers' understanding of their roles is partly explained by the similarities and differences in their educational and experiential background and their current life circumstances. The two LTs of the teams were similar in that they both held a bachelor's degree and they had both taught in HS as a LT for two years. As stated previously, they understood their roles in a similar way.

The ATs, who understood their overarching roles very differently from one another, were similar in terms of education (both had completed part of an education degree), but different in terms of experience. The ATs' understanding and expectations of their roles were likely influenced by the requirements and norms of the two different educational settings in which they obtained their experience.

Laura began her experience with HS as an AT. After several years in this capacity she was promoted to LT and then after two years decided to step back down to AT, because the challenges she faced as LT were too stressful for her. Essentially, in Laura's understanding of the LT position, experience was important. Laura also recognized the value of education. Thus, with her experience and Karen's education she saw them as equals. She felt they both had a lot to offer the team.

Heather was new to ECE and HS. With no experience in this capacity she was learning what the role of AT was in this new context. Heather's work experience was working as an aide in the school district for teachers of students with special educational needs in elementary,

secondary, and special schools. In such settings, the requirements and school culture produce much sharper distinctions between the position of teacher and aide than in ECE. For example, the possession of a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate has been a longstanding requirement for teachers in elementary and secondary schools (Ackerman, 2004; Gomez, Kagan, & Fox, 2015, whereas it is only a recent requirement for LTs in HS. Thus, Heather's understanding of the AT role as subordinate to the LTs role was likely fairly well entrenched.

Prior to the recent change in educational requirements, the roles of LTs and ATs in ECE were much more closely aligned, with a huge overlap in responsibilities. Indeed, Robins and Silcock (2007) suggested that when walking into a preschool classroom, it is often difficult to tell the LT and AT apart. The distinction in LT and AT positions in HS had often previously been based on experience. LTs usually began their work in HS as an aide or AT and, with experience, rose to an LT position. As LTs in SSHS are now required to have a bachelor's degree, this scenario is likely to become less common (Bullough, et al., 2012).

With recent changes in HS generally and SSHS particularly, distinctions between LT and AT are increasing. A bachelor's degree now distinguishes the position of LT from AT; LT is now a salaried position at SSHS, whereas ATs are still paid an hourly wage; and LTs and ATs are now distinguished from each other within SSHS classrooms by colored aprons. Amber, Team 1's education specialist, said, "[W]e didn't used to have the aprons so when you walked in the classroom you didn't know who was lead and who was assistant, which I liked better" (Amber, Int 1).

Assertion 2. The way each team organized their work was influenced by the teachers' identities and the way they understood their overarching roles in the team. The two teams organized their work responsibilities very differently.

Work responsibilities in Team 1 were split almost equally down the middle. The teachers, for the most part, did the same work, and work responsibilities were clearly defined. The teachers took turns teaching the whole group, creating weekly planning forms, and completing menial tasks. Each teacher worked with specific children during small group teaching and each teacher was responsible for documentation, parent-teacher conferences, and home visits for the students in her group. One of the only tasks the LT kept for herself was completing end-of-month paperwork. In many ways teamwork and collaboration seemed almost non-existent, even though, during the working day, the expectation was for the teachers to work together. For example, during free choice time and outside playtime, both teachers were responsible for the whole class together; and when one of the teachers was teaching the whole group, the other teacher was expected to support with children's behavioral challenges where needed.

In contrast, the work in Team 2, for the most part, was not specifically assigned to either teacher. The teachers took turns teaching the whole class and Carly did all the lesson planning. Other than those responsibilities, the LT and AT worked together to get the job done. Both teachers chipped in with whatever needed doing. If one of the teachers noticed, for example, that something needed cleaning, she would clean it. If the end-of-month paperwork needed doing either teacher would complete it. Both teachers were involved in collecting and recording assessment documentation for any of the children, and parent-teacher conferences and home visits were conducted together. Clearly, the two teams had very different patterns of working.

Team 1 discussed their respective responsibilities at the beginning of the year, at which point Laura, the AT, volunteered to do a lot of extra work (complete planning every other week and take responsibility for assessment documentation for children in her small groups). Thus,

the assigning of some of the work was a joint decision between the LT and AT: the AT volunteered and the LT agreed. However, some areas of work organization were decided solely by the LT. For example, Karen chose to complete all end-of-month paperwork herself and chose for the teachers to conduct home visits separately, despite Laura's protests.

Reasons for such an organization were likely a result of a few factors. Laura volunteered to do more work than was expected in her role as AT because of the important part her job played in her life. She had few responsibilities outside of school and teaching was a central part of her identity. Because of her 12 years' experience in teaching, Laura felt she was equal in teaching ability as Karen, who had considerably less experience, and taking on the same work as her LT was a way for Laura to equalize their roles and raise her status within the team.

In contrast, Karen had a much greater priority outside of HS: her baby. Karen's primary identity was that of mother. Therefore, she was happy to have her AT take on a large share of the work. Indeed, it appeared that Karen's main motivation in the organization of work was to increase efficiency. Karen also had a strong identity at work as the LT. Consequently, although she was happy to share the work responsibilities with Laura, she was not willing to share her power or status within the team. She held on to her assigned power in making the final decision in work organization.

The organization of work responsibilities within Team 2 was also decided by the LT, who had a strong identity as lead. Apart from teaching every other day, specific work responsibilities were not assigned to the AT. Thus, both teachers had to be on board with the system for it to work. As Heather identified with her role as assistant, she was willing to support Carly's way of working. The reason Carly chose to organize the work in this way is not entirely clear. It may have been connected to Carly's relative inexperience in working with and directing

other adults in the classroom. It may have been connected to the tremendous pressure and struggles she experienced as a first-year teacher with SSHS. For the first few months she was simply surviving from day-to-day trying to figure things out. She needed flexibility in her AT to just help out wherever she could. It may have simply been due to a lack of communication. Heather claimed the team had not discussed their responsibilities, whereas Carly claimed they had and Heather had said she was happy to do whatever Carly needed help with.

A further difference between the two teams concerned the AT's feelings about working outside of school hours. In contrast to the AT of Team 1, who volunteered to take on extra work, the AT of Team 2 fully embraced her identity as assistant and resented doing any work outside of school hours. She had a busy life outside of school. A second job working in an administrative capacity for a construction company and family responsibilities meant that teaching was not central to her identity as it was for the AT of Team 1.

Assertion 3. *Role confusion for assistant teachers resulted from a lack of communication, a lack of training, and a change in polic*y. Although both LTs believed they had made their expectations clear to the ATs, both ATs expressed confusion. Both Laura and Heather said they did not really know what their LTs expected of them, a situation common for ATs in many areas of education (Blatchford, Basset, Brown, & Webster, 2009; Bourke & Carrington, 2007; Ratcliff, et al., 2011; Robins & Silcock, 2007). The source of confusion, however, differed for the two ATs.

The role confusion in Team 1 was related to the teachers' differing views of their overarching roles. As the teachers understood the role of AT so differently, Laura was left feeling unsure as to what the LT expected of her. Given the recent changes in HS in terms of the educational requirements, and Laura's experience in HS, it is not surprising that she was

confused about her role. Her attempts to take a more prominent role in class decision-making were rejected by the LT, which caused her to question her role. Robins and Silcock (2007) found that the evolving nature of the AT position and a large overlap in responsibilities led to confusion both in terms of work responsibilities and status. Although Laura was not confused in her day-to-day classroom duties, she was confused when it came to her contribution to decision-making. She was doing the same work as the LT, but she did not have the same power. Laura learned in their early days of working together that Karen saw Laura's role as somebody to simply assist her in conducting her duties as LT, which left Laura feeling highly dissatisfied.

Heather, the AT of Team 2, was confused over her specific work responsibilities. This was unsurprising for a couple of reasons: a lack of training and a lack of communication. As described previously, this was Heather's first year teaching at HS and teaching in preschool. She had no experience and no training from SSHS. Thus she did not know what was expected of her. Heather commented on a number of occasions her disappointment that she had not received any introductory training from SSHS. However, SSHS tends to train their teachers with on-the-job mentoring from their partner teachers (Bullough, 2015; Bullough, et al., 2012), which is why an experienced teacher is usually paired with an inexperienced teacher. According to their job descriptions, LTs have the responsibility of mentoring their ATs; however, when the LT is also new to the organization and is unsure of the job requirements, this can be a challenge.

Although Carly had specified that she wanted Heather to teach every other day and would go through the lesson plans with her, she did not communicate to Heather any other work she wanted her to do. Heather was expected to see what needed doing and just help out. The system was working for the team and Carly was happy with Heather's contributions, but Heather's reported confusion suggests there was an element of doubt for her. The importance of clearly

defined roles (Devecchi & Rouse, 2010; Newstrom & Davis, 1993) and the importance of clear communication (Ratcliff, et al., 2011) regarding expectations in terms of roles and responsibilities have been noted in the literature. However, when the LT was trying to figure out the job herself, her ability to direct her AT was limited.

      Assertion 4. *Conflict intensified as power was used and resisted and as a teacher's identity was threatened.* The conflict in Team 1 was between the two teachers within the teaching team and was connected to the teachers' identities. Karen had a strong identity as the LT of the team. An important part of Karen's teacher identity was her education, which qualified her to be the LT. Karen believed that because she had a bachelor's degree, she knew more than Laura and knew what was best for the children. For Laura, being a preschool teacher was not just a job—it was who she was (see Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011). It was a huge part of her identity. Laura had "a deeply emotional attachment to her work" because she "invest[ed] her]self in [it]," as many teachers do. The result of this investment "means that the classroom and/or school become the main sites for the development of self-esteem and self-fulfillment" (van den Berg, 2002, p. 586).

As Karen held the legitimate power in the team, some of the decisions she made threatened Laura's identity in a number of ways. When Laura's ideas and suggestions were rejected or overridden by Karen, she felt her competency was being questioned and Karen's sense of superiority left her feeling inferior. Laura began to feel that she did not have a voice in the team. The power differential espoused by the LT and the way the LT used her power left Laura feeling insignificant and devalued, a scenario that is common when a power struggle exists and decision-making is centralized to the leader of a team (Anderson & Brown, 2010).

Laura had found a deep sense of belonging in working with preschool children; however, her sense of belonging was threatened within the team. Although it was Laura's negativity that drove Karen away, Karen's relationships with others at work, including the FAs and the next-door teacher, left Laura feeling excluded. Her sense of self-esteem was linked to her feelings of self-efficacy and belonging, and it was also linked to her actions in the team. She did not like her reactions to the teaming environment and did not like being wound up in her negative feelings; however, she did not know how to change.

Even though Karen held the legitimate power in the team, Laura was not completely powerless. She had the power to resist Karen's power, which she frequently did. Conflict arose within the team as Laura rejected the hierarchical power structure. As stated by van den Berg (2002), "The search for status and power plays an important role in the social relations within organizations. What cannot be acquired via a formal position is conquered within the everyday micropolitics of [work] life" (p. 582). In response to Karen's use of her formal, legitimate power, Laura took for herself a measure of power by resisting her LT's authority. She often ignored Karen; she complained about her decisions, sometimes verbally, but often silently through her body language; she told Karen what to do at times; and she was once observed deliberately doing the opposite of what Karen had told her. She also frequently made comparisons between herself and her LT, alluding to her own superiority.

In rejecting the power structure, Laura was engaged in status conflict. She was using techniques to raise her own status in the hierarchy. Bendersky and Hays (2012) described people engaged in status conflict as, "undermining or devaluing another's contribution to the group's task or accentuating one's own contribution" (p. 328), each of which was seen in Laura's behavior. She was also observed, "derogating [Karen's] opinions, … asserting superior …

competence" (p. 329), and she "shared little information, ignored information that was shared by others, and withdrew from … conversations" (p. 328).

Unlike Team 1, the conflict experienced by Team 2 involved people from outside of the instructional team—SSHS management, their temporary supervisor, their FAs, the teachers in the adjacent classroom, and school personnel with whom they shared a site. The conflict experienced by Team 2 developed as the teachers, particularly Carly, felt a lack of support from other HS staff, which ultimately threatened her identity. As a new teacher to SSHS, Carly did not know how to do her job. She was experiencing behavior management issues and she did not know how to navigate the paperwork and procedures of SSHS. She was also assigned a CLASS coach to help her raise her CLASS scores and was asked to watch a master teacher at work. She also frequently felt criticized by others for doing the wrong thing. Day and Gu (2010) suggested that a teacher's identity "is likely to relate to their sense of effectiveness" (p. 17). Similar to Laura in Team 1, the threat to Carly's identity led her to react negatively to those around her.

Threat to teacher identity is the root source of conflict that was common to both teams. Both the AT of Team 1 and the LT of Team 2 perceived their identity as competent teachers to be challenged. However, the conflict experienced by the teams affected each team differently. As the conflict came from within Team 1, it resulted in a weakened and negative teaming experience for the teachers within the team. And as the conflict came from outside of Team 2 and as the AT saw her role as supporting the LT, the teaming experience for the teachers of Team 2 was more positive, if still oppositional.

Assertion 5. *The teachers had difficulty addressing conflict.* In her descriptions concerning conflict, Carly sounded like she could be quite confrontational at times. But in fact, it appeared that all four teachers most commonly avoided verbal communication when it came to

addressing conflict. Teachers may avoid verbal communication for any number of reasons.

Although Laura frequently used facial expressions and body language to communicate to Karen

that she was annoyed, she rarely shared with her the reasons for which she was annoyed.

Withholding information in this way could be a form of power used to punish the other person.

Laura's lack of desire to resolve the issues, enabled her to feel justified in her negative feelings

towards Karen. Detert and Edmondson (2006) found that speaking up at work was difficult for

people lower in the hierarchy. They suggested people lower in the hierarchy need to "believe it

is safe and worthwhile" (p. 6) for "upward voice" (p. 3) to occur. Within Team 1 there was

certainly little trust between the teachers; and in her final interview, Laura commented that she

felt like there was no point in discussing the issues, as Karen would always find a reason to

justify her choices. Detert and Edmonson (2006) also suggested that some people choose to stay

silent because they feel they lack the skills necessary and tend to become "highly emotional or

overly-aggressive" (p. 21). As Laura felt so wound-up emotionally concerning her status in the

team, she may have been concerned about losing control in her communication. Carly indicated

that she didn't know how to tell Rosa she didn't want coaching and that she was worried about

hurting her feelings. Sometimes communication is avoided to prevent an uncomfortable

situation. Finally, communication concerning conflict may be avoided in an attempt to preserve

the relationship, which may have been the reason there was no evidence of Heather's minor

conflicts within the team until after school had finished. Whatever the reasons for

communication avoidance, the result was that conflict was rarely resolved.

      Assertion 6. *When intense conflict was present, support from others was important to*

individuals to help them feel validated. However, that same outside support may have been

detrimental to the team. In dealing with conflict, three of the four teachers (Karen, Laura, and

Carly) said that they "vent" to someone else. For Team 1 support came from people outside of the team, whereas for Team 2 much of the support came from within the team. Karen said that she talked to her mom, her husband, and the AT in the adjacent classroom; Laura talked to her mom and the team's education specialist; Carly and Heather talked to family members and to each other.

Although Amber, Team 1's education specialist, satisfied Laura's need to feel validated, she also facilitated the development of a deeper wedge between the teachers in the team as she agreed with Laura and quietly criticized Karen. This left Laura feeling justified in her negativity towards her LT. As the team's supervisor, Amber was in a perfect position to encourage communication and the development of trust, two key elements identified by Amber, of effective teaming. However, instead, she exacerbated the conflict and contributed to the distrust between the teachers. She supported the teachers at an individual level as opposed to a team level. Telling each of them what they wanted to hear was detrimental to effective team functioning.

Personal validation also came from members of Team 1's extended team (the FAs and teachers in the adjacent classroom). Laura saw a division between the teachers. She believed that she had Amber and to some extent Mary (the LT from next door) supporting her, whereas Karen had Patricia, to some extent David (who were both FAs), and Angie (the AT from next door) supporting her. In Laura's mind, the wider team had split down the middle in supporting one or the other teacher. As the teachers were able to talk with one of their allies, their negative feelings toward the other teacher were validated and the issues simmered, thus driving a wedge further between the teachers of Team 1. The recruitment of allies has been reported to be a classic tool used in status conflict within the workplace (Bendersky & Hays, 2012).

Support between the teachers in Team 2 involved agreeing with one another and taking on each other's conflict, making it theirs. For example, both teachers expressed annoyance with SSHS for their lack of training and support, both teachers complained about the teachers next door, they both had issues with Rosa, the coach, they both felt the same challenges with their FAs, and they both experienced the same conflict with personnel from the elementary school. Although the teachers helped validate one another's feelings through this personal support, it did not necessarily help resolve conflict; it was simply a means of coping.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to explore how young, educated, female LTs and their ATs, working in a hierarchically structured team, manage their day-to-day working relationships with one another. Five main themes emerged from the data: understanding of roles; organization of work; use and resistance of power; development and management of conflict; and support from within and outside the team. Six assertions, as described in the previous chapter, were developed based on a cross-case analysis of the findings for the two teams. Issues of identity and power featured prominently in the six assertions and had a strong influence on the way the teams functioned. Consequently, theories of identity and power will be used to frame the concluding discussion.

The threat to a teacher's identity had a particularly significant impact on the functioning of the teams in this study. Identity process theory (IPT; Breakwell, 1986, 1993) is concerned with the process of identity formation, causes of identity threat, and mechanisms used to cope with identity threat. The teachers' personal and professional identities, threats to their identities, and the way they coped with identity threat were all central to the way the teams functioned. These three factors influenced the way the teachers understood their roles, the way they organized their work, and the way they experienced conflict, support, and power. Because power plays a significant role in IPT (Breakwell, 1986), and as power had such an important role in the way the teams functioned, Bourdieu's theory of power and practice (1977) will supplement the discussion.

The concluding discussion will begin with a brief outline of IPT (Breakwell, 1986) and Bourdieu's theory of power and practice (1977). This will be followed by a description of the

identity threats experienced by each teacher, the coping mechanisms they used, and the sources

of the teachers' identity threats. A brief discussion of the complexity of teaming will follow.

Then this discussion will conclude with the implications of the study, the limitations of the study,

and suggestions for future research.

Identity Process Theory

Identity has been defined as "the subjective concept of oneself as a person" (Vignoles,

Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006, p. 309) and develops over time as a result of

psychological processes operating within a social environment (Breakwell, 1986). Identity

formation involves the "biased processing of information in favor of self-interest rather than

accuracy" (Breakwell, 1993, p. 7). Breakwell suggests here that the way we process

information, and consequently view ourselves, is not based on reality, but on a need to develop

and maintain psychological well-being.

Identity formation is guided by several principles, which aim to protect and support an

individual's psychological well-being. In her original theory, Breakwell (1986) identified three

principles: self-esteem (a positive view of self), continuity (a sense of consistency of self over

time and across contexts), and distinctiveness (feelings of differentiation from others).

Breakwell (1993) later added self-efficacy (a positive view of one's abilities and a sense of

competence and control). Drawing on several other theories, Vignoles, et al. (2006) added

belonging (a feeling of connection with others) and meaning (a sense of purpose in one's life).

Identity threat occurs when a person receives information contesting these principles

(Breakwell, 1986). A variety of coping strategies are used to attempt to remove threat. For

example, people may redefine their social position, "inventing properties for the position which

previously did not exist" (p. 90). Others participate in activities which promote self-efficacy

when "the social position occupied threatens self-esteem" (p. 102). Some people engage in "outright conflict" (p. 113), while others comply with demands of authority (Breakwell, 1986).

A key factor of identity threat is the power structure, because interpersonal relationships are subject to power dynamics, which may affect identity. And membership in a "stigmatized, powerless, and subordinated" group may also cause identity to be threatened (Breakwell, 1986, p. 128).

Bourdieu's Theory of Power

Like IPT, Bourdieu (1977) incorporates both a social and a personal element into his theory of power and practice. He suggests that social structure and personal agency influence power relations. His theory includes three important concepts relevant to the experiences of the teaching teams in this study: *habitus*, *field*, and *capital*.

Habitus is the deeply ingrained socialized norms and tendencies that shape a person's behavior and thinking and is formed by an interaction between the social structure and the individual's free will. Habitus is heavily influenced and constrained by social structures. Bourdieu (1977) claims that the habitus of individuals who experience the same social structures will likely be similar. Habitus consists of deeply ingrained, unconscious dispositions, and is therefore fairly stable and transferrable across contexts. However, it is not fixed; it can change over time in response to different contexts (Swartz, 1997).

As society develops, it is increasingly divided into fields (Bourdieu, 1977). A field is a social arena which revolves around power struggles (Jenkins, 2002). Within each field, tacit rules of practice and power are formed. Different forms of capital are valued in different fields, and they are used to gain status and advantage in power struggles. Individuals can draw on the

capital they possess to give them advantage in the power relations they experience within a field (Bourdieu, 1986).

Teacher Identity Threats

As stated previously, identity threat occurs when a person receives information that challenges that person's basic psychological needs. The psychological needs defined by IPT include self-esteem, continuance, distinctiveness, self-efficacy (Breakwell, 1986, 1993), belonging, and meaning (Vignoles, et al., 2006).

Perhaps the most obvious threat to identity observed in the two teams was a threat to the teachers' feelings of self-efficacy. This was particularly evident for Laura (AT Team 1) and Carly (LT Team 2). Self-efficacy is the notion of competence and control (Breakwell, 1986). Based on previous experiences, both teachers had felt they were competent teachers, yet in their current positions, they were receiving information suggesting their lack of competence. The threat to Laura's sense of competence was a result of her position in the team hierarchy. As an AT, she was viewed by her LT and HS policy as subordinate in knowledge and skill to her LT. The threat to Carly's self-efficacy, on the other hand, was a result of her new position at SSHS. She felt she was unable to do her job properly due to a lack of institutional support and guidance in handling paperwork duties and the challenge of handling certain difficult behaviors of children in her class.

The threat Laura and Carly felt to their self-efficacy also threatened their sense of continuity, which is defined as the need to maintain a sense of consistency of self "across time and situation" (Breakwell, 1986, p. 24). Because they both had reason to believe they were competent teachers and as they were currently receiving information suggesting their lack of competence, their sense of who they were as teachers was being questioned.

The two ATs seemed to experience both a lack of control and a lack of meaning in their current teaching positions. This lack of control and lack of meaning was directly related to their position in the team hierarchy, which meant they had no decision-making power within the team without the consent of the LT. Both expressed their dissatisfaction with feeling like they had no voice within the team. The threat to Laura's (AT Team 1) sense of control and meaning was much more acute than Heather's (AT Team 2) because of the way the two teachers understood their roles. Laura understood her role as equal to that of the LT, however, Heather understood her role as one of support to the LT. Consequently, the lack of control and meaning Heather felt seemed to be less of a problem for her. Indeed, as she understood her position as one of support to the LT, her opportunity to support the LT brought some degree of meaning and purpose, and it was only at the end of the school year that her comments suggested she had also felt frustration in having little voice in the team. Additionally, Heather found meaning in other aspects of her life. For example, she had important and meaningful responsibilities within her family, which lessened the importance of her AT role in SSHS. Conversely, Laura had few meaningful out-of-school responsibilities, and she had previously experienced greater autonomy and sense of purpose within her job at HS when she held the position of LT.

Laura also felt a threat to her sense of distinctiveness, which is the desire to develop and maintain a sense of differentiation from others, or a need to feel unique, to feel recognized. Laura desperately wanted to be viewed as more than just an AT. She had 12 years' experience as a teacher at HS and wanted to feel valued for that. She felt like she was not given the recognition she deserved, both within the team and from others outside of the team. For example, although she said one of the reasons she did not want to be a LT was because she did not want to have to deal with upper management and federal reviewers, she also said "it's really

frustrating that they'll just sit there and talk with the lead" (Laura, Int 4), indicating her feeling of being unacknowledged and unimportant in her current position within her team.

Laura's negative relationship with her teammate and with others at her work site resulted in a threat to her sense of belonging. When she originally entered the profession, preschool teaching had provided Laura a deep sense of belonging. The threat to her feeling of belonging in her current work situation was likely reinforced as the LT's relationship with the FAs and the next-door AT strengthened. This ultimately left Laura feeling even more excluded within her own team.

Coping Mechanisms of Identity Threat

The threats the teachers felt to their identities had an important influence on team functioning because of the mechanisms the teachers used to cope with their identity threats. Perhaps the most obvious mechanism used by both Laura and Carly was negativism, which "involves outright conflict with anyone who would challenge the identity structure" (Breakwell, 1986, p. 113). Conflict was seen in abundance within the Team 1 relationship as Laura resisted the power structure and used a variety of methods common in the presence of status conflict, such as criticism, competition, and withdrawal (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). Conflict experienced by Team 2 was directed towards anyone outside of the team who challenged Carly's feelings of self-efficacy. Negativism often took place as Carly vented to others rather than directly to those to whom the negativism was directed. Placing the blame for her situation on others enabled the restoration, to some degree, of her feelings of self-efficacy and continuance.

Although negativism was a common way of coping with identity threat, it had the potential of compounding the identity threat experienced by the teachers. For example, the constant underlying conflict in Team 1 had the effects of straining the teaming relationship,

decreasing Laura's sense of belonging, and decreasing Laura's perception of her social value. Although the conflict in which Laura engaged may have enabled her to protect, to some degree, her sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem, it was not conducive to a healthy team. Indeed, the conflict and negative feelings within Team 1 escalated throughout the year because the challenges were never discussed and resolved.

Social support was another important coping mechanism used by both Carly and Laura. The social support Laura received from her education specialist provided a place of belonging for Laura, as well as validation that she was indeed worthwhile and competent. Carly found the same type of support in her AT, who provided validation that the problem was not with Carly, but with the situation she was in. Breakwell (1986) stated, "Many psychologists and counselors have argued that the provision of effective social-support networks is the answer to virtually all … psychological ills" (p. 110) because talking to caring others "offers individuals a chance to gain positive feedback about themselves and, in that way, to validate the most central aspects of their self-concept" (p. 111). Personal validation was important to the teachers when a threat to identity was present.

Another mechanism Laura used was a "re-definition or re-interpretation of the properties of the position occupied" (Breakwell, 1986, p. 90). Per the job descriptions and the perceptions of the other teachers in the study, Laura's social position as AT was subordinate to the position of LT. Her role was to assist the LT in a variety of tasks, not to take on an equal share of the work. Indeed, her position forbade her from working over 40 hours per week, yet she frequently took work home and did more work than was expected. In a sense, Laura was redefining her position in an effort to appease the threat she was feeling to her identity. When asked why she did the extra work, she claimed that it was just part of her job.

By doing so much extra work Laura was employing another of the coping mechanisms. She was engaging in an activity that would increase her self-efficacy. By taking on extra responsibilities she could prove to her LT, SSHS, and herself that her experience and knowledge was valuable, that she was still a competent teacher, and that she was important to the team.

The mechanism Heather used to cope with the threat to her sense of control and meaning was quite different to that used by the other teachers in this study. Heather suppressed her own needs and conformed to the expectations and needs of her LT. According to Breakwell (1986), "Compliance may be an interpersonal strategy which is used after others fail or it may be the strategy of first choice where its user has known others to use alternative strategies which have failed" (p. 121). Heather's choice of compliance may have been due to a few reasons. After being recruited into the team by Carly due to clashes with her first AT, Heather may have chosen to conform to the expectations of the LT to avoid any in-team challenges she had witnessed in Carly's previous team. Conformity brought with it a smooth teaming experience for Team 2 plus a sense of belonging, another important motivation in identity formation (Vignoles, et al., 2006).

A second reason for Heather's conformity may have been the meaning and purpose she found in other areas of her life, which meant her lack of meaning and control at work was of little importance to her. Accepting the subordinate position of AT, with a requirement of working only 40 hours per week, left Heather with time outside of school to attend to other responsibilities (a second job and caring for family members), from which she derived self-esteem, self-efficacy, and a sense of purpose and belonging.

A third reason for Heather's conformity may have been related to her lack of capital within the field of preschool and HS. Because this was Heather's first experience working in preschool and in HS, she had no capital to use in the hierarchical power dynamic. This

contrasted with Laura, the AT for Team 1, who had the embodied cultural capital of experience (Bourdieu, 1986). Laura knew how things worked and used that knowledge to resist the team power dynamic. However, Heather was new to HS and was developing her understanding of how things worked in her current team. This, coupled with her previous experience as an aide probably influenced the way she understood her role in the team. Both Heather and Carly believed the position as AT to be one of support and subordination to the LT, which led to a requirement of compliance. Whatever the reason for Heather's compliance, her development and growth as a teacher were hindered as a result.

Sources of Identity Threat

The formation and reformation of identity is a dynamic process in which psychological processes, social context, and historical background all play an important role (Breakwell, 1986). The social context was of particular importance in contributing to threats to the teachers' identities. The social milieu of ECE and HS, as well as changes in policy, seemed to be significant sources of identity threat. The prevailing political milieu of ECE is increasingly one of accountability and competition (Bradbury, 2012; Woodrow, 2007). It is at this macro-level context in which the values and norms of the field are created (Swartz, 1997). The federal organization of HS operates in this political landscape and is heavily influenced by this neoliberal ideology. From a Bourdieuian perspective, federal HS (the macro-level) holds the economic capital that gives it power to decide on the rules of the field, which determine the valued capital of the field. This, in turn, influences decisions made by SSHS (the meso-level) and the power relations played out within the team (the micro-level; Swartz, 1997).

Based on the outcome of a federal review, local HS organizations are faced with the possibility of losing funding. Consequently, the triennial federal review at SSHS had a

significant impact on the allocation of resources within the organization. The level of emphasis

placed on the federal review and the support provided to teachers is decided at the meso-level.

Carly, for example, who particularly felt unsupported by SSHS, was given extra support in her

class before and during the federal review, but once the review was finished, that support was

removed. She was given CLASS coaching to help her increase her CLASS scores, which was

the measure used by federal reviewers to determine program quality, but did not have the support

she felt she needed to figure out the paperwork system at SSHS during her first four months of

working there.

These meso-level decisions, influenced by the macro-level, affected the teachers and

teams at the micro-level. Although some of these decisions made the situation challenging for

the individuals in Team 2, particularly the LT, the team became unified as they struggled through

their challenges together. Heather, particularly, provided support to her LT, because of the

hierarchical power structure and the way she understood her role.

Another source of identity threat at the macro-level was the increase in educational

requirements of LTs. The policy instituted at the macro-level only required 50% of LTs to have

a bachelor's degree. Requiring only 50% of LTs to have a bachelor's degree, rather than 100%,

may have been to protect the jobs of very experienced LTs who did not have a bachelor's degree.

However, SSHS increased the educational requirements of LTs to 100%. This meso-level

decision may have been linked to the prevailing culture of competition. Having more teachers

with a bachelor's degree could place SSHS in a strong position as it competed with other HS

organizations. Alternatively, it may simply have been because the SSHS director believed that

educated LTs could provide a higher quality preschool experience for children of families living

in poverty, than experienced LTs. Whatever the reason, this change in policy had a significant impact on the relative value placed on education versus experience.

Team 1 was particularly affected by the policy change because of the teachers' differing role expectations. Laura, who had begun working in HS before the policy change had a very different understanding of the job of the AT than any of the other teachers, who had all begun working for HS after the policy change. Laura expected her role to be equal, or at least similar, to that of the LT. Although Laura had once been a LT, with the change in educational requirements, she was no longer eligible for such a position. Furthermore, her current LT believed that because of her bachelor's degree she was superior in ECE knowledge and skills than her partner teacher. In other words, the important capital required for the LT position when Laura had started working for HS was experience, which she had; however, with the change in the rules the valued capital was now a bachelor's degree, which she did not have.

In this scenario, as with Lasky's (2005) research that examines the potential impact of secondary school reform on teacher identity, policy change does not automatically lead to a change in a teacher's identity. Indeed, a teacher's initial understanding of what it means to be a teacher often prevails despite policy changes that are implemented later in their career. Bourdieu's notion of habitus, the personal dispositions developed early in life and the evolving understanding of how the world should work (Swartz, 1997) may be applied in the context of developing teacher identity. The teachers' primary beliefs and understanding that comes from their initial enculturation into the field are not discarded with a change in policy. One of the problems for Team 1 was the very different experiences the teachers had in their initial introduction to their chosen careers. As a result, their understanding of the relative importance of experience and education differed. It was not the policy itself that was a problem for the

team; it was the policy change, which resulted in differing views and expectations of the power distribution and teachers' roles within the team. In contrast to Team 1, the teachers in Team 2 had both entered ECE after the change in policy concerning the education of LTs. Thus, their habitus in this field was more similar in terms of the qualifications of a LT and their expectations of the power differential within the team. Indeed, as this was Heather's first year teaching in HS, her understanding of the teachers' roles in HS was just developing, based on her experiences working within her current team.

Although the macro- and meso-level influence what happens at the micro-level of teaching teams, the personalities, personal circumstances, and interpersonal skills of the teachers also impacted team functioning. For example, Karen's role as mother brought with it the strong desire for efficiency at work, which influenced the way the work was organized, which in turn may have influenced role expectations. Laura, who had the embodied cultural capital of experience (Bourdieu, 1990), provided a high degree of support in work duties, as she attempted to raise her status in the team. Carly gave little direction to other adults in her classroom, perhaps because of her inexperience in SSHS and perhaps because of her personality. What was noticeable with both teams was the challenge all teachers had in communication and managing conflict. Although there were some institutional systems in place to help teachers address conflict, such as having education specialists mediate team meetings, they were not always used and may not always have been effective. It seemed the teachers received very little support in fostering a culture of effective communication and understanding, which could have helped teachers understand each other and navigate the challenges they experienced.

The Complexity of Teaming

As was evident in the two cases of this study, teaming is complex. The two teams had very different teaming experiences. Team 1 was characterized by conflict and negativity. Team 2 was characterized by support and similarities between the teachers. Yet despite the conflict and negativity in Team 1, the teaming situation enabled the teachers to get their heavy workload completed efficiently. The team was able to meet the needs of the children and the requirements of HS. Despite the positive nature of Team 2's relationship, silent undercurrents of dissatisfaction existed.

The teaming experiences seemed to be largely influenced by the teachers' identities and the way they understood their roles. This, in turn, influenced the in-team power dynamic, which influenced both conflict and support within the team. When the teachers' understanding of their roles was congruent, the teachers were able to unite as a team and provide organizational and emotional support to one another, thus providing a largely positive teaming experience. However, when the teachers' fundamental understanding of their roles clashed, great challenges arose within the team.

The teachers' professional identities and their understanding of their roles were influenced by their past experiences, organizational structure, and institutional policy. As teachers in ECE have such vastly differing background experiences (National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team, 2013; Phillips, et al., 2016), the likelihood of teams consisting of teachers with fundamental differences in beliefs and understanding of preschool teaching is high. Additionally, changes in policy, such as the educational requirements of LTs may intensify the differences in teachers' perceptions and expectations of their roles.

The challenges experienced by the teams were exacerbated by a lack of effective communication. Even Team 2, who appeared to have very few in-team challenges, experienced communication challenges within the team. The hierarchical power structure of the teams may have made it difficult for the less powerful teacher (the AT) to speak up (Detert & Edmonson, 2006). Although education specialists were positioned to support the teachers and their teams, they were not always effective. Indeed, the work of education specialists in supporting teams seemed to largely consist of solving problems that arose, rather than actively fostering a culture of trust and communication within teams. Additionally, a substantial focus of SSHS was to pass the federal review and to gain the funding necessary to maintain the organization, for which the day-to-day communication and functioning of teams had little impact, ultimately placing team functioning and communication low on SSHS's priority list.

Teaming in ECE is complex. As the various elements of the classroom ecology are intricately connected (Kindermann, 2011), teams have the potential of influencing the learning and growth of young children. HS teachers placed together in a team are expected to get along and to get the job done. The teachers in both teams were successful in completing their necessary tasks and both teams managed to get through the year. However, both teams also experienced tremendous challenges. Teacher identity was central to the issues that arose and many of the issues were influenced by structural elements of SSHS and the wider environment of ECE.

Implications

The way in which teams are organized and supported has a significant impact on the educational environment and the wellbeing of the teachers within the teams. Therefore, careful consideration needs to be taken in thinking about and dealing with issues of teaming. A few

implications of this research have been identified, including the importance of teacher identity in the creation and management of teams and the need for increased institutional support in the development of effective teaching teams.

Importance of teacher identity. As teacher identity plays such a prominent role in teaming, acknowledging teacher identity in the configuration and development of teams may be beneficial. As seen in the descriptions of these teams and as noted by Amber, Team 1's education specialist, the background experience, knowledge, skills, and aspirations of teachers differ. Some ATs just want to be an assistant, performing more menial and supportive tasks, whereas other ATs prefer to have a more prominent role in the teaching aspects and decision-making of the job. Similarly, some LTs have a strong identity as a LT and prefer to keep a strong hold on power and decision-making, whereas other LTs may take a more relaxed and open approach to teamwork. Paying attention to who teachers are, their past experiences, their ways of working, and their teaching aspirations may be helpful in the formation and development of healthy, effective teams.

Importance of institutional support. The logistics of assigning teachers to teams is already very challenging, and adding professional aspirations and expectations to the task of forming teams could prove impractical. Thus, it may be more beneficial to increase and improve institutional support that could help teachers increase their understanding of their own and partner teacher's identity and to navigate issues that arise within their teams.

One example includes the creation of personal job descriptions. To consider the identity of teachers, and to help alleviate the challenge of role confusion (as experienced by both ATs in this study), it may be beneficial for meso-level institutions such as SSHS to support teachers in negotiating their own job descriptions, and also discussing their past experiences, their current

life circumstances, and their future aspirations. As flexibility has been noted as important when LTs and ATs are working together (Devecchi & Rouse, 2010), teachers could be given the opportunity throughout the year to revisit and revise their job descriptions, reflect on their work together, and continue the discussion of their identities. Involving the team's education specialist in the process to act as mediator and to also get to know the teachers could also benefit team functioning. As educational specialists come to know their teachers better, they are more likely to know how they can best support them. Boyd and Pasley (1989) proposed that teachers should be involved in the development of their own job descriptions and Fitzgerald and Theilheimer (2013) noted the importance of team members feeling known by their colleagues and supervisors. Bullough (2015) suggested that "teachers needed time set aside to talk with other teachers and the education specialists about who they were as people, what mattered to them, and how they were doing" (p. 425).

Teachers and education specialists also need professional development if they are to navigate more effectively the challenges that arise with teaming. Professional development needs to focus on promoting communication, understanding, and trust, and developing skills in communication and conflict management. First, teachers and education specialists need to understand that conflict is a normal part of relationships and of organizational life (Valentine, 1995) and can increase team effectiveness if managed well (de Wit, et al., 2011). They also need to be aware of different ways of managing conflict (Johnson, 2008) and given opportunities to develop skills for effectively handling conflict at work. Teachers in this study were seen multiple times encouraging and teaching students to "use [their] words" and supporting them in resolving conflict, yet amongst peers, the teachers struggled to do so themselves. Education specialists also need to understand how to help create an ethos of communication and

understanding and to develop the skills to support teachers in effective conflict resolution. Supporting teachers in identifying identity threats, and also strengthening their communication and conflict management skills to enable them to negotiate their roles more effectively, will likely help team functioning. Professional development focusing on these issues is needed at both the pre-service and in-service stages.

Attention needs to be paid to the way teams are functioning in ECE. It is a considerable challenge for local HS organizations to allocate time and resources for addressing teaming issues amongst the demands placed on them by federal HS. However, attending to the human aspect of teaming may improve the overall experience of teachers and consequently of the children they teach.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this research. First, this research consists of the cases of only two teams, so the findings are very specific to the context of these four teachers in this HS organization. In addition, finding teachers to participate in the study was challenging. With a high attrition rate amongst young, female, educated teachers, there were few teachers available for selection. With the new intake of young, educated, female teachers and with the upcoming federal review, only the names of teachers thought to be able to handle the added pressure that could arise from participation in a research study were provided. Thus, the selection of participants was very limited.

As participant selection proved to be difficult, data collection did not begin until approximately a month into the school year. Thus, the data collected reflects teachers' beliefs and views about teaming, their role in HS, and their professional aspirations only after they had already worked together for a month. Responses in interviews were influenced by their

experience with their partner teacher. For example, Laura's response that she felt "very little as an individual" and that she was "at the bottom of the totem pole" (Laura, Int 1) in her first interview may have been a result of her interactions with Karen in the first month, rather than her general feelings about her position.

Another limitation in this research was the lack of data in Team 2 for the AT. With a change in ATs, there was a change in the team that initially agreed to participate in the study. The new AT said that she was willing to participate in the research. However, as the year progressed she hesitated and would not agree to be interviewed. She did participate in two interviews at the end of the year after school had finished. Hence, observations and informed conversations were the only forms of data for the AT of Team 2 available throughout the year. Issues arose in Heather's end-of-year interviews, for which there were no other data available. Thus, some information obtained from Heather was not triangulated.

Finally, for ethical reasons, it was decided not to conduct a member check. Without the input of the participants themselves, it cannot be guaranteed that the conclusions made about each participant are accurate. Care was taken to triangulate the data as much as possible, and alternative explanations were considered throughout the analysis and writing phases. Consequently, the findings of this research case study are open to interpretation.

Recommendations for Future Research

As the teaming issues identified in this study are based on the experiences of only four teachers, far greater research is needed to understand how teams function in ECE. Similar studies examining the exploration of teaming for other teams working both within HS and other ECE settings could provide further insights into additional challenges and issues faced by teaching teams.

Examining teaming issues with a larger sample of teachers through interviews, focus groups, and surveys could help to extend our understanding and determine the extent to which the issues identified in this research are applicable to others. Of particular interest would be identifying various demographic groups and various combinations of teacher teams to find patterns of challenges faced by teaching teams based on varying teacher characteristics.

The hope of illuminating the challenges teachers face in teaming is to lead to an improvement in team effectiveness. Therefore, it may be particularly beneficial to research what the teachers themselves feel would help to improve teams. Research has already been conducted at the elementary level to examine the skills needed for effective team teaching, as perceived by both ATs and LTs (e.g., Bedford, et al., 2008). Similar research could be conducted for teachers working in ECE.

Finally, creating professional development focusing on teaming for both pre-service teachers and in-service teachers is an important step in helping to improve teaming. Studying the effectiveness of professional development in improving teaming may lead to a better experience for teachers as well as a greater effectiveness of teams in teaching children. As stated by Malone and colleagues (2001), "The extent to which teachers feel prepared for today's classrooms is thought to be influenced by the extent to which training in and opportunities for teamwork are embedded in professional development and direct practice" (p. 578). At present, professional development in teamwork is largely lacking for HS teachers and in ECE generally.

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APPENDIX A:

Data Collection Timeline

Team 1			Team 2		
Date	Data Collection	Duration	Date	Data Collection	Duration
09/26/13	Obs 1	3h 35m	09/26/13	Carly Int1	
10/08/13	Obs 2	3h 10m	10/08/13	Obs 1	2h 35m
10/15/13	Obs 3	3h 15m	10/15/13	Obs 2	2h 45m
10/16/13	Karen Int 2		10/22/13	Obs 3	3h 30m
10/17/13	Laura Int 1		10/28/13	Obs 4 (am)	3h 00m
10/29/13	Obs 4 (am)	3h 15m	10/28/13	Obs 5 (pm)	2h 45m
10/29/13	Obs 5 (pm)	3h 15m	11/01/13	Carly Int2	
11/12/13	Obs 6	3h 15m	11/12/13	Obs 6	3h 30m
11/12/13	Karen Int 3		11/12/13	Carly Int3	
11/14/13	Laura Int 2		11/19/13	Obs 7	3h 20m
11/14/13	Amber Int 1		11/25/13	Obs 8	3h 00m
11/19/13	Obs 7	3h 15m	12/03/13	Obs 9	2h 45m
11/25/13	Obs 8	3h 25m	12/16/13	Obs 10	2h 45m
12/12/13	Obs 9	3h 20m	01/22/14	Obs 11	3h 00m
01/22/14	Obs 10	3h 15m	01/28/14	Obs 12	3h 00m
01/28/14	Obs 11	2h 50m	02/05/14	Obs 13	2h 45m
02/06/14	Obs 12	3h 10m	02/10/14	Obs 14	3h 15m
02/18/14	Obs 13	3h 10m	02/18/14	Obs 15	3h 15m
02/25/14	Obs 14	3h 25m	02/24/14	Rosa Int 1	
03/13/14	Obs 15	3h 05m	02/24/14	Obs 16	3h 30m
03/13/14	Laura Int3		03/13/14	Obs 17	3h 45m
03/15/14	Karen Int4		03/27/14	Obs 18	3h 00m
03/27/14	Obs 16	3h 15m	03/31/14	Carly Int 4	
03/31/14	Obs 17	3h 10m	03/31/14	Obs 19	3h 20m
04/10/14	Obs 18	3h 15m	04/10/14	Obs 20	3h 30m
04/17/14	Obs 19	2h 50m	04/24/14	Obs 21	3h 25m
04/24/14	Obs 20 (pt conf)	3h 10m	04/30/14	Obs 22	3h 10m
04/30/14	Obs 21 (20)	2h 50m	05/05/14	Obs 23	2h 45m
05/05/14	Obs 22 (21)	3h 00m	05/23/14	Carly Int 5	
05/12/14	Obs 23 (22)	2h 00m	05/27/14	Heather Int 1	
05/27/14	Laura Int 4		06/06/14	Heather Int 2	
05/31/14	Karen Int 5				

APPENDIX B:

Interview Questions

October 2013 Interview

1. It's a new year in Head Start. How has the year gone thus far? Highpoints? Low points? Surprises? Concerns?

2. What has been the greatest challenge you've faced as a teacher this year in Head Start?

3. Looking ahead, do you have any particular concerns or worries for the year? (probe: Federal Review)

4. Talk about the children: At this point, do any of the children stand out as particularly needy or as being particularly delightful? Who and why?

5. Describe the families of the children. (Probe: How much do they help in class? Are you pleased with how your relationship with the families is developing? Any particular worries?)

6. Describe yourself as a teacher: Strengths? Areas that need work? Do you ever regret becoming a HS teacher? (probe: If yes, why? when?) Probe: Looking back, do you wish you had chosen a different career path? If so, what and why?

7. Describe the H.S. curriculum. Probes: get them to name names and talk about The Creative Curriculum.

8. We understand child assessment is an important part of Head Start. Please describe the system used? What do you think of this system? (probe: does it help you teach more effectively? Does it get at what you think is most important when teaching ECE?)

9. How is your team doing? How do you plan (and when do you plan)? Are plans still required weekly for approval by the educational specialists?

10. What is your most important responsibility as a Head Start teacher? How are you doing meeting (fulfilling) that responsibility?

November 2013 Interview

Federal Review Questions:

1. Can you tell me anything about how the federal review was conducted?
    (What do they know about the process itself?   What is at stake?).

2. What do you think about reviews of this sort?
    (What is their value (if any)? Are they fair?)

3. Did you directly participate in the review in some way?
    If so, what was the nature of your participation?
    Describe what happened.
    How do you think things went?

    a.   If they were observed:
    Did you change anything in anticipation of being observed by the reviewers (Probe: did you design a specific lesson with the reviewers in mind? Did you do anything different to normal?)

4. Have you heard anything from the SSHS leaders about the review?
    What feedback did you receive from the reviewers?
    a.   If they haven't heard anything ask if they anticipate any feedback/information on how things went?

5. How are you feeling now the review is over?

6. What is the general feeling among the teachers now that the review is over?

7. There has obviously been a lot of focus on the review. What will you focus on now that the review is over?

Parent Teacher Conference Questions

8. I know you recently conducted some parent-teacher conferences. How many of the children's parents were you able to see?
    How many more parents do you need to see?   When are you going to see them?

9. Who was involved in the parent-teacher conference?   AT?   FA?

10. Describe a typical parent-teacher conference for me.

11. How do you feel about parent teacher conferences?

    Is there anything you enjoy about them?
    Is there anything you don't enjoy about them?

12. Did you encounter any difficulties in your parent teacher conferences this year? Was there anything that went particularly well?

13. Which children are you most concerned about at the moment?   Can you tell me anything about those children's families?

14. Which children are you most pleased about?   Can you tell me anything about those children's families?

General Questions

15. At this point in the year, what specific things are you working on? What things are going well? And what, if anything, is going poorly? (Probe: How is your team doing?)

16. The organization of Head Start is quite complex. How is SSHS organized?
(Probe for their perception of upper management in head start)
How do you feel about the upper management at SSHS?
What things have they done (or decisions they have made) this year to support you and your work in the classroom?
Is there anything they have done that have made things more challenging for you?

March 2014 Interview

1. How's everything going in your job?
   a. Anything great?
   b. Any problems?
   c. Goals/hopes

2. I wanted to ask you about a few things that I've observed while I've been in your classroom that I didn't really understand:

   a. A few weeks ago you were leading the class and Laura had been cleaning and doing teeth. We went outside and you and Laura had this talk about the amount of time it had taken. I didn't really understand what had happened. Will you tell me about that?

   b. Before Christmas – fire drill. It was the morning so Laura was leading the class. You were trying to organize the fire drill. There seemed to be a bit of resistance from Laura. Help me understand what was going on there.

3. Teaming is a big issue in Head Start. What do you think are the big issues within teaming ?

4. I'm really interested in how teams work and how you figure things out. I'm going to begin a few sentences and I'd like you to finish them off:
   a. The best thing about Laura is …
   b. The worst thing about Laura is …
   c. The best thing about our team is …
   d. The worst thing about our team is …
   e. The best thing about me as a team member is …
   f. The worst thing about me as a team member is …

5. Tell me about home visits.
   a. How were they planned?
   b. Why did you choose to do them that way?
   c. Any surprises?
   d. Beneficial? What did you learn?

6. Tell me a bit about your family situation – Bobby out of work.
   a. How are you coping?
   b. Could you live on your salary alone?
   c. If you had the option to leave Head Start at this point would you?

7. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your experience so far this year?

May 2014 Interview

1. Tell me about your experience working for HS this year. (High/low points/ opportunities to develop yourself in your job as a teacher/personally

2. Organization of work – was there anything you did that Laura didn't do? How did you decide?

3. In what ways do you think you and Laura are similar/different?

4. If you could create a teaching partner that would be perfect for you what would he/she look like? How would he/she be the same/different to Laura?

5. What are yours and Laura's expectation of yourselves and each other?

6. Do you think Laura is good at her job? (What do you think she's good at?)

7. Do you think Laura thinks that you're good at your job? (What do you think she values in you?)

8. Tell me about the tensions that have arisen between you and Laura this year. How have they affected you? What have you done to cope? Any attempts to resolve?
   - As I think about the year, I wish I would have …
   - As I think about the year, I wish Laura would have …

9. I know you have this new assignment – what if you were still going to be with Laura next year – what things would you do differently?

10. On a scale of 1-10 rank how well you and Laura work together. Why a …? Can you think of an example where you think it was a 10/1?

11. Has being in this team improved your teaching? If so in what ways?

12. Do you and Laura have shared goals? Tell me about them.

13. On a scale of 1-10 rate your relationship with Laura/Amber/Patricia/David/ Mary/Angie/the children. Why a …?

14. What could make your job better?

15. What are your hopes for next year?

16. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your experiences this year?

APPENDIX C:

Categories and Codes

Categories	Codes	Analytic Codes
Conflict	Conflicting Issues Within Team	Differing Priorities AT Has No Voice Different Ways of Doing Things Too Much Expected
	Conflicting Issues Outside Team	Can't Do Job Properly Criticism of Teaching
	Dealing with Conflict	Avoidance Help from Others Dealing with it Together Directly
	Effects of Conflict	Home Life Classroom
Power	LT Uses Her Power	Overrides Choice/Suggestions Tells AT What Will be Happening Tells AT What To Do
	Shares Decision Making	Asks AT's Opinion Joint Decision-Making Gives Decision-Making
	Resistance of Power Structure	AT Ignores LT AT Tells LT What to do AT Resists LT's Decision AT Does Opposite of LT LT Disagrees with HS
	Powerlessness	Lack of Control of Self AT Feels She No Power at Work Lack of Control with Children Lack of Training
Roles & Responsibilities	Overarching Roles	Hierarchy Equal
	Organization of Work	Work is Split Exclusive to LT AT Takes Extra Work

		No Formal Assignment
	Clarity	Clear Understanding Unclear Understanding
Support	Children's Social, Emotional, Behavioral Issues	Support with Behavior Support with Social/Emotional Lack of Support
	Class Activities	LT Supports AT AT Supports LT Supervisor Support Support from Others Lack of Support
	Organizational Issues	AT Supports LT LT Supports AT Supervisor Support Support from Others Lack of Support
	Teachers' Personal/Emotional Issues	LT Supports AT AT Supports LT Supervisor Support Support from Others

APPENDIX D:

Cross Case Analysis Worksheets

Worksheet 2

The research questions or Themes of the multicase study

Theme 1: How did the teams understand their roles?
Theme 2: How did the teams organize their responsibilities?
Theme 3: How did the teams experience power?
Theme 4: How did the teams experience conflict?
Theme 5: How did the teams experience support?

Worksheet 3

Analyst's Notes while reading a case report

Case ID   WB

Synopsis of case:	Case Findings:
AT – 12 yrs exp with HS. Began as AT – moved to LT position with experience.	I. Life priorities and view of self influence organization of work responsibilities and view of position in team.
AT – primary identity as teacher. Little outside of school.	
LT – 2 yrs experience with HS – came straight in as LT with no prior experience.	
LT – primary identity mother but also strong id as lead teacher. Bachelor's degree important to her	II. Because of I the power differential led to a lot of status conflict.
Difference in ways teachers view hierarchy. AT disagrees with hierarchy – believes teachers are equal. She has a lot to offer.	III. L tried to raise her status within the team.
LT – maintains power structure	
AT – rejects power structure.	IV. When team relationships are poor, relationships/support from others are important. However, this can be detrimental to the team.
Work split – parallel teaching.	
A lot of conflict within team over power differential	
Teachers rely on others for support – may be damaging to team	V. Communication and team understanding is important in teaming.
Uniqueness of case situation for program/phenomenon: ?	
Relevance of case for cross-case Themes: Theme 1. H Theme 2. H Theme 3. H Theme 4. H	Possible excerpts for cross-case report: Page 10 "I don't see the lead as my boss or superior, I see the lead as my team mate" Page 10 "I'm not necessarily Laura's supervisor, but I do pull a bit more rank than her because of my position"
Factors (optional):	
Commentary:	

Worksheet 3

Analyst's Notes while reading a case report

Case ID   ER

Synopsis of case:	Case Findings:
Both teachers new to HS – little experience. Teachers united together to fight against conflict with everyone else. Teachers' understanding of their roles was the same. Power differential was strong but no problem because their view of their roles was the same. - LT telling AT what to do - AT complies to LT's wishes For both teachers it was just a job. Underlying conflict was present for AT, but it was never voiced – probably because she was fine with the hierarchy. Supported one another	I. Teachers view of who they are and their agreement on their roles and position leads to a smooth teaming experience. II. Power differential is strong but as teachers agree on their roles it isn't a problem. III. Team experiences a lot of stress and conflict with outsiders – leads to united team – agree with each other IV. Support within team – administrative tasks & behavior management
Uniqueness of case situation for program/phenomenon:	
Relevance of case for cross-case Themes: Theme 1. H Theme 2. H Theme 3. H Theme 4. H	Possible excerpts for cross-case report:
Factors (optional):	
Commentary:	

Worksheet 4

Estimates of Ordinariness of the Situation of Each Case and
Estimates of Manifestation of Multicase Themes in Each Case
W = highly unusual situation,   u = somewhat unusual situation,   blank = ordinary situation
M = high manifestation,   m = some manifestation, blank = almost no manifestation

	Case A	Case B
Ordinariness of this Case's situation:		
Original Multicase Themes		
Theme 1 How did the teams understand their roles?	M	M
Theme 2 How did the teams organize their work responsibilities?	M	M
Theme 3 How did the teams experience power?	M	M
Theme 4 How did the teams experience conflict?	M	M
Theme 5 How did the teams experience support?	M	M

High manifestation means that the Theme is prominent in this particular case study.
A highly unusual situation (far from ordinary) is one that is expected to challenge the generality of themes.
As indicated, the original themes can be augmented by additional themes even as late as the beginning of the cross-case analysis. The paragraphs on each Theme should be attached to the matrix so that the basis for estimates can be readily examined.

Worksheet 5

A Map on which to make Assertions for the Final Report

Case A	1	2	3	4	5
Finding I The teachers' understanding of their overarching roles was influenced by their professional identity, assigned position, and past experience.	H				
Finding II Disagreement in understanding of overarching role was central to team functioning.	H		H		
Finding III Organization of work responsibilities was influenced by identity, assigned position, current life circumstances, and past experience.	H				
Finding IV The AT rejected the power structure by ignoring and criticizing the AT, complaining about her decisions, telling her what to do, and doing the opposite of what she said		H	H		
Finding V The LT reinforced the power structure by making classroom decisions, rejecting L's suggestions, and correcting L		H	H		
Finding VI The teachers' opposing expectations of the power differential within the team led to status conflict.		H	H		
Finding VII The AT employed a number of techniques to try to raise her status – made comparisons, criticized, ignored, disagreed with Karen		H	H		
Finding VIII Because team relationships were poor, relationships and support from others was important to the teachers individually.				H	
Finding IX Relationships and support from others were detrimental to team functioning.			H	H	
Finding X The AT's inability to talk about the challenging issues meant they were never resolved.			H		H
Finding XI L didn't communicate because she thought there was no point, she doesn't like confrontation, she thought she couldn't, didn't trust AT			H		H
Finding XII The teachers' differing priorities, related to their reasons for working at SSHS, resulted in conflict and negativity from the AT.			H		
Finding XIII Support from both the LT and the AT sometimes had an element of power.		H		H	

Case B	1	2	3	4	5
Finding I The teachers' view of their roles was similar—the LT to lead, the AT to assist and support. Both teachers accepted the hierarchy.	H	M			
Finding II The AT was confused about her work responsibilities maybe because of differences in school district and HS, change in teams, work not assigned/communicated	H				M
Finding III The teachers had so much work to do, they both ended up working more than 40 hours per week – Heather just a bit but she resented it.	H		M		
Finding IV First 4 months were challenging because both teachers new to SSHS, neither had any training, and they didn't have an Education Specialist.		M	H	H	
Finding V The team became united through their struggles because of their agreement on their roles – Heather fully supported Carly.	H		H	H	
Finding VI Support was given to Team 2 for a couple of weeks before and a couple of weeks after the Review but then taken away.		M	M	H	
Finding VII Criticizing next-door teachers may have been a mechanism for Carly to feel better about her own teaching.			H		
Finding VIII Conflict with others was due to a perceived lack of support and sensitivity to criticism.			H	H	
Finding IX Carly dealt with conflict through confrontation, conflict avoidance, and through the help of her Ed Specialist			H	H	
Finding X The teachers believed it was because of their similarities they were able to work well together – similarities in life circumstances (able to have a personal relationship), personality, and way of working.				H	
Finding XI Support from Carly to Heather also looked like power.		H		H	
Finding XII Heather didn't have a voice in the team and she saw a few differences between her and Carly, but she didn't voice them – she went along with Carly's wishes		M	H	M	

A High mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the theme.

Worksheet 6

Multi-case Assertions for the Final Report

#	Assertion	Evidence in Which Cases
1	The teachers' understanding of their overarching roles in the team was influenced by their assigned position within the hierarchy, and their educational work experience.	WB ER
2	The way the work was organized in the team was influenced by the teachers' identity and the way they understood their overarching roles in the team.	WB ER
3	Role confusion is accentuated when teachers within a team disagree on their overarching roles or when their work responsibilities are not clearly delineated.	WB ER
4	Conflict intensified as a teacher's identity as a competent teacher was threatened.	WB ER
5	The teachers had difficulty addressing conflict.	WB ER
6	When intense conflict was present, support from others was important to individuals to help them feel validated. However, that same support could be detrimental to the team.	WB ER