

Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019

2018

An Examination of Perceptions and Intentions of Preservice Educators in Title I Settings

Annemarie Bazzo Kaczmarczyk
University of Central Florida

 Part of the [Elementary Education Commons](#)
Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd>
University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Doctoral Dissertation (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019 by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

STARS Citation

Bazzo Kaczmarczyk, Annemarie, "An Examination of Perceptions and Intentions of Preservice Educators in Title I Settings" (2018). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019*. 5975.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/5975>

AN EXAMINATION OF PERCEPTIONS AND INTENTIONS OF PRESERVICE
EDUCATORS IN TITLE I SETTINGS

by

ANNEMARIE BAZZO KACZMARCZYK
M.Ed. University of Central Florida, 2014
B.S. University of Central Florida, 2011

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the College of Education and Human Performance
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Summer Term
2018

Major Professor: Sherron Killingsworth Roberts

ABSTRACT

With the shifting demographics of our nation and increased vacancies in schools, teacher preparation programs must equip teachers to work with today's culturally, academically, racially, and economically (CARE) diverse student population effectively. University-based teacher preparation programs are called to examine the steps taken and experiences provided to develop effective teachers to work with CARE students and fill vacancies, specifically in Title I schools. Preservice teachers, 15 total, participated in this qualitative study examining the perceptions and intentions of PSTs who were exposed to course content and field experiences that focused on Title I and CARE students. The PSTs were placed into two focus groups based on the number of times they were exposed to both throughout their undergraduate career. Participants who had one to two episodes of previous exposure comprised the first group. Participants who had three opportunities for exposure (course content, field experience, and/or first internship) comprised the second focus group. All PSTs were completing their final internship with placements in Title I schools. Findings gleaned from the transcripts indicated that stereotypes and previous perceptions of Title I schools and CARE students were positively impacted through their experiences. Throughout their internship semester, all participants used words that denoted respect and understanding for their diverse students and for their beginning challenges to implement instruction. PSTs noted a need for additional preparation in undergraduate courses related to best practice and classroom management within their Title I school settings. Despite challenges, six participants opted to seek employment in Title I schools. Of the remaining participants, five indicated intentions to teach in non-Title I, while four remained neutral. Future related research will focus on creating and providing meaningful experiences for PSTs that lead to positive intentions for teaching in Title I schools.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This has been one of the most demanding, transformative, and rewarding experiences of my life. I would like to thank my chair-extraordinaire, Dr. Sherron Killingsworth Roberts. I am forever grateful for your unending support. I can honestly say I may not be where I am today if it were not for your “warm demands” and constant encouragement. I am appreciative for all you have done for me these last three years.

I would like to thank the remainder of my wonderful committee. Dr. Lue Stewart, you are the reason I have become so passionate about supporting high-needs populations. You lit a fire inside of me that I did not know was there. Dr. Hoffman, your passion for preparing effective classroom teachers is contagious, and I hope to emulate your excellent work. Dr. Donley, you opened my eyes to poverty outside of the educational lens. You helped me see the whole picture and how I can bring that knowledge with me into teacher preparation and working with elementary students. Dr. Jennings-Towle, thank you for influencing my own teaching strategies, and fostering my awareness of inclusive and responsive instruction. You have become an invaluable mentor to me.

Thank you to my husband, who is definitely deserving of an award for participating in this process with me. You pushed me to work even when I started to fatigue, and never let me throw in the towel. I could not thank you enough for your unwavering love and support. Of course, thank you to my four-legged support, my dog Penny. You spent countless hours by my side while I wrote for classes, publication, comps, and this dissertation. If I could make you second author, I would. Finally, a thank you to my guardian angels, my parents. Although you could not be here to see me through this process I know you have been with me this entire time. I hope to make you, and everyone else, proud with my future endeavors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Personal Rationale	4
Problem Statement	5
Purpose.....	7
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Research Questions.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	14
Diverse Populations In Our Schools	15
Conflicting Definitions of Urban and Rural Education	17
Urban Schools and Students	19
Rural Schools and Students	20
Impact of Title I on Schools and Students	22
Stereotypes of Title I Schools and Students	23
Teacher Retention and Development.....	25
Providing Meaningful Experiences.....	26
Preparing Teachers to Work with CARE.....	29
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	30
Funds of Knowledge	35
Summary	36
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	38
Research Design.....	40
Qualitative Approach	41
Phenomenological Methods.....	42
Timeline	44
Addressing Disadvantages of Focus Groups	45
Recruitment and Sampling.....	46
Data Collection and Instruments.....	51
Data Analysis	57
Identification of Codes and Themes	58

Group Interaction	62
Trustworthiness	62
Member Checking.....	63
Bracketing	64
Audit trail	65
Limitations	66
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	68
Findings From Focus Group A	69
Themes	70
Member Checking.....	77
Discussion of Group A Findings	83
Findings From Focus Group B	84
Themes	85
Member Checking.....	95
Discussion of Group B Findings.....	101
Comparisons Across Group A and Group B Findings.....	103
Differing Themes	104
Similarities	106
Discussion.....	107
Limitations of the Research Design.....	107
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	111
Summary	111
Conclusions.....	119
Impactful Field Experiences	120
Working in Title I with CARE.....	121
Implications for Teacher Preparation.....	122
Recommendations.....	127
Future Research	130
APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL FORM.....	134
APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF EXPLANATION	136
APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS	138
APPENDIX D: ORIGINAL FOCUS GROUP A TRANSCRIPTIONS	142

APPENDIX E: ORIGINAL FOCUS GROUP B TRANSCRIPTIONS	183
APPENDIX F: ANALYTIC MEMOS	234
REFERENCES	240

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of public school students enrolled in prekindergarten through 12th grade, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2003, Fall 2013, and Fall 2025, National Center for Education Statistics, 2017, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp	16
Figure 2: Percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1987–88 through 2011–12, U.S. Department of Education, 2016, https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf	17
Figure 3: Focus Group Norms	56
Figure 4: Themes and Statement Analysis for Group A.....	60
Figure 5: Themes and Statement Analysis for Group B.....	61
Figure 6: Member Checking Activity – Group A.....	78
Figure 7: Member Checking Activity – Group B	96

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Protocol Blueprint.....	41
Table 2: Study Timeline.....	45
Table 3: Grouping of Participants Based on Survey Results	50
Table 4: Focus Group 1 Interview Protocol.....	53
Table 5: Focus Group 2 Interview Protocol.....	54
Table 6: Focus Group 3 Interview Protocol.....	55
Table 7: Timeline of Focus Group Sessions and Transcription Time Frames	66
Table 8: Member Checking Findings – Group A	79
Table 9: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Group A	82
Table 10: Member Checking Findings – Group B.....	97
Table 11: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Group B.....	100
Table 12: Themes from Group A and Group B	103
Table 13: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Both Groups.....	115

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

By 2026, White students will account for less than 50% of the student population in public schools and by 2050 over 62% of this nation's child population will be members of minority groups (Bullock, Gable, Carrero, Lewis, Collins, Zolkowski, & Lusk, 2013; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). As the population of our nation becomes more diverse, so does the makeup of our classrooms. Teachers must learn how to work with students who are culturally, linguistically, racially, ethnically, and economically diverse (Griner & Stewart, 2013; Kincheloe, 2010; Kozleski, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2008; Milner, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Educators are called to address and celebrate this diversity. With this shift in diversity, there is also a shift in our schools. Therefore, school systems must shift in the way they think about students served, how programs and services should be designed or differentiated, and how perceptions of race play a role in the creation and implementation of policy (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Davis, 2007). Schools must become a place where personal identity is honored, and academic achievement is attainable by all students (Davis, 2007; Delpit, 2012; Emdin, 2016).

Students from families identified living in communities of low-socioeconomic status (SES) tend to have fewer learning opportunities outside of the school setting, and their schools are often unable to aid them in achieving academic success equal to that of schools with a more affluent student body (van der Klaauw, 2008). These students are school-dependent and rely on their teachers to provide them with the information needed to be successful both in and out of school (Ladson-Billings, 2008). Families living in economic hardship are more likely to live in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty. Children living in these communities are then most likely to attend neighborhood schools which tend to be under-resourced (Buck & Deutsch,

2014). These schools often lack qualified educators along with supplemental instructional resources needed to support academic achievement. Research has shown that students from low-SES families and communities lack self-efficacy and are found to underperform on cognitive assignments in all subject areas when compared to more affluent students (Buck & Deutsch, 2014; Jones, 2016; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008). This dissertation investigated the impact of coursework and on-site field experiences on preservice teachers' perceptions of and intentions to teach in Title I schools.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), enacted in 1965, raised awareness for the importance of every child's right to receive a quality education and "such education was in the best interest of the nation" (Nelson, 2016, p. 367). The government sought to make the educational opportunities of whites and minorities, students with special needs, and students whose first language is not English, equal through the implementation of this act and to bring additional resources to their schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). ESEA's focus on educational equality paved the way for the inclusion of Title I within the creation of the act and introduced students of poverty into the conversation. Title I made it a federal priority to support disadvantaged students and improve the education of children living in poverty. It has "been the largest single program... by accounting for close to 40 percent of the Department of Education's total K-12 budget in recent years. In 2012, its annual funding was about \$14.5 billion, and it reached over 23 million" children (Sousa & Armor, 2016, p. 205).

The changing landscape of our nation brings an increase in prevalence of Title I schools due to higher concentrations of poverty. Gaps in opportunity and education still exist which merits the importance of policies like Title I, which are defined further in this chapter and within the literature review. Inconsistencies in qualified teachers among schools in low-SES

communities increase these gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Delpit, 2012; Weiner, 2003). As previously stated, these students from low-SES backgrounds already come to school at a deficit academically. Placing unqualified or ineffective teachers into their classrooms only exacerbates these deficits. Powerful instruction provided by effective, qualified teachers is imperative for these students (Delpit, 2012). Under Title I, these students and their needs are recognized, and efforts are made to close the gaps and erase the discrepancies.

Students from low-SES families can be found in both urban and rural communities, yet there seems to be a disparity in the discussions of rural communities and schools. Teacher preparation programs often boast their “urban” preparation programs while less attention is paid to rural teacher preparation. Policymakers also pay little attention to rural education (Tieken, 2014). Per the 2010 Census, 34 counties in Florida were designated Urban, 30 counties were designated Rural, and 3 changed from Rural to Urban (Florida Health, 2010). Title I schools can be found within urban and rural communities across the state of Florida. While some argue that more students of poverty are found in urban counties, this is strictly due to the definition of that designation and higher overall population numbers. Culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse students can be found within either community.

To maintain consistency throughout my study, I created the following acronym: **CARE**. For the purposes of this dissertation, this acronym is used when referring to students who are **C**ulturally, **A**cademically, **R**acially, and **E**conomically diverse. The changing landscape of our nation identified earlier shows a prevalence for understanding the diversity of students. Terms such as “at-risk” and “high-needs” are often used to describe our most vulnerable populations of students. Often, these students face the most adversity or are often misrepresented within the school system. I created this term that accurately portrayed the population of students that

compose most Title I schools, but also spoke to the positivity that should be used when discussing diverse student populations within Title I classrooms. As statistics that show the diversity of our classrooms increasing are looked at, it is not hyperbolic to state that CARE students compose most of today's classroom. Preservice teachers are likely to encounter students who do not look like them, nor who come from the same economic background. Exposure to CARE students through meaningful experiences is vital to both preservice teacher and student success (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Delpit, 2012; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Weiner, 2003).

Personal Rationale

Reflecting on my own experiences as a Title I teacher, I began to see how prevalent and pervasive the challenges are that directly relate to preparing preservice teachers and retaining high quality teachers for today's diverse school population. When I entered my first year of teaching, I thought I was prepared for whatever challenges I would face. I graduated from a highly ranked, traditional teacher education program where I completed content rich courses and multiple field experiences and internship experiences. I was hired at a Title I school located in a very low-socioeconomic area. I was the standard-issue White, middle-class female in a school with mainly Black and Hispanic students. I was naïve in thinking that the basic instructional strategies and techniques that I learned in college would be what I needed to be a successful teacher.

I learned quickly that my background often created tension and led to misunderstandings between the students and myself. As a result, I was forced to address my own biases and tried to understand the perspectives and backgrounds of my students. This was not a task assigned by administration or fellow teachers, but something I felt I needed to explore to become a more effective teacher. As a new teacher in a Title I school, I was innocently unaware that a student's

home life, culture, or background might affect their behavior and performance in the classroom. I persisted, however, and worked to become cognizant and responsive to my students' needs.

These differences did not deter my desire to teach or to connect with my students. Unfortunately, I saw many teachers around me speak negatively of their students, and the school community, and lose hope. Perhaps, if some acknowledgement of these disparities, as well as some effective strategies in my undergraduate preparation program had been addressed, I would not have been as overwhelmed working in a Title I school in my first years.

Problem Statement

About 15 million children in the United States, 21% of all children, live in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2017). Over the span of their careers, classroom teachers will undoubtedly interact with a student facing poverty. Teachers must understand that students coming from low-SES backgrounds or homelessness are at risk for emotional, physical, social, and behavioral problems that can hinder school attendance and performance (Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008). Teacher preparation programs can bring awareness of these deficits through coursework and field experiences. Providing preservice teachers with the opportunity to work with CARE students early in their academic career can help address stereotypes and biases that may develop (Fraser & Watson, 2014; Polakow, 2007). The mindset that all classrooms are the same must be understood to address the needs of the diverse students being served.

The problem addressed by this dissertation is the observed reluctance that preservice teachers present regarding working with CARE students within a Title I setting, whether it be in an urban or rural community, prior to entering and during internship. Later, in this dissertation, I address some of the stereotypes current preservice teachers hold about Title I schools

highlighting the reluctance displayed. Research foci often artificially separate urban and rural students when their disadvantages are in many ways the same. Differences and similarities between urban and rural are further discussed in the literature review. There is no promise that upon graduation preservice teachers will not end up in an urban or rural community; therefore, by providing preservice teachers with the tools and experiences necessary, teacher educators may be able to increase their persistence in such settings may occur.

The large university in southeastern Florida, where this study occurred, places preservice teachers in various school districts in the state for internships and other field experiences. Within the state of Florida, there were 2,074 Title I schools during the 2017-2018 school year. One of those school districts served by this university is a large school district also located in central Florida, which is one of the top ten largest school districts in the nation (Florida Department of Education, 2018). For the 2017-2018 school year, this district reported that 109 of the 191 schools in the county were identified as Title I schools. The district poverty average was 47.92%, with over 68,000 students from low-SES households being served by their schools (Florida Department of Education, 2018).

More schools, within districts also partnered with this large university in Florida, fall under the Title I umbrella. Therefore, the need to prepare preservice teachers for this significant role, working with CARE students, is vital. Title I of ESEA ensures that students living in poverty are provided equal academic opportunities. These CARE students come from low-SES households and face more hurdles than students coming from more affluent backgrounds. Often, the need to fill vacancies within Title I schools leads to more preservice teachers securing jobs in these schools upon graduation. Without proper training or understanding, teachers may lay blame on the students themselves instead of understanding the hurdles facing CARE students.

As a result, teachers often leave Title I schools for more affluent communities, causing numerous classroom vacancies within Title I schools. This has been the case for many of the schools, especially in the large Florida school district, that receive teachers who have recently graduated from the university over the past few years. This suggests that upon graduation preservice teachers' perceptions and intentions might change, and an exodus from these settings occurs.

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the impact of coursework and on-site field experiences on preservice teachers' perceptions of and intentions to teach in Title I schools. Studying preservice teachers who were intentionally prepared to teach CARE (culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse) students with planned encounters, readings, and discussions within coursework likely supports important insights for teacher education. If the implementation of targeted and purposeful field experiences and enhanced coursework regarding CARE students is successful, then hopefully preservice teacher perceptions and intentions of working with CARE students in Title I schools led them to teach in and remain teaching in Title I schools. The preservice teachers chosen to participate in this study have been exposed to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) related working with these diverse students, as well as participate in field experiences in Title I schools. This study hoped to determine how exposure to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and CARE students through multiple course discussions, field experiences, and internship placements influences preservice perceptions and intentions to teach in Title I schools.

Theoretical Framework

As the country's demographic becomes more diverse, the teaching force continues to remain overwhelmingly White and female (Goodman, 2001; Kerssen-Griep & Eifler, 2008;

Sleeter, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1997). With this increase in diversity, classroom teachers are more likely to interact with students from cultures different from their own. This interaction could prove to be both an opportunity and a challenge. Equipping preservice teachers with the cultural awareness is needed to effectively interact with and support diverse student populations (Kerssen-Griep & Eifler, 2008).

Gordon Allport (1954) proposed the theory of contact hypothesis to explain bias and prejudice between different ethnic groups. Allport (1954) suggested that prejudice and negative stereotyping occurred as a product of ignorance, and that to dispel these stereotypes, there should be greater contact between people of different cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds (Neili, 2008). This increased contact would in turn bring about “more harmonious relations between people of different social identity groups as they come to realize that their prejudices and negative stereotyping are based on false assumptions and gross overgeneralizations” (Neili, 2008, p. 412).

At the time Allport (1954) proposed contact hypothesis, the landmark case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* was taking place (Pettigrew, 2004). Schools were still racially divided and Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren delivered the unanimous ruling that state-sanctioned segregation of public schools was a violation of the 14th amendment and was therefore unconstitutional (Telgen, 2005). “Critics of desegregation often ask why sitting next to a White child in school should benefit Black youngster... Desegregation enables African Americans to break through the monopoly that White Americans have traditionally had on informational flows and institutional access” (Pettigrew, 2004, p. 525). Desegregation also allows individuals from two diverse groups to come together, face, and break down the stereotypes they may have of one another (Allport, 1954; Kerssen-Griep & Eifler, 2008; Neili, 2008). The timeliness of *Brown vs.*

Board of Education and discussions of Allport's (1965) theory of contact hypothesis, highlighted the importance of increased contact between groups from different demographic backgrounds. Teachers and students from different racial backgrounds were being thrust into the same classrooms. Understanding an individual's background, and breaking down negative stereotypes, were vital for success of both teachers and students.

Original discussions of contact hypothesis suggested that these "harmonious relations" could only occur if four criteria were met: cooperation, equal status, common goals, and strong institutional support (Allport, 1954; Keressen-Griep & Eifler, 2008; Oortwijn, Boekaerts, Vedder, & Fortuin, 2008). Without these four criteria, contact hypothesis was not seen as successful. Some argued that unless the two diverse populations were working at equal status, i.e. employees working on the same company project, then the contact would not be valuable enough. This argument could be applied to contact hypothesis research within schools because teachers are not equal status with their students. Further studies have shown that this is not necessarily the case and that equal status does not have to be essential to studying contact hypothesis. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) support the importance of these criteria, but also found that these criteria are not essential for reduction in prejudice and bias. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) observed that while these criteria help facilitate positive interactions and relations, it is the amount of exposure that is essential. Wernet, Follman, Magueja, and Moore-Chambers (2003) as well as Oortwijn, et al., (2008) echo Pettigrew and Tropp's findings. Therefore, by increasing interaction and contact between two groups with differing backgrounds, stereotypes are challenged, social distance decreases, and any difficulties in communication may also be confronted (Miles & Crisp, 2014; Neili, 2008; Wernet, et al., 2003).

Instruction on diversity in teacher education is often focused within one specific course in the traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program. Such limited exposure may not be enough to equip preservice teachers with the skills needed to be culturally competent and understanding of their students' needs (Banks & Banks, 1997; Cochran-Smith, 1995, 2000; Haberman & Post, 1992). This idea that multiple exposure can be used to dispel stereotypes and increase positive discernments drives the thrust and purpose of this dissertation to examine preservice teachers' perceptions and intentions of working with CARE students and in Title I school settings. The contact hypothesis framework within this study is also supported by Pettigrew and Tropp's (2000) meta-analysis, which found that schools, due to their organizational structure, produce positive changes for participants engaged in intergroup contact. Miles and Crisp (2014) further discovered that "a potentially key component of educational strategies aiming to promote social change" can come through multiple exposure; thus, the contact hypothesis is once again upheld (p. 3).

Therefore, the theoretical framework of this dissertation was based primarily upon Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis. Through increased contact time and multiple exposure, the research examined here relies on the contact hypothesis framework that intentions to teach in a Title I setting and with CARE students may be impacted. By analyzing perceptions and intentions that preservice teachers have towards CARE students and Title I schools after multiple exposure, the current research has the potential to contribute to the body of literature on both teacher education and contact hypothesis by revealing that perhaps biases and stereotypes can be reshaped or that anxieties may decrease through Title I exposure during senior internship.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to determine answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout coursework and field experiences impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?

RQ2: How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?

The definitions deemed necessary for this dissertation are included below:

Capstone Colloquium: Senior Internship II students at a large university in southeastern Florida where this study took place, take part in a bi-weekly Capstone colloquium as part of their internship requirement. On these days, preservice teachers return to the main campus to partake in professional development activities. Senior Internship II students are broken up into small groups, but receive the same instruction and complete the same activities within breakout rooms. This platform provided time and space over lunch to conduct focus groups.

CARE students: An acronym representing various designations of students found in urban or rural Title I schools. The acronym stands for culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse student populations.

Field experience(s): Preservice teachers have experiences in classrooms with elementary school teachers and students. These field experiences range from observations of instruction, one-on-one tutoring, working with small groups, and teaching whole group lessons. Some of the methods courses taken by preservice teachers require them to teach content specific lessons and/or spend a predetermined amount of time in classrooms.

Intentions: One's purpose or objective. Based on their experiences, this study looked at the intentions, or plans, that the preservice teachers have regarding teaching in Title I schools upon graduation based on their experiences.

Internship: During their final year, preservice teachers spend two semesters completing required internships. The first internship, or Internship I, requires elementary preservice teachers to spend two days a week in one K-5 classroom. Halfway through the semester the interns switch to second grade within the same school. For their final internship, or Internship II, elementary preservice teachers spend five days a week in one classroom. This internship requires them to slowly transition into teaching full time for a few weeks of their placement. Preservice teachers experience the day-to-day responsibilities of being a classroom teacher and are encouraged to work closely with students and families. Participants in this study were in their Internship II placements.

Perceptions: Ways of understanding or interpreting something. For this study, the term perception is used to discuss the beliefs or judgments that preservice teachers have about working in Title I schools and with CARE students.

Preservice teacher: A university student enrolled and taking classes in a teacher preparation program. Instructional methods courses are taken along with completion of various field experiences in elementary schools. A preservice teacher or teacher candidate has not graduated yet or started their official teaching career.

Title I: Title I funds are allocated by the federal government to schools serving high numbers of children from low-income households (U.S. Department of Education, 2015b). Schools eligible for funding are identified based on the most current census estimates of children's poverty levels in the school district and the cost of education in the state. Poverty can also be measured using the counts of children from families' eligible welfare benefits and/or for free lunch under the National School Lunch program (van der Klaauw, 2008). Preservice teachers in this study had

placements in Title I schools for their internship placements within a large school district in central Florida.

Chapter One introduced this study along with the purpose and research questions to be addressed. Chapter Two is a review of the related research literature, while Chapter Three provides information on the methodology and research design used to conduct this study. The findings of this qualitative research are reported in Chapter Four. Chapter Five concludes with a discussion of the findings pertaining to improvement in teacher education and offers limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In order to further understand the purpose of this study, this chapter reviews and critiques the research and scholarship on preparing teachers to work with CARE students in today's classroom. When trying to understand the perceptions and intentions of preservice teachers to work with CARE students in Title I schools, prior research can support the importance of this study. Previous studies examine teacher preparation with diverse populations in isolation; i.e. with culturally diverse students or economically diverse students. Comparatively few studies look at teacher preparation for working with a combination of culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse students. This literature review also provides additional insight into the similarities between impoverished urban and rural communities and how teacher education programs can prepare their teachers for either setting, while maintaining important focus on CARE students.

The analytic focus on embedded coursework and on-site experiences provides another insight. This study analyzed what concepts and skills should be incorporated into teacher preparation programs and the effectiveness of related coursework and field experiences. In addition, although numerous studies in urban teacher preparation have identified possible strategies and field experiences, little analytic attention has been paid to CARE students outside of the urban setting, or more meaningful exposure to students from diverse backgrounds. This issue of narrowing the attention on urban teacher preparation was addressed by demonstrating that the strategies and practices used to prepare teachers for "urban" classrooms can be brought into rural classrooms as well and applied within Title I schools.

Because this dissertation is focused on the perceptions preservice teachers form from exposure to CARE students and content learned through their teacher preparation coursework,

this literature review is divided into five sections. The first section highlights the changing landscape of the United States and the growing diversity in our schools. It looks at diversity within urban and rural communities along with their differences and similarities. The second section discusses the policy of Title I and its importance within and impact on schools. Section three discusses teacher retention within Title I schools and how teacher preparation programs can support preservice teachers' understanding of CARE students. The fourth section highlights the value of meaningful field experiences, while section five introduces culturally responsive pedagogy and its place in teacher preparation.

Diverse Populations In Our Schools

As previously stated, the diversity of our student population is increasing and will continue to increase over the next decade. Figure 1 below shows the percentage distribution of public school students enrolled in prekindergarten through 12th grade by race/ethnicity for three years: 2003, 2013 and 2025 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

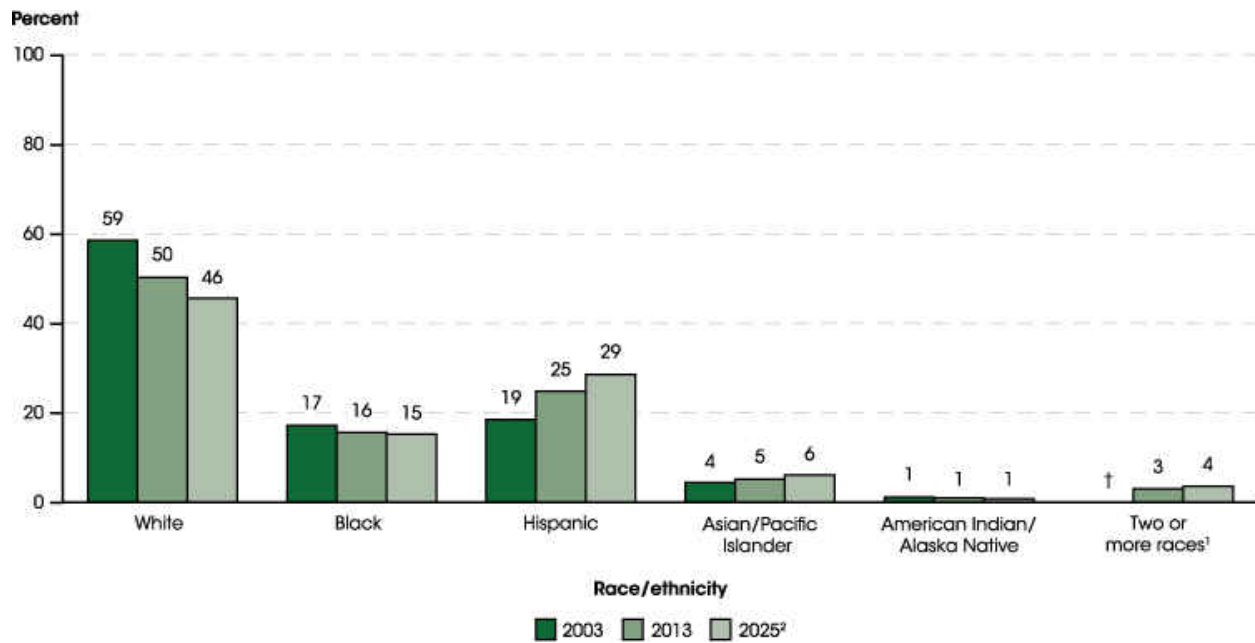


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of public school students enrolled in prekindergarten through 12th grade, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2003, Fall 2013, and Fall 2025, National Center for Education Statistics, 2017, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp

The continual increase in student diversity in public schools as predicted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) illustrates the importance of preparing educators to effectively work with CARE students. As student diversity increases, so should the knowledge preservice teachers have of working with such diverse populations. Understanding student diversity, and the funds of knowledge brought to the classroom, is especially important when the majority of teachers are still White. In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education released a report highlighting racial diversity among teachers. While the teaching force is also becoming more diverse, it is at a much slower rate than the students they teach. Figure 2 shows the percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools by race/ethnicity.

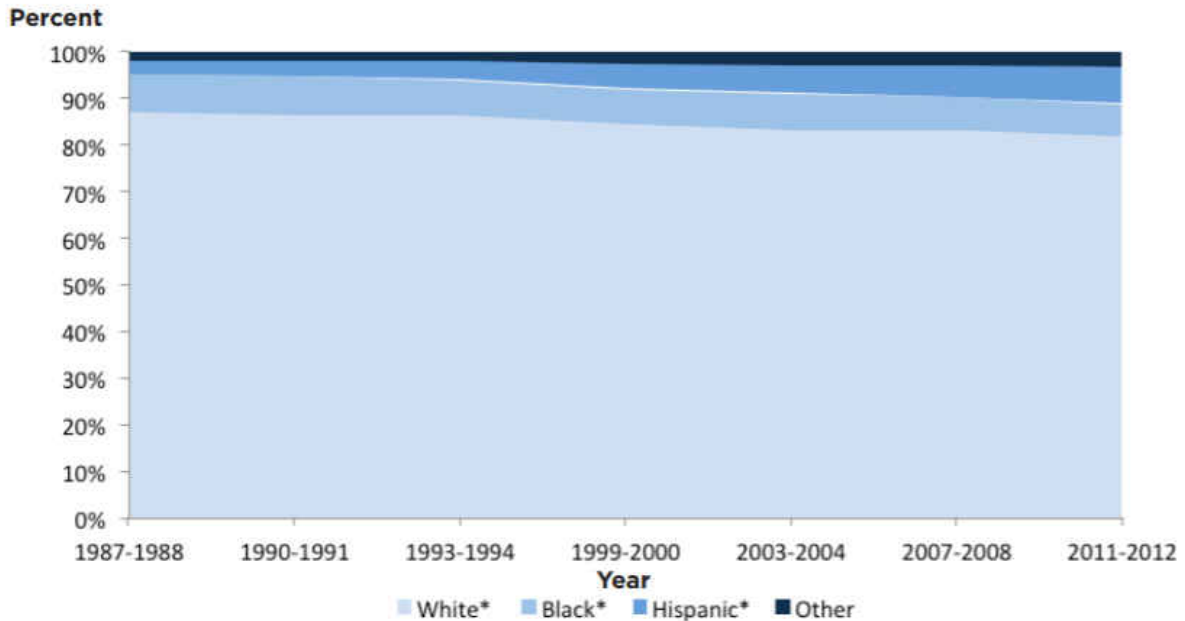


Figure 2: Percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1987–88 through 2011–12, U.S. Department of Education, 2016, <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf>

The elementary and secondary school teacher workforce in the United States is not as racially diverse as the population at large or the students, yet they must work effectively to support these populations (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The following three sections discuss the importance of preparing teachers to work with diverse students no matter the school setting.

Conflicting Definitions of Urban and Rural Education

Previous studies on preparing teachers for settings with CARE students often refer to the schools these students attend as “urban.” This designation is used to describe schools which contain students from low-income households, students who are culturally diverse (sometimes predominantly African American), and lack of parental involvement. Milner (2012) asks those in education to revisit the use of the word “urban” when using it to describe teacher preparation programs that are aimed towards students of color. Urban, by definition, is an area related to, has characteristics of, or constitutes a city or dense metropolitan area (Merriam-Webster

Dictionary, 2017). This term, Milner notes, is quite inappropriate to classify schools that have a majority of African American students with academic disparities. Numerous studies and institutions use “urban education” to continue to describe teacher preparation programs that work with high-needs and culturally diverse students.

This designation ignores the fact that the same demographic of students, from low-SES households and culturally diverse, also attend schools in rural areas. Rural schools serving high-needs students are still at a disadvantage due to limited accessibility to academic resources and experience the same problem with teacher retention (Huysman, 2007). Just as with teacher preparation for urban schools, preservice teachers in rural schools must “develop an awareness of how their cultural contexts shape their identities and teaching practice” (Azano & Stewart, 2015, p.2). Instead of preparing our preservice teachers to work with “urban” students, the terminology should be adjusted to reflect the students encountered in multiple school settings and geographical locations. Those in rural school settings need as much support as those in urban settings. Therefore, this dissertation will use the term CARE to denote the diverse student populations that can be found in both urban and rural school settings.

CARE students can be found in both urban and rural communities, yet there seems to be a disparity in the discussions of rural communities and schools. With a vast amount of studies examining “urban” teacher preparation programs, less attention is paid to rural teacher preparation. Little attention is paid to rural education in comparison to urban education (Tieken, 2014). Per the 2010 Census, 34 counties in Florida were designated Urban, 30 counties were designated Rural, and 3 changed from Rural to Urban (Florida Health, 2010). Title I schools can be found within urban and rural communities across the state of Florida. While some argue that more CARE students are found in urban counties, especially those who are racially and

economically diverse, this is strictly due to the definition of urban. Urban communities are in metropolitan areas and have higher overall population numbers. Therefore, populations of CARE students are denser in these communities. CARE students can be found within either community. Urban communities and their students are looked at first, followed by rural communities.

Urban Schools and Students

Especially for educators and preservice teachers from a dominant culture, it is important that they understand poor, urban communities in which some of their CARE students are growing up in. In the nonfiction book *The Long Shadow*, Alexander, Entwisle, and Olsen (2014) paint the typical picture of what it is like growing up in an urban community. The research is based in the city of Baltimore, but similarities in poor inner-city communities are almost identical around the country. Similarities include a high number of single-parent households, children witnessing to acts of violence and crime, and community cohesion tends to be lacking (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2014). In contrast to the picture of urban communities painted in *The Long Shadow*, urban does not always correlate with poverty. Middle- and upper-class families can also be found in urban communities along with schools that serve a more affluent student population. Scholars must be wary of how urban communities and students are represented in their research and acknowledge the context in which the urban students are being represented (Milner, 2012; O’Conner, Mueller, & Neal, 2014).

Issues regarding education exist within urban schools and their surrounding communities. Due to racial and economic differences between teachers and their students there is often tension within the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Weiner, 2003). The need for qualified teachers in urban schools has increased concurrently along with the number of

teachers leaving these same urban schools. About one in every two teachers working in the urban classroom leaves within five years (Kincheloe, 2010). Inner-city schools with a higher population of students from low-SES communities have a harder time retaining teachers. These teachers leave to find work in surrounding suburban areas with better salaries, cleaner schools, higher-achieving students, and less arduous work conditions (Kincheloe, 2010). Due to this poor retention, these schools are having to place less qualified teachers in the classroom to reduce vacancies. Urban schools are also hiring people who have minor formal teaching preparation to fill spaces as well (Weiner, 2003). Students who would benefit greatly from an experienced educator are now left to be taught by one with less experience who will most likely continue the trend of departure.

Rural Schools and Students

Teachers and students in rural schools and communities face their own myriad of obstacles. Tieken (2014) reminds us that 51 million Americans live in rural communities and within these communities racial diversity is prominent. Members of rural communities depend on local schools to meet the educational and social needs of their students. With the enactment of ESEA and the elimination of school segregation, integration began in rural schools. This integration did not last long though, as parents of white children began placing their students in private schools (Tieken, 2014). Despite this change in school setting, demographic challenges still emerged within rural communities. Immigration changes also have an impact on rural populations. According to the current *Why Rural Matters* report (Johnson, Showalter, Klein, & Lester, 2014), 26.7 percent of students in rural communities nationally are minorities. “Nearly 69% of all rural minority students in the U.S. are concentrated in the 13 states where they make up one-third or more of the state’s rural student population” (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 10). Florida

falls third on this list. As these changes continued, teachers and administrators began to feel lacking in the skills and resources necessary to meet the needs of their new students. Rural schools “have not escaped the racial inequality that structures so many of America’s schools” (Tieken, 2014, p. 23).

Like their urban counterpart, “salient challenges related to poverty, geographic isolation, low teacher salaries, and a lack of community amenities seem to trump perks of living” and teaching in rural communities (Azano & Stewart, 2016, p. 108). Recruiting and retaining teachers is a persistent struggle. Rural schools also see demographic shifts in their student population and face high-stakes accountability pressure (Johnson & Reynolds, 2011). Poverty rates among rural children are actually higher than that of children who live in urban areas, despite what media tends to portray regarding inner-city youth (Forner, 2016; Tieken, 2014). In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education reported that 20.9% of inner-city children lived in poverty compared to the 26.7% of rural children (Forner, 2016).

Title I, discussed in the next section, aims to bring educational equity to disadvantaged students, more specifically those from low-income households (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Statistics have shown that there is a strong relationship between poverty, access to quality education, high school graduation, and family structure (Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008; Delpit, 2012; Hollins, 2012). Teachers in urban and rural classrooms must understand how poverty affects their students. “Poverty is surely the most widespread and important example of scarcity... Half the children in the world live below the global poverty line” (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013, p. 147). In Mullainathan and Shafir’s (2013) book, the authors define scarcity as the mindset people take on when having very little regarding money, possessions, etc. It affects how the world is seen and interpreted through the eyes of those who

must deal with it. Scarcity occurs in “different cultures, economic conditions, and political systems” (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013, p. 5) Based on this concept and definition, it is safe to conclude that scarcity occurs in urban and rural communities.

Impact of Title I on Schools and Students

Discussions on public education and its parameters are always evolving. Concerns of educational equity remain a hot topic among politicians, parents, educators, and teacher preparation programs. Disparities in academic achievement have been noted among low-income urban and rural schools. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was enacted by Lyndon Johnson in 1965 as a response to the War on Poverty (Office of Education, 1971). It has gone through two major reauthorizations since, those being No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Even through these two reauthorizations, the policy of Title I remains virtually the same as it did when it was first enacted over 50 years ago. Title I made it a federal priority to support disadvantaged students and improve the education of children living in poverty. Title I of ESEA ensures that all children receive a quality education, and that focus be placed on closing the achievement gap and college readiness (Nelson, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

The changing landscape of our nation brings an increase in prevalence of Title I schools due to higher concentrations of poverty. Gaps in opportunity and education still exist which merits the importance of policies like Title I. Inconsistencies in qualified teachers among schools in low-income communities increase these gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Delpit, 2012; Weiner, 2003). As previously stated, students living in poverty already come to school at an academic deficit. Placing unqualified or ineffective teachers into their classrooms only exacerbates these deficits. Powerful instruction provided by good, qualified teachers is

imperative for students living in poverty (Delpit, 2012). Under Title I, CARE students and their needs are recognized, and efforts are made to close the gaps and erase the discrepancies.

Title I is “complex and murky,” but teachers must understand its impact on their instruction (Roza & Lake, 2015, p. 4). In their 1980 publication, Archambault and St. Pierre discuss how Title I has created more individualized instruction which is still prevalent today. Title I classrooms across the nation focus on more small-group instruction, improving the quality of their educators, providing support from additional staff members, and emphasizing the importance of parental involvement (Archambault & St. Pierre, 1980). While individual schools may create different projects or select diverse resources, these four components must be addressed by every Title I school (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). These requirements, not only aid in academic achievement for students living in poverty, but provide a more successful environment for all students.

Stereotypes of Title I Schools and Students

Stereotypes are characteristics of a group that become common beliefs. Much of what enters our consciousness and shapes stereotypes comes from the culture around us and experiences with people from different cultural groups (Nolan, 2017; Paul, 1998; Project Implicit, 2011b). Stereotypes are usually caused by indirect sources and sometimes viewing life situations inaccurately (Lizelle & Alewyn, 2015). For example, someone who is poor is thought to have minimal education. This stereotype holds some truth if looked at from the reality of, or even statistical representation of, societal oppression. An individual who grows up in a low-SES household may not have the same opportunities for education as an individual from a more affluent household (Keener, 2012; Nolan, 2017). Unfortunately, stereotypes are sometimes perpetuated onto our elementary school students unconsciously. Teachers may assume a

student's behavior or academic progress based on their cultural, academic, racial, or economic background.

Since becoming a teacher educator, my past experiences in a Title I school have inspired me to look at my own bias. The self-reflection sparked my interest in existing stereotypes of Title I schools among preservice teachers. Therefore, I provide my students with a short questionnaire to obtain a snapshot of their understanding prior to the semester. One of the questions asks students to identify stereotypes of Title I schools. Students may identify stereotypes that are personally believed or just ones that have been heard. It is no surprise that most of the responses result in negative stereotypes. When analyzing the responses, some of the common stereotypes identified were

- Title I schools lack resources and tools for students to be successful;
- Students in Title I schools do not want to be there;
- Student discipline is an issue; and
- Title I schools are located in low-SES areas.

Distinguishing between knowledge of a stereotype and endorsement of a stereotype is important for teacher educators to keep in mind. Most have knowledge of what commonly held negative stereotypes are associated with different social or ethnic groups but knowing does not necessarily signal agreement with those stereotypes (Nolan, 2017). There is no proof that the individuals who supplied these statements endorse them, but they displayed an awareness of stereotypes for Title I schools. Through multiple opportunities of exposure and field experiences within Title I schools, perhaps teacher educators can work to improve and maybe even erase these stereotypes.

Teacher Retention and Development

To understand the challenges teachers may face within schools with CARE students, whether in an urban or rural community, some of the reasons behind those challenges need to be recognized. Studies have shown that education is a commuter profession (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005; Weiner, 2003). Most administrators and teachers, about 80%, are middle-class white women who do not live in low-SES communities. Teachers' life experiences and perceptions often don't align with those of their students, causing a disconnect. Between daily tasks such as lesson planning, instructional time, and assessments, teachers feel that opportunities to further understand their students, the parents, and the school community are minimal (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Teachers must learn to understand that their students come from a valued and diverse cultural background and to reach their students, building connections and relationships is vital (Allen & Labbo, 2001).

Studies have shown that by not creating opportunities to get to know students, teachers often form and believe misconceptions about students from culturally, academically, racially, and economically (CARE) diverse backgrounds (Bryant, Moss, & Zijdemans Boudreau, 2015; Buck & Deutsch, 2014; Jones, 2016). Teacher education, therefore, is not only about developing solid knowledge of subject matter, but also sociocultural competence in working with the diversity of students who characterize these schools is critical. Teacher educators and students must address the difficult structural issues found within their neighborhoods (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Teachers must see beyond their social, cultural, and economical isolation and work to understand their students' ways of viewing school and the world around them (Byrd-Blake, Afolayan, Hunt, Fabunmi, Pryor, & Leander, 2010; Kincheloe, 2004). Teacher education programs need to increase preservice teachers' understanding of the difficulties faced by their

CARE students while avoiding deficit thinking in the portrayal of underprivileged families (Jones, 2016).

Teachers must be able to respond to all students' cognitive and social-emotional needs. Being cognizant of the communities around the schools and applying knowledge of child growth and development must not go ignored (Berghoff, Blackwell, & Wisheart 2011). Preservice teachers should be taught how to incorporate diverse cultural practices into traditional academic instruction to enhance the educational performance of diverse student populations (Bullock, Gable, Carrero, Lewis, Collins, Zolkowski, & Lusk 2013). "Knowing the content of the curriculum is not enough when teachers are expected to educate all children – including those from diverse economic backgrounds" (Berghoff et al., 2011, p. 19).

Informing preservice teachers about the "lives of students from different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds other than their own, conjoined with opportunities for them to explore their own values, biases, and attitudes, may prepare them to work more efficiently" with CARE students (Cicchelli & Cho, 2007, p. 379). Preservice teachers must be wary to not take on the role as "helper" with trying to provide for the basic needs of their students. This idea of helping students is reoccurring through several studies and is perpetuating the idea that their families cannot provide for them (Bryant et al., 2015; Hyland, 2005). Preservice teacher programs can use discussions through coursework to identify and discuss biases and remedy the "helper" mindset that may hinder student success.

Providing Meaningful Experiences

Anderson and Stillman (2013) address the importance of field experiences within their own literature review. Studies have shown us that placement selection and sequencing, modeling, internship, documentation, and remediation are vital during preservice teacher

preparation (Anderson & Stillman, 2010). If preservice teachers are to understand the life of their students and how to successfully assist them in the classroom they must have more than a singular experience: more than a single conversation, more than one course with content on diversity, and more than a few weeks in a setting with CARE students. Some studies claim that experiences like these prove to be fruitful, but teacher preparation programs must work to create meaningful experiences that address teacher perceptions and expose them to classrooms, they will one-day work in (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Azano & Stewart, 2015; Berghoff et al., 2011; White & Murray 2016). Also, by using context-specific preparation across multiple courses, teacher education programs may become more grounded in practice and develop thoughtful educators (Matsko & Hammerness, 2014).

Teacher preparation programs must provide sufficient clinical time to foster the skills, cultural competence, and pedagogical knowledge of teacher candidates needed to work with 21st century learners (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fraser & Watson, 2014). Simply dropping into a classroom for a few weeks won't provide enough opportunities to apply strategies learned within coursework or allow candidates to see challenges that effective teachers face and overcome daily (Fraser et al., 2014). Fraser & Watson (2014) refer to current service learning and field experience models as "parachuting" into the classroom. This brief interaction often strengthens the bias or stereotypes that they may have about working with CARE populations. It also gives them little to no time to implement what they have learned through coursework into lessons with students. More in-depth opportunities, such as residencies, allow preservice teachers to pair what they are learning about content with instruction and experiences in the classroom. They also have more time to learn about their students' lives and build the relationships needed to create a successful classroom community (Fraser & Watson, 2014).

Klein (2009) talks about needing effective teachers for students of poverty, and meaningful field experiences are one of the best ways to prepare them. It's about teaching preservice teachers to not blame poverty for their students' shortcomings but strive to find strategies to implement and help them succeed academically.

While Fraser & Watson (2014) refer to some service learning opportunities as "parachuting in," it is still beneficial to give preservice teachers exposure to Title I settings in small amounts at the beginning of their undergraduate career. Finding strong mentor teachers for them to observe is vital. When in class, preservice teachers should be encouraged to discuss what they've observed as well as perceptions they have about the school and the students. Teacher educators at the university level must model effective strategies for working with diverse populations (Celik, 2012). Content within courses must also be relevant to and target the issues of teaching in Title I settings with CARE student populations (Ladson-Billings, 2001, 2009; Lee et al., 2010; Celik, 2012).

Teacher preparation programs must provide sufficient clinical time to foster the skills, cultural competence, and pedagogical knowledge of preservice teachers needed to work with 21st century learners (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fraser & Watson, 2014). Simply observing a classroom for a few weeks likely will not provide enough opportunities to apply strategies learned within coursework or allow candidates to see challenges that effective teachers face and overcome daily (Fraser et al., 2014). To support preservice teachers in gaining more confidence and skills, teacher preparation programs in universities are now testing out more exposure to the classroom.

Preparing Teachers to Work with CARE

From previous research, one can see the importance of colleges of education taking unprecedented steps to redesign current teacher education programs to include a specific framework for the development of efficacious teachers of high-needs populations (McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008; Anderson & Stillman, 2010). Meaningful field experiences must continue, and preparation programs must find a way to embed content related to CARE students into multiple courses. Internships and student teaching are a universal component of teacher education programs. Studies on urban/rural and high-needs teacher preparation is abundant. Yet, teacher retention is still a large problem faced by school districts with this population of students. This calls for more robust research into strategies and practices that will be implemented into teacher preparation programs. White & Murray (2016) explain that preservice teachers must be aware of how social and economic disadvantage create educational under-achievement. “Teacher educators in universities and schools need more sophisticated ways of teaching about issues of poverty, class and educational under-achievement; and these need to be pedagogies that might guide students beyond stereotypical deficit views” (p. 512).

Teacher educators at the large university in southeastern Florida have already started providing preservice teachers with multiple opportunities to work with CARE students. Some teacher educators implement a culturally responsive pedagogy, which is discussed in the next section. Several courses offer field experiences within schools with diverse student populations. This university has also recently partnered up with a large school district in Florida to take preservice teachers on tours of Title I schools within the county to expose them to the teachers, the students, and the community. While not every teacher educator and course implement these

components, this study looked at the impact on preservice teachers who have these opportunities to interact with CARE students prior to their final internship.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Some teacher educators at the large university in southeastern Florida where this study took place, are working to incorporate a culturally responsive pedagogy into their course curriculum. They recognize that there is a strong class-based dynamic at work in most urban and rural schools due to economic and cultural differences between student and teacher. Teachers must not only develop solid knowledge of subject matter, but also sociocultural competence in working with the diversity of students that characterize these schools (Griner & Stewart, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b; Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Teachers must know how to understand that their students come from a valued and diverse cultural background and to reach their students, they must connect with them (Allen & Labbo, 2001). Administrators and teachers must address the difficult structural issues found within their neighborhoods (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Teachers must see beyond their social, cultural, and economical isolation and work to understand their students' ways of viewing school and the world around them (Kincheloe, 2010).

A teacher's knowledge of how culture is formed and sustained, along with his or her attitudes regarding education, are a vital component of effective student learning, particularly in classrooms where the teacher's background and culture are very different from those of the students (Loadman, Freeman, & Brookhart, 1999). "If educators continue to be ignorant of, ignore, impugn, and silence the cultural orientations, values and, and performance styles of ethnically different students, they will persist in imposing cultural hegemony, personal denigration, educational inequity, and academic underachievement upon them" (Gay, 2010,

p.27). Teachers and administrators must “deliberately create cultural continuity” when educating diverse students (Gay, 2010, p. 27).

To understand the challenges teachers are having within some Title I schools, some of the reasons behind those problems need to be recognized. Studies have shown that a major problem relates to education being a commuter profession (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Weiner, 2003). Most administrators and teachers, about 80%, are middle-class White women that do not live in the low-income communities in which they teach. Teachers’ life experiences and perceptions often do not align with those of their students causing a disconnect. Opportunities to further understand their students, the parents, and the school’s community are minimal (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Teachers must learn how to understand that their students come from a valued and diverse cultural background and to reach their students, they must employ strategies to connect with them (Allen & Labbo, 2001).

Teachers who understand students who are ethnically, linguistically, racially, and culturally diverse and apply this knowledge to their instruction are operating under a culturally relevant pedagogy (Taylor & Sobel, 2014). Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b, 2009) initially conceptualized a culturally relevant pedagogy to support populations who were underserved and to bring educational equity to schools. “Culturally relevant teaching uses student culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 17). Teachers who operate within a culturally relevant pedagogy infuse their students’ home and community culture in their lessons, empower students on many levels, and further the conversation on cultural understanding, experiences, and considering how others view the world (Taylor & Sobel, 2014).

Culturally relevant pedagogy mirrors the intent of operating under a culturally responsive pedagogy, except there is a difference in the researcher's focus that distinguishes which will be implemented (Taylor & Sobel, 2014). The primary aim of culturally relevant pedagogy, as emphasized by Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b, 2009), is to help African American students identify with their culture while pursuing academic excellence. Culturally responsive pedagogy therefore builds off cultural relevance and engages students from various cultural, racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds (Gay, 2010; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Taylor & Sobel, 2014). Gay (2010) defines culturally responsive pedagogy "as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 31). Griner and Stewart (2013) contend that students from economically disadvantaged households fall into considerations for culturally responsive pedagogy because they too have been underserved by the education system.

Through culturally responsive pedagogy, educators recognize the "knowledge, skills, and rich cultural experiences that students from diverse backgrounds bring to school. It is a philosophical view of teaching grounded in nurturing students' welfare, including their academic, psychological, social, emotional, and cultural well-being" (Taylor & Sobel, 2014, p. 22). Gay (2010) asserts that effective teaching is tied to class, ethnicity, race, gender, and/or culture of teachers and students. Becoming a culturally responsive teacher does not mean teachers need to present instruction in a "Black way" or "Asian way." Teachers must learn to teach their whole class in a way that all involved can relate to and understand the material, by using aspects of their cultures (Kozleski, 2010; Rajagopal, 2011). Culture likely plays a strong role in determining how our students view life and their relationship to the world. Because culture also influences how and what children learn, educators can use culture to improve self-

identity and achievement. Not only must teachers show an appreciation of cultural diversity, they must also incorporate teaching strategies that are aligned with the learning styles of their students (Delpit, 2012; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 2009; Rajagopal, 201).

In the article *Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum*, Villegas and Lucas (2002) introduce six qualities that teachers must possess to become more culturally competent in their classrooms. The six qualities are (1) sociocultural consciousness, (2) a supporting attitude toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds, (3) commitment and skills to act as agents of change, (4) constructivist views of learning, (5) learning about students, and (6) culturally responsive teaching practices. Culturally responsive teaching includes acknowledging the cultural heritages of students, building a sincere bridge between home and school experiences, implementing a wide variety of instructional strategies, fostering tolerance for diverse cultures, and incorporating materials and resources that students can connect with (Gay, 2010; Griner & Stewart, 2013).

Culturally competent is a term used to describe teachers who use a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in their classroom. Teacher must be culturally competent if they are to be effective with students from cultures other than their own. According to the National Education Association (NEA, 2017),

“Cultural competence is having an awareness of one’s own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry.” (NEA, 2017).

Banks and Banks (2013) attest that to become culturally competent, teachers must deliver culturally responsive, evidence-based, and high-quality instruction for their diverse students. They must know how to utilize their students' culture as a "vehicle for learning" (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 161). While developing a culturally competent mindset, it is important that administrators and teachers not only plan for their culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse students, but for their economically disadvantaged students as well. Students from low-income households see the same disadvantages with education as their racially and linguistically diverse peers (Banks & Banks, 2013; Gibson, 1999; Griner & Stewart, 2013).

Under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), additional funds are given to schools with a percentage of their students living in poverty. These funds are to be used towards additional resources to aid in closing the achievement gap and providing educational equity (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Title I schools can use their funds to obtain resources and materials that reflect the cultural diversity of their students. They can also provide training on instructional strategies and interventions that teachers can implement in the classroom. Teachers in Title I schools must be aware of the impact that having cultural competence and implementing a culturally responsive pedagogy has on their students. The gap in their students' cultural background and their knowledge must be filled to reduce academic failure (Taylor & Sobel, 2014).

Our nation is one of continuous change. The diversity of our country from when a formal educational curriculum was first developed until now has changed immensely and continues to change. "The growing diversity of our school-aged population means that traditional cultural norms and values no longer apply" (Bullock et al., 2013, p. 104). Curriculum, which was once shaped by White middle-class standards, must now address the changing faces of our public

education students. With this increase in diversity, teachers are called to increase their cultural awareness and become advocates for their students (Emdin, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Postmodern curriculum must be overhauled in such a way that cultural identities are left intact and societal justice and compassion are promoted (Slattery, 2013).

Funds of Knowledge

Addressing the needs of diverse student populations through cultural competence parallels a funds of knowledge approach. The notion of funds of knowledge is defined as “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992, p.133). Students’ intellectual and cultural resources should be seen as assets by classroom teachers and used as guides to transform education (Llopart, Serra, & Esteban-Guitart, 2018;). School curriculum and teaching activities should connect to and enhance students’ funds of knowledge. Studies have documented the positive consequences of the funds of knowledge approach on family-school and teacher-student relationships (Esteban-Guitart, 2016; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Hensley, 2005; Lin & Bates, 2010; Llopart, Serra, & Esteban-Guitart, 2018).

Earlier studies, regarding funds of knowledge, strictly focused on transforming power relationships between teachers and families (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). Families were seen as intellectual resources that would help transform educational practices to make them more culturally compatible (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018; Rodriguez, 2013). More recent studies have fused the need to focus on students’ cultural resources with conditions individual families face. For example, a student may be falling asleep in class because they were up late caring for a younger sibling (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018; Templeton, 2013). Implementing a funds of

knowledge approach does not just include identification of knowledge, skills, and abilities to be incorporated into teaching practices. It also calls teachers to “know the everyday living conditions of students in order to better understand their behavior as well as the situation of their families, thus converting” prejudices and perceptions into judgments based on facts and knowledge (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018, p.151). Realizing the differences in funds of knowledge can help educators forge the separation that culture, language, race, and socioeconomics can place between teacher and student (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Templeton, 2013)

Summary

As the literature shows, CARE students and Title I schools can be found in urban and rural settings. Therefore, this dissertation is not just focusing on urban education, but the education of CARE students no matter the school settings attended. Also, challenges with teacher retention within Title I, low-socioeconomic schools are still prevalent today. This can be seen through initiatives taken by a large partner school district with exposing and recruiting teachers for their Title I schools. As seen, creating meaningful field experiences, and incorporating a culturally responsive pedagogy by recognizing funds of knowledge may be necessary steps to impact preservice teachers’ perceptions and intentions of working with CARE students.

While Chapter Two reviewed the literature supporting this dissertation and the need for this research, Chapter Three looks at the steps taken when conducting this study. After examining the literature and seeing that teacher retention remains a challenge, especially for those working with CARE students in Title I schools, the use of a qualitative approach is supported in the upcoming chapter. Education is a field where interactions among teachers and

students are pivotal to the success of each. By using a phenomenological study, this dissertation hopes to paint the narrative as to how perceptions and intentions of working with CARE students can possibly change.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the last year, a large school district in Florida has expressed the dire need for qualified teachers to fill vacancies in schools, specifically their Title I schools. The desire to increase teacher recruitment within this county was expressed by a district official during a monthly special interest group meeting where members of the university faculty and community members gather to discuss ways to support surrounding schools. The attrition of teachers within the county match that of the nation; about 50% of teachers working with culturally, academically, racially, and economically (CARE) populations leave within their first five years (Kincheloe, 2010). Inconsistencies in qualified teachers among schools in low-SES communities increase achievement gaps between low-performing and high-performing schools. Placing unprepared or ineffective teachers into these classrooms only exacerbates any deficits CARE students have. Powerful instruction provided by effective, qualified teachers is imperative for student success (Delpit, 2012).

As shown in the beginning of this dissertation, stereotypes about Title I schools and CARE students exist among preservice teachers. Whether these are stereotypes they themselves have developed or are just ones they have heard, these negative stereotypes have an impact on the perceptions and intentions they have in terms of pursuing careers in Title I schools. Negative perceptions can impact intentions and keep effective teachers from working with and assisting CARE students to thrive.

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of coursework, on-site field experiences, and internship experiences focused on CARE students has on preservice teachers. The impact of these three opportunities were assessed based on if and how preservice teacher perceptions and intentions related to working with CARE students in Title I schools may change.

The preservice teachers involved in this study were previously exposed to culturally relevant content as well as participate in field experiences in Title I schools while working with CARE students.

The motive for this dissertation arose from my own past experiences with CARE students, working in a Title I school, and with my current experience supporting preservice teachers. As a product of a traditional teacher education program, I thought I had known everything prior to accepting my first teaching job. Not until I was in my own classroom, did I recognize how differences between my students and me impacted instruction and relationships fostered in the classroom. The success I had with learning about my students, creating a caring classroom community, and implementing differentiated strategies came not only from my own motivation to learn more, but from the valuable experience I had within my own preservice internship.

As an undergraduate preservice teacher, I was placed within a Title I setting and worked closely with CARE students. The strategies and experiences discovered and fostered within this career placement changed my own perceptions and intentions about working within a Title I school. During my first year I was sure I was going to leave and seek employment in a more affluent area closer to home. I decided to remain at my Title I school another year, and this is when I noticed my own behavior towards my students and attitude shifting. Relationships and understanding the assets each student brought to the classroom began to become central to instruction and my interactions with students. This personal growth drives me to wonder if such exposure to similar school settings yields the same findings for other preservice teachers prior to entering the teaching profession. Recognizing effective preparation strategies that are being implemented within teacher preparation programs is important to analyze the experiences that

preservice teachers are having during coursework, field experiences, and within internship settings.

Research Design

To bring awareness to the assets that CARE students bring to the classroom, it is important to provide preservice teachers with opportunities to work with CARE students. These experiences can help address stereotypes and biases that preservice teachers may hold before becoming first year teachers (Fraser & Watson, 2014; Polakow, 2007). As noted in Chapter One, the research questions this dissertation addresses are:

RQ1: How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout coursework and field experiences impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?

RQ2: How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?

Table 1 below shows the blueprint used in developing the above research questions. Once the research questions were created, the blueprint was then used to aid in the development of the focus group protocols which can be found later in this chapter.

Table 1: Protocol Blueprint

Research questions	Data (type)	Data(Instrument)	Participants	Data Analysis
RQ1. How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content through coursework and field experiences impact their perceptions and about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?	Perceptions of Title I schools Perceptions of CARE students Experiences in coursework Field experiences	Initial Qualtrics survey Focus group protocol Member checking activity	Group A: 7 Group B: 8 <hr/> 15 total	Coding to identify themes (per group) Compare themes across groups
RQ2. How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?	Intentions to work in a Title I school	Focus group protocols	Group A: 7 Group B: 8 <hr/> 15 total	Coding to identify themes (per group) Compare themes across groups

Qualitative Approach

This study used a qualitative approach to analyze and answer the research question(s). Qualitative research has roots in many academic disciplines, including the social sciences, humanities, and interdisciplinary studies (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Rosenthal, 2016). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative offers more insight into why people engage in certain behaviors or actions. “Qualitative research is best for understanding the processes that go on in a situation and the beliefs and perceptions of those in it” (Firestone, 1993, p. 22). When applied to

academia, qualitative research helps researchers understand perspectives of students and teachers, clarifies the processes that take place in the classroom, provide snapshots of program implementations and other classroom events, and describe interactions between students and teachers. Qualitative data emphasizes the lived experiences of those involved and focuses on naturally occurring, ordinary events in their usual settings (Firestone, 1993; Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012; Saldaña, Huberman, & Miles, 2014).

Discussions on quantitative versus qualitative often revolve around the construct of generalizability. For a study to be generalizable, the findings must be applicable to larger populations and multiple settings. Because of the acquisition of the smaller sample size within a qualitative study, strong proponents of quantitative research claim that that generalizing the findings more difficult. Firestone (1993) states that qualitative researchers can increase the broad applicability of their findings to combat these claims. The researchers' prerogative is to take the readers of this dissertation into the setting, with thick description, to understand the context. Also, intentionally sampling for "theoretically relevant diversity and replicating cases through multisite designs" can also be useful (Firestone, 1993, p. 22). Qualitative research can provide broad relevance and can aid in identifying patterns and themes surrounding groups, events, and experiences.

Phenomenological Methods

This study analyzed and share the "essence" of the experiences had by the participants. Therefore, a phenomenological approach was used (Creswell, 2007). A qualitative approach has several advantages. Phenomenological research can be used to study a wide range of educational phenomena (Gall et al., 2007). How elementary students experience a classroom lesson, how teachers experience professional development meetings, or how experiences preservice teachers

have during internship placements can be detailed through a phenomenological approach. This approach can paint a picture for readers that supplies them with a deeper understanding of what those experiences are like. The focus group processes is beneficial because, when conducted efficiently, a large amount of data can be gathered. Aspects of the experience identified in the data collected can negate whether no further analysis is needed or if an additional qualitative or quantitative study should be conducted (Gall et al., 2007).

Gall et al. (2007) and Creswell (2007) discuss the relevance of focus groups to phenomenological studies. While interviews often occur individually and for a lengthy amount of time, the experiences of an individual are examined. While interviews provide for a more personal and secluded setting, limitations in terms of the amount of information a participant is willing to divulge may result. If rapport is not established, the individual being interviewed may feel uncomfortable and less likely to provide the whole truth about their experiences (Rosenthal, 2016).

When trying to understand the experiences had with a phenomenon, researchers sometimes divert from individual interviews and choose focus groups to explore issues, views, perceptions of and elicit rich data from a group of participants (Asbury, 1995; Kitzinger, 1994; Krueger, 2000; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007; Rosenthal, 2016). This study relied exclusively on the use of focus groups consisting of graduating senior preservice teachers. “Focus groups are structurally similar to in-depth interviews in the sense that they are comprised of open-ended questions designed to capture the in-depth experiences of respondents” (Rosenthal, 2016, p. 510). Krueger and Casey (2000) identify the intent of a focus group is to promote self-disclosure among the individuals involved. This disclosure is another reason focus groups were utilized over individual interviews or a survey.

As stated before, sometimes individuals are wary of disclosing personal views and opinions when sitting one-on-one with an interviewer. There are also limitations to the use of surveys with the amount of rich data that can be collected. Participants may answer with brief responses offering minimal information when completing computer-based surveys. Through a led focus group discussion, participants can offer extended responses providing a better look into the experiences they had. Participants can comfortably challenge or agree with the perceptions or stories of others. This addition to stories is an advantage that Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) refer to as “snowballing.” This chain effect encourages the formulation of different interpretations resulting in better final knowledge of the experience trying to be captured (Acocella, 2012; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990; Stewart, et al., 2007). Focus group interaction also allows the researcher to clarify and explore the differences and similarities within the group and their experiences with the phenomenon (Acocella, 2012; Kitzinger, 1994; Stewart, et al., 2007). When moderated effectively, the interaction among participants should develop smoothly and without intervention from the moderator. An advantage to a smoothly running focus group is that the information generated by the discussion can multiply (Acocella, 2012). “The group synergy can favor the production of a plurality of positions and stimulate participants to remember forgotten or unconsidered details” (Acocella, 2012, p.1132).

Timeline

An estimation of the tasks for this dissertation was created and recognized for the duration of this study. Table 2 shows the timeline upheld and the tasks that were completed.

Table 2: Study Timeline

Month	Activity
November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation proposal submitted • Proposal defense & revisions • IRB submitted to university IRB office
December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding/updating dissertation literature review
January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruited participants • 1st focus group for Group A conducted: January 26th • Transcription and data analysis
February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st focus group for Group B conducted: February 9th • 2nd focus group for Group A conducted: February 23rd • Transcription and data analysis
March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd focus group for Group B conducted: March 9th • Transcription and data analysis
April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd and final focus group for Group A conducted: April 6th • 3rd and final focus group for Group B: conducted April 20th • Member checking with participants (both groups) • Transcription and data analysis
May/June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and Second Cycle coding • Analysis of data • Recording findings

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was submitted during Fall 2017. Early IRB submission was crucial to ensure approval prior to the Spring 2018 semester, so that recruitment could begin in January (see Table 2).

Addressing Disadvantages of Focus Groups

Morgan (1995, 1997) identifies five problem areas that most researchers encounter when conducting focus groups. Without careful planning and preparation, problems can occur in each

stage. These stages are recruiting, sampling, developing questions, moderating, and analyzing. In this and the following sections, steps are identified that were taken to reduce falling prey to common mistakes and to ensure the legitimacy of the current study.

Recruitment and Sampling

Participants considered for this study were preservice teachers at large university in southeastern Florida who must have been enrolled in at least one course in which the teacher educator implemented a culturally responsive pedagogy and discussed, or interacted with, CARE students. Several teacher educators within this university's college of education were identified and approved by the dissertation committee as culturally responsive teacher educators. These teacher educators discuss components of Title I within their coursework related to working with CARE students. In addition to having been enrolled in a culturally responsive pedagogical-infused course, participants have also had course-related field experience. Some teacher educators at the university infuse opportunities for preservice teachers to work with CARE students as part of a course requirement. Also, only participants who had the opportunity to complete their first internship within a Title I school were considered for this study. Participants would also be considered if they attended at least one of the Title I school tours that were offered within multiple sections of a classroom management course. To summarize, the following list of identifiers was applied to participants to recruit effectively: (1) participation in coursework/course discussions related to Title I schools and CARE content; (2) completion of field experiences in at least one Title I school; and/or (3) completion of first Internship In a Title I school. To be chosen as participants, all volunteers were completing their final Internship In a Title I school. These identifiers are not equal in their levels of exposure. Each experience becomes more intensive as preservice teachers experience them. Ideally, if experienced in

succession, each identifier would build the intern's knowledge on working with CARE students in Title I schools.

Having too few participants can limit the data provided, which is why devising an effective recruitment strategy from the start is important (Morgan, 1995, 1997; Stewart, Shamdasani, et al., 2007). Participants for this study were recruited purposefully by using criterion sampling (Patton, 1990). In identifying possible participants, a list of preservice teachers enrolled in Internship II was obtained from the Office of Clinical Experiences. From this list, preservice teachers who were placed within a Title I school in the selected partnered school district were identified. A short research presentation was made to the preservice teachers, by the author, at their first Capstone colloquium, previously defined in Chapter One, inviting them to volunteer during their final internship semester for this study. The Summary of Explanation of Research that was provided to the preservice teachers prior to the presentation can be found in Appendix B. Following the presentation at the colloquium, an additional follow up email was sent on January 22nd inviting eligible preservice teachers to volunteer for the study. Possible participants were notified that there would be no monetary incentive for their involvement, but since focus groups would take place on colloquium days they would be provided lunch.

Participants

To be considered for the study, participants were enrolled in Internship II and placed within a Title I school. As defined in Chapter One, Internship II requires preservice teachers to spend five days a week in their placement. They are expected to slowly begin taking over the daily tasks and responsibilities of the classroom teacher. Initially, this study was going to look at preservice teachers to who met all three criteria, but limitations arose with securing enough

participants to volunteer who met all criteria. As a result, the committee chair and I decided to create a comparison group of students who met just one to two of the three criteria. Those in the comparison group needed have had experience with coursework/class discussions focused on Title I and CARE students, field experiences in a Title I school, or completion of Internship I in a Title I school. This would allow for further analysis of the experiences of preservice teachers who met the criteria and of those preservice teachers who did not.

As part of the Capstone Colloquium, Internship II students are separated into smaller, breakout sessions and assigned a colloquium instructor. During the recruitment process each instructor was notified of my research purposes and allowed me to speak to each group to request volunteers. Permission to approach Internship II students was also granted from the university's Office of Clinical Experiences, which is in charge of interns and their placements. This permission helped to ensure convenience for the participants, since they were all already in the same place at the same time.

Following the presentation at the Capstone Colloquium and sending of a follow-up email, volunteers began to reach out. To ensure that all volunteers were identified, and the study could begin according to the timeline, no further volunteers were taken after January 19th, 2018. During the recruitment period, 16 preservice teachers placed in Title I schools in the large Florida school district volunteered to participate in the study. An additional four more volunteers were late to respond, but their names and contact information were gathered in case a participant dropped out. The 16 participants were sent a Qualtrics survey to aid in assigning the memberships of the two focus groups. Participants were asked to identify Internship I placements, completion of service learning in Title I schools, possible attendance at scheduled

Title I school tours, and courses/instructors that were taken where culturally relevant pedagogy was embedded.

Based on responses to the Qualtrics survey, two focus groups were identified for this study. Table 3 shows the results of the survey, along with how participants were grouped based on those results. The first focus group, Group A, was comprised of participants who met just one to two of the criteria required for this study. The second focus group, Group B, included individuals who met two to three of the criteria: (1) exposure to culturally relevant pedagogical infused coursework, (2) at least one course-related Title I field experience, and (3) an Internship I placement within a Title I school. By using two focus groups with varying exposure, a comparison of the levels of exposure might prove interesting based on the differences in perceptions and intentions of teaching in a Title I school.

Table 3: Grouping of Participants Based on Survey Results

	Participant Information			Title I/CARE Exposure Criteria			
	Participants (Pseudonyms)	Gender	Ethnicity	Internship II in Title I	Internship I in Title I	Field Experience in Title I	Course/Instructor Infusing CARE content
Group A	Sasha	F	White	✓	✓		
	Maria	F	Hispanic or Latino	✓	✓		
	Jennifer	F	Other	✓	✓		
	Rebecca	F	White	✓			✓
	Alyssa	F	Hispanic or Latino	✓	✓		✓
	Leslie	F	White	✓	✓		
	Aisha	F	Black	✓			✓
	Meredith*	F	White	✓			✓
Group B	Claire	F	White	✓	✓	✓	✓
	John	M	White	✓	✓		✓
	Catherine	F	Other	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Anna	F	White	✓		✓	✓
	Jaime	F	White	✓		✓	✓
	Abby	F	White	✓		✓	✓
	Tracy	F	White	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Amber	F	Hispanic or Latino	✓	✓	✓	✓

To meet appropriate focus group size, two groups of eight participants were identified (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Keeping the intended sample size in mind when going through the recruiting process helped obtain an effective sample size in the end (Morgan, 1995). Initially, the goal was to have 20 participants; however due to reliance on volunteers and having no incentives, 16 participants volunteered and were selected. After the first focus group, one participant from Group A was moved to a non-Title I school; therefore, had to withdraw from the study. For the remainder of the focus groups, Group A was comprised of seven members while Group B had eight. With focus groups it is important to use a sample size that yields enough data for analysis. By conducting two focus groups with at least seven participants, rich, detailed data was obtained to address the stated research questions (Creswell, 2007; Saldana et al., 2014).

As seen in Table 3, 10 of the initial 16 participants identified as White, three identified as Hispanic or Latino, one participant identified as Black, and two identified as Other. Out of the 16 participants, one participant was male while the remainder were female. While gender had no apparent impact on the findings of this study, it is interesting to note how closely the participants in this study resembled overall teacher demographics shown in Figure 2 from Chapter 2.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data collection for this dissertation was obtained using focus groups beginning in January 2018 and ending in April 2018. Focus groups took place on the university's main campus in a conference room located in one of the education buildings. Since participants were already on campus for their bi-weekly Capstone colloquium, this location was a convenient place for them to meet and separate themselves from their peers. Lunch was provided so that participants could come straight to the focus group at the beginning of their designated lunch break. This ensured adequate time to conduct each focus group.

To avoid the chance of swaying responses from participants with whom I have served as an internship coordinator, participants were informed that my role as focus group moderator was strictly for the purposes of this study. Therefore, their voluntary participation and subsequent responses carried no weight on their grades, evaluations, or final internship grade. As an internship coordinator, I had been assigned interns to evaluate during the Spring 2018 semester, but my interns were not allowed to participate in my study to avoid conflict of interest.

Due to the official start of the semester and other time constraints, I was unable to meet with participants prior to entering their Internship II placement. During the initial focus group for each group of participants, I was able to collect their initial perceptions and intentions about teaching in a Title I school. Keeping in mind Morgan's (1995) problem areas, the questions developed to guide this study and for the focus group protocol were designed with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Title I schools in mind. The questions were written neutrally to avoid swaying participants in a direction that would be beneficial to intended findings. Specific stereotypes and misconceptions of CARE students and Title I schools were not probed within the protocol to avoid altering participants' responses and to allow any stereotype misconceptions to occur naturally.

Focus Group Protocols

At the beginning of this chapter, the protocol matrix was shared. This matrix acted as a blueprint in developing the research questions for this study. From this matrix, I was then able to develop the focus group protocols that would be used. Table 4 displays the protocol that was used for the initial focus groups.

Table 4: Focus Group 1 Interview Protocol

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	Tell me a little about yourself. What brought you to the field of education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers • Influences on career choice
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	<p>What are some stereotypes you have heard about working in Title I schools? With CARE students?</p> <p>Tell me about what you personally know or think about Title I schools prior to your internship.</p> <p>What were some perceptions you had about your current school placement at the beginning of your internship?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/ service learning on perceptions
Experiences with service learning with CARE students (in Title I)	<p>Tell me about your service learning experiences. Where any of those experiences in a Title I school?</p> <p>Did you work with any CARE students within those settings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	<p>Have you had any experience with CARE content in your undergraduate coursework?</p> <p>What information and discussions you recall from those courses?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Member-checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	<p>Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with service learning 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

Table 5 below shows the protocol that was used for the second round of focus groups. This protocol is similar to the first protocol but required participants to compare their initial thoughts from the beginning of their placement to the middle of their placement. Perceptions are still addressed to see if they still upheld these initial perceptions after having more experience.

Table 5: Focus Group 2 Interview Protocol

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	Tell me about how things are going in your internship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	Thinking back to when you began the program, have your perceptions of Title I changed at all since you began your Internship II?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/field experiences on perceptions
Experiences with field experiences with CARE students (in Title I)	Have your previous field experiences in Title I schools impacted your Internship II experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	Do you think the content you received in courses regarding CARE students has helped you at all during your Internship II placement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Member checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea: 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with field experiences 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

The final protocol, seen in Table 6, again asked participants to address initial perceptions at the beginning of their internship and how these may have changed throughout their experience. The final focus group also asked the participants to discuss their intentions of pursuing a career in a Title I school and to explain their rational for working with CARE students.

Table 6: Focus Group 3 Interview Protocol

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	Tell me about how things are going in your internship. (For the final focus group, participants will use the beginning meeting to member-check)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	Thinking back to when you began the program, have your perceptions of Title I changed at all since you began your Internship II?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/field experiences on perceptions
Experiences with field experiences with CARE students (in Title I)	Have your previous field experiences in Title I schools impacted your Internship II experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	Do you think the content you received in courses regarding CARE students has helped you at all during your Internship II placement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Intentions to teach in Title I	After graduation, do you intend to pursue a career in a Title I school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude towards school/students • Intentions
Member checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea: 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with field experiences 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework 4) Intentions to teach in Title I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

Given a strong group of participants and well-crafted questions, focus group moderators can obtain useful results from the focus group (Morgan, 1995). As an internship coordinator, I carefully addressed my positionality during the first focus group. I made sure to keep the role as internship coordinator separate from my role as focus group moderator by not discussing

requirements of the internship program or my interaction with my own assigned interns. The preservice teachers participating in this study were made aware of my role as an internship coordinator but were informed that this role had no effect their midpoint or final evaluations. They were assured that their own assessing coordinators would not be contacted or informed of what was discussed within the focus groups. Serving as the focus group moderator, I kept discussions on-track without influencing or hindering the perceptions of the participants. Lack of discussion and focus was addressed by using the prompts identified within the focus group protocol.

To ensure participants understood the importance of the focus groups, and to inspire honest discussion, norms were created. Norms are a standard or pattern, especially of social behavior, that is expected of a group (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Figure 3 shows these norms that were displayed during each focus group meeting.

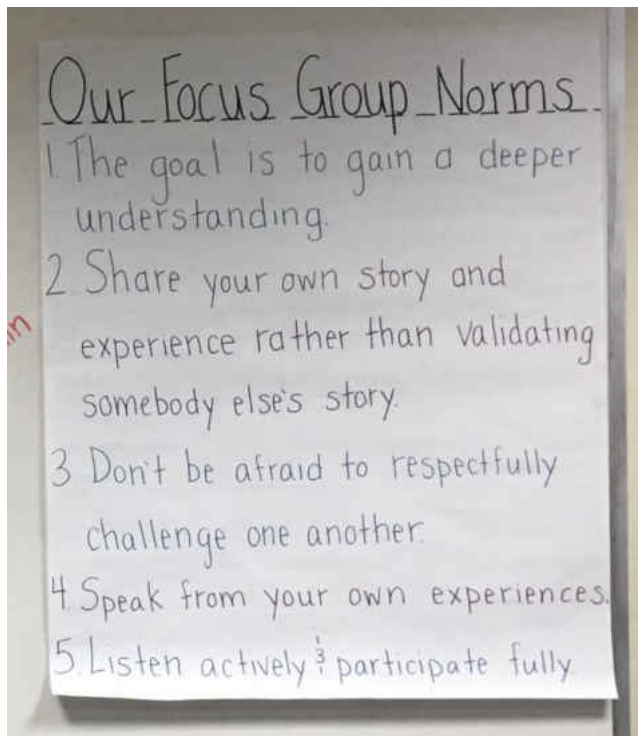


Figure 3: Focus Group Norms

These norms were implemented with the goal to serve as a guide and to regulate acceptable discussion and behavior during each focus group meeting.

Each focus group was audio-recorded and later transcribed. Only minor handwritten notes were taken during the focus groups but were used to aid in bracketing and transcriptions. Confidentiality of participants is important and were honored in the transcriptions using pseudonyms. School names mentioned during discussion were redacted from the transcriptions. Only the moderator, myself, has access to the recordings. Recordings of each focus group are stored on two password protected devices: a cellphone and a laptop. The focus group recordings were all transcribed by myself to acquaint myself with the data and to help maintain the confidentiality of the participants.

As previously noted, close to the conclusion of the Internship II placement, participants were involved in a third and final focus group. This focus group followed a similar protocol to the first, but it also addressed their intentions of teaching in Title I and working with CARE students after graduation. The preservice teachers were asked to discuss notable or memorable experiences within their internship placements that may have influenced, reinforced, or shifted their perceptions and intentions. The preservice teachers were then asked to discuss their intentions or willingness to pursue and/or accept a career teaching in a Title I school.

Data Analysis

Transcripts from the initial focus group were coded to identify reoccurring themes and perceptions shared by the preservice teachers. Coding was completed using Saldana's (2013) two major stages: First Cycle and Second Cycle. Member checking was utilized to ensure that the participants feel that the themes and beliefs identified are accurately portrayed. By checking my preliminary findings with my participants, broader implications and ramifications can be

discussed (Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). Member checking is addressed later in this section.

Identification of Codes and Themes

During the transcription process, jotting was used to record any emergent reflections or commentary when thinking back to the moment the focus group was occurring (Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). Reactions to some of the participants responses, doubts about quality of some of the data, and mental notes of issues to pursue later were recorded with jottings using the Microsoft Word comment tool. In addition to jottings, analytic memos (Appendix F) were recorded following each focus group transcription. These are brief narratives documenting my own reflections about the data (Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). By writing the memos, possible codes, patterns, and concepts were noted prior to the final coding and analysis process.

Coding for each piece of data collection from the focus groups occurred with minor computer assistance using Microsoft Word's comment function and in an "old school" manner with the use of sticky notes and cut-out transcription statements. No formal coding software format was utilized (Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). While computer software has advanced significantly regarding data organization and management, a more hands-on approach to analyzing the data was preferred.

During First Cycle coding, codes were assigned to the data in chunks (Saldana, 2013; Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). Referring to the analytic memos allowed for a provisional "start list" of codes prior to analysis of the transcripts. Through descriptive and In Vivo coding, a list of initial codes was constructed. Descriptive coding was utilized to assign labels to participant statements throughout the transcriptions. In a few instances, In Vivo coding designated codes pulled from the participants' own language (Saldana, 2013; Saldana,

Huberman, & Miles, 2014). All transcripts were analyzed a second time to check for codes that may have been missed during the first run through. Participant statements

Once the transcriptions were coded, these codes were recorded in simple list format on an Excel spreadsheet separated by group, Group A and Group B. With a list of codes created, Second Cycle coding took place. Initial codes for Group A and Group B were then analyzed for patterns. By pattern coding, the lengthy list of codes was grouped into a smaller number of categories (Saldana, 2013; Saldana, Huberman, & Miles, 2014). These categories were then grouped to create the six themes for Group A, and the six themes for Group B. Each groups' themes were then recorded separately, and significant statements from each focus group meeting were identified and cut out. Based on the correlation between a participant's statement, using words such as "classroom management," "diversity," or "coursework," the statement was placed under a corresponding theme. Statements were affixed with tape to allow for reassignment if needed.

Initially, seven themes emerged for Group B, but due to the similar nature of two of the themes, they were combined. Additional observations that arose during this sorting process were noted on sticky notes and placed with the themes and statements. Figures 4 and 5 show the sorting that took place for each group. During this sorting process, two sub-themes, Stress and the Role of Race/Ethnicity emerged and were recorded.

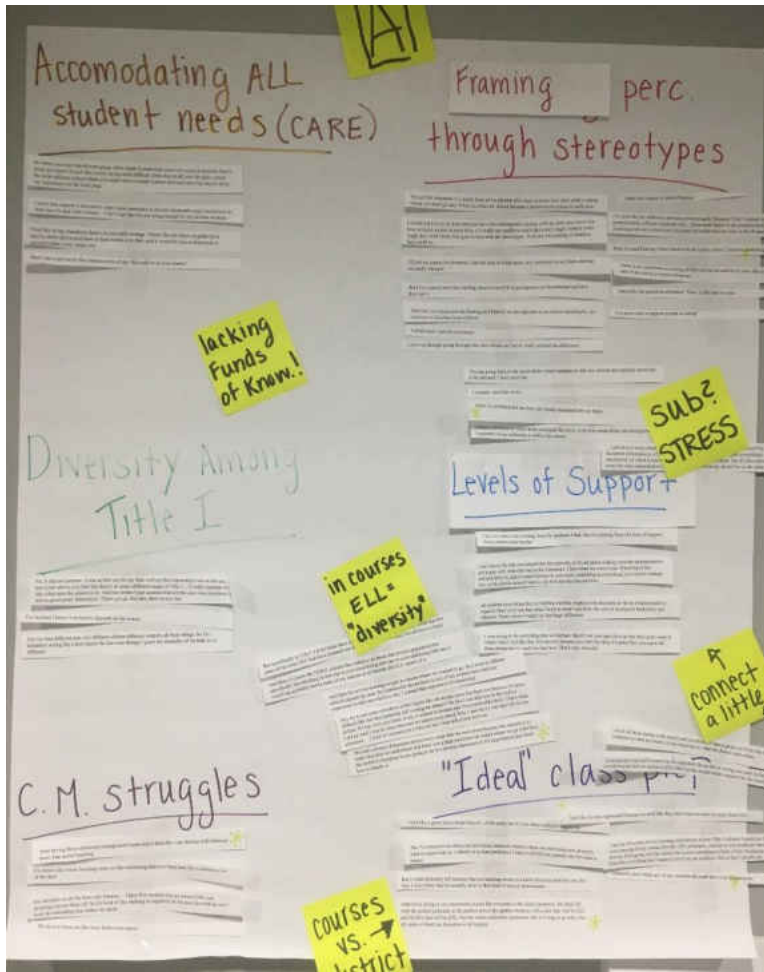


Figure 4: Themes and Statement Analysis for Group A



Figure 5: Themes and Statement Analysis for Group B

If requested, committee members, other researchers, and peers were allowed to check the data analysis to help identify any biases that may inadvertently seep through, to locate any pertinent themes that may have been overlooked initially, and to corroborate findings. The dissertation chair was provided copies of the transcriptions, with and without coding, to peer review the data analysis. Participants were assigned pseudonyms throughout the transcriptions to guarantee that reviewers are not made aware of any identities. These themes are further discussed in Chapter Four.

Group Interaction

The final problem area with focus groups that Morgan (1995) identifies is data analysis. To avoid complications in this area, I looked at the context of the group interaction with the experience, not necessarily individual comments. I focused on similar encounters had by the participants to analyze the effectiveness of culturally responsive pedagogy and prior experience with CARE students (Asbury, 1995). Looking for commonalities among responses or points of agreement can help identify overlapping perceptions important to the preservice teachers in the context of the focus group. Using the data to create an overall picture of the experience had by the preservice teachers is vital, whether that be positive or negative (Rosenthal, 2016). The data collected in the form of transcripts of focus groups A and B were the primary data sources to address the two research questions posed. The research questions were composed to identify how impactful the incorporation of culturally responsive pedagogical content and related field experiences within Title I schools are to preservice teachers' perceptions of Title I schools and to their intentions of working with CARE students.

Trustworthiness

To ensure trustworthiness of the data collected, various steps were taken during and after the data collection process. Trustworthiness involves establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Amankwaa, 2016). Credibility ensures the truth of the findings and transferability shows that the findings are applicable in other contexts. Through dependability, the findings are consistent and can be repeated. Finally, with confirmability, the findings of the study are shaped by the participants and not through researcher bias or motivation (Amankwaa, 2016).

Steps taken within this study show the credibility and transferability of the process and can be replicated at other institutions, or within other content areas. During the data collection process, member checking was utilized to check any emerging findings with participants. Member checking allows the opportunity for clarification of focus group answers and for misconceptions to be cleared up (Saldana, 2013). This strategy ensures that participant contributions are recorded and represented honestly and appropriately within the study, and ensured that findings were true to how participants felt their responses were interpreted during focus groups (Amankwaa, 2016).

Member Checking

Member checking for this study occurred in two separate ways. First, to conclude each focus group I paraphrased participants' answers, as noted on protocols, and ask for any clarifications and additions. This process safeguarded that transcriptions reflect the responses of the participants. Second, prior to the final focus group, participants were shown data collected and relevant to the study in a printed format. Participants were shown quotes, sans names, gathered during their specific focus group. As a group, they were asked to sort the data/quotes and assign a title, or theme, to each category created. The participants were then provided the themes that emerged when I was coding, whereupon they could either substantiate or negate, if they thought something was misinterpreted.

Through member checking, participants perceptions and intentions were identified and represented authentically. Of course, participants were encouraged not to identify their own quotes or personal statements, but to look at the data holistically and objectively. This rich exercise was recorded and used for verification and further data analysis. Participant responses

were kept and compared to my own coding along with the data collected from the final focus group.

This form of member checking was adapted from Hoffman's (2006) study analyzing elementary student perceptions of their own mathematics learning. In a similar format for this study, participants were given strips of paper with statements/quotes typed on them and they were instructed to sort whichever way they saw fit. At first, the participants worked in pairs to sort the strips they were given. After five minutes, they were then instructed to work group to regroup and sort their findings and develop headings for each. Discussion while developing each heading was encouraged and noted in the handwritten focus group notes. The headings assigned by the focus group along with the corresponding statements can be seen in Chapter Four.

Bracketing

Another process must be incorporated to aid in the trustworthiness of this study, so bracketing was used. Bracketing is often used in qualitative research "to mitigate the potential deleterious effects of unacknowledged preconceptions related to the research and thereby to increase the rigor of the project" (Tufford & Newman, 2012, p. 81). Due to my connection with the topic of research, bracketing allowed for me to analytically focus on participant responses and not influence the data in a favorable way. The method of bracketing used was writing memos (Tufford & Newman, 2012). Memo writing allows me, the researcher, to record any insights or any preconceptions I may have during the data collection process. Analytic memos written during transcriptions can be found in Appendix F. According to Tufford and Newman (2012), memo writing allows the researcher to "engage more extensively with the raw data" (p. 86).

Prior to each focus group and member checking activity, I reminded the participants of my positionality. I worked to suspend my judgment, even in my facial expressions, on the phenomena of their working with CARE students. By suspending judgement, the extent of their experiences, whether positive or negative, can be fully examined. The use of jottings and analytic memos allowed me to express reflections I had about the focus group during and after the transcription process.

Jottings allowed me to express my own thoughts on what participants said, while the analytic memos allowed me to record patterns I saw emerging from their conversations. Initially, jottings were used to express thoughts separate from emerging themes, but I later realized that comments and questions noted during jottings connected to some of the findings, discussed in Chapter Four, and some of the recommendations, discussed in Chapter Five. For example, in one transcript I questioned “How helpful are the supervising teachers being with establishing the boundaries for the interns?” This lack of support later arose as a theme, and also influenced recommendations and further research. Participants non-verbal, through body language and tone of voice, expressions of stress were also noted in several jottings. Stress was later identified as a sub-theme for Group A.

As the researcher, I did not serve as their internship coordinator which allowed for the interactions with participants to be solely rooted in the purposes of this study. I did not assess their performance or provide feedback during their internship. These decisions along with bracketing allowed for more honest conversations during focus groups.

Audit trail

Additionally, trustworthiness was attained through the creation of an audit trail. Audit trails allow for a transparent description of the research steps taken. Steps taken during this study

were recorded from the beginning of the study to the collection and reporting of the findings (Rodgers & Cowles, 1993). Organizing findings, maintaining good records, and providing the steps for how data are organized gives more validity to the collection process. Transparent description of the research steps taken from the start of this study through to the development and reporting of findings was maintained. In additional files, dates of documents and communication sent were recorded, all transcriptions from their initial rendering were kept, and all handwritten focus group notes were retained. Hard copies of these documents have been retained and stored in file folders accessible only to the Principal Investigator. If requested, this information could have been made available. A copy of the Summary of Explanation of Research that was sent during recruiting can be found in Appendix B. All transcriptions were also completed within a two to three days of each focus group session. Table 7 shows the timeline that was followed when completing the focus groups and transcriptions.

Table 7: Timeline of Focus Group Sessions and Transcription Time Frames

Focus Group & Transcription Timeline				
	Group A		Group B	
Focus Group	Date	Transcription Period	Date	Transcription Period
1	January 26 th	January 27 th – January 29 th	February 9 th	February 10 th – 12 th
2	February 23 rd	February 24 th – February 26 th	March 9 th	March 10 th – 12 th
3	April 6 th	April 7 th – 9 th	April 20 th	April 21 st – April 23 rd

Limitations

My position as a teacher educator and internship coordinator had the potential to pose limitations for the study. As an instructor for a teaching strategies and classroom management course, I implement culturally responsive pedagogy and talk about CARE students within my course. Former students of mine were not excluded when recruiting preservice teachers to increase participants. Instead, for those who chose to participate, I addressed my positionality as

their former instructor and defined my role in the research for this study. They were informed that there was no possible impact on their assessments.

As with any research design, limitations to the methodology may arise. Being able to paint a picture for readers of the study is important, which is why a phenomenological study was chosen. Readers can “see” and understand the experiences had by the participants through this qualitative approach. Phenomenology also usually calls for a smaller sample size to gather richer data. This dissertation’s research design addresses criticism of small sample size by eliciting sixteen participants spread across two different focus groups. This allowed me to gain a deeper perspective on the Title I perceptions and intentions held by preservice teachers exposed to Title I field experiences and CARE students. Two focus groups allowed for some possible comparisons between those who were receiving “more experience” to those who did not. As preservice teachers who work with CARE students, the two focus groups allowed for layered, deep discussions to note how perceptions and intentions changed, remained stagnant, or diminished.

The next chapter, Chapter Four, findings from each focus group are highlighted to address the research questions and their relevance within the findings. Chapter Five offers a summary along with recommendations for teacher preparation and offers ideas for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the possible impact targeted coursework and on-site field experiences had on elementary preservice teachers who are currently completing their final internship in Title I schools. With vacancies in Title I schools rising and scrutiny of what makes an effective teacher preparation program, this research explores the experiences of preservice teachers in Title I schools. This study was guided by the following research questions: (RQ1) *How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout various courses and related field experiences with Title I impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?* and (RQ2) *How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?*

Guided by the theoretical framework of contact hypothesis, it is assumed that participants who have had more exposure to CARE students in Title I schools through course content, field experiences, or internships may express more positive perceptions and may have increased intentions to teach in a Title I setting. Two focus groups were utilized for this study that each met at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the participants internship for a total of three events each. Group A had one or less instances of exposure to CARE students and Title I setting, while participants in Group B had at least two instances of exposure. The specific items that qualified as exposure were outlined in Chapter Three, but included coursework focused on Title I schools and CARE students, field experiences, and Internship I in a Title I school. This chapter reports the findings for each focus group of participants in the order of the research questions postulated. Two sections are presented, one for each focus group, that (1) discuss the themes discerned from

the focus group transcriptions based on RQ1, (2) explain the analysis of the member checking activity, (3) presents the findings for RQ2; and (4) discusses the interpretation of these findings. The final two sections offer a comparison between the two groups and limitations to the research design.

Findings From Focus Group A

RQ1: *How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout various courses and related field experiences with Title I impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?*

Focus Group A, also referred to as fewer exposures, met for a total of three times. During the first two focus group sessions, the protocol (see Appendix C) focused solely on the first research question pertaining to perceptions and exposure to CARE students and Title I settings through course content and field experiences. From RQ1, three prompts were created to guide the discussion. Those prompts invited participants to share (1) their perceptions of the schools which they interned in and the students with which they worked, (2) if previous service learning/field experiences impacted their readiness to teach in a Title I; and (3) what course content they utilize that prepared them for their current Title I placement. The focus group protocols containing the specific questions can be found in Appendix C and in the Chapter Three.

To analyze the transcripts, first and second cycle coding, as explained in Chapter Three, were utilized. In keeping with the purpose of focus groups, the collective feelings and perceptions addressed the first research question. While individual responses are shared and

quoted within the findings, these individual quotes were selected to reflect the overall feeling of the group.

Themes

Through thorough analysis of transcriptions from three focus group sessions for Group A, the following six themes emerged: (1) framing perceptions through stereotypes, (2) variance among Title I schools, (3) accommodating all student needs, (4) classroom management challenges, (5) levels of support; and (6) preparation for the “ideal” classroom. Small connections between some themes were identified and addressed. A sub-theme, stress, also emerged during final analysis of the data.

Framing perceptions through stereotypes. At the start of the first focus group, participants were asked to recount stereotypes they had heard about Title I schools and CARE students. The participants in Group A were careful to designate that the descriptions they were giving were not their own, but ones they had heard. They offered responses relating to lack of parental involvement, lack of support, high population of low-SES students, students’ disinterest in their education, and funding. Some participants discussed their hesitation to begin their internship once they had received notification of their Title I placements. One participant admitted to crying when she received her placement because these stereotypes had led her to believe the school was not a place she wanted to be.

- Jennifer: *I cried when I got my placement. I wanted Title I and I had put Title I around my home that I would describe as not as Title I as where I am. I am more West Orlando, so you have a lower socioeconomic status. That is where a lot of the people around the area have government assistance and housing. We have students that are homeless. So, it was a lot rougher I guess in my mind.*

Discussing these stereotypes at the beginning allowed participants to be honest when sharing their own perceptions of Title I schools and CARE students. By acknowledging the

negative stereotypes, Group A participants were able to recount some of the positive perceptions that developed during their time in their current internship. One participant shared:

- Sasha: *I have never seen a support system so strong.*

when discussing the support provided to and among teachers in her school. When thinking back to other stereotypes discussed, Group A participants also acknowledged that Title I schools do have adequate funding, if not more than other schools.

Unfortunately, through experiences had within their current internships, some of their final perceptions aligned with a few of the stereotypes discussed. Representative responses provide evidence of these perceptions:

- Sasha: *I'll just say parent involvement, like the lack of it has been very cemented in my brain and has not really changed.*
- Aisha: *I've seen like the difference between predominantly Hispanic Title I schools and like predominantly African-American Title I... behavioral issues in the predominantly African-American Title I schools are a lot more prevalent than the ones in the Hispanic schools.*
- Maria: *Yes, um, going back to the stress factor where teachers in Title I schools are typically perceived to be stressed. I have seen that.*

Variance across Title I schools. One of the interesting findings that emerged was the participants' understanding, while surface, of the variances across Title I schools. On several occasions, Group A participants noted that some of the experiences they were having, or some of the stereotypes they were seeing, were not as prevalent as in other Title I settings.

- Sasha: *There's so [sic] many different ranges of Title I... It really depends on like what area the school is in. And like before, I just assumed that all Title I were, you know, in not so good areas. Stereotype. There you go. But like, that's so not true.*

The participants in Group A were in consensus that characteristics generally applied to Title I schools, such as lack of funding, location in low-SES neighborhoods, and minimal resources, do not apply to every Title I school. Participants stated that the variance depended on the culture of

the school, the administrative support within the school, and “the mentality of the kids.”

Participants noted that although a school may be give the Title I denotation, the cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) makeup of that particular school does not represent all Title I schools.

Accommodating all student needs. At first, this theme came slightly as a surprise to the researcher and chair. When prompting participants to discuss their perceptions of and experiences with CARE students, they often referred to English Language Learners (ELLs) and the prevalence this focus had in their coursework.

- Meredith: *There was a pervasive, like, undercurrent of the ELs will be in your classes.*
- Jennifer: *... and then of course the TESOL classes. They talked a lot about that diverse population. But specifically, like teaching in Title I or ever considering Title I or ever addressing Title I? I would say probably not in many of my courses at all, besides the ELL aspect of it.*

Accommodating ELL students focuses on the cultural and racial components of the CARE acronym. There was little mention of economically diverse students in the focus group discussions, but Group A participants showed no difficulty with being able to accommodate non-native speakers. Participants did not designate this as an area of needed growth which suggests they received extensive instruction on this in their teacher preparation program. Understanding the importance of accommodating EL students was prevalent, but participants expressed additional concerns with working with diverse student populations, especially in Title I schools. Accommodating for academic diversity, students above, below, or on grade level, seemed to be an area of desired improvement for the preservice teachers.

- Alyssa: *So, when you have that diverse group where there is some high, some low, some in between, there's some you know, it's just like you're saying more difficult when they're all over the place versus the more affluent school where you might have a couple outliers here and there.*

- Maria: *I think that support is absolutely super, super necessary in diverse classrooms, and I would love to learn how to deal with it alone... Like I feel like I'm not doing enough for my diverse students.*
- Maria: *I feel like in my classroom there's no one that's average. There's the one that's on grade level they're either above over here or there below over there and it would be nice to learn how to accommodate every single one.*

Group A participants' concerns spoke to the lack of multiple exposure focusing on CARE students. Based on current internship experiences, the participants effectively wanted to be more informed about working with CARE populations, in addition to EL students they have been prepared to work with. Preservice teachers recognized the diversity of their classrooms and wanted to know how to better assist the range of students through effective instruction.

Classroom management challenges. This theme connects to the first theme pertaining to stereotypes/perceptions. Initially, in the first run of data, feelings expressed about behavior were categorized across those themes, but there were enough mentions to warrant a separate, independent theme. "Behavior," "discipline," and "classroom management" were mentioned 22 times across the three focus group sessions. Trouble with student behavior and discipline stood out during Group A participants' discussions.

In the previous theme, Accommodating all student needs, Group A participants expressed their desire for more course content related to teaching diverse populations. Quotes leading to this theme expressed the need for more understanding of behavior and classroom management. Participants lamented that most of their instructional time is spent on correcting behaviors rather than teaching content.

- Sasha: *We have to focus on like more behavioral aspect.*
- Jennifer: *It's almost like you're focusing more on like redirecting behavior more than like academics a lot of the days.*

- Maria: *...been having these classroom management issues and it feels like I am dealing with behavior more than actual teaching.*

With statements such as these, one can easily see why preservice teachers may be stressed out in internship placements. In regard to the learning opportunities that the university provides preservice teachers, only one course provides instructional focuses on classroom management. During the first focus group meeting, Group A participants noted that behavior problems were a stereotype of Title I schools. In the second and third focus group sessions, participants began to notice behavior and classroom management issues becoming more prominent. Further discussion on classroom management concerns can be found in the discussion portion of this section and within Chapter Five.

Levels of support. This theme was not an original one that developed during the first cycle of coding. In the second round of coding the transcriptions, the levels of support provided by supervising teachers and the district became apparent. As Group A participants discussed what shaped their perceptions of Title I schools, CARE students, and what influenced some of their stress, this theme emerged.

Many stressors were either reinforced by teachers supervising Group A participants or through mandatory district requirements.

- Jennifer: *I feel my stress isn't coming from the students. I feel like it's coming from the lack of support from a supervising teacher.*
- Aisha: *You do all these... teacher work sample and you know, I'll take a glance at it but like this is nothing compared to what we observe in the classroom or what the district uses online.*
- Jennifer: *I feel like in the Title I school that I'm currently in it's all about making sure the administrators are happy with what they see in the classroom. I feel when we were, I was observing in the affluent schools, admin wasn't always in your room nitpicking at everything, 'you need to change this.' Or the district doesn't want to see this, this, this, this, and this.*

Perhaps the instruction and guidance that preservice teachers are receiving within their teacher preparation program was not aligned to their Title I placements. Preservice teachers acknowledged the assignments completed for course requirements were almost always irrelevant to the demands of daily lesson planning in Title I schools. Due to such strict school district requirements, Group A participants reported the inability to implement what they learned in their courses.

This theme of levels of support connects with the upcoming theme about preparation for the “ideal” classroom. The stressors preservice teachers are facing due to these influences and instructional choices are impacted by the preparation they previously received prior to entering their internship.

Preparation for the “ideal” classroom. A final theme that emerged across each of the three focus groups was perception of lack of preparation from the participants in Group A’s teacher preparation program. One of the most powerful understandings came when Jennifer said:

- *What we're doing in our coursework, is just like everyone is the ideal classroom, the ideal life, with the perfect principal, in the perfect school, the perfect students, with a few that will be ELL, and the few that will be ESE. Not the whole collective classroom who is living in poverty who all... some of them are homeless or all hungry.*

Jennifer seemed to have expressed what Group A felt collectively in the idea that they were being prepared for the “ideal” classroom. While she was making this statement, other Group A participants were nodding their heads in agreeance and some echoed this same feeling. Their perceptions echoed that they were not prepared for the diversity that they were facing in the classroom. Other participants, three total, added that while some of their instructors mentioned

diversity, a mention was not enough to prepare them for the daily demands of teaching in a Title I school.

- Leslie: *But I've noticed even when you have those hardcore classes where we went deep into diversity, what to expect in Title I schools, or at least professors I had, it still did not prepare me for what to expect... I can say from past service learning experiences in non-Title I schools, I could see like what we were learning in our courses like the UDL principles. You know you could see them you could just see it but going into the school I'm in now, sometimes it feels a little frustrating because it feels like everything that I learned, I don't see as much as I felt or feel I should see.*
- Jennifer: *I honestly don't think any of my coursework could have ever prepared me... but specifically in Title I, I don't think there is anything that I have gone through those last few years of my time [university name] that have prepared me for the type of culture that I would have to learn.*
- Maria: *I also really, very, super, unprepared and you know, considering that I did go through Title I schools through my academic career. So, I was in those type of schools, going into the teachers shoes this time being the one handling the situation is completely different. And our coursework. I feel like it kind of prepares us for the idealistic view of what education should be like.*

The participants in Group A shared their consternation with the preparation they received prior to entering their Title I placements. They noted the discrepancies they saw between what was being taught to them in methods courses compared to what they were actually able to implement in their classrooms. Lesson plans they were taught to create looked nothing like the lesson plans needed for daily instruction. Minor discussions of Title I issues and CARE students were not enough to prepare preservice teachers for the reality they faced every day.

This theme calls teacher educators to attention in terms of what would serve as sufficient preparation for working in Title I schools and with CARE students. One participant in Group A noted that one of her professors was moving the conversation forward.

- Leslie: *She had a diverse discussion almost every class that we were there because she wanted us to make sure that we understood that there was a high, you know, no matter*

where we go. With how the world is changing, we are going to be in a diverse classroom so it's important to just learn how to handle it.

Leslie's statement shows the realities that her instructor was asking her and other preservice teachers to acknowledge. No matter the classroom, there will be diverse students and being able to work with and support them is important.

Stress. Throughout the three focus group sessions, participants noted levels of stress several times. Due to the amount of mentions, about 36 times, stress slowly built as an underlying or sub-theme during the final analysis. Group A participants noted that they were seeing, and even experiencing, one stereotype of stressed teachers in Title I schools. During the final focus group meeting, Group A participants shared:

- Maria: *Stress is something that has been very firmly cemented into my brain*
- Leslie: *... (stress) has been cemented the most. A lot of it comes from just seeing how important strong leadership is within the school.*
- Jennifer: *I feel my stress isn't coming from the students I feel, like it's coming from the lack of support from a supervising teacher*

Notably, Group A participants distinguished that the stress they experienced was only in part coming from the students. Rather, most of the stress came from the lack of support within the school. Lack of support from school administration and supervising teachers were apparent through Group A's discussions. This lack of support was exhibited in lesson planning and delivery, practice of using research-based strategies, and behavior management. Some of the additional themes also influence and captured preservice teachers' perceptions of stress.

Member Checking

Prior to the third and final focus group, Group A preservice teachers participated in a member checking activity. Participants were required to sort statements taken from the transcriptions of the first two focus groups. As a group, they sorted the statements, came to

consensus on titles for each sorted group, and recorded those titles on note cards see Chapter Three for more detail). Figure 6 shows a visual of the finished product, and Table 8 provides the same information typed to see more detail within the statements along with their prospective themes. This activity was performed to identify possible emergent themes prior to final data analysis. By taking part in this process, participants had the opportunity to clarify statements that may have been misinterpreted, reflect on the two previous focus group sessions, and categorize similarities between statements. Member checking in this fashion stands to provide evidence that the themes identified by the researcher correlates closely with those identified by the participants, and that no misconceptions arose during initial data analysis.

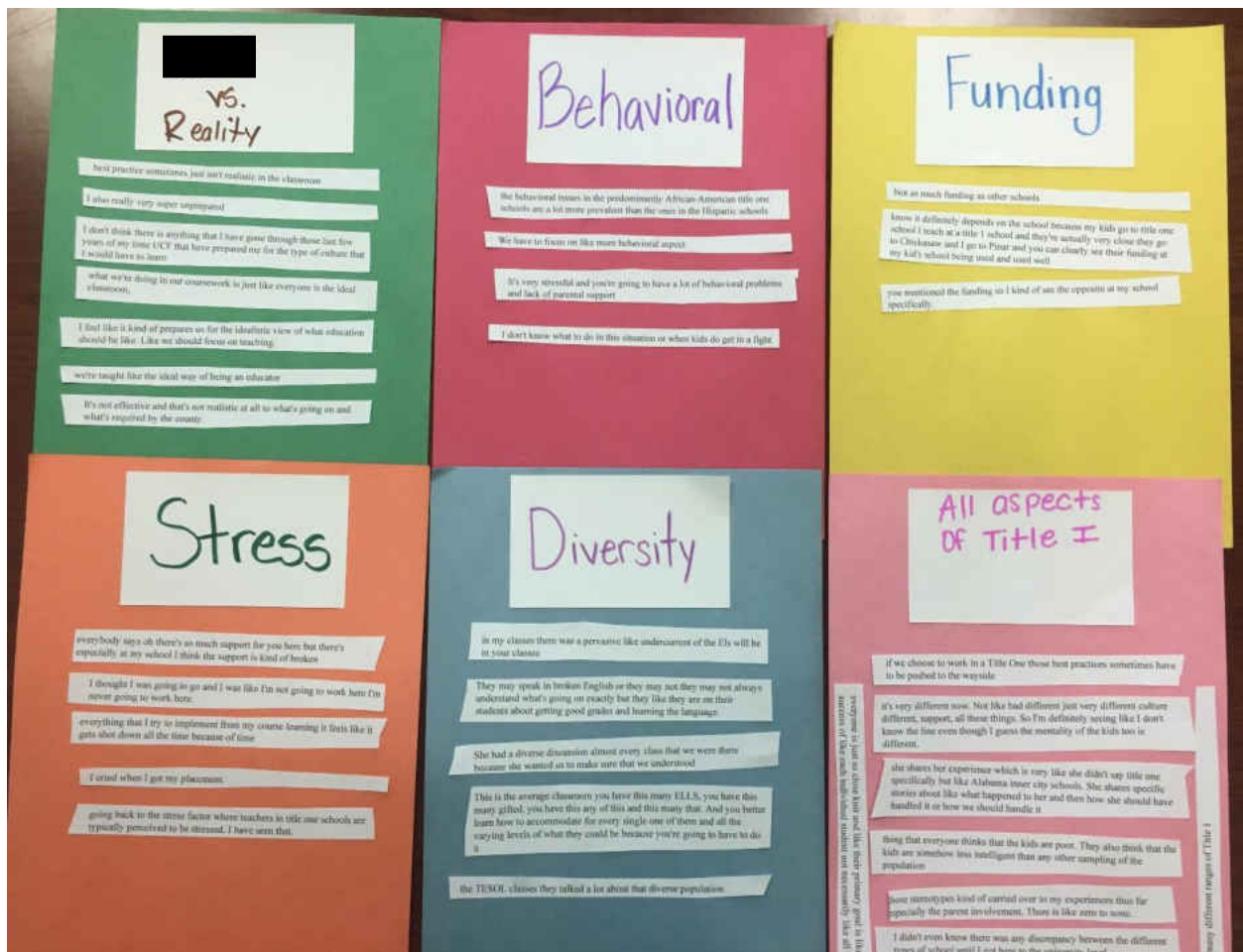


Figure 6: Member Checking Activity – Group A

Table 8: Member Checking Findings – Group A

Assigned Theme by Participants	Statements from Transcriptions
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my classes there was a pervasive like undercurrent of the ELs will be in your classes • They may speak in broken English, or they may not they may not always understand what's going on exactly, but they like they are on their students about getting good grades and learning the language. • She had a diverse discussion almost every class because she wanted us to make sure that we understood. • This is the average classroom: you have these many ELLS, you have this many gifted, you have this any of this and this many that. And you better learn how to accommodate for every single one of them and all the varying levels of what they could be because you're going to have to do it. • In the TESOL classes, they talked a lot about that diverse population.
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behavioral issues in the predominantly African-American Title I schools are a lot more prevalent than the ones in the Hispanic schools. • We have to focus on like [sic] more behavioral aspects. • It's very stressful and you're going to have a lot of behavioral problems and lack of parental support. • I don't know what to do in this situation or when kids do get in a fight.
University Prep v. Reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice sometimes just isn't realistic in the classroom. • I also was really, very, super unprepared. • I don't think there is anything that I have gone through those last few years of my time at (university name) that have prepared me for the type of culture that I would have to learn. • What we're doing in our coursework is just like everyone is the ideal classroom. • I feel like it kind of prepares us for the idealistic view of what education should be like. Like we should focus on teaching. • We're taught like the ideal way of being an educator. • It's not effective and that's not realistic at all to what's going on and what's required by the county.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not as much funding as other schools. • Know it definitely depends on the school because my kids go to Title I school I teach at a Title I school and they're actually very close they go to [REDACTED] and I go to [REDACTED] and you can clearly see their funding at my kid's school being used and used well. • You mentioned the funding so, I kind of see the opposite at my school specifically.

Assigned Theme by Participants	Statements from Transcriptions
All Aspects of Title I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we choose to work in a Title I those best practices sometimes have to be pushed to the wayside. • It's very different now. Not like bad different just very different culture different, support, all these things. So, I'm definitely seeing like I don't know the line even though I guess the mentality of the kids too is different. • She shares her experience which is very like she didn't say Title I specifically but like (<i>specific state</i>) inner city schools. She shares specific stories about like what happened to her and then how she should have handled it or how we should handle it. • Everyone thinks that the kids are poor. They also think that the kids are somehow less intelligent than any other sampling of the population. • Those stereotypes kind of carried over to my experiences thus far, especially the parent involvement. There is like zero to none. • I didn't even know there was any discrepancy between the different types of school until I got here to the university level. • I was nervous going in because starting out I was a substitute teacher. And so, my first experience with Title I... don't even know what it was until I went to my orientation. • Everyone is just so close knit and like their primary goal is like the success of like each individual student not necessarily like all test scores. • There's so many different ranges of Title I.
Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everybody says oh there's so much support for you here but there's, especially at my school, I think the support is kind of broken. • I thought I was going to go, and I was like, I'm not going to work here I'm never going to work here. • Everything that I try to implement from my course learning... it feels like it gets shot down all the time because of time. • Going back to the stress factor where teachers in Title I schools are typically perceived to be stressed... I have seen that. • I cried when I got my placement.

The themes ascertained after two focus group sessions by the researcher are quite closely aligned to the themes identified by Group A participants. During an initial sorting by the researcher, the themes assigned were stereotypes/perceptions, differences among Title I, “idealistic” preparation, feeling unprepared, and course exposure. While titles may be different, Group A identified themes of diversity, stress, behavior or classroom management, Title I characteristics, and discrepancies between teacher preparation and the “real” classroom. After the member checking activity, the outcomes were saved and not referenced again until the in-depth transcription analysis following the third focus group meeting, which makes the comparison that much more interesting. In fact, these findings were not revisited again until final codes and themes were identified and recorded. Participants were able to discuss and identify almost identical themes to those that were discovered upon analysis which reinforces the importance of those that were found.

RQ2: *How might preservice teachers’ experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?*

At the conclusion of the third focus group, RQ2 was introduced. Participants in Group A were asked, based off their semester long experiences in Title I schools with CARE students, if they intended to pursue and accept a career in a Title I school. Table 9 shows their responses when asked about their intentions. Out of seven total, three participants stated they would, two participants were neutral with her choice, and two participants said they would not seek employment in Title I schools upon graduation.

Table 9: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Group A

Preservice Teachers' Intentions to Teach in Title I (Group A)	
YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At first, I would have said no... I got placed in a Title I school for both of my internships and I actually think that's where I'm going to lean more towards because although it has like the negative aspects it's also very rewarding and the students are so thankful for everything like you can do the smallest thing for them. (Aisha) • I actually plan on stay at school I'm at now. I've like talked to the principal and stuff, so I'm really excited. I mean, it's going to be hard, but I just like, I love the support that I have. (Sasha) • I am feeling burned out at this stage, but I do have a dream school, and it is a Title I school so more likely than not I will stay in some type of Title I... the spectrum is different from school to school. (Maria)
NEUTRAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would be happy with either. I'm, I mean I'm not picky because I know there is such a, just within Title I, there is such a difference between the schools. (Leslie) • I was used to those affluent schools. And so, at first, I was like No I hate this. This is rough. And now towards the end of my internship. I've like really bonded with my kids. I can't say yes, I'll be in Title I. Wherever I can get a job, but I won't be mad either way. (Alyssa)
NO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For me, I am kind of burned out with Title I. So, I have been applying to affluent schools in my area. (Jennifer) • I need a change of pace because I know the rough side of it, but I also feel like I want a non-Title I school, so that I can experience the parent involvement aspect. (Rebecca)

Participants who stated that they do intend to pursue a career in Title I focused on some of the positive aspects as their reasons. One noted that the support she received was a considerable influence on her decision, while another realized she wanted to make a difference in the lives of her students and she could see herself doing that in Title I school. The third participant to say yes admitted that her “dream” school was a specific Title I school, so she intends to pursue her teaching career there. Another participant from Group A states that she would be fine with either Title I or non-Title I because she understands the variations that occur across Title I schools.

The participants whose intentions were not to teach in Title I schools, attributed this decision to being burned out and seeking a school with stronger parental support. The participant who admitted to being burned out after her internship stated that she was actively applying to affluent schools in hopes for a different experience. Based on their responses, two participants from Group A were listed as neutral. While technically their words could be considered a yes, their tone during the interview and use of “either way” are why an indifferent category was created.

Discussion of Group A Findings

The themes of Accommodating all students needs and Variance across Title I schools emerged as most constructive among the six themes. While participants expressed more support in accommodating all the needs of the students in their classrooms, they demonstrated an understanding of providing services to their EL student populations. Accommodations for ELs is discussed thoroughly in their teacher preparation program, and the participants in Group A were able to touch on this during the focus groups. Considering the variances across Title I schools showed that the participants also understood that stereotypes of Title I schools did not apply to all schools falling under that designation. Participants were able to distinguish between the differences they saw across schools. Two of the participants who expressed intentions to teach in Title I schools upon graduation, noted that they understood the differences among Title I schools and this was something they took into consideration when saying yes.

When examining the remaining themes of classroom management challenges, levels of support from teachers and the district, preparation for the ideal classroom, and the underlying theme of stress, it is important to note that this group of participants were those with comparatively minor exposure to Title I settings and CARE students. While disheartening to

analyze the transcripts, the findings call into question what an effective teacher preparation program should do to address the critical need for qualified teachers in Title I schools. From these findings, one may surmise that preservice teachers must have knowledge and strategies for working with diverse populations and understand the various aspects of the schools they enter.

Through analysis and creation of themes, the areas that preservice teachers may need additional support throughout their undergraduate career can be easily identified. Stereotypes and perceptions can be addressed through discussions on implicit bias in courses, field trips (virtual or real), films, and other activities. As teacher educators introduce components of Title I in their classes, it is important to address, and challenge, stereotypes that preservice teachers may have. While learning to incorporate ELL strategies is important, students from academically and economically diverse backgrounds cannot be forgotten.

Teacher education programs must strive to create effective teachers for today's 21st Century classrooms. Based on the findings from this study, additional recommendations for enhancing teacher preparation will be discussed in Chapter Five. The following section of this chapter focuses on the findings and themes that emerged with the second group, Group B, participating in this study. Later, the findings for both Group A and B will be addressed.

Findings From Focus Group B

RQ1: *How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout various courses and related field experiences with Title I impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?*

Identical to the procedures used for Group A, questions for Group B, which is referred to as having more exposure, focused solely on the first research question pertaining to perceptions

and exposure to CARE students and Title I settings through course content and field experiences. The three prompts used to guide the discussion focused on (1) perceptions of the schools they were placed in and the students with which they worked, (2) their previous service learning/field experience impacted their readiness to teach in a Title I; and (3) what course content they utilize that prepared them for their current Title I placement. The focus group protocols containing the specific questions can be found in Appendix C and in the previous Chapter Three.

Themes

Through systematic First and Second Cycle coding of transcriptions from the three focus group sessions held at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester for Group B, the following six themes emerged: (1) framing perceptions through stereotypes, (2) variance among Title I schools, (3) varying field experiences, (4) classroom management challenges, (5) implementing best practices, and (6) building relationships. Small connections between some themes which will be touched on. A sub-theme, the role of race/ethnicity, also emerged during the second coding run of the data. Figure 5 in Chapter Three shows the final stage of analysis for these themes. After outlining these themes, the member checking activity Group B participated in will be revealed followed by discussion of the findings.

Framing perceptions through stereotypes. Similar to Group A, these participants who had more exposure, such as field experiences and Internship I placements, were asked to address stereotypes they heard about Title I schools and CARE students prior to their internship placements. Unlike the first group, Group B participants quick to list the stereotypes they had heard without worrying about ensuring that these stereotypes were not something they directly believed. Group A appeared timid when providing responses, while ensuring that other participants in Group A understood that the stereotypes mentioned were not ones they

themselves initially agreed with. Group B used the stereotypes to frame their perceptions. When mentioning things they had heard about Title I schools and students who attend these schools, they quickly follow up with differences they saw upon beginning their current internship placement. The stereotypes listed included behavior and discipline, lack of parental involvement, lack of support, amount of paperwork, and students lacking desire to learn.

- Abby: *So, you go in thinking there's going to be limited resources and that there's a lot of behavioral problems, and sometimes there are. But I don't think it's as negative of a picture that people paint.*
- Tracy: *I know for my school the kids definitely care. Like all of my students care about doing the work and getting good grades...like pre-ideas that it was going to be awful. These kids were just going to be little monsters and they're not; they're actually wonderful kids. The community is still terrible though, and that is still definitely a very strong image in my mind. Maybe as I do more Title I work I'll learn differently. But for now, I know that all the rumors about kids, false. They care. They want to be there. They enjoy being there.*
- Catherine: *A lot of what you hear is kind of what I was expecting even though I didn't want to expect that. But when I'm in there I realize a lot of it is, it just depends on the situation like it's not because it is a Title I school.*
- Jaime: *... the area for me was a little sketchy, and like I'm a little bit nervous to be there... that was a little nerve wracking for me at the beginning, but I definitely feel a lot safer inside the school than I thought I would.*

While trying to make a point about their perceptions, two participants' statements above perpetuated a stereotype regarding communities in which Title I schools are located. Tracy and Jaime tried to explain that the students care about being there and that the school is safe, but still manage to mention the "terrible" and "sketchy" qualities of the communities the schools are in. Other participants gave examples of how these stereotypes may also be perpetuated within the schools, such as

- John: *It's kind of like they get labeled, and then they just accept their behavior.*

- Anna: *It definitely solidified my whole perceptions of the behaviors, the things that they don't do anything about.* (In reference to teacher/administration allowing behavior problems to continue in the classroom without discipline.)

This suggests the idea that perhaps stereotypes about Title I schools and CARE students are being perpetuated by interns' observations in their internship placements. The participants were open to admit perceptions of stereotypes they had about Title I schools, but those stereotypes seemed to stay active through their tones and experiences discussed within the focus group. As discussed in Chapter Two, their discussions around Title I and CARE stereotypes shows that while they may not agree with the stereotypes, they know they exist. Even if they do not endorse the stereotype associated with the Title I school they were interning in, it appears that they may still unwittingly rely upon it when forming impressions of students.

Variance across Title I schools. Group B participants have had exposure to other Title I schools through various field experiences, readings, and activities, prior to their current internship placement. This additional exposure brought about conversations on differences among Title I schools. Participants statements reflected this difference that they were seeing from previous Title I schools compared to their current placement.

- John: *[referring to a previous school] Is Title I? I think it is... Yeah, and it's a predominantly Hispanic school. But like she said it [sic], I mean, it was a completely different feel, a different atmosphere than where I'm at now.*
- Abby: *... that two Title I schools within a mile of each other, you know just so, kids are so different, the way they treat the kids is so different, and just the way that they support them is different.*
- Jaime: *I think I thought that a lot of Title I schools are the same. And now I've been at two different ones. I was at one for service learning, and I'm in one now for my internship, and they're polar opposites... I think there's a very big difference between how they treat the kids at that school and how they treat the kids at the school I'm currently at.*

Since participants in Group B had more exposure to working in other Title I schools prior to their final internship through field experience, course content, and Internship I placements, they were able to see the variances among schools that fall into the Title I category. Participants noted differences in student behavior, how students were treated, and overall school culture. While some of their current experiences may have seemed difficult or complicated they knew not to assume the same would happen in another Title I school. During the focus groups sessions, Group B participants would often repeat ideas that current difficulties were only observable at the current Title I school; not at all Title I schools based on experiences previous experiences.

Varying field experiences. This exposure to Title I schools discussed in the previous theme came through various field experiences offered through the participants teacher preparation program. Several service learning courses required preservice teachers to complete 15 clock hours of field experiences in schools. Participants in Group B completed service learning hours through either assigned placements, choice placements, or Junior Achievement, in courses prior to their Internship I in Title I schools. As described in Chapter One, this first internship requires preservice teachers to be present two full days a week, eight hours each day for 15 weeks (about 240 hours), in an elementary classroom.

Whether through a field experience or Internship I in Title I, participants in Group B had significant previous experiences in a Title I school. In response to the protocol prompts, participants reflected on those experiences and appeared to realize how these varying field experiences impacted their final internship. Due to the flexible and variable nature of field experience placements, which sometimes could be just observing, tutoring, or teaching, Group B participants stated that these field experiences could be scaffolded for success.

- Amber: *JA (Junior Achievement) ... it's, it... didn't really help in a way, because also when I was at those schools I was basically just observing and just working with small*

group here and there. It was only there for like an hour or two a day for like one day or two days a week.

- *John: We were only there two days a week. So, it was like for those two days, I felt like they were always really excited to see me... now that I'm here the whole time, it feels much different than that.*

Of the eight participants in Group B, three noted that while they may have had previous field experiences within a Title I school and with CARE students, those experiences were brief. They felt that they were not given sufficient time to implement pedagogical processes they had learned. The remaining five completed their Internship I in a Title I school which allowed for more exposure time. But as John stated, being in the classroom for two days a week during that internship created a much different dynamic than what they faced in their current internship placement. Now in their final internship Group B worked to incorporate strategies learned, and it almost seemed impossible.

- *Jamie: "You see the beginning of the week. But by the time you get back the next Monday, everything is changed. You have no idea what happened there the rest of the week because it's not like you're getting an update from your teacher every day... Like, I had several times that I planned to do a lesson, and then walked in Monday and my teacher was like "I got ahead I taught it already." And then I'm kind of like, well what do I do now?"*

Classroom management challenges. When discussing preparation and coursework related to Title I schools and CARE students, the participants noted their desire to build a stronger classroom management toolbelt. Throughout the three focus groups, behavior problems seemed to be a continuous theme. Experiences had led participants to believe that the stereotype regarding behavior was true for Title I schools.

- *Anna: It definitely solidified my whole perceptions of the behaviors, the things that they don't do about anything.*
- *Abby: I feel like with Title I schools a lot of people also think that teachers in Title I schools don't really teach. They more work on classroom management because of the behavior aspect.*

Group B participants noticed that the teachers in their Title I schools seemed to be dealing more with behavior and classroom management rather than instruction.

- Amber: *We deal with behavior management more than the actual content.*
- Abby: *I wish I had gotten more strategies on how to work with behavioral problems.*
- Claire: *We can always learn content, but how to teach that content would be more beneficial focusing on those behavioral issues. I think we're all experiencing some sort of behavioral challenge that definitely can disrupt an entire lesson, which is difficult.*

These revelations led to discussions on their preparation and the understanding that classroom management and discipline are not repertoires that were completely instilled prior to beginning their final internship. While teaching and classroom management strategies are discussed at length in their content courses, classroom management often is more difficult to operationalize in internships. Preservice teachers are required to take a course directed towards classroom management, but half of the course is spent on instructional strategies. Group B participants shared experiences for which they felt unprepared, such as outward defiance or physical violence. Participants found it hard to identify whether they should ignore or correct the behavior. Their persistent challenges with classroom management was prominent with five of the participants throughout the three focus group sessions. Some Group B participants, approximately three, expressed concern with their supervising teachers using their internships strictly for behavior management, such as monitoring during lessons, rather than teaching. These three preservice teachers felt they were often left to their own devices to solve behavior problems without vital support. This lack of support leads into the next theme addressing levels of support.

Discussions of classroom management challenges led Group B participants to reflect on the influence that supervising teachers had on participants' views of Title I schools and the

students that were in them. The participants shared experiences they had with teachers within their schools who seemed to perpetuate the stereotypes, especially those regarding errant behavior.

- Abby: *But as my internship was going on, the teachers nonstop complain about the behavior issues with the kids, and then like they gossip about, it and its to the point where it's so commonplace now with all the behavior issues that there are.*
- Jaime: *They're treated like they're criminals half the time. I mean the teachers talk badly about the students in front of them. They know that they're not respected by the teachers at the school. So, they act like it.*

The participants shared additional instances in which teachers or administrators perpetuated the stereotypes of Title I and CARE students through poorly handled situations.

Two participants shared instances in which behavior situations were mishandled by teachers or administrators:

- Abby: *It's to the point where it's so commonplace now, with all the behavior issues, that there are kids that threaten to stab other kids multiple times, and have crisis intervention plans, and nothing gets done.*
- Claire: *One of my fifth-grade girls called 9-1-1 and said there was a fire, and she was in our room all day, and that should have been an automatic suspension. They just said "well, we're not going to do the paperwork" And she sat there all day.*

Teacher preparation programs work to dispel these stereotypes, but supervising teachers rely on these stereotypes to perpetuate negative attitudes and behavior. As stated in the first theme, Framing perceptions through stereotypes, Group B participants noted that students who were labeled as behavior problems often accept this label and rise to it in the classroom.

Implementing best practices. Group B participants expressed frustration when trying to handle instructional barriers within their internships. Through their teacher preparation program, preservice teachers were taught and practiced various best practices and strategies for teaching content. Throughout all their courses, preservice teachers experience what it means to be an

effective teacher along with effective strategies for implementation. Due to district regulations within their schools, Group B participants expressed the defeat they feel when not allowed to implement those strategies that they have learned.

- *Jaime: My school is pretty much all done by the district. The teachers don't have a lot of freedom about what they do in the classroom... It isn't even really possible to teach lessons that are effective and that engage the students because all it wants them doing is sitting reading they read the same story every single day for a week.*
- *John: We talked about it a lot in our classes, like what an effective teacher is and what an ineffective teacher is. I think the way that the district is forcing us to teach is forcing us to be ineffective teachers.*
- *Abby: The kids don't have time to sit there and close read a math problem and circle the vocabulary they don't now. It really is making us ineffective and these kids are struggling because they can't get what they need to do because the district is like "you have to do this."*
- *Catherine: ... I feel like because it's so structured the way that it is I have to kind of, like, sneak around to do things that I know are effective.*
- *Amber: ... And it's like they said, you know black and white, just worksheets for their reading lessons. They get like a text set and it's just on a worksheet. All black and white, just very boring.*

The goal of teacher education programs is to create effective classroom teachers for today's diverse population. These preservice teachers reported hearing a united position on effective teacher practices and then seeing another. Throughout the three focus groups sessions, Group B participants noted how best practices they are taught to implement are not being utilized in their classrooms. Catherine even shared how she and her supervising teacher must "sneak" additional literature into parts of the lesson if they want to ensure students are engaged. Three participants admitted that boring and bleak PowerPoints provided by the district overshadow the implementation of technology tools in the classroom.

- *Claire: I feel like going through (university name) we heard all about these great technology things. My classroom, I have PowerPoint, a smartboard to display the PowerPoint, and a document camera to show what the packet looks like... I'm going*

through, especially social studies class, we're seeing all these virtual reality things, and all of these tools that we can use when we get to the classroom. All the students don't have their own technology that we have been hearing about.

These inconsistencies added to their feeling of unpreparedness because it made it difficult to teach the lessons and engage students in the activities that were required of them.

Building relationships with students. An uplifting finding among the participants in Group B was their understanding of the importance of building relationships with their students. Catherine shared an example of how her supervising teacher has helped her begin building relationships with her students:

- *Despite all the academic struggles that are happening, it has been like a really great example of like a teacher student relationship. I feel like that's something I didn't really get to see at my first internship. I feel like my teacher has done a great job of creating like a classroom community and making me feel like a part of it.*

While all participants admitted to some challenges with behavior at some point during their current internship placement, they discussed how relationships were a key component to working towards student success in the Title I classroom. The participants shared:

- *Catherine: I felt like one of my professors for one of the reading courses would always just talk about like the stereotypes for Title I schools, and how building relationships is always like the most important thing.*
- *Abby: (university name) stresses relationships with students and how it's very important so we go into the internship knowing that we have to create these relationships with our students.*

These statements clearly show that the value of relationships with students in Title I was instilled in them during their undergraduate coursework. Participants in Group B took part in discussions on relationships and have worked to create positive working student relationships in

their internship with their own students. One participant's statement shows how she uses student relationships to focus on the assets that her students bring to the Title I class:

- Abby: *But now I have a better understanding of who they are as small adults and just who they are as people. And I feel like once you get that kind of relationship with them the behavioral issues kind of go to the wayside because now I connected with them.*

Another participant, Claire, shared an anecdote that has stuck with her. It was the moment she realized her fifth-grade students valued the relationship they had with her:

- *I don't know how my student and I got this conversation, but he said, "Ms. Claire, you don't make no Benjamins here?" No, I don't make no Benjamins. "Why? You need money" and I said, "Because I care about you guys." Like, all their eye balls lit up. They were like, "You make no money, but you're here helping us?" And ever since then it's been like, they've just like taken me right in. So, I just I always remember that... Ms. Claire, you don't make no Benjamins.*

The role of race/ethnicity. An unexpected sub-theme emerged when the discussion of race and ethnicity was brought up. Seeing the participants with more prior exposure feeling comfortable enough to disclose such feelings within the focus group was enlightening and refreshing. Following the prompts related to perceptions, four of the participants brought up the impact their ethnicity may have on their internship.

- Claire: *I didn't know how I would be accepted honestly because I was I'm Caucasian... So, this is the first time I had ever walked into a place where I looked different. Well I didn't know how they would accept me.*
- John: *I'm the only White male I think in the entire building.*
- Jaime: *I've had it on two different occasions students asked me and one of the only other White teachers if we're sisters and then trying to explain that to them and be like we're not sisters just because we are White... I don't love being like a young White female by myself in the area. So that was a little nerve wracking for me at the beginning.*
- Abby: *I've never been in a school where the primary language was not English where I couldn't communicate with any of the students.*

For participants to allow themselves to become so vulnerable in a focus group early on revealed their honesty that continued throughout the remaining focus groups. Observing preservice teachers address their differing race and ethnicities in terms of working with CARE students provided evidence of an awareness that race is important in student/teacher interactions and relationships. This awareness showed that Group B participants were open to considering identifying their positionality in the classroom, whether Group B participants understood the impacts race may have on their own experience and their students in the Title I classroom.

Member Checking

Group B participated in the same member checking activity as Group A, by sorting statements pulled from the first two focus group sessions. Participants first sorted statements in pairs, then combined the categories they developed with the whole group of participants. Group B participants then assigned themes to each category. Below Figure 7 shows the finished product gathered from the participants, while Table 10 provides the detailed look at each of the statements along with their prospective theme titles.

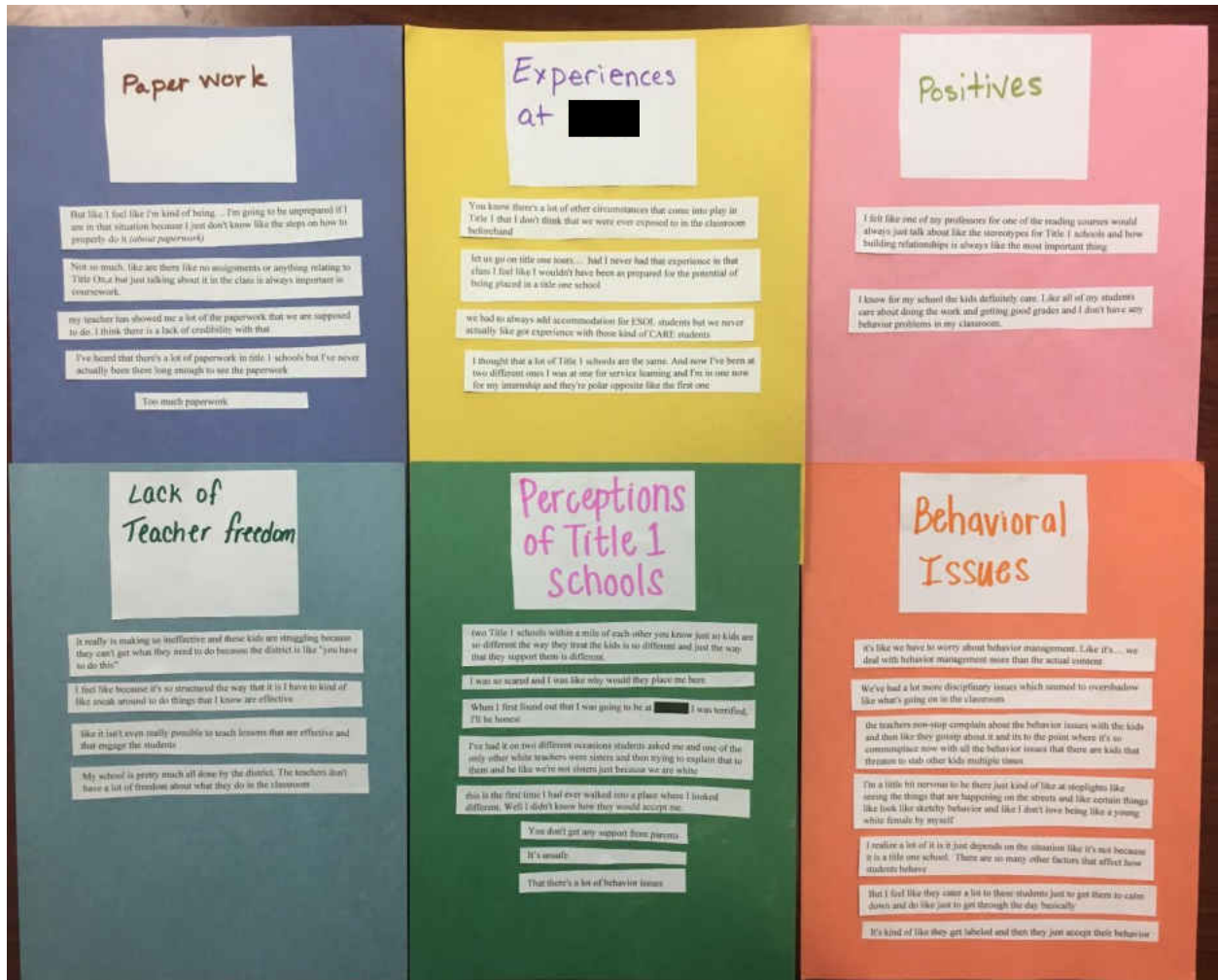


Figure 7: Member Checking Activity – Group B

Table 10: Member Checking Findings – Group B

Title/Theme	Statements from Transcriptions
Paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But, like I feel like I'm kind of being... I'm going to be unprepared if I am in that situation, because I just don't know like the steps on how to properly do it (about paperwork) • Not so much. Like are there like no assignments or anything relating to Title I, but just talking about it in the class is always important in coursework. • My teacher has showed me a lot of the paperwork that we are supposed to do. I think there is a lack of credibility with that. • I've heard that there's a lot of paperwork in Title I schools, but I've never actually been there long enough to see the paperwork. • Too much paperwork.
Lack of Teacher Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It really is making us ineffective and these kids are struggling, because they can't get what they need to do, because the district is like "you have to do this" • I feel like because it's so structured the way that it is, I have to kind of like sneak around to do things that I know are effective. • Like, it isn't even really possible to teach lessons that are effective and that engage the students. • My school is pretty much all done by the district. The teachers don't have a lot of freedom about what they do in the classroom.
Perceptions of Title I Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Title I schools within a mile of each other you know, just so [sic] kids are so different, the way they treat the kids is so different, and just the way that they support them is different. • I was so scared, and I was like why would they place me here. • When I first found out that I was going to be at (school name) I was terrified, I'll be honest. • I've had it on two different occasions. Students asked me and one of the only other white teachers were sisters, and then trying to explain that to them and be like "We're not sisters just because we are White." • This is the first time I had ever walked into a place where I looked different. Well I didn't know how they would accept me. • That there's a lot of behavior issues. • It's unsafe. • You don't get any support from parents.

Title/Theme	Statements from Transcriptions
Experiences at University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You know there's a lot of other circumstances that come into play in Title I, that I don't think that we were ever exposed to in the classroom beforehand. • ... let us go on Title I tours... had I never had that experience in that class I feel like I wouldn't have been as prepared for the potential of being placed in a Title I school. • We had to always add accommodation for ESOL students, but we never actually like got experience with those kind of CARE students. • I thought that a lot of Title Ischools are the same. And now, I've been at two different ones. I was at one for service learning, and I'm in one now for my internship, and they're polar opposite.
Behavioral Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's like we have to worry about behavior management. Like it's... we deal with behavior management more than the actual content. • We've had a lot more disciplinary issues which seemed to overshadow like what's going on in the classroom. • The teachers non-stop complain about the behavior issues with the kids, and then like they gossip about it and its to the point where it's so commonplace now with all the behavior issues that there are kids that threaten to stab other kids multiple times. • I'm a little bit nervous to be there just kind of like at stoplights like seeing the things that are happening on the streets and like certain things like look like sketchy behavior and like I don't love being like a young White female by myself. • I realize a lot of it is it just depends on the situation, like it's not because it is a Title I school. There are so many other factors that affect how students behave. • But I feel like they cater a lot to these students just to get them to calm down and do like... just to get through the day basically. • It's kind of like they get labeled and then they just accept their behavior.
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt like one of my professors for one of the reading courses would always just talk about like the stereotypes for Title Ischools and how building relationships is always like the most important thing. • I know for my school the kids definitely care. Like, all of my students care about doing the work and getting good grades, and I don't have any behavior problems in my classroom.

Group B participants worked quickly and efficiently to sort the statements provided. Once they sorted the statements, they came to an agreement on what the titles/themes should be. While this activity took place prior to the third focus group meeting, the findings were not revisited again until an in-depth analysis of all focus group transcriptions was completed. Like Group A, Group B participants created some themes close to the ones that emerged through the initial coding of the first two focus group transcripts. Prior to the member checking activity, the statements chosen were sorted by the researcher into the following themes: stereotypes/perceptions, race, differences in Title I, behavior problems, university preparation, paperwork, and district control. Group B participants created the themes of lack of teacher freedom, perceptions of Title I schools, behavior, and experiences at their university that coincided with several themes that came out of the researcher's analysis. While a few titles/themes do not match up, these statements would still appear within themes that were later developed. So, this correlation shows that student voice was accurately portrayed and that their feelings and experiences are not misrepresented in the findings.

RQ2: *How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?*

At the conclusion of the third focus group meeting, RQ2 invited Group B participants to share their intentions to pursue and accept a career in a Title I school, based off their experiences in Title I schools, with CARE students. Of eight total participants, three participants stated they would, two participants expressed neutrality in their responses, and two participants stated they would not seek employment in a Title I school. Table 11 shows their responses when asked about their intentions.

Table 11: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Group B

Preservice Teachers' Intentions to Teach in Title I (Group B)	
YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will give it a yes, because I've accepted a job at the school... I'm going to be happy. I'm not going to dread going there and having to deal with her attitude and all these things. And also, the administration is just outstanding. They give you so much support. (Amber) • I say yes. I've accepted a position at a Title I... I know each school is different but it's making me realize a lot of the things have been other factors not just Title I and I do love the kids and love the community and I want to stay kind of within that population. (Catherine) • I have been offered a job there and I would work in a Title I but it would have to be a school like what I am at. They all... That's a very good community. They all trust each other. The administration is on their side. (Anna)
NEUTRAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wouldn't say I'm willing or not willing. And it doesn't really matter to me if the school's been labeled as a Title I school, because through this experience I know that I'll enjoy the kids no matter what... The problem I have is the community outside the school and within the schools. (Tracy) • I've been offered and accepted the position at a non-Title I school and I wouldn't say that I would never teach at one. But I think just getting my feet wet, I probably wouldn't go that route. (John)
NO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think this experience made me a little bit more apprehensive because I got offered and accepted a position at a school that's currently not Title I, but it has a chance to be this upcoming year. So, it's makes me a little nervous. (Abby) • I will not go through the same experience with our leadership team and the lack of support from leadership. (Claire) • I don't currently plan on working in a Title I school. I've currently been questioning whether or not I want to be a teacher which is how I felt a lot of days in this internship. (Jaime)

Of the three participants who said yes to pursuing a career in a Title I school, two accepted jobs at their current internship placements. Their choices to do so were guided by a supportive staff and the community the school was located in. The third participant who said yes also attributed her answer to a supportive school community.

Responses for two of the participants were placed under the “neutral” category. This was due to the stipulations that went along with the answers. Ensuring a community that is not a

“problem” was a reason one participant would be hesitant. The other participant stated that after getting her “feet wet,” she did not foresee herself pursuing a career in a Title I school.

Additionally, three participants stated that they would not pursue a career in a Title I school after this internship experience. Prior the start of the final focus group meeting, one of the participants informed me that she was planning on pursuing her masters in lieu of entering the classroom. She mentioned that she was burned out and looking for a way to extend time before having to enter the classroom. Another participant applied to and accepted a position at a non-Title I school due to apprehension to continue his career in a Title I school. The third participant responded no, noting that this experience had her questioning her desire to be an educator.

Discussion of Group B Findings

These findings are interesting due to the nature of this group. Group B was comprised of participants who had experienced multiple forms of exposure to Title I and CARE students through content and discussions, field experiences, and/or their first internship. Through the theory of contact hypothesis, they should have exhibited a more positive perception towards Title I schools and the students. In fact, that seemed to be the opposite. More participants stated that they did not intend to teach in a Title I setting due to their experiences.

For transparency of findings, it is important to note that one of Group B’s participants, Claire, was in a situation unlike the other participants in her group. Prior to the second focus group meeting, she disclosed that her placement situation had shifted. Claire had been placed in a classroom by herself to lead small group instruction, and tutor students who needed additional support during school hours. A supervising teacher was not with her throughout the day, yet she was still subjected to administrative walk-throughs. This experience most likely influenced her

responses, along with her intention to pursue a master's degree before seeking a classroom teaching position.

Even though findings from Group B's focus groups did not show vast differences in positive discernments of Title I school stereotypes, classroom management, and variances in Title I, they did show some distinctions. Participants in Group B reflected on previous experiences in Title I schools to guide their understanding of the differences. Discussions within this theme were evident of their multiple exposure through course content, field experiences, and Internship I. Participants were able to recall experiences from prior Title I placements to offer comparisons for their current internship placements.

Classroom management challenges was a robust theme throughout the three focus groups sessions. Group B shared a great deal of unpreparedness when dealing with student behavior. This led to a lot of their frustrations with their placements. There was also frustration with supervising teachers and administrators in the schools, and the lack of support that was offered to help manage behaviors. Several Group B participants noticed student behavior being ignored, even if it meant instruction was impacted negatively.

What also stood out was willingness to discuss the impact participants' race had on interactions with students. While not prompted in any way, one participant shared her concerns with being Caucasian, the other students shared similar concerns. After the final focus group concluded, two Group B participants noted that they believed the reason they weren't offered a position at their placement school was because they were White. They felt that administration wanted more teachers that looked like their students. These two participants shared additional times when race may have had an impact on how they were treated in their schools, both by

students and by faculty. These statements were made off the record following the conclusion of the final focus group.

A refreshing theme emerging from Group B’s focus group sessions, was in relationship building. The theme of Building relationships with students emerged as the most constructive of the six themes. Multiple participants noted the importance of building and sustaining positive relationships with their students in Title I schools. Group B participants mention that the university talked about the value of relationships, and it was evident that they carried this with them into their placements.

Comparisons Across Group A and Group B Findings

Group A consisted of participants who had minimal exposure to Title I schools and CARE students through course content, course discussions, and field experiences. Group B was comprised of participants who had two to three indications of exposure to Title I schools and CARE students. Table 3 in Chapter Three shows characteristics of the groups. Difference in exposure is likely to have resulted in the varied themes that emerged between the two groups. Table 12 below shows the themes that emerged for each group of participants. The themes designated with an asterisk are themes shared by Group A and Group B.

Table 12: Themes from Group A and Group B

Themes	
Group A	Group B
Framing perceptions through stereotypes*	Framing perceptions through stereotypes*
Variance across Title I schools*	Variance across Title I schools*
Accommodating ALL student needs	Varying field experiences
Classroom management challenges*	Classroom management challenges*
Levels of support	Implementation of best practices
Preparation for the “ideal” classroom	Building relationships with students
<i>Sub-theme: Stress</i>	<i>Sub-theme: Role of race/ethnicity</i>

Between Group A and Group B, themes that differed were varying field experiences, accommodating all student needs, implementation of best practices, building relationships with students, the sub-theme of stress, and the sub-theme of the role of race/ethnicity.

Differing Themes

Accommodating all student needs. When prompting discussion on CARE students, Group A participants were swift to mention accommodating EL students. Continual awareness of and preparation for making accommodations was addressed within coursework. Group A participants asserted their cognizance of working and modifying instruction for EL students, but felt they needed more preparation for working with other CARE populations. Surprisingly, when discussing CARE students, Group B participants were brief in their mention of accommodating students. While Group B shared this theme during the first cycle of transcription analysis, the theme changed to reflect relationship building. A pattern of focus on relationship building for Group B participants emerged during the second cycle of transcription analysis.

Varying field experiences. Both groups noted their understanding of the differences that can be found between various Title I schools. While Group A drew these conclusions from discussions with other educators and preservice teachers, Group B had had these varying experiences in Title I schools. They were able to see the differences and compare those with their current internship experiences. The findings with Group B proved that the understanding Group A had was a feasible one.

Implementation of best practices. While Group A discussed problems with district-provided lesson plans, Group B focused much more on lack of teacher freedom. This could perhaps be because they were experiencing this lack of freedom on a different level than Group

A. Group B was dealing with administrative and district walk-throughs which wasn't a common concern among the other group. The word "stress" never really appeared in the conversations with Group B, but one could tell that the barriers they were facing when it came to instruction had an impact on their internship experience and some of their intentions of whether or not to pursue a career in a Title I school.

Building relationships. Group B also talked a great deal about understanding the importance of building relationships with their students. Group A did talk about their diverse student populations and the desire to assist them all through accommodations, but it was Group B that really focused on the relationship aspect. They shared discussions that were reinforced within some of their coursework and the impact that had on their approach to their diverse students.

A shocking difference was the different outcomes in intentions to teach in a Title I school upon graduation. In Group A only two participants said that they did not intend to teach in a Title I setting after their internship experience. Group B had four participants state that they would not teach in a Title I school. It appeared as if their experience with multiple exposure, completing field experiences and internship in a Title I setting, led to quicker burnout and a desire to pursue a career in a more affluent area.

The role of race/ethnicity. As mentioned before, it was really intriguing that Group B addressed the impact their race had on their interaction with their students. Group A never alluded to race in our three sessions. Two of the participants, divulged the level of uncomfortableness that they felt when they first walked into their schools. Perhaps the makeup of the group, which consisted of six White participants, one Hispanic or Latino, and one Other, helped them feel comfortable with sharing this information. This gives hope that preservice

teachers are capable of addressing and discussing the role of race/ethnicity in their classrooms; therefore, race is something that can and should be addressed during the preparation program.

Similarities

Even with multiple exposure to Title I schools and CARE students, Group B did share some similarities with Group A. They shared three themes in common: variance among Title I schools, classroom management challenges, and framing of perception through stereotypes when talking about Title I schools and students. Behavior and classroom management were prominent themes among both groups. They expressed their concerns with the lack of instruction they were able to complete due to the increased focus on discipline. Their challenges and concerns with classroom management call to question the amount of preparation they received on this construct. It also calls to question just how much focus should be placed on classroom management instruction in teacher preparation programs.

Both groups understood the differences that can be found among Title I schools. They noted that the stereotypes that are normally attributed to Title I schools do not always hold true. Title I schools are not all located in low-SES neighborhoods and the student populations are diverse. Two participants, one in each group, expressed their shock at discovering that the schools they were placed in were Title I. They admitted to thinking about traditional stereotypes when thinking about Title I and realized that these stereotypes did not reflect what they were seeing in their schools.

Throughout the focus groups sessions, some implicit bias when participants were discussing CARE students or school communities were noticed. Reading back through some of the statements above, one can see that while trying not to prove they held a stereotype, some of the participants used words or tones that implicitly applied the stereotype to what they had been

talking about. One example occurred when a participant in Group A was talking about behavior. She noted that behavior problems in predominantly African-American schools were more prominent than in mainly Hispanic schools. While she was trying to make her point that not all Title I schools were the same, she managed to perpetuate the stereotype of predominantly African-American schools being more difficult for teachers. The stereotype and reality of stress was also noticeable through their discussions.

Discussion

With such comparable findings between the two groups, deciphering whether or not multiple exposure to Title I settings and CARE students had a substantial impact on the participants in Group B may be difficult. In fact, it looks like this multiple exposure may have burned a few of the preservice teachers out prior to beginning their careers as teachers. Through contact hypothesis the idea of multiple exposure over time does still have some hope of being effective for preparing teachers to work effectively in Title I schools and with CARE students. Perhaps the approach on this preparation is what needs examining. The experiences had by Group B can help guide preparation programs in creating more streamlined and meaningful experiences for preservice teachers. Recommendations for creating meaningful experiences in teacher preparation programs will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Limitations of the Research Design

As with any study, limitations do exist. The limitations to the research design and to the data collected for this study are discussed in this section.

1. Participants were not randomly selected for this study. A list of preservice teachers placed in Title I schools was obtained and those individuals were contacted to volunteer in this study.

From those contacted 18 participants volunteered. Of those 18 volunteers, 16 preservice teachers

were chosen. Those individuals were then administered a survey asking about previous exposure to Title I schools and CARE students. From that survey, the participants were split into two groups of eight. Ensuring criteria was met in this way was risky but worked out so that participants with minimal exposure comprised Group A and participants with multiple exposure comprised Group B.

2. The sample selection process makes generalizability difficult. While criterion sampling was employed, the number of participants made it hard to then randomly select from the available pool. Traditional focus group size was adhered to by having eight participants per group (Stewart, et al., 2007). Due to placement changes, one participant had to drop out of Group A which left that group with seven participants. To make the study more generalizable more focus groups would have to have been created and data from those focus group would add to the rich data collected. Unfortunately, getting college students to volunteer for a study without incentives created a roadblock in obtaining a larger sample size.

3. By taking volunteers there was little control over the schools the participants were placed in. This lead to a wide array of experiences had by the preservice teachers during their internships. Some were placed in schools that were completely taken over by the district which affected their interaction with content and lesson planning. State and designated district administrators were placed within these schools due to continued low school grades. Their responsibility was to help classroom teachers boost student achievement through lessons aligned to state standards and state assessment expectations. Interns found it difficult to try new strategies because they had to abide by the lessons and activities provided. While the goal was to understand their vast experiences, this may have impacted their perceptions slightly because it was harder to relate to participants in schools not under district control.

4. Additional data collection strategies could help support the information collected from the focus groups. Along with member-checking, Creswell (2007) suggests observations and documents in addition to interviews when conducting a phenomenological study. For example, when interviewing interns on experiences had in field experiences, it may have been beneficial to also observe them in the classroom. This allows for comparison between answers they may be providing within a focus group and the actions they are realistically taking in the classroom. Looking over lesson plans and personal reflections can be additional forms of supporting, qualitative data collection. While various forms of data collection outside of interviews and focus groups may seem extensive, it can help researchers create a detailed and triangulated image of the experience had by the participants.

5. A conflict of interest in the data collection process is important to note as a limitation. The moderator had had previous contact with three of the participants through courses or as an internship coordinator. Positionality was addressed prior to the start of the focus groups to encourage participants to be honest in their responses. Also, two of the participants were interns in the same school which may have led to some bias in their discussions.

6. Human limitations are also a concern for this study. The Principal Investigator and researcher acted as the focus group moderator and performed transcription analysis to identify possible themes. Due to the nature of this study, picked from researcher's area of interest, positionality and bias must be addressed. Steps taken to avoid bias towards this topic included jotting during initial transcription and analytic memos. Jotting allows for personal reflections to be noted, while analytic memos helped create an interface between the participant's data and the researcher's interpretation. At times, analysis of transcriptions may have been viewed through a "lens of teacher preparation," even if it an attempt was made to avoid it. Focus group

transcriptions were also provided for peer review to a fellow researcher who was not present for focus groups. This allowed a second pair of eyes to detect any differences in analysis or theme identification. However, holding this stance as a human “tool” perhaps allowed for salient recommendations.

Each of the limitations presented have implications for future research. These implications will be addressed in the following chapter. Chapter Five includes further discussion of the findings and their pertinence to possible reform of teacher preparation programs and the creation and implementation of meaningful field experiences. It also offers recommendations for focusing instruction around culturally relevant pedagogy to aid preservice teachers in increasing effectiveness when working with CARE students. Correspondingly, ideas for future research are shared.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact that coursework and on-site field experiences had on the perceptions and intentions of preservice teachers working with CARE students in Title I schools. Preservice teachers' exposure to CARE students and Title I schools came through three possible experiences: (1) coursework, (2) field experiences, and (3) PSTs' first internship (Internship I). Transcripts from two different focus groups of participants across the beginning, middle, and end of the semester were analyzed for this study. One group of participants, Group A, had one or two of these three experiences aimed towards the understanding of CARE students and Title I schools prior to entering their final internship placement. The other group of participants, Group B, had two to three of these experiences prior to entering their Internship II placement. Two research questions guided this study: (RQ1) *How might preservice teachers' experiences with cultural, academic, racial, and economic (CARE) diversity content throughout coursework and field experiences impact their perceptions about working with CARE students, specifically in Title I schools?* and (RQ2) *How might preservice teachers' experiences during internships with CARE students in Title I school settings impact their intentions to accept teaching positions in a Title I school?*

Motivation for this study came from the teacher retention problem faced by a large school district in Florida. The teacher retention in this district was most troublesome in the Title I schools supporting vulnerable CARE populations. By analyzing the lived experiences that preservice teachers faced in their internships, perceptions and intentions to teach in Title I schools could be identified. Possible strategies to further support preservice teachers could also be identified and implemented into teacher education programs.

Prior to creation of the two focus groups, a list of preservice teachers interning in Title I schools within a school district in Florida was obtained. During the Spring 2018 semester, preservice teachers participated in bi-weekly professional development through the Capstone Colloquium. Participation in the colloquium required the preservice teachers to return to the university's campus to participate in additional trainings, lesson planning support, and to address aspects of their current internship. During the first Capstone Colloquium, all preservice teachers eligible for the study received a letter summarizing the research and asking for volunteers (see Appendix B). Over a week span, volunteers began to reach out. After a second email soliciting volunteers, a list of all possible participants was finalized. These 16 participants were sent a Qualtrics survey to collect exposure data. Once this data was collected, the 16 preservice teachers were split into two focus groups of eight, based on the amount of experience. Group A was comprised of those preservice teachers who indicated one or no criteria of exposure, and Group B members indicated experiencing at least two of the criteria. Due to one placement change out of a Title I school following the first focus group session, Group A went from eight preservice teachers to seven.

During the Spring 2018 semester, six total focus groups, three sessions (beginning, middle, and end) per focus group, were held. The first round of focus group sessions with each of the two focus groups were held at the beginning of the semester after the preservice teachers had been in their placement for one week. The second round of focus group sessions were held during the middle of the semester, and the final round was held at the end of the semester as their internships were coming to an end. Focus groups were utilized to collect qualitative data, with the goal being to better understand the lived experiences of the participants and focus on

naturally occurring, ordinary events in the internship settings (Firestone, 1993; Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012; Saldaña, Huberman, & Miles, 2014).

During the first focus group sessions, each focus group of participants were asked to reflect on their perceptions of Title I schools and CARE students. The initial perceptions shared aligned with many common stereotypes: schools located in low-SES neighborhoods, low parental involvement, student lack of concern for their education, high-stress, and lack of resources. A few participants shared feelings of being “scared” or “nervous” when first discovering their placements were in Title I schools. The transcripts revealed a shift in perceptions as the semester progressed, and the preservice teachers began noticing the variance across Title I schools. Preservice teachers noted that while schools under the Title I designation are receiving monetary support from the state; this designation does not mean that every student in that school is from a low-SES household. Preservice teachers also discussed the differences in available resources and with the utilization of local school funding. Some of the Title I schools had technology, such as a pad, for every student, while some schools only had four computers in a classroom. With evidence from the transcripts over the course of the semester, both focus groups’ participants agreed that judging a school on its Title I designation alone creates erroneous assumptions.

Across both focus groups, the most obvious stressors came from conversations related to support and classroom management. The preservice teachers who seemed to struggle the most held oppositional stances concerning role expectations for Internship II, handling behavior problems, and implementing best practices with their supervising teachers in the schools and/or their internship coordinators from the university. This lack of positive support led some preservice teachers to question their intentions of teaching in a similar school setting. Classroom

management issues were also identified in the focus groups as areas in which the preservice teachers felt more preparation was needed within their teacher preparation. Instructional and/or classroom strategies taught in their Teaching Strategies course were not observed as operationalized within many of the internship placements. Group A and Group B participants who did observe best practice instructional and management strategies being implemented, also noted that often these same strategies were unsuccessful and behavior problems persisted.

Research question two (RQ2), which solicited their intentions to seek employment in Title I schools, was asked at the end of the third focus group. Participants were asked about intentions to teach in Title I schools following their all their university preparation coursework and field experiences, as well as the current semester-long experience in internships in Title I schools. Table 13 shows the responses of all participants in the study to RQ2.

Table 13: Intentions to Teach in Title I Schools - Both Groups

Preservice Teacher's Intentions to Teach in Title I (Both Groups)	
YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At first, I would have said no... I got placed in a Title I school for both of my internships. and I actually think that's where I'm going to lean more towards. Because although it has like the negative aspects, it's also very rewarding and the students are so thankful for everything like you can do the smallest thing for them. (Aisha) • I will give it a yes, because I've accepted a job at the school... I'm going to be happy. I'm not going to dread going there and having to deal with her attitude and all these things. And also, the administration is just outstanding they give you so much support. (Amber) • I actually plan on stay at school I'm at now. I've like talked to the principal and stuff so I'm really excited. I mean, it's going to be hard, but I just like, I love the support that I have. (Sasha) • I am feeling burned out at this stage, but I do have a dream school and it is a Title I school so more likely than not I will stay in some type of Title I... the spectrums different from school to school. (Maria) • I say yes. I've accepted a position at a Title I... I know each school is different but it's making me realize a lot of the things have been other factors not just Title I and I do love the kids and love the community and I want to stay kind of within that population. (Catherine) • I have been offered a job there, and I would work in a Title I, but it would have to be a school like what I am at. They all... That's a very good community. They all trust each other. The administration is on their side. (Anna)
NEUTRAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would be happy with either. I'm, I mean I'm not picky because I know there is such a, just within Title I, there is such a difference between the schools. (Leslie) • I was used to those affluent schools. And so, at first, I was like No I hate this. This is rough. And now towards the end of my internship I've like really bonded with my kids. I can't say yes, I'll be in Title I. Wherever I can get a job, but I won't be mad either way. (Alyssa) • I wouldn't say I'm willing or not willing. And it doesn't really matter to me if the school's been labeled as a Title I school because through this experience I know that I'll enjoy the kids no matter what... The problem I have is the community outside the school and within the schools. (Tracy) • I've been offered and accepted the position at a non-Title I school and I wouldn't say that I would never teach at one. But I think just getting my feet wet, I probably wouldn't go that route. (John)

Preservice Teacher's Intentions to Teach in Title I (Both Groups)	
NO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For me, I am kind of burned out with Title I. So, I have been applying to affluent schools in my area. (Jennifer) • I need a change of pace because I know the rough side of it but I also feel like I want a non-Title I school so that I can experience the parent involvement aspect. (Rebecca) • I will not go through the same experience with our leadership team and the lack of support from leadership. (Claire) • I don't currently plan on working in a Title I school. I've currently been questioning whether or not I want to be a teacher. Which is how I felt a lot of days in this internship. (Jaime) • I think this experience made me a little bit more apprehensive because I got offered and accepted a position at a school that's currently not Title I but it has a chance to be this upcoming year. So, it's makes me a little nervous. (Abby)

Of the total participants, six participants asserted positive intentions to start their teaching careers in a Title I school upon graduation. Further, five participants confirmed being in search of employment at a non-Title I school, while four participants remained neutral. For those who revealed clear intentions to teach in Title I schools, four had already accepted positions at their current placement schools or at another Title I school. Their reasons for doing so were for the staunch support from administration and teachers, and the relationships built with the students. An opposite experience was had by two participants, who were in search of employment elsewhere due to the lack of support within their internship placement. This reported inconsistency of support among Title I schools provided evidence engendered within the focus group conversations that school cultures found in Title I schools vary widely.

One of the more dismaying responses to RQ2 were the two participants, both from Group B, who felt as if a break from teaching was needed. Claire decided to continue her education and pursue her master's degree before applying for a teaching job. She expressed, off the record, that she needed to pursue other avenues, after her internship experience, that would give her a break from classroom teaching. As shared in Chapter Four, Claire was in a unique situation because

halfway through her internship she was given her own classroom, where a supervising teacher was not present. She acted as a small group instructor for most of her internship, which caused her to feel out of the loop with instructional choices, and she handled classroom management challenges alone. This may have led to her decision to remain out of the classroom a little longer by pursuing graduate school. Another participant who declared that she would not seek a position within a Title I school mentioned that, she too, was burned out. If her experience in her own classroom were to imitate what she experienced in internship, she did not want to go through that again. She claimed that the experiences had during internship made her question her desire to become a teacher. Lastly, four participants are listed as neutral in their intentions to teach in a Title I school. All three participants did not give a “yes” or “no” answer when asked about their intentions. They seemed hesitant in their responses when saying things like “I wouldn’t say I’m willing or not willing,” and “I wouldn’t be mad either way,” which is why they were ultimately placed in a neutral category.

The data collected through focus group transcripts from this study yielded rather interesting findings. While the effectiveness of multiple exposures to CARE students in Title I schools cannot be measured, important discussions were analyzed that might shed light on what preservice teachers felt was lacking in their preparation for Title I settings. Participants in both groups expressed inconsistencies, such as defined roles and expectations, or implementation of best practices, across field experiences in Title I placements. Preservice teachers revealed a need for more knowledge of classroom management strategies, as it relates to implementation of instructional strategies while maintaining student engagement. These two aspects of support for best practice and classroom management within their internships were cited by preservice

teachers as hindering them from executing the educational strategies learned within their university coursework.

Looking back upon Allport's (1954) suggestions in successfully creating "harmonious" relationships, he stated that four criteria must be met: cooperation, equal status, common goals, and strong institutional support (Kerssen-Griep & Eifler, 2008; Oortwijn, Boekaerts, Vedder, & Fortuin, 2008). Initially, this study focused on Pettigrew and Troop's (2000, 2006) assertions that these criteria were not necessary, but upon further analysis of the preservice teachers' experiences, evidence of these criteria began to emerge. The circumstances in which these criteria were not met may justify why several of the preservice teachers chose to seek employment elsewhere and why contact hypothesis appeared unsuccessful.

During focus group sessions, preservice teachers expressed inconsistencies with expectations communicated from supervising teachers and internship coordinators. This unsuccessful cooperation from several supervising teachers and coordinators led to burnout and frustration among several of the participants. Challenges with equal status appeared in the findings as well. Participants expressed concerns with classroom management because they were not viewed by students to have equal status to their classroom teachers. Preservice teachers felt that they were often used strictly as behavior management or were not given the same opportunities to teach lessons, which skewed the way they were viewed by students.

Lack of common goals and institutional support can be attributed to inconsistencies among preparation program experiences, internship coordinator/supervising teacher expectations, and lack of administrative support. Findings shows that preservice teachers expressed concern with support they received from their coordinators, supervising teachers, and school placement administrators. This lack of institutional support, from the university side and

school placement side, led a few participants to seek employment in non-Title I schools. On the other hand, a few participants who experienced strong institutional support chose to accept jobs within Title I schools, specifically the schools where they interned. Participants' responses showed the importance institutional support had on their decision to seek employment in Title I or non-Title I schools.

Conclusions

The findings of this study highlighted the importance of navigating perceptions and intentions within teacher preparation programs. As the demographics of the country shift and classrooms become more diverse, teachers must be able to learn how to best support their diverse students (Bullock, et al., 2013; Griner & Stewart 2013; Kincheloe, 2010; Kozleski, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2008; Milner, 2012; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). By sending preservice teachers into setting where they may experience stress, such as the participants in Group A discussed, their intentions to remain in that setting may diminish, even if the students in that setting are most vulnerable and need the most support. Perhaps, ensuring that preservice teachers with staunch support in field experiences and equipping them with the tools needed to be efficacious with diverse student populations is the key to their success. As Table 13 shows, the preservice teachers who stated positive intentions to remain in a Title I setting attributed that reasoning to a dedicated support system. Participants' awareness of diversity was recognized in this study. While preservice teachers feel they have a grasp on "diversity," this may not necessarily be the case. While EL students do come from diverse backgrounds and require accommodations, this was the extent of their knowledge on support diverse student populations. Integrating more coursework on and experiences with

CARE students may broaden preservice teachers understanding of what it means to support diverse student populations efficiently.

Impactful Field Experiences

To assume that any preservice teacher would thrive and be successful in a highly diverse classroom is unfair. Unfortunately, some let their implicit bias and deficit thinking effect their mindset and impact student achievement in the classroom (Weiner, 2003). In redesigning undergraduate teacher preparation programs and including various kinds of field experiences within Title I settings and with CARE students, there should be a strategy for vetting preservice teachers. Those who express intentions to work with high-needs and diverse populations should be given opportunities to work with them during service learning and internship. Too many classroom teachers place blame on a student's upbringing for their academic performance. Teacher preparation programs must train preservice teachers to see past these deficits and use students' backgrounds to enhance lessons and increase achievement. This idea is elaborated in the recommendations portion of this chapter.

Researchers have found that across the United States the definitions and parameters of field experiences vary. Some programs have year-long residencies, while others do not require their preservice teachers to be in a classroom for more than just a few hours per week prior to graduation. Education is a personal and hands-on field. Teacher preparation programs must place more emphasis on getting preservice teachers into classrooms to observe and practice instructional strategies ascertained in courses.

Darling-Hammond (2014) found that successful programs have done just that. She affirms that the "magic" of successful and impactful teacher education lies within field/clinical experiences. Teacher education programs must utilize these experiences to help preservice

teachers understand the relevance of content and pedagogical knowledge being taught in their courses. Preservice teachers must be paired with mentor teachers who understand the same pedagogical knowledge, use effective instructional strategies, and are ideal models. Preservice teachers need valuable time to observe mentor teachers interact with high-need students, and time to interact with them as well. The value of what is learned during their coursework needs to be seen within the context of the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Fraser & Watson, 2014).

Working in Title I with CARE

When discussing diversity in the focus groups, participants were quick to refer to EL students and their accommodations. Students from diverse cultural, academic, racial, and economic backgrounds were not a large part of the conversation. Making accommodations for students who were not English language learners was not something the preservice teachers felt confident doing. While unknowingly applying stereotypes to the students, the participants were causing harm by ignoring their individual needs. Their understanding of diversity was shallow, but not to any fault of their own. Participants from Group A had not been exposed to instruction framed around culturally responsive pedagogy which could explain why questions about diverse student populations were met with answers focused on ELs.

This narrow view on diversity could be what affected the preservice teachers' ability to handle behaviors in the classroom. In Rosenthal, Johnson, and Johnson's (1968) book *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy is used regarding student achievement. How a teacher perceives a student will perform on an academic task, or even behaviorally, is usually how that student will in fact perform. This self-fulfilling prophecy was evident in statements related to behavior. Participants noted that once the students in their classes were labeled as behavior problems, these students continued to behave the way that was

expected. Throughout the years, researchers have challenged educators to fix this way of thinking. Setting high-expectations for students and expressing confidence in them will result in more academic achievement no matter their cultural, linguistic, racial, or economic background (Ladson-Billings; Delpit, 2012; Emdin, 2016; Jones, 2016). Effective teachers recognize this and employ positive thinking and positive interactions with students in their classroom.

Looking ahead to prepare efficacious preservice teachers, a few considerations must be made. The diversity of the students applying to our program to relate that to the current trend of diversity within elementary classrooms should be acknowledged. But, prospective teachers who are White cannot be ignored. No matter the linguistic, cultural, ethnic, or racial background of our prospective teachers, recruitment should focus on those who truly want to be in the field of education. Not those who want to go into classrooms and “rescue” our high-needs students, but those ready to build the strong relationships needed to help their students succeed. Our prospective teachers must be willing to adjust their mindsets to effectively teach in these surrounding high-needs communities.

Implications for Teacher Preparation

The findings of this study speak to current nationwide issues with teacher preparation programs. Participants expressed the discrepancies within their field experiences as well as the discrepancies between instruction in courses and implementation in the classroom. The Blue Ribbon Panel found that across the field of teacher education, the definition of clinical preparation was varied and often unclear. Discrepancies across states on student teaching requirements and lack of specificity of what the roles of student and mentor should be exist. These variations in clinical training leads to unevenness in teacher quality (NCATE, 2010). These discrepancies were observable in the statements collected from the preservice teachers in

both groups. The Panel suggested that teacher preparation programs use clinically based preparation in which content, pedagogy, and coursework be integrated around a core of clinical experiences. Through clinically based programs, preparation programs can easily identify the needs of the schools these programs/universities serve and how their student teachers and teacher educators can become more effective within them (NCATE, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Fraser & Watson, 2014).

Disparity exists when policy makers and organizations such as CAEP decide what should be used to gauge the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2016). With changing of research-based practices, different clinical preparation requirements, and varying needs of public schools from state-to-state, it can become contentious trying to use uniform standards across all teacher preparation programs. The U.S. Department of Education “proposed to evaluate preparation programs by using value-added text measures for students of teacher education graduates” (Darling-Hammond, 2016, p. 89). Darling-Hammond (2015) noted that such a policy had wide error ranges and exhibited bias against teachers who had low-achieving or high-achieving students. The goal of policy evaluating teacher preparation programs should be intentional and systematic in an “effort to unlock the ‘black box’ of teacher education, turn the lights on inside it, and shine spotlights into its corners, rafters, and floorboards” (Cochran-Smith, 2005, p. 8).

This study moves the discourse of “unlocking the black box.” Even though it employs a smaller sample size, through the qualitative data collected, a snippet of what day-to-day experiences are like for students in our schools that need effective teachers the most can be envisioned. This dissertation highlights the importance of consistency is throughout a teacher

preparation program. Dedicated support in and out of internship placements and relevant coursework are imperative.

With alternate routes to the classroom becoming more prominent, such as Teach for America or alternative certification, the debate for traditional teacher education programs is continuous. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) enacted in 2015 put focus on preparing and developing effective teachers and expanding support for high-needs students (The White House, 2015; Mungal, 2016). Teacher vacancies within high-needs schools were, and continue to be, prominent. The Teach for America (TFA) program seeks to recruit college graduates to teach for at least two years in these hard-to-staff high-needs schools (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Teach for America, 2015). Unlike traditional teacher preparation programs, TFA recruits participate in student teaching and basic coursework for just a few weeks during a summer program.

While TFA recruits are carefully selected based on their academic achievements in college, none have participated in formal teacher preparation programs. Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) found that TFA recruits are indeed less effective when compared to certified teachers. Those who do become certified after two to three years are more successful in supporting student achievement, but many of them leave within three years. This shows that “teachers’ effectiveness appears strongly related to the preparation they have received for teaching” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Lack of teacher efficiency from programs like TFA and other alternative certification routes show the importance of teacher preparation programs and their impact on students. It shows that clinical experiences candidates experience during their preparation programs are valuable to their success in the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2014; Fraser & Watson, 2014).

“The education of teachers in the United States needs to be turned upside down” (NCATE, 2010, p. ii). Efforts to improve teacher preparation programs must focus on effective clinical experiences. The “magic of teaching and teacher preparation” is how teachers learn to integrate theory and practice into lesson planning and delivery (Darling-Hammond, 2014, p. 547). When done correctly, clinical experiences can be a tremendous learning opportunity for teacher candidates. Experiencing classrooms and analyzing practices can be helpful but putting theory into action has more powerful outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Pomerance, 2017).

Based on the findings from this study, in conjunction with research on effective teacher preparation programs, some steps can be taken to create an impactful preparation program. Preservice teachers should receive more instruction on pedagogic methods. Improving their understanding of content would allow for more time to focus on building relationships with students rather than trying to understand the content themselves. Finding strong model teachers is another important piece. Pairing preservice teachers with master teachers who model research-based teaching strategies helps them see best practice in action (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2017). Creating a “career ladder” would also help to keep preservice teachers in or around their internship schools upon graduation. Placing them in schools where jobs are more likely available upon graduation would increase effective teachers and allow them to build on those relationships with students made during internship. The participants in this study who denoted their intentions to not only accept a position in a Title I school, but remain in their internship school, are indications that this ladder can happen.

Like this study, education researchers in the U.S. continue to look for models to emulate within their own teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2005; McMahon, Forde, & Dickson, 2015). Along with identifying other successful education systems, efforts to improve

teacher preparation have focused on effective clinical experiences. “Strengthening clinical practice in teacher preparation is clearly one of the most important strategies for improving the competence of new teachers and the capacity of the teaching force as a whole” (Darling-Hammond, 2014, p. 557). The amount of time preservice teachers spend in the classroom, combined with their ability to apply theory and practice is a vital component (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Fraser & Watson, 2014).

Teacher preparation programs must provide sufficient clinical time to foster the skills, cultural competence, and pedagogical knowledge of teacher candidates needed to work with 21st century learners (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fraser & Watson, 2014). Simply dropping into a classroom for a few weeks will not provide enough opportunities to apply strategies learned within coursework or allow candidates to see challenges that effective teachers face and overcome daily (Fraser et al., 2014). To help teacher candidates gain more confidence and skills, universities are now testing out more exposure to the classroom through residency models. Adoption of a residency model for the large university in southeastern Florida in this study is addressed in Future Research.

In a perfect world, every university-based teacher preparation program would be utilizing a residency model. As more programs begin looking to move towards residences or are looking for ways to improve their current program, components to prepare preservice teachers to work with 21st century learners should be adopted. Preparation programs should communicate a sharp vision of good teaching and offer coherent learning experiences within the university classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2014). Curriculum should be strong and grounded in the knowledge and understanding of social and cultural contexts paired with extended clinical experiences to help preservice teachers apply what has been learned (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Fraser & Watson, 2014;

NEA, 2014). Teacher preparation programs must be models of strong relationships among schools and their surrounding communities (Darling-Hammond, 2014). Faculty members must model common knowledge and shared beliefs about effectively preparing successful classroom teachers.

Recommendations

Based off the findings of this study, the following five recommendations emerged as plausible solutions for providing preservice teachers with meaningful and impactful experiences during their undergraduate teacher preparation programs. These recommendations include ideas for additional support through coursework. These experiences are created with Title I and CARE students in mind.

Recommendation One. Teacher preparation programs should include implicit bias exercises in introduction education courses based on the findings from RQ1. Resources such as the Harvard Implicit Associations Test can help begin those salient conversations (Project Implicit, 2011a). These conversations can guide discourse on identifying and working with students' funds of knowledge. Preservice teachers should be made cognizant of the assets students bring to the classroom, and how to tap into those cultural funds. As suggested, recognizing home life is vital for aiding student success (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018; Templeton, 2013). The large university in Florida where this study was conducted, has used a poverty simulation to help Internship I preservice teachers understand the effects poverty has on their students' daily lives. This simulation should be continued in conjunction with other diversity trainings.

Recommendation Two. Classroom management coursework should be reviewed and reformed to reflect common behavior challenges that preservice teachers observe within Title I classrooms in their internship placements. Findings from this study showed that classroom management was

an area of struggle for the participants and one of the areas where more support was desired. Participants expressed the desire to implement research based strategies but found themselves managing student behavior more than teaching content. Creating a new course focused solely on classroom management framed within a culturally responsive pedagogy can provide needed support while also including important knowledge for working with CARE students. Texts such as *From Discipline to Culturally Responsive Engagement: 45 Classroom Management Strategies* by Laura Pinto (2013), and resources found on the Teaching Tolerance website, could be used as a supplementary to provide preservice teachers with a better understanding of their students' needs. Most educators are aware of the need to differentiate instruction based on student needs. This understanding of differentiation should apply to classroom management strategies to create structure that works. If instruction is not one size fits all, classroom management should not be either. Approaching classroom management from a more culturally responsive view can create empathy among educators.

Group B participants understood the importance of relationship building. Framing classroom management around the building of relationships can allow educators to consider the cultural, ethnic, and diverse backgrounds of their students. Discipline must move away from excessive referral writing and suspensions. Classroom management strategies that focus on and bring out student assets should become more commonplace.

Recommendation Three. The university in Florida in which this study was conducted has an impactful Supporting High Needs Populations certificate program. This program is only offered at the graduate level; however, preservice teachers at the undergraduate level could greatly benefit from courses such as Challenges in Classroom Diversity, Critical Issues in the Study of High Needs Populations, and Building and Improving Relationship and Emotional Intelligence.

Aspects from this program could be replicated and modified for undergraduate level courses to best prepare and support beginning teachers.

Recommendation Four. This recommendation focuses on the use of educational modules created under the designation of Core CARE. These modules focus on strategies for working specifically with CARE students and can be created with the goal of integration into methods courses in teacher preparation programs. These modules would work in conjunction with the content information preservice teachers are getting in the methods courses, such as math, science, social studies, and reading/literacy. By creating these supplementary modules, instructors in methods courses would not have to worry about trying to fit the extra content into their already full courses themselves. A postdoctoral scholar or designated faculty member could work to create and embed each module into the methods courses. Each course, such as language arts methods or elementary math methods, will create a related module tied to specific effective strategies used in that specific content area with strategies for working with CARE students.

These modules would be similar to the ESOL modules that this university already has embedded throughout undergraduate education majors. ESOL students are part of the CARE acronym, and participants in Group A addressed accommodations for ESOL (EL) students in their focus groups. Their acknowledgement and understanding of the accommodations showed that these modules and course activities are impacting their preparation to work with a population of CARE students. Core CARE modules could be combined with ESOL modules or could be stand alone.

Recommendation Five. Consideration should be made to develop a cohort, CARE Accelerated, in which preservice teachers participate in courses and field experiences focused on CARE and

Title I schools. This would allow for preservice teachers who intend to teach in Title I with CARE students to select courses that will effectively prepare them for these settings. Preservice teachers who select this track will be in courses with others who intend to teach in Title I schools with CARE students. This commonality could lead to more productive conversations on preparation and added support through courses and field experiences. Course lists will include instructors who teach with a culturally responsive pedagogy and field experiences in selected Title I schools.

Future Research

The findings from this study lend themselves well to the following potential research projects: (1) observing preservice teachers who pursued and accepted positions in Title I schools to examine Title I within their first year; (2) exploring strategies for recruiting and training effective supervising classroom teachers; and (3) implementing and researching a residency model created within a contact hypothesis framework.

1. Longitudinal Study on Perceptions and Intentions of First Year Teachers in Title I Schools. Overall, six participants stated positive intentions to teach in a Title I school upon graduation, and three of those six accepted positions at the school where their internships were completed. A longitudinal study can be conducted by monitoring the perceptions and intentions of these three participants while completing their first year of teaching in Title I schools. A focus group can be conducted where participants discuss current perceptions and the impact of their teacher preparation program on their effectiveness as a classroom teacher.

In addition to those who accepted positions in Title I, those who sought employment in more affluent schools can participate in focus groups as well. Reasons for seeking employment in these schools, such as parental involvement and support from administration, can be discussed

and analyzed. Using the data collected from this first study, statements participants made can be isolated and shared with them. Reflections upon initial perceptions can be addressed and discussions on if/how these changed can take place.

2. Effective Vetting of Mentor Teachers. Conduct a study to create a tool used to evaluate supervising/mentor teachers for possible internship placements. To support the creation of effective beginning teachers, pairing with strong, positive teachers who exemplify culturally responsive pedagogy and who model best practices in their classroom is important. Teachers need to be vetted to identify those who would provide the most impactful experiences for the preservice teacher in their classrooms. Vetting should also occur for university-level internship coordinators. Role expectations for interns and coordinators should be clearly identified and revisited at the beginning of each internship semester.

With proper vetting of supervising teachers, administrators must be brought into the conversation. Administrators must be knowledgeable of the effectiveness of the teachers preservice teachers are placed with, along with how interns are performing in their placements. Conversations on accountability for administrators, classroom teachers, and internship coordinators must be had.

3. Residency Model through a Contact Hypothesis Framework. For classroom experiences to be successful, the integration of coursework, embedded with Title I field experiences, cannot be overlooked. The opportunity for teacher candidates to apply what was learned along with immersion in the materials of practice and student work are key to a strong residency program (Berghoff, et al. 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Gibson, 2004). Current teacher residency models have laid important groundwork for developing new residency models. Residencies

bring more innovative practices to traditional teacher preparation programs and include the active participation of all teacher preparation stakeholders (Fraser et al., 2014; NEA, 2014).

“Residencies may be the single most important kind of preparation for teachers,” especially for those entering high-needs classrooms (Fraser et al., 2014). Residency programs require preservice teachers to spend no less than one year working closely with the same classroom teacher while taking parallel coursework. Preservice teachers who spend this extended amount of time in a classroom have a chance to learn more about their students’ interests, lives, and culture (Fraser et al., 2014; NEA, 2014). More time to apply pedagogical knowledge and experience teachable moments become available. The NEA (2014) sees multiple benefits from residency programs. Providing teacher candidates with extensive practice with actual students in Title I settings prepares them for the realities of today’s classroom. Preservice teachers who are paired with strong mentors also witness quality practice that is modeled and a mentor who can be relied on for support (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Fraser et al., 2014).

The Florida university in this study does not currently have a residency program for elementary preservice teachers; however, a residency approach to field experiences should be strongly considered as a successful model for more universities to implement. While instigating a residency program may seem overwhelming at first, the sustained experience could create more support for preservice teachers and offer an effective type of contact. Based on the framework of contact hypothesis, created in the field of sociology, the more exposure that diverse groups from varying backgrounds have to one another, the more negative stereotypes diminish (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000, 2006). Very few studies in educational settings have utilized contact hypothesis as a framework. Looking at the effects of persistent contact across the elongated timeline of a residency model would allow the study to differentiate itself from others. Through

a residency model, the four criteria that Allport (1954) proposed to create harmonious relationships, cooperation, equal status, common goals, and institutional support, can be focused on more in-depth.

The goal of this dissertation was to investigate the impact coursework, on-site field experiences, and internship experiences focused on CARE students had on preservice teachers. Impact was assessed based on if and how preservice teacher perceptions and intentions related to working with CARE students in Title I schools shifted. For the purposes of this dissertation, the acronym CARE, was created to acknowledge the culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse student populations that comprise elementary schools. By highlighting the growing diversity of today's classrooms and examining perceptions of preservice teachers working with this population, hopefully these recommendations add to the body of literature to inform teacher preparation programs to prepare high-quality, caring teachers to persist in Title I school settings. The findings of this study support White and Murray's assertions that "teacher educators in universities and schools need more sophisticated ways of teaching about issues of poverty, class and educational under-achievement; and these need to be pedagogies that might guide students beyond stereotypical deficit views" (2016, p. 512).

APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL FORM



University of Central Florida Institutional Review
Board Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Determination of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Annemarie Bazzo Kaczmarczyk**

Date: **November 20, 2017**

Dear Researcher:

On 11/20/2017, the IRB reviewed the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination Category 2
Project Title: Preparing Elementary Teachers to Work with CARE: A Qualitative Study Examining Perceptions and Intentions of Preservice Teachers with Multiple Exposure to Culturally, Academically, Racially, and Economically Diverse Students in Title I Schools
Investigator: Annemarie Bazzo Kaczmarczyk
IRB Number: SBE-17-13639
Funding Agency:
Grant Title:
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#). This letter is signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Neal-Jimenez", written over a horizontal line.

Signature applied by Jennifer Neal-Jimenez on 11/20/2017 04:39:01 PM EST

Designated Reviewer

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF EXPLANATION

EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH

Title of Project: Preparing Elementary Teachers to Work with CARE: A Qualitative Study
Examining Perceptions and Intentions of Preservice Teachers with Multiple Exposure to
Culturally, Academically, Racially, and Economically Diverse Students in Title I Schools

Principal Investigator:

Annemarie Kaczmarczyk
Doctoral Candidate, Elementary Education
School of Teaching, Learning, & Leadership

Faculty Advisor:

Sherron Roberts, Ph.D.
Elementary Education
School of Teaching, Learning, & Leadership

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

- The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions and intentions of Internship II students in Title I schools. You have also had previous exposure to Title I schools through various coursework, field experiences, or Title I tours. This study wants to look at those experiences and how they shape your future intentions of teaching in a Title I school.
- Participants will participate in focus groups held on the UCF campus during your Capstone sessions to provide for convenience. Lunch may also be provided to those participating in the focus groups.
- Students will be invited to participate based on their Internship II placements. Once volunteers are identified, groups of 5-7 will be randomly selected. Participation is completely voluntary and will have no effect their internship evaluation.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints please contact Annemarie Kaczmarczyk, Doctoral Student, Elementary Education Track, College of Education and Human Performance by email at annemarie.kaczmarczyk@ucf.edu or by phone at 407.668.0236.

IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Focus Group Protocol for First Focus Group

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	<p>Tell me a little about yourself.</p> <p>What brought you to the field of education?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers • Influences on career choice
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	<p>What are some stereotypes you have heard about working in Title I schools? With CARE students?</p> <p>Tell me about what you personally know or think about Title I schools prior to your internship.</p> <p>What were some perceptions you had about your current school placement at the beginning of your internship?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/ service learning on perceptions
Experiences with service learning with CARE students (in Title I)	<p>Tell me about your service learning experiences. Where any of those experiences in a Title I school?</p> <p>Did you work with any CARE students within those settings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	<p>Have you had any experience with CARE content in your undergraduate coursework?</p> <p>What information and discussions you recall from those courses?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Member-checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	<p>Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with service learning 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

Focus Group Protocol for Second Focus Group

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	Tell me about how things are going in your internship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	Thinking back to when you began the program, have your perceptions of Title I changed at all since you began your Internship II?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/field experiences on perceptions
Experiences with field experiences with CARE students (in Title I)	Have your previous field experiences in Title I schools impacted your Internship II experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	Do you think the content you received in courses regarding CARE students has helped you at all during your Internship II placement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Member checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea: 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with field experiences 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

Focus Group Protocol for Third Focus Group

Data Type	Interview Questions	Prompts/Elicitations
To break the ice and provide some background	Tell me about how things are going in your internship. (For the final focus group, participants will use the beginning meeting to member-check)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education track • Attitude towards teaching/teachers
Perceptions of Title I students/schools	Thinking back to when you began the program, have your perceptions of Title I changed at all since you began your Internship II?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative perceptions • Impact of previous coursework/field experiences on perceptions
Experiences with field experiences with CARE students (in Title I)	Have your previous field experiences in Title I schools impacted your Internship II experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards school/students
Experiences in coursework with CARE content	Do you think the content you received in courses regarding CARE students has helped you at all during your Internship II placement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/negative experiences • Activities completed • Attitude towards course
Intentions to teach in Title I	After graduation, do you intend to pursue a career in a Title I school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude towards school/students • Intentions
Member checking (At conclusion of each focus group)	Let's paraphrase what was discussed about the main idea: 1) Perceptions of Title I schools 2) Experiences with field experiences 3) Experiences with CARE/CRP coursework 4) Intentions to teach in Title I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for clarifications

APPENDIX D: ORIGINAL FOCUS GROUP A TRANSCRIPTIONS

Focus Group 1 - Group A (1.26.18) 1of 2

[00:00:00]

Moderator: Make sure yeah, we're good, I'm going to stick that right in the middle of the table. So just to start some questions I may round robin and just go around the table some I'll just call on you or if you're sharing and you want to share out we can go out of order. That doesn't matter. But for right now I just kind of go around just tell me a little bit about yourself. Some of you may know from class or internship but just tell me you know go over your name, so others can know who you are. What placement, where you're at and then kind of just what brought you initially to the field of education. So, Alyssa, let's start with you.

[00:00:38]

Alyssa: Can you repeat the question again

[00:00:41]

Moderator: Yeah, just a little bit about yourself, what's your placement and then what kind of brought you to education.

[00:00:47]

Alyssa: Well I'm at A [REDACTED] Elementary, it is Title I. I believe it has a C grade. The demographic, just brief, very very largely Hispanic Spanish speaking, lots of ESOL. Now a lot with the hurricane happening a lot of new students with that. And for me I entered teaching just because I have three younger sisters and my dad being in the military. I did a lot of helping with them. There's a big age gap between me and the second oldest. So, I was a lot of the times in charge. And so I got that practice there a little bit in high school I did a bunch of volunteer hours in elementary school and then like I was like wow I really liked this and started taking some classes and was like OK this is where I'm meant to be.

[00:01:35]

Moderator: Thank you. Aisha

[00:01:37]

Aisha: Hi everyone. I'm Aisha. I'm at C [REDACTED] Elementary with first grade and I absolutely love it. It's a Title I school as well. Predominantly Hispanic but it's weird, I don't have any ESE students in my class and I don't have any English language learners this semester which is a first. So, it's been interesting. Let's see what brought me into teaching. I was with a little girl. I was like teaching my teddy bears and I always used to love helping my teachers grade papers and stuff I just always like the aspect of like being a teacher and being in charge helping others. So.

[00:02:17]

Rebecca: I'm Rebecca. I'm at L [REDACTED] elementary school. I'm in fourth grade. I like the fourth-grade kids but I also was in my first placement last semester was in kindergarten so I got the big wide range so I kind of like somewhere in the middle. But as for why I wanted to be

teaching when I was in high school I did a bunch of volunteer stuff. I started up the Key Club program there so that I was kind of like a service organization to helping other kids in the communities. I always liked helping people and I knew that I wanted to help change the world and how people perceive kids. So that's what I thought to do that was to be a teacher.

[00:03:00]

Meredith: My name is Meredith. I'm at Ch█ Elementary, it's a Title I and I'm in a fifth-grade class. The fifth and I believe also the fourth grades are departmentalized. So, I'm in an English language arts classroom and I could not be happier because that is my area. Let's see what the third thing I was supposed to talk about?

[00:03:23]

Moderator: Why do you want to be in education?

[00:03:23]

Meredith: Oh why I want to be an education. I was the I was like the smart kids in the class, I'm putting air quotes. So a lot of times I would like if there were students struggling around me like my natural inclination was to be like oh hey. So I'm thinking of it like this way. And I'll explain it in a different way. I remember in eighth grade when it hit me that this is what I should do. The teacher that it was a language arts class obviously the teacher said OK if you have any questions go to Meredith or if she's busy and can't help you come to me so.

[00:04:02]

Moderator: Leslie.

[00:04:02]

Leslie: My name's Leslie and I'm at P█ Elementary in fourth grade. It is a Title I school also predominantly Hispanic. I think it's like 80 percent Hispanic and there are a lot of the same thing a lot of students coming in from Puerto Rico. So, there are a lot of ELLs in my class. Really great group of kids. I didn't think I'd like fourth grade as much as I do but I love it. And I thought I would be the opposite might be a lower grade, but I actually don't like the lower grades except first grade, but I love them. But what else is there, why I wanted to teach. I was actually, I took a gap year after, I'm probably older than most people here. I took a gap year that turned into like gap years and had kids. And when I started going back to school again I actually was not going to become a teacher, but I started volunteering in my son's class when he started kindergarten and I felt drawn to it. Also, I come from a family of educators and they just everyone agreed that they felt it would be a good fit for me. I was very lost for many years. So, I'm very happy with my choice.

[00:05:12]

Moderator: Can I ask what you switched from?

[00:05:15]

Leslie: I was actually doing political science. I was on a prelaw track before that. So yeah that's a big difference.

[00:05:25]

Maria: I'm Maria. I'm over at P [REDACTED] Elementary. We have a very diverse population. It's not just Spanish speaking ELLs. We also have a Haitian Creole population as well. Let's see the reason I decided to go into teaching. I was at a different Title I school, the same one that I went to when I was younger. I did my community service hours there for bright futures. My whole whopping 100 hours I did it there through the summers and just being there in that atmosphere everybody was always so nice to each other and everybody was like oh a good morning how are you everyone really cared. I was able to help them during their summer reading boot camp. And I really enjoyed working with the first graders. So, I was like maybe this is something I'll do and then the principal she cornered me in the work group. She's like You know we really need good teachers because a lot of them are retiring and there's a shortage and we really really need good people. And you look like you might be a good person. So, I was like Ok I'll try it, and here I am.

[00:06:43]

Jennifer: Hi I'm Jennifer and I'm I [REDACTED] Elementary School and we have a population that is predominantly African-American. However, the next largest would be Hispanic. I'm in fourth grade. And like Rebecca I had a huge gap. I was in kindergarten during my first placement and then I was in fifth grade. So, I'm in fourth grade now and I'm really enjoying it. And I decided to become a teacher because it has always been in the back of my mind. So, I'm sure and I came in I was set on being a physician's assistant. And I had a major in health sciences. I took all the courses and two years before I got my AA I, not two years - one semester, I decided to take one. The introduction to teaching class what let me just see it's three credits. I hate it I hate it. It was one of those. You know whatever. So, I ended up falling in love with it and here I am.

[00:07:41]

Sasha: I'm Sasha, I'm at W [REDACTED] elementary. Our student population is pretty much all black. There's probably like 2 percent Hispanic and that's it. I absolutely love it. I, how I became a teacher correct? I've been kinda like nannying, so I was like babysitting kids and I kind of just see a lot of kids that don't really have that support like in their home. And it just really affects them especially around Title I areas. So, I just predominantly want to be placed there just to kind of be like that support system for them. Especially, there's a lot of kids in my class who are either homeless and don't really have a family. So, it's just come to be like a support system and then I also kind of fell in love with the whole educational aspect of it. So.

[00:08:33]

Moderator: And to be fair I'll let you know. I'll let you know a little bit about me. Similar to Leslie and Jennifer I did not start out in the field of education. I was actually a business major for three years and I disliked the courses. I wasn't doing well because I didn't like the classes they just I couldn't relate to them. I liked nothing about them just the work, the readings, it just all seemed so boring to me and then kind of like you it was kind of nagging always like I should

switch to teaching it was that constant though like "teachers don't make money" that kind of kept me from it. But I was like you know what let me take some classes and see. And I just love every class and every class I took sort of solidified that passion and then upon graduation I went and worked at S [REDACTED] Elementary which is down off of Oak Ridge and Title I school. Got my master's here at (university name) also and then back now for a Ph.D., teaching teaching strategies and classroom management and coordinating interns as well. Yes.

[00:09:39]

Meredith: I forgot to say that C [REDACTED] is mostly Hispanic and then we have like small populations of black, white, and probably the smallest is Asian. I just realized I forgot to say that.

[00:09:51]

Moderator: S [REDACTED] was 40 something percent Hispanic 40 something percent Haitian-Creole. I had to learn a few words in Haitian Creole and talk to my kids. To tell them to sit or stop. I still remember "shitta" and "rete" to this day and I've taught it to my dog too. She's bilingual.

[00:10:10]

Moderator: So thank you all for sharing and then since we are all in Title I schools. I'm kind of interested to hear so starting not what you think but just [00:10:19] what are some stereotypes that you heard about Title I schools? [4.8] So not necessarily what you thought or think about them. What are some things you've heard people say? Some stereotypes that are out there?

[00:10:34]

Aisha: It's very stressful and you're going to have a lot of behavioral problems and lack of parental support

[00:10:41]

Moderator: Leslie.

[00:10:42]

Leslie: I was going to say kind of the same thing. Also, a lot of people would automatically assume that every child that goes to school is poor. That's not always the case. Not every child comes from the same socioeconomic background and sometimes just a neighborhood that surrounds it. Maybe a little more (inaudible) but mostly (inaudible). Another thing is I think that they don't teach the kids. It's a huge one they think that they don't have computers. My kids go to a Title I school and the technology there is amazing. Like they think it's just total opposite of what it really is.

[00:11:23]

Moderator: Meredith.

[00:11:23]

Meredith: I was going to say the same thing that everyone thinks that the kids are poor. They also think that the kids are somehow less intelligent than any other sampling of the population and that's just plain wrong. My kids are like really smart. Even the ones who aren't getting the best of grades I can see, and I can feel that there is intelligence running through there. It's just like the particular things that may be happening are maybe not digging out that intelligence like they maybe could be.

[00:11:53]

Moderator: Anyone else want to add?

[00:11:57]

Sasha: Not as much funding as other schools which honestly is opposite, they get more if anything. Especially with the technology. They're some of the first schools to kind of get things implemented in them.

[00:12:12]

Moderator: So, within my dissertation when I talk about Title I schools I've sort of developed an acronym or a term when I talk about the students I call them CARE. Teaching teachers to teach with CARE. And that's talking about culturally, academically, racially, and economically diverse students because I feel in Title I, a lot of schools and even Title I we have culturally different. Academically, You've got your gifted, you've got students below. Racially different and then economically diverse. So we're talking about the stereotypes with Title I. [00:12:44] Do you feel some of those stereotypes kind of carry over to some of the students that are in the schools? [6.1]

[00:12:49]

(multiple responses) Yes, definitely

[00:12:51]

Moderator: Does anyone want to add to that?

[00:12:54]

Maria: Well I've had kids say I don't deserve to be in this school. I deserve something better. Those are word by word exactly what he says and others that just say I hate this school, I hate being here. I don't want to be here because of the climate. And like this this whole stereotype looming over them that because they are there that this is who they have to become, the whatca-ma-call it, the self-fulfilling prophecy.

[00:13:24]

Sasha: I mean in my experience not saying all Title I but at least in my class like a lot of the students come from a lower economic situation. And there hasn't been like zero parent involvement with my experience so I'm sure it's different other schools. But those stereotypes kind of carried over to my experiences thus far especially the parent involvement. There is like zero to none. So.

[00:13:51]

Meredith: I found that there's like different kinds of economic, of lower socioeconomic like there is, not just that like what tax bracket you fall under but there are those who like desperately want to help their child but have zero resources and do not know how to do it or their education. Or they don't have the language in order to help their child. And then there are some who are like they're doing fine but the parents either don't care or they don't believe that they have the time to care. And thus, like they're not getting anything. And sometimes like because it's so chaotic like the students are helping out at home and sometimes they're not helping out at all they're told to like to go outside or go do your homework and then they're never checked on again until to make sure that they're in their beds and not dead.

[00:14:40]

Sasha: And that kind of carries over to into the behavioral issues.

[00:14:42]

Meredith: Yes. So much.

Sasha: Yeah. Because, yeah

[00:14:43]

Alyssa: I've substituted a lot as well, so I've seen like the difference between predominantly Hispanic Title I schools and like predominantly African-American Title I schools. And I just feel as if the behavioral issues in the predominantly African-American Title I schools are a lot more prevalent than the ones in the Hispanic schools. And I don't know I kind of like thought about it and I just felt like when I sub for like schools with like a lot of black students I overhear conversations and it's like oh yeah the teacher called my mom and my mom don't care like my mom had my side kind of thing and then like I feel like the students that are at the predominantly black schools are a little less motivated and I think maybe it comes from their household like they don't really have that parent support verses like the Hispanic students like. Even though there is a language barrier their parents probably like do put forth a little bit more effort and... Does that make sense?

[00:16:09]

Meredith: I have a similar experience. Well I can't say anything about the predominantly black schools because I've only ever been in the one, I've been in two Title I schools. The one was a middle school and not applicable here. The elementary school that I was in I've had a lot of I've been sitting in on parent conferences recently and the the ones, the students who are coming from that predominantly Hispanic, are coming from Hispanic households like their parents. They may speak in broken English or they may not they may not always understand what's going on exactly, but they like they are on their students about getting good grades and learning the language. I think it has something to do with the fact that they come. It sounds like from what they're telling me that they come from when they come from different countries they are like

eager to make sure that their kid has like the best and brightest opportunity and to them that means English. You have to speak English to have the best opportunities.

[00:17:05]

Rebecca: See I've seen both though like in my kindergarten class there's 20 kids, but each kid has their own different story. Like I have there were two Hispanic kids that I knew about that one: Her mom believed everything that the kids said, and it was very. Why are you attacking my child like my child is perfect she's an angel but then you ask the child right there. Did you actually do this. Yeah, I did it and the moms like I'm so sorry my kid lied to me like she believes her kid over she believes the teacher kind of thing. But then I've also had like you try to set up parent teacher conferences but then the parents don't ever answer you. So, then you ask the kid is your mom working. She's like yes, she's a single mom she's working three jobs now so I had to walk myself to school. I'm like you're five. Why are you walking yourself to school? Like I get it because mom works three jobs she works nights and she works. And she has a baby sister and her grandma takes care of them so it's you have the Hispanic families that are very on top of everything. But then you also have the other families that are trying really hard for their kids. But they're also they can't do everything because they're just by themselves so it's very two different sides of the story.

[00:18:16]

Moderator: What were some... So, we talked about, so we walked about some of those stereotypes that go into the students and the facilities of a Title I school. [00:18:24] What are some of your own personal thoughts that you had about Title I before entering? [6.0] Did you kind of relate to any of the stereotypes? Did you think differently? Aisha.

[00:18:37]

Aisha: I was nervous going in because starting out I was a substitute teacher. And so, my first experience with Title I don't even know what it was until I went to my orientation. And they explained the pay difference when you go to a Title I like (inaudible) and they kind of like they try to not scare you about it like they're like oh we pay more but that's not because it's more difficult like, but they ended up still scaring me about it I'm like I can skip out on the twelve dollars. I'll stay over you know in my A school in A [REDACTED] and I'm comfortable there. That's what I did up until I was in your class and we talked more about Title I and then I was like OK let me adventure. And I went to C [REDACTED] I think was Title I at the time. And like I kind of ventured out a little bit but I was still a little nervous. And then when my internship started I saw that it was Title I and I was still like oh no, but I mean it was all the stereotypes went away. So, it's kind of my experience.

[00:19:39]

Moderator: Meredith, Maria, or anyone else who wants to go.

[00:19:39]

Meredith: Your first alphabetically.

Moderator: Yeah, let's do that.

[00:19:50]

Maria: Well I had a different experience than you did. I grew up through going through Title I schools, so I never really noticed the difference. So, I didn't even know there was any discrepancy between the different types of school until I got here to the university level. When somebody said Title I somebody else was like oh you like like that's a taboo kind of thing. And I got, I experience the stereotype when I got here not while I was going through the schooling system because up until like I graduated high school I was like it's just school just like everybody else.

[00:20:34]

Meredith: So, C [REDACTED] I guess is one of the like my teacher my supervising teacher and the librarian at C [REDACTED] and a couple other people have told me horror stories about their Title I schools about like I don't know if I can name the specific events without mentioning children. Is that alright?

[00:20:54]

Moderator: Sure.

[00:20:55]

Meredith: OK. You know

[00:20:57]

Moderator: I can omit it from

[00:20:58]

Meredith: Yeah just edit me out. I believe it was a third-grade student tried to hang themselves and hang themselves in the bathroom. And one student brought marijuana to school and similar things but like C [REDACTED] is not at all like that. When I walked into a Title I school my idea was like oh there's going to be a high Hispanic population. Great. I already speak Spanish. So, or you know at least a little bit so at least you know on that side. I hope I'll be better prepared than maybe people who only speak English or who speak English and like Latin and don't like you know when they are approached by students speaking Spanish they like I don't understand. But then I encountered my first students who spoke French before it had only been Spanish and one Asian girl who spoke a language I do not recall but I had my first French student, so I had to experience what everyone else experienced when they have their first Spanish students and so like a lot of things were broken there. The idea that they're all Spanish speaking because we live in Florida and that I forgot about the Haitian thing really.

[00:22:00]

Sasha: Can I say something?

[00:22:10]

Moderator: Yes.

[00:22:13]

Sasha: Just like I will say like thought being in Title I, I've never seen a support system so strong like within a school like it's it's almost crazy to like it...Everyone everyone is just so close knit and like their primary goal is like the success of like each individual student not necessarily like all test scores like yes, they do. Like I went to a meeting and they still talked about test scores to try to get out of the Title I stereotype but the only reason why they want to get out of that Title I title is because they know that like they're just as good as any other school. So, like their focus is really like the individual students that I've never really seen in some of the other non-Title I schools I did like service learning in. And I feel like there's a lot there can be. There's a lot of outlets and more people for students to talk to as far as like my experience in the Title I that I did not see in like the A and B schools. Where I feel like I can kind of get overlooked.

[00:23:13]

Aisha: Can I add to that? So, my school right now they have a lot of extra like we have the ESE teachers that pull out and ESOL and the reading specialist we have a speech therapist that comes in we have all these people that come in and I'm not used to that from my prior experience. And so at first I'm like I don't know how to handle it as a classroom teacher. Like it's added disruptions and like the student maybe is missing out on a certain assignment or test or something. So I'm trying to like learn how to juggle that like they are getting the extra support that they need. But like how do I deal with that. And as a classroom teacher.

[00:23:51]

Moderator: Jennifer, did you have any kind of feelings or perceptions about I [REDACTED] before you started there?

[00:23:58]

Jennifer: Yes. I cried when I got my placement. I wanted Title I and I had put Title I around my home that I would describe as not as Title I as where I am. I am more West Orlando, so you have a lower socioeconomic status. That is where a lot of the people around the area have government assistance and housing. We have students that are homeless. So, it was a lot rougher I guess in my mind. I called my mom to say I knew exactly where she is right outside of downtown areas, like oh, Great. So, I had like three months to really kind of get my mind into this is internship. I wanted to be placed in a Title I school I put Title I, I need to make the most of this experience. And I formed a lot of relationships with students that I didn't think that I would. I thought I was going to go and I was like I'm not going to work here I'm never going to work here. I'm going to go back to my Windermere/Winter garden side of town. But these kids from day one stole my heart with their stories. Even the kindergartners you know we would find out some of them were homeless or I would start to realize they wore the same clothes every day and their parents didn't want the help from the school because they didn't want to be a charity case to the school and they wanted to do it on their own. And so, it kind of shaped my mind and thinking OK you know

there are parents that are trying their students and they deserve the most and I'm there to assist and to learn and to help and form relationships. And I still have kids that come with me in the morning and they sit, and they talk with me and things like that. So, it's been a really great experience.

[00:25:41]

Moderator: I'm going to stop you there because you're saying a lot of stuff that I'll ask you on the third. No, its great, I'm like I want to hear it, but no I can't. I want to jump too, and I think if you did the Qualtrics survey you addressed some of this either based on the instructors that you picked. How many have you had, and I think you even mentioned think back to your courses that you took because now you're kind of removed a semester you still had some courses last year but it was attached to internship last semester. But it was attached to internship one. [00:26:12] What service learning experiences if any did you have with Title I schools [6.1] in your coursework?

[00:26:22]

Jennifer: For me going back I remember like Junior Achievement. You had to pick a school. But all those schools that I had looked at and Googled really quick in the five seconds we had to pick a school were all affluent schools at least in my experience. And then for service learning we got to choose where we wanted to go. So, I went to affluent schools around the area. So I personally do not have in any of my courses have had any experience in Title I which is why I wanted that experience for internship.

[00:26:49]

Moderator: Anyone else similar or different? Meredith

[00:26:52]

Meredith: I had like I mentioned I was at a Title I school, and it was a middle school because that was the closest school that I knew I could get to by bus my first year at college I didn't have a car. So that was really interesting because not only was it not my grade level, so I was dealing with attitudes and behaviors that I wouldn't normally see or like a kind of like this not intelligence but like the smart-alickyness that I wouldn't see from my fifth graders. Oh my God everything just flew.

[00:27:28]

Moderator: So, you did have Title I, was that service learning?

[00:27:30]

Meredith: Yes, service learning, yeah U [REDACTED] Middle School

[00:27:35]

Moderator: Leslie, for Service learning

[00:27:36]

Leslie: Yeah. About I would say 80 percent of the schools I did Service learning with were Title I schools.

[00:27:45]

Moderator: Maria, do you remember?

[00:27:47]

Maria: All of the classes for service learning I did ((inaudible)) Title I.

[00:27:52]

Moderator: Aisha?

[00:27:56]

Aisha: None of them were in Title I.

[00:28:01]

Moderator: Rebecca?

[00:28:01]

Rebecca: Mine didn't seem like it was. I don't ever know if mine was or not...L [REDACTED]
Elementary school.

[00:28:04]

Moderator: What county is that? Seminole? I'd have to look.

[00:28:11]

Rebecca: Yeah but I don't know because it was all very like the kids didn't. Some kids still got the free or reduced lunch but they all brought their lunch boxes with them, so it never seemed any different than the school I'm at now which is nice because it's not like a big change that I saw from one to another. So, it was still very it still seemed very much the same. So even though I'm at Title I, now it didn't seem like a big change for me to go from one to another.

[00:28:41]

Moderator: Sasha do you remember any?

[00:28:43]

Sasha: A [REDACTED] that's not Title I but U [REDACTED] elementary I don't know if that's Title I. I know it was. It is. OK. Yeah.

[00:28:52]

Moderator: And then Alyssa you mentioned you branched out?

[00:28:56]

Alyssa: That was more subbing but my service learning I did all at T [REDACTED]. And I got my Junior Achievement there (inaudible)

[00:29:04]

Moderator: I hate to rush through this, but I want to make sure your time is spent well whenever you go back. Do you remember other than service learning, [00:29:14] do you ever remember instructors talking about either CARE students, that culturally academically racially economically diverse or Title I within your class settings? [12.5]

[00:29:27]

Aisha: Yeah. Dr. G [REDACTED] was huge because she shares her experience which is very like she didn't say Title I specifically but like Alabama inner city schools. She shares specific stories about like what happened to her and then how she should have handled it or how we should handle it. And you talk about Title I a lot. And anyone else I'm missing.

[00:29:54]

Moderator: Meredith.

[00:29:54]

Meredith: They in my classes there was a pervasive like undercurrent of the ELs will be in your classes there will be students who knew what was the class I took a class with V [REDACTED] over the summer. I think it was actually for my TEFL(?) Certificate. But I, sorry.

There was a slight interruption when I used my phone as a timer as well. It turned the recording off when the alarm went off. Recorder was turned back on once I noticed the issue.

Focus Group 1 - Group A (1.26.18) 2 of 2.mp3

[00:00:00]

Meredith: (inaudible) they broke it down or maybe it was a KnightED talk I don't remember, they broke it down like what percentage of students total are ELL or they have a disability or they have like a thousand other things that would make them accept exceptional students and the percentages were high and they're like This is the average classroom you have this many ELLS, you have this many gifted, you have this any of this and this many that. And you better learn how to accommodate for every single one of them and all the varying levels of what they could be because you're going to have to do it.

[00:00:34]

Moderator: Interesting. Anyone else. There's no right answer. So, if you told me No we never talked about this. I want to hear that. Maria.

[00:00:40]

Maria: I think Dr. H [REDACTED] was really good about that. I don't think he specifically naming it as Title I but he did thoroughly explain you know how this happens why this happens. Why the situation is cyclical and what would be the way the what we would have to do as a whole as everybody to get together in order to assist these students and do them a better service.

[00:01:07]

Moderator: Anyone else?

[00:01:11]

Leslie: I was just going to say Dr. S [REDACTED] her class. We watched the video. It was 60 Minutes episode where they went to the hotels, the kids that lived in the hotels and they are all 192. Also, just she had the means to name the school the primary learning center the principal and I believe the assistant principal come in which is in Title I believe it's a Title I school but is also just in general very just... She had a diverse discussion almost every class that we were there because she wanted us to make sure that we understood that there was a high you know no matter where we go with how the world is changing we are going to be in a diverse classroom so it's important to just learn how to handle it. Now than when you get out in the field.

[00:01:59]

Moderator: Excellent. Jennifer.

[00:01:59]

Jennifer: I had to agree with her about, Maria, about Dr. Hewitt it just was that law and ethics class that he talked a lot about Title I and like she said how it happened in everything. And then of course the TESOL classes they talked a lot about that diverse population but specifically like teaching in Title I or ever considering Title I or ever addressing Title I, I would say probably not in many of my courses at all besides the ELL aspect of it.

[00:02:30]

Moderator: Well to respect your time and make sure you get back on time. I want to thank you all again. Your honesty especially when talking about your perceptions of the schools you're going into I want to thank you especially for saying I cried like it happened. And that's the kind of things I want to hear. Or you know I grew up going to Title I so I didn't think there was a difference until you get to this level and like you start hearing about it and the stereotypes start coming around. So I want to thank you guys for talking about you know the stereotypes and then your perceptions.

[00:03:00]

Moderator: And because I really want to see you know if that service learning makes an impact and the coursework as well. So, thank you for that. And I think it's what :53... Do you all have any questions, or do you have any last minute things you want to share?

[00:03:19]

Are you going to be coming into our classrooms?

[00:03:22]

No. I wanted to but I'd have to go through OCPS with IRB. And I've heard they are terrible. Very hard to get a them from. Yes. I wanted to them this piece. I'll turn that off for now.

Focus Group 2 - Group A (2.23.18).mp3

[00:00:00]

Moderator: All right. Let's put that right there again because it has great range which is awesome. Thank you again for coming. We did lose one participant just because she switched schools no longer Title I so no longer able to participate. But this is fine, a group of seven works just as good. I went ahead and put our focus group norms back up. Not going to go through them again one by one just kind of keeping them there to remind us why we're here our goals and then how to participate fully in this experience. So just to kind of go ahead and dive right in if we want to go around like we did with introductions or we can kind of ping pong back and forth. Just kind of tell me how things are going. The first time we met it was towards the beginning of your placement. So you think you had been in just about a week or two by the time we met the first time. Next week your midpoints are all due, so we're hitting that midpoint and then when we meet again it'll be about a week or two before you finish up internship. So now that we're kind of at the middle of your internship experience just kind of tell me in a general sense how things are going compared to when you first started Who wants to start?

[00:01:15]

Jennifer: I'll start.

[00:01:15]

Moderator: Yeah. Jennifer

[00:01:15]

Jennifer: I think for me I'm getting more like accustom to the classroom routines and being able to quickly transition and really getting the respect from the students...

[00:01:33]

Moderator: Pause that

[lunch arrived]

[00:01:34]

Moderator: We'll start again. Jennifer so you mentioned you're just now kind of getting a custom to routines and earning kind of respect and having rapport with the students.

[00:01:42]

Jennifer: Correct. And I think just gaining their respect and that I feel like the first half has been them trying to see how far they can get with me and seeing where my breaking point is with authority. And they've kind of quickly come to learn that it's pretty much the same as the supervising teacher. Whatever her rules are, my rules and I've implemented my own twist on things so it's not just me copying the supervising teacher. They're not looking at me like oh she's

just trying to copy [REDACTED] or sorry didn't mean to say the name. But. So, I mean so far so good. And I think we're headed in the right direction.

[00:02:22]

Moderator: Can I ask what sort of things you're doing to gain their respect?

[00:02:27]

Jennifer: I'm standing in the door by the door in the morning and saying good morning to them asking them about their day especially if it was like their morning. Did they have breakfast? Because some of them will come late. They don't get breakfast. Hey, did you get breakfast? No. Go ahead and go downstairs. I think just showing that I'm like interested in what they're doing, they're safe. It was a Monday morning. Hey what did you do this weekend? Did you do anything fun? Who were you with? Oh, you were with so and so this weekend. Oh, you were so and so and things like that. So just taking the time in the morning they come in a little bit earlier to just have a conversation with them like, cause nothing academic, just they ask me questions and I answer what is appropriate to answer. So, I think that's helped a lot.

[00:03:16]

Moderator: Alright, who else? Maria

[00:03:17]

Maria: I would like to add on to what you have been talking about in gaining their respect. I notice that when I went into the school I had this idealistic view and I know many of us do that we want to give them more positive reinforcement and we don't want to give them those negative consequences. And um going hand in hand with that classroom management. I've had to learn the hard way that with this particular set of students you do have to have that, you do have to be firm like really firm, but you can't be super sweet all the time because then they'll try to really test those limits. So, at first, I was having a lot of difficulty in trying to gain that respect and being that new authority figure in the classroom and to get there. I've had to learn what works for them in specific. And my teacher has taught me that I have to be more practical in what I do for them because these are the types of kids that will be like well if I do this what's in it for me and if I don't do it then what are you going to do. What are you going to do about it? So, we have to have this really structured "OK if you do something you're not supposed to do. This is the plan that we follow" and I've had to follow it with that even though I came in with this different mentality I've had to really switch my mindset completely.

[00:04:49]

Moderator: So, you're saying basically like to kind of gain that respect and get classroom management, it's what works for the students not necessarily your plan going in.

[00:04:59]

Maria: Not what I think will work, what I've learned should work.

[00:05:05]

Moderator: Excellent. Who else next?

[00:05:05]

Sasha: Can I jump in?

[00:05:05]

Moderator: Sasha, yeah.

[00:05:05]

Sasha: It's about the whole respect thing. I'm kind of struggling a little bit. So like we'll have our good days and it kind of seems like they respect me more than the teachers there. As soon as she leaves the classroom it is total chaos. I've been trying to figure out different ways to handle it. It's the same way as I came in with this view. Like I'm pretty positive person. I don't really like to raise my voice ever so I'm in like that trial stage of of being more firm because these students are very defiant people and so they and I can see that a lot of them get away with whatever they do outside the classroom. So, it's really like finding that firm tone to gain that respect but it has been getting better and I've been doing is honestly just being just being honest with them and letting them know that like this is a learning experience for me too. There have been moments where I get so frustrated that like my emotions get the best of me and I'll just like sit down like in a circle and just talk it out and even just ask them like why do you treat me a little differently than like when the teacher leaves. But we don't really have set consequences for each kid we don't do. We have like blurt beans that they talk out of line put a bean back. It's a classroom thing but I'm kind of struggling with making sure I'm not yelling all the time and really figure out like different approaches to to gain that respect. So, I mean it's going good but I'm still struggling with find that respect when the teacher does leave. So, I'm not flustered all day.

[00:06:42]

Aisha: I want to add on to what she was saying about like yelling. I naturally have like a really loud voice compared to my supervising teacher and she can talk like super quiet. Everybody's like quiet and listening and then with me I'm like loud and then when they're like talking I'm like even louder. So, I spoke to her in regards to that like I really need some practice like the ranges of my voice. So, like last week I was practicing. "OK boys and girls" and it was like so hard for me. I felt like I was whispering. But it actually worked. But besides that, it's been a really great experience. What I find with first grade is that they they get easily distracted. So, I'm like very theatrical sometimes to like get their attention. So, if we're reading a story and I see that like some people are like wandering if they're not really with me I'll start speaking in a British accent and like everybody's looking like "huh, Ms. Miller speak like that again." And it's just like really fun. So I try to make it fun.

[00:07:51]

Moderator: Leslie, Rebecca, Alyssa. How are things going.? Rebecca

[00:07:55]

Rebecca: I'm stressed out all the time only because not because of the workload of what I actually have to do in the classroom but because I have five students that are labeled EBD, and anything can set them off. So it's kind of like walking on eggshells all the time like making sure I don't do something that makes me upset. I'm making sure nobody like flips a desk tries to hurt anybody in the classroom so it's all very... Walking on eggshells all the time but it's never never just a easy day because I have some in one class and some in another class and my groups are departmentalized So even though I just teach reading it's not just all the same kids all the time so I've got two in one class and three in another and it's all very... It's never one kid has a bad moment and then the rest the day's fine. It's one kid goes off then it sets this kid off in the afternoon as can't doesn't have a good days and sets off his kids. It's all very hit or miss thing.

[00:09:01]

Moderator: Have things gone easier since the beginning or kind of stayed the same?

[00:09:06]

Rebecca: Well harder. They've gotten harder only because parents are still finding what medication works for them. And so, we've got kids that they change medications so it make them sleepy and they sleep the entire morning they don't do anything. So, then we're telling parents hey it's affecting their grades like it's gotten to a point where it's not just a 15 minute nap anymore. Now it's the whole entire morning and then when you try to wake them up they get aggressive. They try to... like they yell at you. They yell at the principal. They yell at anybody that tries to help them and the parents are like well they do that at home, so what do you want me to do?

[00:09:41]

Rebecca: So, like the parent involvement is also kind of like hitting a wall. Even though we communicate with them it's still very. What do you want us to do about it? So that's the hardest part is trying to help all the students that don't have the EBD label because then it becomes a safety issue with kids throwing desks or pencils or books or whatever it is and then helping those kids that just because they have an issue they still want to learn. When they when they can't. Like what they recognize that it's their medication and then they realize OK I just need a break because I can't handle what you're telling me right now like I just feel angry but they realize it's because of their medication. So that's different than kids just being mad for no reason and then not knowing what happened or what to do or it's just very

[00:10:41]

Sasha: Can I generally quick just say like one statement about that? Is similar in my classroom but also like it's almost like you're focusing more on like redirecting behavior more than like academics a lot of the days. There will be some days where you barely even get to what you need to get to because you're trying to like redirect all these behaviors that are being set off like at once. So yeah, I agree. Yeah sorry...just... you're not alone

[00:11:08]

Moderator: Leslie, how are things going in your internship now that we've hit midpoint?

[00:11:10]

Leslie: It's kind of been like a rollercoaster I would say. It's good for the most part that I think the thing that makes it feel like a roller coaster is I'm witnessing exactly what happens in the intermediate grades during testing season and it becomes extremely frustrating because I feel that there's so much focus on them getting them ready for the test that everything else goes out the window. It affects it just affects my ability to get in there and participate in most subjects. I usually do science and social studies for now which is it was an hour now it's cut to 30 minutes. And that's also where I'm doing my teacher work sample which has been extremely frustrating. Also just seeing the insides of teacher like teachers beyond just teaching a class has been very interesting very positive but also very negative because sometimes you feel like they're being too hard on the kids you know and you see it with them when they're talking about the kids and everything. So that's been new but overall it's been decent. I have to say I enjoy it but like I said testing season is no joke. So, it's been... That's what's made it frustrating.

[00:12:22]

Moderator: And Alyssa

[00:12:25]

Alyssa: And that's similar, I'm in a third-grade classroom. So, it's huge right now. I'm doing my homework sample in math so that didn't happen because it is still like that is tested so it is stressed, but I'm having a hard time trying to implement my little like activities or fun practices because my teacher is very focused on finding a grade for everything. And she'll tell the students that oh this is for a grade or this isn't a grade and then they have that mentality Oh oh I'm going to work hard because it's a grade or I don't care because it's not and I'm struggling with that I'm trying to tell them like doesn't matter if it's a grade or not.

[00:13:04]

Alyssa: You're still going to do your best work and we're going to use this to learn. So it's kind of similar to my struggle and just trying to get in there and implement my like any activities or strategies that I've learned here into the classroom especially with like like adding onto that was like the CRM says we have to do X Y Z on this day. Like Day 2 we have to identify shape attributes but like Okay we're not there yet. So, like to be able to go back it's hard whenever they have the specific common assessment that the whole grade level has to take and still teach it effectively to my students level. That's my story.

[00:13:48]

Moderator: So, I meant to mention this earlier but you'll notice some of the questions may be repetitive of what we talked about in the first focus group. But mainly that's just because again we're at the middle point. So maybe in these past few weeks things have kind of clicked or switches have gone off or you're remembering things from courses. So first, well second

question I want to get into is kind of thinking back to the beginning of internship too. And our first focus group we talked about you know some of the stereotypes and perceptions of Title I and CARE, that culturally academically racially economically diverse population. Some of the stereotypes we discussed, you know you mentioned that Title I is stressful to work in. There's behavior problems. Funding is an issue. Students are perceived as less intelligent.

[00:14:38]

Moderator: But then you know you talked about, you have seen some of these stereotypes come into fruition but then you were also kind of notice that each kid coming in has, someone mentioned you know each child has a different story when they walk in the door. They do. Some do come from a low SES, but some may not. And some even, Maria even mention that some of the students say things like I don't deserve, um, I guess what it is that they're getting in that school. And then you mentioned some of us mentioning your nervous orientation. Orientation made it sound kind of scary. You've heard horror stories from other faculty members but you're also noticing some strong support. And then mentioning you know you may have wanted a Title I school but not the one that you were placed in. So, thinking back to that. [00:15:30] Have any of your perceptions changed? Are they the same right now? [5.1] Alyssa.

[00:15:36]

Alyssa: Well like you mentioned the funding so I kind of see the opposite at my school specifically. There's a new principal so I just hear you know I hear teachers talking but apparently, we have all this extra Title I money lying around that they put out this year. The new principal is like we're using that for instance, so we went to Sea World, like none of the students had to pay only the chaperones. So, all our third grade got to go to Sea World for free. Fourth grade is going to St. Augustine and 5th is going to Universal. That's all being paid for by Title I money from what I was told. So, it's just interesting because like that is the perception going in is like oh less funding but I see that we have more funding.

[00:16:23]

Aisha: My teacher told me that Title Is have more funding especially for books and different resources like read well, read naturally and stuff like that so I thought that was pretty cool.

[00:16:36]

Rebecca: Mine kind of goes with support. Like everybody says oh there's so much support for you here but there's especially at my school I think the support is kind of broken because everybody's like all the everybody is here to help you in whatever you need. Just let us know we'll find a way to take care of it and be that resource people and the like the principal vice principal there very will help you. But it's not how you would perceive it to be helpful so those kids that do have those emotional issues and they just we have one kid that just like to manipulate people into what he wants so he'll want to go play on the iPad in the principal's office because now that's seen as a treat for him to go do what he does good work but sometimes he'll just leave the classroom just to go there because that's what he wants to do instead of doing his work. So, the principal will instead of bringing him back and saying OK do you work first and

when you finish it then you can go to the office he's just like he's just going to do whatever work he does in my office and whatever he's doing he's on my iPad right now but whenever he's done with the iPad. So, it's not really a... I feel like the support system maybe just in that school was broken but like it's not really like the systems that they have set in place for reward systems or disciplinary systems for kids that fight other kids.

[00:18:04]

Rebecca: Instead of saying OK they're being sent home, they have ISS here's the plan that we have in place but then later in the day the kids still here and the kids back in the classroom and he's fine and everything. So, we get told one thing but then something else actually happens. So like I don't feel like I can just talk to anybody about certain things because I feel like just because you say what I'm saying. But you do something different. So, I don't really want to some of those resources I don't know if I should ask because either they have them and they don't use them or they don't. If that makes any sense.

[00:18:40]

Moderator: So, anyone else have their perceptions either change, either good or bad. Right now, during the middle of our placement? Leslie.

[00:18:49]

Leslie: The only thing I can say is while that I've noticed I know it definitely depends on the school because my kids go to Title I school I teach at a Title I school and they're actually very close they go to C [REDACTED] and I go to P [REDACTED] and you can clearly see their funding at my kid's school being used and used well. But when you go to the school that I'm at it feels... Every day going in I'm trying to figure out where the funding is going because I don't, like, something simple as being in a meeting and the teachers are asking for headphones for the computer room and they won't, they keep buying these cheap headphones that keep breaking and this is what we put a little bit more money and they say we don't have the money. But you know I can.

[00:19:35]

Leslie: Like I said I can clearly see it at my kid's school but I can't see it there and I mean I don't know if it's there's a difference in the amount of funding personally depending on the school but I just noticed that as I've gone along that you know some of us some of the stereotypes that we were talking about last week you can kind of say "OK I can see why other stereotypes in the school I'm at.

[00:19:55]

Jennifer: And to add to the support aspect of, oh what, you know I was told by the principal whatever you need you let us know and you know I personally feel like nobody is on the same page. I feel like the principal has his own agenda. The assistant principal has his own agenda. The resource people have their own agenda. Or what this resource person tells me or what this research person tells me, they're completely opposite. And you're always getting all this information and it's never the same. So, who do you listen to. So, let me try to get clarification

and it's oh well we'll sit down and have a meeting and then nobody is on the same page. And it's just a constant of well what are we doing. What do you want us to do? Or the district will come in and oh this is out, oh we are changing this or changing this, or we were supposed to be doing this. It's just constantly constantly changing what is being said and I feel like is just not across the board. All teachers staff administration whoever or whatever aspect I feel they're not always on the same page. And it's just frustrating.

[00:21:04]

Moderator: Did you want to add to that?

[00:21:04]

Maria: Yes, um going back to the stress factor where teachers in Title I schools are typically perceived to be stressed. I have seen that. Many of the teachers will tell me that sometimes they go home and they just in tears and it's a little bit embarrassing but I will share that one day when we did have a sub the kids did just want a little chaotic and we had a situation occur where we had to call in the Dean and the nurse and all that jazz and the principal was in and you know being a good kid my whole life it was really flustering and I broke, I ended up breaking down in front of the principal. But she did sit down with me and she said that this is the reality of what these schools are like and what she mostly spoke about this particular school. But she did say it gets better over time, but you still have to be... I don't want to say on edge but mindful that this is the climate this is the culture this is what we experience and there's just different demands for what these kids should be able to do and what we have to get there now. We do have support just like you ladies have been mentioning, we have massive amounts of support, resources. I've noticed in other schools that they don't give. They would not give us as much printing or laminating, and here we can do all of that and the staff, not the staff, the assistant principals constantly tell us oh we'll help you. We'll support you. They come in and check in. But it's still super stressful even with that support there.

[00:22:44] I agree.

[00:22:45]

Sasha: I actually cried like twice. One of them was after school ended and I had a sub the whole day and it was like the worst day of my life. So, but I think it's a matter of you know when they say gets better. It's a matter of like building those like layers of skin. Those tough layers to the point were like you know you do, you have to expect the worst to happen like every day because of like the, I mean depending on like the climate of your school and the students like you have to like go into that day expecting the worst so that you can already be thinking ahead. And like looking for ways to prevent all these things from happening and so on. Obviously, we've only been there for like two months, so I like there's going to be situations that happen like you know I've never seen my students hate each other so much where they like beat each other up all the time like I was never really around that. So, like just seeing that you know it's more of a point of like OK well how can I prevent this next time. As far as like support there's more support like in my team my grade team. But we don't really have interaction with like any other grades. But I

personally like to see more support as far as like behavior issues like I'm I don't know why I don't understand why they wouldn't have like more like workshops and like how to deal that... My staff... I've only been to one big staff meeting and that's the only one they've had.

[00:24:06]

Sasha: And that was like the second day I went there in January so I think I would personally like to see more of that because like just like hearing all the different things that happened it's like I don't know if maybe they just expect at this point. But seeing teacher like come and go I just feel like to see more support like the behavioral like aspect and like how you like acclimate to that environment. So yeah.

[00:24:29]

Rebecca: And one other thing we we were told that for those kids that we have that are EBD we're not allowed to like to touch them. But and that's in the sense of like it's like we're not qualified to like to pull them off somebody if they're beating somebody up but then like when they do get in a fight with somebody I'm not just going to let them stand there and punch your kid but like

[00:24:54]

Moderator: There is a specific training you have to go to and you get certified because there is a very specific hold.

[00:25:01]

Rebecca: Yeah. So, I feel like if we had more people that knew that training and that were with the kids that were in our classes because I only have one person that she comes by sometimes to check on these EBD kids so even if it was like somebody who stayed with them all day. I feel a little bit better because she is qualified to be with them and understand what to do if something happens. But I'm just I'm a senior intern, I don't know what to do when a kid flips a desk and starts throwing pencils and scissors at all like

[00:25:30]

Sasha: Your natural instinct.

[00:25:31]

Rebecca: Yeah like I don't know what to do in this situation or when kids do get in a fight like I don't know I don't want to be like OK. I know that you're hitting him, but I'm not allowed to help you. I have to wait for somebody to come do that. But I don't know how to like... I just wish there were more people that had the training or more people that were there to in the moments when stuff happens like that.

[00:25:58]

Moderator: So again, repetitive questions. So again, think back to those previous field experiences. [00:26:04] So any service learning, your internship one, is anything from that kind

of coming back and maybe impacting your experience in internship two? [10.2] Or are you kind of haven't even thought of it. Alyssa

[00:26:19]

Alyssa: Well you know because you've worked with me before but like I used to sub in the A [REDACTED] A schools and it's very different now. Not like bad different just very different culture different, support, all these things. So, I'm definitely seeing like I don't know the line even though I guess the mentality of the kids too is different. Like their home life is very different. And so, I see that like for example when we went to Sea World. If I had gone with the A school there like those kids have probably been to SeaWorld, they might have an annual pass. Who knows. They go to Disney World all the time. These kids it's like the first time ever seeing a whale in real life and it's like oh my gosh the best day of their life like they're like we're so excited to go SeaWorld, I've never been, what's a rollercoaster. Like that was huge for them. And so of course like attendance every single kid went because they were like yeah, it's FREE.

[00:27:17] We're going to go to SeaWorld and all the parents wanted to go. So that was it was neat to see that happy difference there were those kids really really enjoyed SeaWorld.

[00:27:32]

Moderator: Anyone else?

[00:27:32]

Sasha: No, it did not prepare. I was at Title I for my first, well my first internship I was at tile one, but it just shows you that like there's so many different ranges of Title I. Like I was at R [REDACTED] which is Title I and now I look back on it. I was like OK that was not like Title II. It really depends on like what area the school is in. And like before I just assumed that all Title I's were you know in not so good areas. Stereotype. There you go. But like, that's so not true. I'm just I'm dealing with so much so many new things at the school I'm at now that I would never even like occur, or if it did occur it was like once in a while but like not even in my grade. So it's just like two completely different atmospheres of Title I. So, it's like you never know what you're going to get at like different Title I schools.

[00:28:30]

Moderator: You want to add?

[00:28:31]

Jennifer: For me, I honestly don't think any of my coursework could have ever prepared me.

[00:28:36]

Moderator: Good and you got me to question four.

[00:28:36]

Jennifer: Sorry.

[00:28:36] No go for that. So, think about that content you received. You know especially talking about this sort of environment or even think about working with diverse student populations as far as your coursework and that preparation. So yeah continue with that.

[00:28:55]

Jennifer: As I was saying I don't think any of my coursework and they will tell you no matter what school you will not know until you're in the classroom. But specifically, in Title I, I don't think there is anything that I have gone through those last few years of my time (university name) that have prepared me for the type of culture that I would have to learn. The tone of voice you have to use with the students, how you speak to the students. I've kind of just got accustomed to you can say certain things to these kids and you can get away with it and you can... I've heard stories of teachers throwing footballs out windows and if you did that a affluent school you could possibly lose your job. So, I feel like there is just such a big gap. And I like I think I've learned more about this kind of culture and community and school by actually being in the school. And so, I think yeah. So that's pretty much it.

[00:29:59]

Moderator: Can anyone else think back to like your coursework? And is there anything again. Are you having similar experience to Jennifer where nothing really prepared? Or are there things you've been accessing that kind of some aha moments or rethinking things?

[00:30:12]

Maria: Um I will agree with you Jennifer. I also really very super unprepared and you know considering that I did go through Title I schools through my academic career, so I was in those types of schools going into the teachers shoes this time being the one handling the situation is completely different. And our coursework, I feel like it kind of prepares us for the idealistic view of what education should be like. Like we should focus on teaching.

[00:30:43]

Maria: We should focus on creating this general not creating but practically raising this generation of children who should be leaders who should be critical thinkers who should do all these wonderful amazing things but we have just like you mentioned all these fires we constantly have to put out so education is kind of going into the back burner because we're not trained much on how to deal with all those random behavior issues that pop up because it's not just like the same behavior issue every day. It's a bunch of random OK. So, what do you do with the kid takes his pants off in the middle of class. Who do you call. Who do you tell. what do you do if a kid punches a window and their hands starts bleeding like what do you do in these types of situations. I kind of want a book. I wish somebody would write a book or something or teach a class on what to do when there are these random behavior issues. And these parents also we need to learn how to deal with parents because one of the teachers I know the other day she did mention how a parent just came up to her started screaming at her over her child receiving a referral. And this was first of all it's not her fault because it was an administrative referral. But

when you are placed in that kind of situation what do you do. So, I don't feel like we are adequately prepared to deal with these types of situations that are commonplace in these types of schools.

[00:32:16]

Moderator: Rebecca

[00:32:16]

Rebecca: To build off the Parent one we have I feel like when we do talk to parents we know how to be professional and how to hold yourself up to a higher standard of not just being combative at first but actually holding yourself back and learning how to do that.

[00:32:32]

Rebecca: But then we also have these parents that are so extreme. Like we have parents they complain to the district and the school board about their kid being bullied outside of school. And we're kind of like that's not really our, we can't really do anything about that if it's not here. But then the parents are so combative about well you need to do something you have to do. You have to help my kid. But if we don't know anything about it like just how to deal with the extreme parents not just the ones that are OK my kids doing good. Is there anything you can tell me? Resources. Like helping parents in that sense, we get plenty of training on for how to communicate how to help with resources and stuff. I don't think we ever get prepared for the extreme parents that are over the top. They stop you in the hallway they have to talk about my kid right now. Like how to handle that kind of stuff.

[00:33:27]

Moderator: Does anyone else want to add on or add something from their own experience?

[00:33:29]

Leslie: I think the only thing I could add on as far as courses is going back to what you're saying how we're taught like the ideal way of being an educator. I can say from past service learning experiences in non-Title I schools I could see like what we were learning in our courses like the UDL principles, you know you could see them you could just see it but going into the school I'm in now sometimes it feels a little frustrating because it feels like everything that I learned I don't see as much as I felt or feel I should see. And everything that I try to implement from my course learning it feels like it gets shot down all the time because of time you know. So, I think we were very prepared. We even were prepared you know with different types of information about diversity, socioeconomic status and everything throughout all our courses. But I, No matter how much preparation we get just being in there and facing reality is just a lot

[00:34:41]

Sasha: We have to focus on like more behavioral aspect. It's all about like ELs when you're in classes and I totally understand. Also, we're in Orlando and there's a lot of Title I schools that allow students you know only speak Spanish like I can't read in any language. So, I had to be

able to literally google translate everything but it's like they don't prepare you for emotional behavior disorder. They don't prepare you for all these kids who are on the spectrum who are not diagnosed you know all these you know A.D.D, A.D.H.D like different scenarios. So, like I personally would like to see more hands-on experiences like throughout classes because a lot of philosophical ideas which is great I understand like we need the foundation but like it would be beneficial even if it just included more videos of different scenarios. Like you know more interactive you know within the classes because I agree it's very idealistic for the classes

[00:35:43] It's 11:50.

[00:35:44]

Moderator: Thank you. So just (inaudible) does anyone want to add more about that coursework piece?

[00:35:51]

Alyssa: Yeah. Can I add real quick?

[00:35:52]

Moderator: Yeah.

[00:35:52]

Alyssa: I was going to say like I think back to one class specifically, I'm not going to name anything, but it was a reading course. And what we were told like OK you can't plan for a weekly story because you need to have a new text every day, new authentic text, literature. And being in the classroom, That's not possible because you also like it... We're also told that every student needs to have it in their hands. Well I'm not going to have 100 copies of every text that we want to use so using the journeys books for example is a way to have the text in their hand. So having that in that specific course was like ingrained like no this is wrong you can't do this. It's not effective and that's not realistic at all to what's going on and what's required by the county.

[00:36:48]

Jennifer: I think what was instilled is best practice sometimes just isn't realistic in the classroom. You know I feel like at least for me. You know I, I go in with this mindset that these are all these things that I want to be able to implement in my classroom once I have my own classroom. But the reality of it is especially if we choose to work in a Title I those best practices sometimes have to be pushed to the wayside because it's all you are spending the first two three months just being able for them to walk in a straight line in the hallway without busting out a noise or anything like that.

[00:37:17]

Jennifer: So, I think like you know what we're in now and what we're doing in our coursework is just like everyone is the ideal classroom, the ideal life with the perfect principle in the perfect

school the perfect students with a few that will be ELL and the few that will be ESE. Not the whole collective classroom who is living in poverty who all, some of them are homeless or all hungry. Things like that.

[00:37:41]

Sasha: Til we get more respect I don't know if anything's going to change soon. Just education in general.

[00:37:48]

Alyssa: I just feel like if we're going to be like we should be taught those ideal scenarios and stuff, but also say this is ideally what you should do knowing that's not going to happen here's how you can adapt to make it happen. That's what I would like to see

[00:38:06]

Sasha: I could sit here and talk all day.

[00:38:11]

Moderator: Thank you guys. Let me just go over so we talked about just kind of what was going on and I really liked the discussion you guys were talking about in regards of kind of we just go off Jennifer's respect. I just can't let you guys go with it. So, I wanted to hear what you would talk about and how thinking back to your previous experiences and coursework that you are saying that there's kind of a gap in what you're given, the tools that you're given, and what you're experiencing in the classroom. Next time when we meet on April 6th. We're going to since it will be some of the same questions again and just kind of closing out your internship as far as meeting with me on April 6 even over a few weeks. What I'll have is I'll have some pieces from the transcriptions and I'll have some categories some codes that I've been working on and what I'm seeing and not to identify who said what, but I want to see if you guys have kind of the same mind. If certain phrases and ideas fit into certain categories and so, we'll spend maybe a few minutes sorting and doing that. I call that member checking just to see you know you can see what was said or you see something that you said that it's not kind of written how you thought it was you can go "Oh hey I think I was the one that mentioned this, but this is what I meant by it. Not this" and that's what we'll do for that and then we'll close out our focus groups and then. So that's it. You guys have 6 minutes

Focus Group 3 - Group A (4.6.2018) 1.mp3

[00:00:01]

Moderator: OK. I'm going to but that in the center again, so we can go ahead and begin. It is 11:36 so we'll probably go for about 45 minutes it should be perfect. It'll give you about 10 15-minute break before the session and you've had lunch. So, we're good to get started.

[00:00:18]

Moderator: I'm actually just going to skip ahead and again like I mentioned last time some of the questions are going to be repetitive but that's the point just kind of thinking back and seeing if things have come up or you're now remembering things. And then I have one question that's going to be different since it is our final focus group.

[00:00:37]

Moderator: So now that you're sort of at the end, I think what's two more weeks three more weeks left, then everything is due and then you have your final week in the classroom. So thinking back to the very beginning we did this at the midpoint and we're going to do it again now. How have any perceptions of Title I schools that you had...? How have they changed until now? The last time we did talk about, some of you mentioned some different things that changed like you thought maybe there was problems with funding, but you realized there was a lot of funding. Or you noticed some stereotypes are actually existing out in the schools. So now we've made it another, probably a month since the last time we met. How have those perceptions changed or kind of been cemented in your mind? With Title I and working students... Anyone can start for this.

[00:01:52]

Alyssa: Well I've learned now that funding, there's a lot of it it just depends on the principal and how they use it. We were talking about it yesterday actually and we have new principal this year who's really like spending the money on the kids. So, she's doing like gift card incentives for coming to extra activities doing like more parent involvement things trying to improve that. So, she's really putting that Title I money towards the kids and not just like hoarding like previous (inaudible).

[00:02:09]

Sasha: As far as change, or stay the same, or both?

[3687:58:41]

Moderator: Either.

[00:02:12]

Sasha: I'll just say parent involvement, Like the lack of it has been very cemented in my brain and has not really changed. My teacher has not been able to have any parent meeting conferences since I've been there just because she either can't get in contact with them or they just don't want

to be like Face-To-Face. So the there's just not really any parent involvement. I rarely chaperones actually showing up for all of field trips I've been on so that has been a struggle. So that's like something that 've seen at my school Title I school. That there has definitely still been a lack of. And I know those are like the stereotypes as well. It just doesn't really help the kids at all. And that makes a stereotype stay there because of that.

[00:02:59]

Alyssa: Can I like add on to that for a second.

[00:03:01]

Moderator: Yeah.

[00:03:01]

Alyssa: So, we did a Sea World field trip and the teachers were talking about how that field trip is when the parents are like Yeah I'll send my kid or I'll show up because it's free versus normal. So if it was more like a museum or something then the parent might not find fun or interesting then they would run into that kind of problem.

[00:03:22]

Moderator: Anything else has stayed the same, changed. Maria you look like you want to talk

[00:45:54]

Maria: Stress is something that has been very firmly cemented into my brain. In our previous session. I still had not obtained full 100 percent control of everything that goes into being the classroom teacher. At this point now, I am doing all a lot of bands uploading them onto their drive. I'm searching out the scales, I'm doing everything. So, at this point she's not doing anything just monitoring me looking at me see what I'm doing, and the stress is at a further level than it was during our last time.

[00:04:06]

Maria: Even admin like they will come up to me and they'll say like Hey so I've noticed that you've been having these classroom management issues and it feels like I am dealing with behavior more than actual teaching because my teacher she did advise me that you do want to go ahead and you want to deal with all the behavior issues so that they know that you are asserting your authority, that you mean business. But it feels like I'm not doing any teaching and having to deal with all of these behavioral issues and it stresses me out because I'm not going through the content that I need to call through with them. They're testing soon that's another layer of stress. Our schedules frequently flip around because of all the testing all of these arrangements that have to be made in wake of testing. So, it feels like the stress is very very high especially towards this last leg of the race.

[00:05:13]

Jennifer: I think to add to that in my opinion I feel my stress isn't coming from the students I feel, like it's coming from the lack of support from a supervising teacher. If I have a behavior issue or it's all on me she doesn't really step in to help. She often leaves me a long period of time in the room alone. Which I know, which is a good thing and bad thing I'm not sure the rules. I'm not aware how long they're allowed to, but I feel it's not for me the stress isn't coming from the students. I feel that I've gained their respect. Obviously, every day I'm going to have to talk to a student. That's regardless whether you're Title I or not you're going to have some kind of behavior issue that you're going to have to deal with throughout the day. But I feel like it's not coming from the kids it's the stress is coming from the supervising teacher in my placement.

[00:06:01] I

Leslie: can kind of, in general, kind of add on to what everyone has said. For me the stress it is partially the stress is what's been cemented the most. A lot of it comes from just seeing how important strong leadership is within the school. If you have leadership that does not communicate well, you feel it. If your team your grade level team does not communicate well, you feel it. The communication is huge. I learned that because I wasn't communicating as well enough as I should, and I also liked there was questions I wasn't asking. So that stress has gone through the roof now because there's things that I still need to meet for those those assessments that if I would have asked or if you know.

[00:06:49]

Leslie: Just ask questions I would have felt a little better but like with you I have that respect from the kids. They love me. I love them, but I still feel like there's this distance between the leadership and the teachers and everything else. I kind of just feel out of place for the most part.

[00:07:09]

Rebecca: To go off that I feel kind of almost the opposite effect since our school has planned out what the fourth-grade team is doing up until testing. Like we have a certain workbook pages that we're doing here is practice test questions like everything's laid out for the next three weeks for us. So, every day I used to worry about what I'm going to do today and do I have everything I need for today. But now I feel almost like everything's done. I don't have to worry about... I just have to worry about those behavior issues I don't have to worry about if I'm giving them the correct information or if I'm teaching the lesson correctly if I'm just everything's already set and planned out which is nice and I don't have that stress anymore. But it's also stressful in the sense that when administration does come in they, everybody should be on the same page should be on the same lessons all the teachers, all the reading teachers have to be on the same story on the same questions. So if something does change to where "Oh the kids already did this page yesterday" we can't really move onto the next page because then we get "you're not same page somebody else" and then there's that whole frenzy.

[00:08:19]

Sasha: That happened in my school and all the teachers were like on the same thing. They made their rounds. They didn't come to our class for some reason. I'm the only intern on my team. But

they're like multiple teachers who went to centers too fast. And like really got like reprimanded for it. So, while they say they promote creativity like and like the lesson planning and all that and like it's not like super mandatory I feel like they're low key. If you are not doing what is says to do, then you're in trouble.

[00:08:54]

Jennifer: And I've seen that. I feel... That We have the district walking every week, reading and math. Because we are still in corrective program however they are just ragging on the fourth grade and how we are not doing anything correctly and we're continuously trying to change and their like "Nope that's not what you doing. Nope that's not right." Well we're not getting any feedback on how to implement. So, I think just not being on the same page with the administration, what is the county wanting you to tell us. Because we're getting chewed out but we're not getting any... you get the feedback not us. So, I think again that lack of communication with the administration I have seen also is a huge importance.

[00:09:36]

Moderator: So, are you seeing differences now in kind of what you've been experiencing in the title of schools that you're in? And if you are either subbed or did service learning in more affluent areas are you seeing a difference or is it pretty much you think the same kind of impact with stressors and behavior? Or what does that look like if you can remember back.

[00:10:00]

Jennifer: I think for me the stressors are different because you had the parental support. But it was the stress of having to keep a parent happy versus the stress of having to keep your administrators and the District happy. I feel like in the Title I school that I'm currently in it's all about making sure the administrators are happy with what they see in the classroom. I feel when we were I was observing in the affluent schools, admin wasn't always in your room nitpicking at everything you need to change this, or the district doesn't want to see this this this and this.

[00:10:36]

Jennifer: Whether that was a conversation that was had way before the beginning of the year that this was expectations set. I feel the stress is now just for the parents. You get the thousands of e-mails from all the parents who want to know how their child is doing versus you don't get any of that in a Title I school because a parent involvement is really low.

[00:10:54]

Rebecca: And to add on to that I have administration walk in my classroom at least twice a day but they don't ever tell me when they're coming. They just show up and they expect to see certain things. So, it adds stress to me not knowing when they're coming in what they're looking for because they don't always tell me what they want to see in center groups. They don't always tell us specifically what they're looking for but then it also adds stress on the kids which are "why is the principal in here again? He was here earlier. What was he doing here?" But I feel like that's

more stress than anything else. Worrying about not just what I'm doing is right because I'm getting the guidance from my teacher. What we're doing is what we're doing.

[00:11:39]

Rebecca: But the principal always seems to have an opinion on if were teaching it how he wants us to or anything else so.

[00:11:54]

Moderator: So, if we take the label off the schools and say that they are not Title I and that we focus on the student population that diverse you know across all schools that are culturally academically racially and economically diverse population. Do we see any of that kind of stereotypes or stressors coming from or applying to the student population? Is it harder do you think to work with such diverse populations or is it mainly the school providing the stress?

[00:12:27]

Sasha: I have trouble my class. Like obviously I'm with another teacher but if I was by myself it would very hard to really accommodate every single student. And that's I mean any school you go into to be honest. But because at least in my classroom a lot of my kids don't come from any stable homes. And that's even if they have a home at all. Sometimes you know I would just love to sit there and just have like a therapeutic session with my kids you know you have to teach content at same time, so I really am unable to reach like every single student every single day. And I think that goes in turn with the stereotypes. Kids not succeeding as much as they could be. And I think you know obviously I can branch out try figure out different ways to do it, but I don't have the right support coming in. We have some pars that come in for EL but like that's pretty much it. It's really only for the ELs. There's nothing, no one else coming in for any of the students.

[00:13:31]

Sasha: I don't even know if we have a guidance counselor to be honest. But you know it's very hard. It's very hard to teach a super diverse population. So, I'd like to see you know I would like to hear other people's response. That are like more experienced teachers or even like in courses because it's like almost impossible.

[00:14:02]

Alyssa: Adding on to that. We are very diverse and different... We have kids getting pulled all the time I think I've mentioned it before and so that adds to... We have someone pulling our bubble kids to practice testing taking strategies for the FSA. So, I'm literally missing eight of my kids during the entire reading block. And then of the ones that are leftover I have something pulled for speech and ESE. And so, I have like six kids in the room. Like how am I supposed to teach them in a normal schedule when things are way off? So, when you have that diverse group where there is some high some low some in between there's some you know it's just like you're saying more difficult when they're all over the place versus the more affluent school where you might have a couple outliers here and there but they're all in my experience on the same page.

[00:14:49]

Jennifer: I completely agree with what she has to say. Speaking with other interns who have placements in more affluent schools and I tell them about my experience and how I have students at a first-grade reading level I have students at seventh grade reading level all within the same classroom. They're like "oh no our lowest is a third-grade reading level and they're in fourth grade. So, we just need to back them up a little bit." They don't have like you said a bunch of people getting pulled out for ELL or ESE or speech or gifted. They all pretty much stay in the classroom and they're there with them the whole time. Like you said there could be sometimes where you only have six kids in the room and I have the same thing. Currently they pull the bubble kids during reading intervention to really "oh this is how you need to answer the question, you're really close, you have a chance of passing" they pull the low ones "just try and guess" you're left with some of them that they were not going to pull them because they're not going to waste their time because they know they're not going to pass. So those are the ones you're left with.

[00:15:53]

Aisha: One thing that I always wonder. I know it's very, it's a lot easier when there's two teachers in the classroom when it comes to like testing students on A.R. and stuff like that. They have different levels so my teachers constantly pulling certain students who can't read the test for themselves while I'm doing small group reading a book for them and stuff like that. So, what I always wonder is like when I'm all alone like how how am I going to do it.

[00:16:26]

Maria: To bounce off of that. I think that support is absolutely super super necessary in diverse classrooms and I would love to learn how to deal with it alone. Because right now we are two in classroom and it gets super stressful. Like I feel like I'm not doing enough for my diverse students. I have an ELL who speaks no English. Still try figure out how to best support her. I have numerous children who identify under an ESE label so they all have their specific needs. Their specific accommodations that need to be met and whoever doesn't have a label might need one just has not gotten the paperwork just isn't caught up on all that is required to obtain those services. I have students who are pulled and it's just every single student has a specific unique need.

[00:17:28]

Maria: I feel like in my classroom there's no one that's average. There's the one that's on grade level they're either above over here or there below over there and it would be nice to learn how to accommodate every single one. When you're supposed to teach a whole group and then have a small period of small group.

[00:17:51]

Leslie: I was going to back up just a little. Because when you were talking about the difference between that affluent and the Title I schools and thinking about removing the labels of the

schools. From a student standpoint in the schools I've been behavior wise and level like differentiation wise I don't see much difference. But these are only in the schools that I have been in. You know all students have things they're battling, and they might not be the same as far as a background in regards. But I don't see that when I look at what I see from the school standpoint leadership and whatnot. That's where I really see that huge difference. You know one school their kind of the teachers can be more creative they are doing their own thing. But then you have the other school that is micromanaging constantly. So that's where I see the differences in students.

[00:18:44]

Leslie: I you know I see students I see kids they're just having fun and they're being themselves. But I still see like the small you know interventions, small group, I still see all those things happening. But like I said to me it's I see it from this school and leadership standpoint where it's different.

[00:19:02]

Moderator: And then I probably don't need ask this question again especially with our nice "University preparation vs reality" category. I was going to ask you how do you think again do you think content you received in courses regarding Title I or CARE/that diverse student population has helped you at all during your internship to placements? I think that category kinda speaks for itself. Does anyone want to add to that?

[00:19:29]

Rebecca: I feel like it gives you a broad idea of

[00:19:38]

Jennifer: very broad.

[00:20:20]

Rebecca: of diversity but it's not what's actually happening. It's you'll have some troubled kids you have some kids It's hard to reach because of a language barrier because of a background barrier but it never gives you like specifics. "Here's a great tool to help or like personal experiences."

[00:19:58]

Alyssa: I feel like it's also sugarcoated because we don't like they don't want to scare us away from Title I. So it's like it's like "oh these these might be some issues but it's not so bad because of this" and so like I've noticed it's a little sugar coated.

[00:20:14]

Jennifer: I think when it comes to like diversity they kind of play it as "oh you're going to have a little bit of this a little bit of that" and it's not going to be oh 90 percent of your kids are going to have 504s or IEPs and that you have to accommodate and make accommodations in your lesson

plans for 26 out of your 30 students as you say. It's so for me diversity I thought I was like All right. I love it. That's kind of how the picture that you're going to have this little bit of that. I may have a couple of students who are ELL or ESE or 504s but no like in my classroom like it's a large majority of students who have me have those needs.

[00:20:48]

Leslie: I think I said, maybe the first or second session, How it was hard kind of breaking that mold that bubble that you kind of build yourself from your courses here at (university name). I think they do their best to kind of prepare you for what you, what to expect. But I've noticed even when you have those hardcore classes where we went deep into diversity, what to expect title in 1 schools or at least professors I had, it still did not prepare me for what to expect. And that really started I started seeing it mostly with lesson planning and unit planning. And I can say that out of my whole intern experience that has been the most stressful thing because to me you do all these lesson plans you practice. You know you get great grades and then you go out there and it's like no this isn't going to work. And it's such a letdown.

[00:21:46]

Leslie: So I mean I spent several days like you know several days each week sometimes and almost in tears because I didn't know how I was going to do it because I felt whatever I think I (inaudible) I felt like my um, I was just going to get shot down again because I was trying to do everything that we learned. But it's not you can't fit it in that they don't want it. That's what I feel like that. It's stressful because you feel like they it's great that you know all those things but we can't use that here. That's very stressful.

[00:22:15]

Sasha: I can't help but think that you know a some of these professors might just have done all schooling you know. Maybe not. So, I mean some professors have taught for years and years and years. But I've also had some professors who maybe only taught for a couple years and then decide to come back to school and like get like you know Master's, Ph.D., start teaching. But I could definitely tell teachers that are teaching about you know diversity and Title I, but they I don't think they've actually been in that kind of school environment. So, you know from their standpoint they're teaching everything that they know about the school that schools that they have worked so in. So, you can't you can't really preach about you know accommodating all these students like really being real about how it's going to be when in your mind you've only experienced what you experienced. So, you can only read so many articles, You know, before you're actually in the real thing. There's only there's only so many scholarly journals that you could read that could actually maybe prepare you or give me some tips. But I don't I don't think it's the professors fault. And so that's why I kinda bring that up. You know they're trying to do the best they can.

[00:23:30]

Sasha: Maybe they are sugarcoating a little bit because they don't want us all to leave because teaching is very hard. But I think that a lot of them are maybe teaching to like where they had their experience.

[00:23:42]

Aisha: To go off of the whole lesson planning what really stuck out to me this morning during the first session when the principals were there. They're like oh yeah you do all these teacher work sample and you know I'll take a glance at it but like this is nothing compared to what we observe in the classroom or what the district uses online. So why are we doing this then?

[00:24:08]

Jennifer: Or, its, they show these videos of Title I "Oh here's a Title I school" and you watch this video and all the kids are sitting down and they're in polo t shirts with the school logo on it and you know they're doing their work. But that's nothing (chatter) when you walk into a Title I school some might be like that, maybe not in [REDACTED] or anywhere near us or where I'm currently. But that's I feel like sugarcoating it kind of selecting what they want to show us about Title I versus this is what you could get. This is the worst of the worst. This is you know here's the broad scope of what you could expect to Title I because I feel like there are more Title I's that utilize their funding more like better than other Title I's to make sure kids have all the technology and things like that.

[00:25:00] (inaudible). I think everyone should see Title I

[00:25:00]

Moderator: What was that?

[00:25:00]

Sasha: I think is important for everyone. Like all this is me personally, if I ran the (university) college community innovation and education I really, I really would like I wouldn't make it a requirement that part of your service learning has to be in a Title I or STO school because even if you're not planning, even if you plan to live in a super-rich neighborhood rest your life great. You have a lot of money. You teach in a nice, really nice school, that's fine. but like You have to like open up your mind set to it because otherwise you're going to get a student every once in a while. And it's gonna throw you off and your gonna have no idea what to do with the rest of your life. Or like us, we don't have a choice really where we get placed for internship. We put our top three. My school was like, I chose schools that were like close by, none of my top three were chosen at all for my internship 2. So, you really may never know. You may like she cried (referring to another focus group member) when she got her placement. Like but if you have exposure to Title I schools prior to that I think you would be so much more prepared. And like if we could have more speakers come in from Title I schools that really like sugarcoat it and they kinda just give it to you like it is. I think not only will it open people's eyes but also the kind of inspiring. Think about it because these are the people that work. Some of the hardest. And like all the teachers. So that's how I would run it.

[00:26:28]

Sasha: But you know every school is different. I understand that there are the rules regulations whatever but if I would have I would have definitely been maybe a little bit more prepared if I would have been exposed to that environment or hearing people from those environments come and talk "Hey I'm going to get you the lay down out right now. This is like what happens in my daily life in the classroom." That's fine. I would just like to like learn about it beforehand before being thrown into it.

[00:26:57]

Jennifer: And I think too that because I thought one of my professors said Oh you have to pick one. One place will be in Title I and one place will be a affluent school so you can see both. She thought that was expectation beforehand and she thought and I said no. They didn't say that that was a requirement. So for me I really wish that I would have been able to be placed in one and to see both because I feel like now I had no idea how to deal with these helicopter parents because my school. I've been in this school for a year with no absolute parent involvement.

[00:27:27] Yeah (multiple agreeing from other members).

[00:27:28]

Jennifer: I don't know how to deal with having to enrich students when I'm dealing with students who are below grade level or in things like that or I don't know how to plan if oh, This is your classroom you have the creativity to do whatever you want versus a classroom that is very structured: This is what you're teaching. I didn't get to implement any of my creative side or to know what things like that. So, I feel like it should. I felt that I should have been able to see both sides. I don't feel like I'm prepared for the affluent side. I feel like I'm prepared for the Title I side which is what they want because they want us to stay in Title I.

[00:28:03]

Moderator: So, going off that exact statement their last question. Seeing as you are, it is the 6th and you are about 1 month from graduation, with your previous experiences, your field experiences, your coursework your internship 1 and 2... Upon graduation do you intend to pursue a career in a Title I school?

[00:28:34]

Aisha: At first, I would have said no. Like I wrote in my journal because I write. I said that I would never teach in a Title I school, and I got placed in a Title I school for both of my internships and I actually think that's where I'm going to lean more towards because although it has like the negative aspects it's also very rewarding and the students are so thankful for everything like you can do the smallest thing for them. And they're like oh my god thank you for letting us have so much fun today. Thank you and it's just it's just warms my heart, so I'll probably end up teaching in a Title I school.

[00:29:15]

Alyssa: I was the same at the beginning because I was used to those affluent schools. And so, at first I was like No I hate this. This is rough. And now towards the end of my internship I've like really bonded with my kids and I don't know I love them to death but it's a way different bond when I know they don't have that figure at home, that I am that figure that they look up to for a lot of them vs the affluent schools where they have parents who are doctors and lawyers that they look up to already. So, it's just very different but for me personally I don't even know what state I'll even be in so I can't say yes I'll be in Title I. Wherever I can get a job, but I won't be mad either way I'll be fine either way. So.

[00:30:02]

Moderator: I'm going to make everyone answer

[00:30:03]

Jennifer: For me, I am kind of burnt out with Title I. So, I have been applying to affluent schools in my area. Whether or not I will accept those positions or if I find a Title I school that I really fall in love with that has leadership that is showing that they're going to support teachers especially first year teachers, novice teachers who are stepping into Title I setting. I'll definitely take that into consideration. Right now, it's kind of more towards the affluent side. If I'm being honest.

[00:30:37]

Moderator: Yes please, honesty is what I'm looking for right now.

[00:30:39]

Rebecca: I'm in the same boat. I feel like I've since I've been in Title I for both junior and senior internships. I need a change of pace because I know the rough side of it but I also feel like I want a no Title I school so that I can experience the parent involvement aspect. But yeah.

[00:31:05]

Leslie: I would be happy with either. I'm, I mean I'm not picky because I know there is such a just within Title I there is such a difference between the schools. Of course, you know if a school, like that I've been to that I know, like the school I'm at right now I would probably not want to work at just being honest. But if you know another school that I had maybe been in the past that was Title I. I loved all the experiences I had at those schools, so I would not you know say oh I'm never working Title I. Just like it was said before the kids are different. They just there's just have a different relationship and the different bond like I can actually already start to feel like sometimes when I'm sitting there I'm thinking like it's almost over and part of me is excited. Part of me is like I'm going to miss these kids like am I going to cry on the last day.

[00:31:59]

Aisha: I know I am.

[00:32:01]

Leslie: I'm not picky. They're both they're both great experiences.

[00:32:09]

Moderator: Maria and Sasha, who wants to go first?

[00:32:10]

Sasha: Yeah, I actually plan on stay at school I'm at now. I've like talked to the principal and stuff so I'm really excited. I mean it's going to be hard, but I just like like I love the support that I have and to be honest I probably wouldn't stay if I wasn't staying with my supervising teacher, if I was being honest. So, like they want to keep me in the same grade, so I could be with me and my teachers, so I can grow so they have a smart principal. But like if it was like any other grade, or if it was fourth or fifth grade Title I, I would not I would never I never. I don't want to go to those upper elementary in Title I, it freaks me out at least right now. That's how I feel. So, I'm fine with my babies. But it's just like they just need people will like fresh minds. They need fresh ideas and people that could... Yes, Like there are boundaries but they need people who like to push those boundaries a little bit more. So, I just think oh I'm more creativity needs get back in so that's my goal. Yeah hopefully they hire me.

[00:33:21]

Maria: It's a little different. My principal came by and spoke with me. She said that she would place me in first grade. It was interesting she didn't even ask me she said you're doing first grade next year. Like ok. But I am thinking on it very seriously. I want to take this very seriously. It is a different grade than what I am now because I am in fourth grade and just like you said fourth grade is a beast. It is very stressful in comparisons to the more primary grades. Or that's what I've heard from my other friend who was an intern there in a primary grade. She says it's a little bit less stressful to deal with them because right now I'm feeling sort of like oh you're feeling burned out. At this stage but I do have a dream school and it is a Title I school so more likely than not I will stay in some type of Title I just the spectrums different from school to school

APPENDIX E: ORIGINAL FOCUS GROUP B TRANSCRIPTIONS

Focus Group 1 - Group B (2.9.18).mp3

(Two participants were out for this focus group. One was with her coordinator and the other was sick. They were present for the remaining focus groups.)

[00:00:00]

Moderator: Let's get started this thing is awesome, it has really good range for using a phone so we'll just kind of go around. Normally when we answer questions whoever wants to answer first, just raise your hand and go ahead and talk but just for introduction purposes and I know some of you do know each other. You may be at the same school or at the same school classes. But just go around. Tell me your name. Your placement. So, we know what your placement is and then just what brought you to the field of education. Catherine you can begin.

[00:00:33]

Catherine: Well I'm Catherine. I'm at C [REDACTED] Elementary which is in [REDACTED] and I'm in the second-grade classroom and education wasn't my first choice. Kind of like going through high school I thought I wanted to do like journalism or something with writing and then that I just decided I didn't want to do. So, I started volunteering in classrooms just to kind of you know put something on my resume as I was going through like my AA and stuff. And my first experience was with a reading coach at a Title I school, and I just really loved the kids and just like the passion that she had to make them better at reading writing whatever it is she was doing. So, and I saw just kind of like the needs of where I was and how schools in general need a lot. And that's kind of just what got me in.

[00:01:25]

Moderator: Thank you.

[00:01:28]

Abby: OK. I'm Abby I'm at C [REDACTED] elementary in third grade I'm the same as Catherine, I didn't want to be a teacher at first. I actually wanted to be a pediatrician. So, I've always wanted to work with kids just not in the same field. And then I did a clinical and I saw how much kids didn't like pediatricians and they cried and screamed and it made me sad. And I never want to make a kid sad. So, I volunteered at a summer camp and I loved it and I was kind of like a mentor to a lot of third, fourth grade kids and I just decided that that's what I wanted to do.

[00:02:04]

Claire: Claire, I [REDACTED] 5th grade. My mom is currently in her forty-third-year teaching

[00:02:15] Good for her.

[00:02:15]

Claire: 30 years in fifth grade and then the rest in sixth grade. Growing up in grocery stores and everything in the community, everybody knew her. I mean at this point she's teaching great

grand grandchildren and just the respect that she got going into her classroom and seeing how much her students loved her. I wanted to be a part of that. So, I think I've always known I wanted to be a teacher and to watch kids learn and grow is absolutely rewarding.

[00:02:48]

JOHN: I'm JOHN, I [REDACTED] Elementary in third grade. This is actually my second career. So I did sales for long time I was in the business world worked office jobs. My mom, like Claire, my mom was a teacher she taught kindergarten for the better part of almost 30 years. So, did any given like throughout my life my dad is also an educator. So, it's something that I think our family kind of has a knack for and then something that I always knew I could fall back on. And when I decided I didn't want to deal with adults anymore. So.

[00:03:30]

Moderator: Jaime.

[00:03:32]

Jaime: I'm Jaime I'm in second grade at E [REDACTED] Elementary. I'm like you guys teachings in my blood. My mom is a teacher at the same school for I want to say 32 years I might be wrong but something like that. She's taught every single grade, it's a school I went to, she was my teacher twice. And growing up I was always like the famous person's daughter. And I would walk around school and people would be like oh my god that's Ms. [REDACTED] daughter, like it was such a huge deal because my mom was like a huge deal. And we ran into her students literally in other countries like everywhere we go we see students of hers and like I always thought it was so amazing that she was so known and that they always had positive things to say about her and every parent I see is always like your mom is the best. All that and also, I just have always loved kids. I've been babysitting for like 10 years and I work e d at a sleep away camp for the past four years. And I really got an opportunity there to like not lesson plan because you're not teaching at a summer camp, but I planned a lot of programs and I was able to see kids like figure things out on their own and that I thought was really cool that I got to guide them through that.

[00:04:38]

Anna: My name is Anna I'm in third grade at C [REDACTED] Elementary and I originally started in the nursing field because being an educator was not something that my family ever wanted me to do. Nobody in my family is. So, I started nursing and I realized that I have hated everything about it. So, but I had always I always babysat. I'd always worked at the church and in the kids ministry and everything and I was like I really like it so I'm going to try to this. I ended up loving it and I don't regret leaving nursing at all.

[00:05:12]

Moderator: Well some of you know me either from 4410 or as interns. But just a little bit again, [REDACTED], I, kind of similar to those of you that thought you wanted another field. Initially I came into [REDACTED] years ago to go as a business major. Well actually it was technically hospitality management. And then that became business and that became business pending maybe

accounting. But I took the classes hated the classes wasn't doing well because I didn't want to go I didn't like the content didn't find it interesting at all or relatable but always in the back of my mind it has been like teaching teaching. But of course, it was the same old teachers don't make money. Why do I want to do that? But I decided you know what even though I've spent two years already in this area. Let me just take an intro to ed class and see, and took it, loved it, loved every education class I took here at UCF. And realize that's when I was like All right. This is where I'm supposed to be. Let me finish education. I worked for several years in a Title I school [REDACTED] elementary. Kindergarten for a few years then second grade. I got my masters while I was teaching at [REDACTED] again and a leadership. And now I'm back working for the [REDACTED] and then completing my Ph.D. as well.

[00:06:39]

Moderator: So to kind of get started the... I'm actually excited because for this study I get to have two focus group groups. And based on the Qualtrics survey I sent for those two that filled it out. Most of us in this group have actually had prior experiences with Title I. So, it's not just your internship right now but you've been in an internship one, you've had teachers who've talked about it, or you attended Title I tours, or you had service learning in these, so you've had multiple exposure to Title I and the students within Title I throughout your time here at [REDACTED] And you'll hear me use a term I call them CARE students in my dissertation I'm talking about you know working with students who are culturally academically racially and economically diverse and usually that's the type of population of students we see in Title I. You know they're very diverse in cultural race academically with low performing high performing and economically. So, if I ask you just a random question like oh you know has any teacher talked about care students. Just remember it's not something you had heard before. Don't be like am I supposed to know what that is. That's just me saying the acronym really quickly and then I'll go back and go oh wait yeah this is what I mean when I ask that.

[00:07:54]

Moderator: So just to start and there may be times I don't want to rudely cut you off. But if we start going in the direction and I need to pull you back and be like "oo let's pull it back real quick" because there are things we will talk about in the second and third focus groups that some of you may bring up today and I go "Oh that will be good. Let's talk about that next time". So just to begin what are some stereotypes that you've heard not necessarily what you feel, but what are stereotypes that you've heard about working in Title I schools?

[00:08:27]

Abby: That there's a lot of behavior issues.

[00:08:31]

Claire: It's unsafe.

[00:08:31]

Abby: The kids aren't as, they don't perform as well academically.

[00:08:37]

Jaime: You don't get any support from parents.

[00:08:40]

Catherine: I've heard lack of administration support

[00:08:45]

JOHN: Lack of resources.

[00:08:51]

Anna: Too much paperwork.

[00:08:56] So have you heard any stereotypes about working with CARE students those culturally academically racially economically diverse?

[00:09:04]

Abby: They just don't care as much.

[00:09:06]

Catherine: They're not going to get it.

[00:09:09]

Abby: Like kind of like don't waste your time with this right.

[00:09:15]

JOHN: Typically, they're behind they should be.

[00:09:19] So what are some... So those are some of the stereotypes we're hearing. Tell me about what you personally know or think about Title I schools or what you thought prior to internship?

[00:09:31]

Abby: I mean I think just because we've heard it I went into a Title I school thinking that's what I was going to see and especially because on the outside it doesn't look as pretty as a school that's not Title I. So, you go in thinking there's going to be limited resources and that there's a lot of behavioral problems and sometimes there are. But I don't think it's as negative of a picture that people paint when you go before you go into work anyway.

[00:10:02]

Catherine: I've never been at a school that wasn't Title I so I don't have anything to compare it to. So, going into it like with Abby said it was a lot of what you hear is kind of what I was expecting even though I didn't want to expect that. But when I'm in there I realize a lot of it is it just depends on the situation like it's not because it is a Title I school. There are so many other factors

that affect how students behave, it could be like teacher perception of students, so I feel like I try to give it a chance before I make any assumptions. Now that I've been in

[00:10:48]

Anna: My school just recently this year became Title I like this is their first year and it's because they just built these apartments have like reduce costs for people who come over from Puerto Rico and everything. So, this is the first year that it is and it's just different because it's literally like one side of the town is not at all close to a title I. But because of this one area on the other side of town is that what made this school Title I. So, it's just like the kids are in there are those CARE students they're the kids in the bilingual program up until third grade. So, it's just very different because like the year that I did all my service learning it wasn't a title I. So, the things that I see now that they're constantly doing portfolio assessments and doing all these different testing things just because now this year they are title. It's just kind of crazy to see the transformation between the two years.

[00:11:40]

Jaime: I think I thought that a lot of Title I schools are the same. And now I've been at two different ones I was I'm in one now for my internship and they're polar opposite like the first one. I would say like you couldn't even really tell it was Title I. It seemed just like the kids were like quote unquote normal. They seemed just like the kids that I'd seen in any other school. But the kids that I'm with now are much more of like CARE students I would say but I think it has a lot to do with where the school is and like the population that's at the school not necessarily like the Title I factor.

[00:12:16]

Abby: I feel like with Title I schools a lot of people also think that teachers in Title I schools don't really teach they more work on classroom management because of the behavior aspect. And I was in for my internship one not a Title I school actually a school in a really good area. And I feel like their standards for some things are not as high as the Title I schools and I found that to be interesting like there's more testing in Title I and there's more almost like different. I don't know... Support because they, I feel like with the school that was in a better area they just expected the kids to have the support at home. So, it's just different.

[00:13:00] So I'm thinking back to the stereotypes and kind of what you personally believe or thought about Title I prior to that. What were some perceptions you had about your school the one you are placed in now, at the beginning of your internship?

[00:13:14]

JOHN: I know that for mine... I'm at I [REDACTED]. I didn't know a whole lot about the school. So, I did research online. And I was like OK the schools a little bit older, like you know from what I've read online it didn't have a very good track record. But then when I first drove up to the school, It was brand new they had just built a brand new one. So completely like for momentarily changed my perception because I was thinking like they have this fancy new

building they have all the resources the smart boards everything in every classroom that they need. So, like for me walking into that it was something like this could be really positive thing. So, to counter that like we also have a different principal at the beginning of the year. So like they took our principal out halfway through the first semester to transition to a different school so like when I first came. When we first came in they had a solid plan. There was a lot of support. The principal was very accessible. And now that they have a new principal kinda the agendas have changed like it's it's almost having seen two different schools at the same school the same school year that makes any sense.

[00:14:33]

Moderator: Claire you're at I [REDACTED], would you say were your perceptions the same or different upon just kind of your first beginning there at Ivy Lane?

[00:14:41]

Claire: In S [REDACTED] social studies class we had the principal from [REDACTED] come in and talk about his neighborhood school in paramour. And then when I looked up this school and saw there was only 400 students. It was a majority African-American. I was like that's not typical because as a sub I would go into schools with twelve hundred students. So, I was a little, I was very interested to see how this tiny little school was going to function versus these 900 student schools that I had been subbing in previously. But I knew I didn't know how I would be accepted honestly because I was I'm Caucasian. And I think our statistics right now are 94 percent

[00:15:30]

JOHN: Yeah 94 95 percent.

[00:15:32]

Claire: So, this is the first time I had ever walked into a place where I looked different. Well I didn't know how they would accept me. They have, and I love the kids now. But the first couple of days I didn't really know how to act. Which was strange for me. I didn't know what to do.

[00:15:49]

JOHN: I'm kind of in the same boat because I'm the only white male I think in the entire building. So, I was just like well in the when I came in anybody any of the other teachers that were white. All the kids were like Are you their husband. So, it's just like for them it was just it was a definite change to see a white male because there's no other ones in the building. So, it was like. And initially I felt like a fish out of water. But you know like after they see you you know on a regular basis you know just kind of falls into place. But I knew like like you you didn't know what you would do me good. You know how they're going to react to you if they were going to respect you at all or not you know it was just kind of a crap shoot I guess you could say as to how they were going to accept you.

[00:16:40]

Abby: I had a similar experience because my school is actually the same kind of statistic very high up there with Hispanic and a lot of them have come over from Puerto Rico, so they don't speak any English like they're all LY ones are like unless it's the first year they don't know anything. They talk to each other in Spanish. Then if I try to communicate with them it's hard because students have to translate. And that was something I wasn't used to because I've never been in a school where the primary language was not English where I couldn't communicate with any of the students. And it's sad because sometimes you have to put the students on programs that they can't understand because it is third grade and you don't focus on them really for the testing because they don't count. And I feel like a lot of them get left behind but it was it's definitely something I've never had to deal with and it's it's difficult.

[00:17:31]

Moderator: Anyone have different or same?

[00:17:32]

Catherine: I had a slightly different experience when I got my placement for C [REDACTED], I like knew it was in [REDACTED] So, I just I don't know why I automatically assume that it wasn't Title I. And then did a little bit more research about it because I remember you said you liked it and then I was like oh it's a green school. Like they had all these like I guess they've been like recognized for their efforts for like saving energy and like they're a cycling program and like I saw pictures of the school. So, at first, I was like oh it's not Title I and then I saw the school improvement plan and I was like oh it is.

[00:18:07]

Catherine: So, I guess I kind of like took me out of the box and made me realize I was like assuming a lot of things at first because I in my mind I already had like expectations of what it might be like or like how you know teachers might be or how administration might be. And then like being in the school now for like you know weeks at a time I'm like realizing that like I expected all these things and some of my expectations were right but not necessarily because it's a Title I school. It's just like a lot of things

[00:18:40]

Moderator: Jaime, anything?

[00:18:41]

Jaime: I actually have a similar experience to you. I had I've had it on two different occasions students asked me and one of the only other white teachers were sisters and then trying to explain that to them and be like we're not sisters just because we are white, like, Are you guys brothers because you're both black like and they don't get that. So that was really weird for me. Something that was strange for me that I found out before I went in, I kind of just googled and looked for the school hours. My teacher hadn't responded to my emails, so I was like I need to find out what time I'm going to be there. So, I looked it up and I found out that my school is an extra hours school, which seems like you know all know what that is. I had no idea what that

was. And I was like this must mean that they are like a disaster like this is going to be bad. So, and I did like a drive by of the school beforehand (inaudible).

[00:19:29]

Jaime: I'm really bad with direction, so I was like I'm going to go and see if I can find it. And the area is like for me like a little sketchy and like I'm a little bit nervous to be there just kind of like at stoplights like seeing the things that are happening on the streets and like certain things like look like sketchy behavior and like I don't love being like a young white female by myself in the area. So that was a little nerve wracking for me at the beginning, but I definitely feel a lot safer inside the school than I thought I would.

[00:19:59]

Moderator: And did you find out what it meant to be extra hour?

[00:20:03]

Jaime: Yeah, so I found out that it's because of their low-test scores of previous years that they have an extra plan at the school, so we have an extra hour of reading instruction every day. I don't necessarily agree with how they use it but that's what it's for.

[00:20:16]

Moderator: And Anna what were your perceptions of C [REDACTED]?

[00:20:22]

Anna: I didn't ever expect C [REDACTED] to be a Title I because also the year before they were supposed to be an A school. There was like one thing it was like attendance that kept them from being in A school and I was like How can this school that's doing so well? And they just got rebuilt like JOHNS like when I first showed up like I thought this school was gonna be your average school. So, it's a little different. But I mean there's not that many issues and like the ethnicities and stuff are kind of even there's a lot of Hispanic but there's no like I don't feel like I'm a minority there. It's all kind of equal and I think it's also because they are a bilingual school. So those students are separated from like I only have one ESOL student out of my thirty-three students that we have. So, my experiences are a little different than what they're experiencing ((inaudible)) differences are. We're here to talk about that.

[00:21:22]

Moderator: So, thinking back I know we're going have to go back a few semesters to when you were doing service learning and I think you mentioned service learning in your introductions. Just tell me a little bit about those service learning experiences. And do you remember any of them being in Title I? If so what were those experiences like. And I see Christine nodding yes.

[00:21:40]

Catherine: The first school that I did service learning at was L [REDACTED] Elementary which is off of (location mentioned). And I was in a third-grade classroom and this was after my

experience with working with like individual kids with the reading coach so I was in like a third grade math classroom. And I felt like the expectations there were very different than the school I'm at now which is also Title I. At [REDACTED] they have an EBD unit which is emotional behavioral

[00:22:18]

Moderator: Disturbance

[00:22:19]

Catherine: Disturbance yes. So, I'm not entirely sure what all of that means but I know that there are resources and staff for students with those needs and I feel like I felt kind of afraid at first just as I would hear the whisperings of like oh you have an EBD kid in your class and like it just felt kind of negative. And that classroom specifically like my first day volunteering there, there was a student who I believe he had ADHD and he was on the spectrum. I didn't know beforehand, and I felt like the teacher expectation might have played into that. But there was like an incident where he was kind of like shutting down and he was like upset and like started throwing chairs like in the middle of the lesson and that was like really kind of shocking to me is like the first time being in like a whole classroom and like not knowing what to do and so me and the teacher kind of talked about it afterwards. And I felt like he kind of had like a negative perception of just like oh like this happens because I'm at this type of school rather than seeing it as like this is an individual with certain needs. It's not like because of this school or because of ((inaudible))

[00:23:44]

Abby: I did, I think it was junior achievement at D [REDACTED]. And I'm at Ch [REDACTED] so they're not that far apart. I think it's like the next street over two streets over and it's just crazy to see the difference in the students. Like at Ch [REDACTED] they have a whole team for behavior problems and they have all the kids listed out. I mean there's so many behavior problems, but they focus on the ones that are the worst. And there's a list of like 30 kids between all the grades. I never saw them at D [REDACTED]. I mean I was in, I heard things that were sad, but I never saw any major behavior issues and it just goes to show that two Title I schools within a mile of each other you know just so kids are so different the way they treat the kids is so different and just the way that they support them is different.

[00:24:33]

Moderator: Any other service learning, even if you're service learning wasn't in title I.

[00:24:37]

JOHN: I did some service learning at S [REDACTED] Elementary which I don't know if it is title I, I think it is. Yeah and it's predominantly Hispanic school. But like she said it I mean it was a completely different feel a different atmosphere than where I'm at now. And it's interesting because two of the teachers from S [REDACTED] are at I [REDACTED] now where I'm at. So, it was actually kind of refreshing for me to see teachers that I had worked with previously like.

[00:25:12]

Moderator: I think the principal came from S [REDACTED] too.

[00:25:13]

JOHN: Yeah [REDACTED] came from S [REDACTED] and that was it. Mrs. [REDACTED] and Mrs. [REDACTED] they teach second and third grade. So, it was. And it's interesting to see to hear their perspective on how it was teaching at that school previously to how it is now because like that one they were Title I but like they, there was no behavior issues. You know it was more just like the issues they dealt with are are they going to show up for school today like that was the major thing but right now where I'm at an Ivy Lane it's Okay, so we have a lot of lot of disciplinary problems probably even more so than a school that has two or three times as many students. It's just very compact. I guess you could say

[00:26:02]

Abby: A lot of emotions.

[00:26:04]

JOHN: Yeah. And it's you know it's just it's one of those things is the teacher you have to you know, talking to my teacher you have to make a choice on whether or not you're going to go after disciplining one student and taking time out of your day for that or focusing on every other student in the class. So, it's just it's it's just been interesting to get like those perspectives from the teachers

[00:26:35]

Moderator: Do you want to add anything?

[00:26:37]

Jaime: I was at T [REDACTED] elementary which I'm pretty sure is Title I for my service learning for two semesters. The teachers there like I think there's a very big difference between how they treat the kids at that school and how they treat the kids at the school I'm currently at. At that school, I didn't really know they were Title I. My teacher told me one day because there was something going on but she just it came out. But the kids there were treated like they were smart like they were good kids and they're ready to learn all the time. And there was so much learning happening. And I was in a second-grade classroom. And now I'm in a second-grade classroom and barely any learning happens because it's all screaming at them for whatever bad behavior they're having. They're treated like they're criminals half the time. I mean the teachers talk badly about the students in front of them. They know that they're not respected by the teachers at the school. So, they act like it. So, I think there's a very big difference between like you can really tell there that those kids have issues at home instead of the teachers kind of like not ignoring them but allowing them to deal with them and then also learn but it's just really all about their problems outside of school.

[00:27:44]

Moderator: And then kind of thinking back into the past what experiences with CARE content, so that culturally academically racially economically, do you remember? Or did teachers talk about in your undergraduate coursework here? Did any teachers talk about Title I? Were there any experiences within the courses? I see Anna nodding her head no.

[00:28:04]

Anna: I mean like we had to always add accommodation for ESOL students but we never actually like got experience with those kind of CARE students. So, it was like you were given like the chance to make an accommodation but actually doing it was like just not in the picture

[00:28:24]

Abby: If I didn't say I had experience I feel like you would kill me because I had your class and you let us go on Title I tours. And I think I [REDACTED] was one of I remember. So that's why I knew about the whole (inaudible) brand new school because it was right before they built that new school is when I went. And it was something I had never seen before ever before I went on that tour because I saw the principal had like her desk in the middle of the hallway and I was like This is so odd. It was scary. And then you know they were saying that they were in the middle of a ghetto and I was like Oh my goodness. But I feel like I had never had that experience in that class I feel like I wouldn't have been as prepared for the potential of being placed in a Title I school like some of my other friends when they found out they got placed in a Title I they were like oh no this is awful, I'm like it's not awful they need you. But it's because I got to see that

[00:29:22]

Catherine: In coursework I know I had you for classroom management, so I remember you and other professors that have been there which is during like introductions or something explain like where you've been teaching. So, I always knew like what Title I schools were just because I'm from here and like I've heard of it just being in education and stuff. And I know we always had the opportunity to do service learning in Title I schools whenever the recommendations were made for where you go and everything like that. But I felt like one of my professors for one of the reading courses would always just talk about like the stereotypes for Title I schools and how building relationships is always like the most important thing. Kind of like breaking down those barriers. So not so much, like are there like assignments or anything like relating to Title I but just talking about it in the class is always important in coursework.

[00:30:20]

Moderator: Did anyone else have professors that wasn't an assignment, but it was something that was discussed in the class? Jaime nodding yes.

[00:30:28]

Jaime: Yes. I mean I can't think of like a specific example but yes.

[00:30:32]

JOHN: I was in all the same classes as Anna. I mean I think every single class we took we were in the same class, so I can't I can't think of any instance where like I mean it maybe got brought up maybe every once in a while but it wasn't elaborated on. And I mean like as far as like you know we didn't have to make accommodations for ESOL students. But there's also the it goes further than that with Title I like how do you accommodate for a student that refuses to do any work. Or that's you know like two grade levels behind, but they make them be in this class. You know there's a lot of other circumstances that come into play in Title I that I don't think that we were ever exposed to in the classroom beforehand. So I mean for me like it's it's it's been challenging to get through to some of the students because like they just flat out refused to do anything you know and that was never something that I would expect to come across like you know because in every other service learning situation that I've been in it's pretty much the students more or less go along with the flow of the classroom and they do what they're expected to do. So, it was just kind of surreal initially to like come in and be like Wow these kids some of them just flat out don't listen and don't do anything that is expected of them. And think that they can run the place. And then on top of that there is like for those kids I feel like if the school we're at I feel like they just cut them a lot of slack because of the stuff that's going on that's outside of school. So, like when they're in school like instead of being disciplined appropriately they just cut them slack and send them to a classroom where they can play games and kind of.

[00:32:33]

Claire: There's basketball.

[00:32:33]

JOHN: Yeah. they're just they're just caving to them and giving them what they want so that they'll cooperate as opposed to just doing like what is expected of them because it does because you can't for some of the kids they just feel like some of the teachers just expect them to not do what they're supposed to.

[00:32:56]

Claire: I'm going to be honest. One of my fifth-grade girls called 9 1 1 and say there was a fire and she was in our room all day and that should have been an automatic suspension. They just said well we're not going to do the paperwork. And she sat there all day. But in fifth grade you know not to call 911. And it was because she didn't get invited to be a part of literacy night.

[00:33:28]

JOHN: Well there's a reason why she didn't like

[00:33:32]

Claire: It was because of her behavior. But guess I think differently than a lot of my students think. So, for me this whole semester and last semester I've been thinking ok well, they didn't eat last night they went to bed at 2:00 a.m. They don't have the same mental thought that I do I had a different experience growing up. Calling 911 is maybe OK in their house. They are just things you hear and you're like wow the first time, but they keep hearing things like OK we're just

going to have to work with them on their level even if their mental emotional capacity is very very low. They don't they don't think like adult when they think.

[00:34:25]

JOHN: They don't rationalize it the same way that you do.

[00:34:29]

Jaime: I've had a similar experience that a lot of the things that happen in my classroom my jaw drops and I'm like How is this happening right now. I have one student who has a back story that has reasons to be aggressive, but it's completely allowed that he's aggressive. He punches other kids kicks other kids through throws things and we just get him to calm down and then we go back to our day. And where I grew up, I mean I went to a private school complete opposite of this, so that like the second you lay a hand on another kid like you are out. And in this room, it's like OK like I pick them up from PE every day they're hitting each other, throwing things, screaming each other. We walk them back in and start science like it's normal.

[00:35:10]

JOHN: Yes.

[00:35:10]

Jaime: And like the way that she deals with certain things. It's a way that I would never even conceptualize. For example, we had a kid who was poking another kid with a pushpin. She likes to poke people this is like her thing. She always finds something to poke with. So, I came at it, I thought first, and I came at it as you can't poke her you can't hurt other students. That's not allowed. Can I have the pushpin please? That was my discipline strategy. My teacher came at it as. You can't poke her because you don't know what kind of disease you could get from her blood. And this is to 7-year olds. This is the conversation she's having and it's like baffling to me. I don't even know how to respond I just kind of sit there

[00:35:53]

Jaime: And that's every day. Every day there's something. We talked about stealing from the student handbook and they're talking about like don't take a teacher a teacher's pencil don't take this from a teacher and she showed them videos of like people robbing banks because that's the kind of things they see in their lives and like that's what they know. They know like oh my dad's in jail because he did that. So, it's very crazy.

[00:36:16]

Abby: Yeah, I think they take their circumstances into account and almost baby them with that. Like I have one student he lost his marbles this week, but like, His dad is in prison and his mom doesn't care and he keeps saying how mom beats him and they're like oh well you know there's no mark so it's ok it's just probably because his dad is in jail and he likes attention and this and that and then like this week he actually lost day and tried to hurt somebody and they just they

brush it off and they gave him the one day suspension. They're like that's all we can do. I guess we'll call DCF but like this isn't the first time he's done this. This is the first time he's claimed it but because he's known as one of those 30 kids on that list at my school they're like Oh it's him. You know it's what he does.

[00:36:58]

JOHN: It's kind of like they get labeled and then they just accept their behavior

[00:37:02]

Abby: And then they feel bad about it and then they know that they have to live up to the expectation that they're just a terrible kid and then they hear it at home and then they hear it at school.

[00:37:12]

Moderator: So, kind of just to go back, it sounds like some of you did have experiences in coursework as far as either of those discussions or something like the actual tours, but some of you other than ESOL being introduced and accommodations being talked about, those discussions weren't there which is good to know. And I have more questions, but I have to save those for the next two, so I can't get too deep here. And then it sounds like most of you with service learning did end up around Title I or working in a Title I school and then you're some of you your first internships. Was your first internship one in Title I?

[00:37:48]

Catherine: Yes

[00:37:49]

Moderator: Is it the same school or different?

[00:37:50]

Catherine: No, I was at D [REDACTED] Elementary.

[00:37:53]

Moderator: At D [REDACTED]. Yours was not?

[00:37:53]

Abby: No

[00:37:55]

Moderator: You both were at I [REDACTED].

[00:37:56]

Moderator: Where was your first?

[00:37:57]

Jaime: B [REDACTED] in Winter Park.

[00:37:58]

Moderator: Not Title I.

[00:37:58]

Anna: (inaudible) C [REDACTED]

[00:38:04]

Moderator: C [REDACTED]. And so, when you transitioned it was still Title I, but their new year when you went in. Good to know.

[00:38:11]

Moderator: So yeah so some of you have had that service learning experience through that. And then we talk about you know just the stereotypes you've heard of Title I. and from what I heard and seen it's pretty much what you guys stated as far as you know the behavior problems are there. They're unsafe, the students you know don't care, or lack of materials, or resources and you know lots more paperwork for teachers. And then it looks like some of you didn't really share some of those perceptions as you went in, but you were still hesitant as far as like OK where am I headed in right now. Do I need to reframe my thinking as I enter the school? Does anyone have anything else they want to add to the discussion for today?

[00:38:55]

Moderator: There is other stuff I want to get into what's more so middle of internship and end of internship stuff, so I don't want to push too much as far as that goes. But again, I just want to thank you for that. I do like thank you for your honesty. We're talking about you know maybe how your own race affects you know how the students treat you or how you enter the classroom because that can play a role in some classrooms and even know your own thoughts as you went into the school kind of looking them up online first the like oh it's going to be interesting and then kind of how your view even has changed arriving at the school I'm not even going in yet. So thank you again for you know the honesty and sharing in your discussion and I get transcribe all of this later on then we'll meet again like I said March 9. Same deal. Just head on over when you can, and I'll have lunch here and ready to go. And then that'll be our second discussion we can share more about what's happening in internship. Any questions for me?

Focus Group 2 - Group B (3.9.18).mp3

[00:00:00]

Moderator: Kind of round robin it for the first one. And then whenever We get to the second part of the questions we'll just whoever wants to talk and the we'll bounce around to go back and forth. Some of the questions may be repetitive your back you asked this as last time. But now that we're in the middle of internship kind of, actually a little past all your mid work stuff was due last week. So, it will be some of the same stuff. But since you've now been in internship a little longer there's probably more experiences and more things to share and talk about. And then just remember whatever happens in focus group stays in focus group. When I do write up and analyze the data for dissertation there's no names used or anything it's just you know a student said this or student A said the. Or a collective theme that occurred was statements that said this. So it's not like Catherine said that this is where her schools like so all that is just confidential. Whenever I go through and I do all the transcription so no one else is listening to or hearing what you are saying.

[00:01:03]

Moderator: So, we do have two new members today. Tracy was sick last time and Amber unfortunately her coordinator told her kind of last minute I have to meet with you during lunch. So just real quick and then we'll come back around. Just say what school you are at and what grade you are doing your internship one in

[00:01:25]

Tracy: I am S [REDACTED] and I am in first grade.

[00:01:28]

Amber: I'm at P [REDACTED] and I am in fifth.

[00:01:31]

Moderator: All right. So, the first question I kind of I just want to go around for this one, sorry JOHN I saw you just get your pizza, so now that we're in the middle of our internship just kind of give me an overview. How are things going?

[00:01:46]

JOHN: Well I mean this last week was challenging for us. We've had a lot more disciplinary issues which seemed to overshadow like what's going on in the classroom. I guess my teacher been pulled out of a classroom I want to deal with like meetings and things like that. So that's just something that we're dealing with on our end. But like I mean the kids are OK still but there are challenging ones

[00:02:16]

Moderator: Claire

[00:02:21]

Caitlin: It's FSA time. Teach for the test teach the test. There is no room to make adjustments. I'm not allowed to teach whole group per the principal because its testing time and the teacher has to teach it. So that's frustrating.

[00:02:40]

Moderator: Claire is in a unique situation. If you weren't here last time. Can you explain a little more what happened in your placement?

[00:02:47]

Claire: I am a tutor. I meet with another tutor who's being paid from Kelly Services and she takes my lesson plans and does her things with the other fifth grade classroom I'm in my own room. We basically do small group for all subjects all day. So, I do reteach. I'm actually teaching third and fourth grade standards and then my teacher does current fifth grade standards. So, I don't know what it's like to teach fifth when. So, when my coordinator does her observation she always sees me with 6-8 kids at a time.

[00:03:26]

Moderator: Catherine

[00:03:28]

Catherine: Mine is going really well. I transitioned to teaching for the entire day and my teacher is really good feedback and kinda just sitting back and letting me just like teach in the moment and handle anything that pops up as far as like maybe like certain behaviors I've been like transitioning to just being there full time. And we like explicitly told the kids like this is what's happening. So, it's not like confusing to them because in the beginning it was a little rough but now that we've kind of like talked to the kids and like established that relationship I feel like it's been a lot smoother.

[00:04:10]

Moderator: Abby.

[00:04:10]

Abby: Mine's been up and down. So, I've been teaching pretty much the whole day since week one. She just kinda threw me into it and I've had to figure it out. The past week has been rough because it's getting closer to FSA lot of my kids have anxiety or any (inaudible) their acting out, their fighting they're just... and there's not enough time in the day to get them like extra recess or take them out for a run. But my teacher encourages doing that. But then that sets us back on morning time so it's it's been difficult trying to figure out how to get them prepared for FSA but also deal with the behaviors that are coming from that stress.

[00:04:52]

Tracy: Mine has been pretty difficult so far because my supervising teacher I'm her first intern ever. So, she didn't know what she needs to do to help me. And I don't know what to tell her to do to help me because it's my internship and I've never really been in a classroom besides the first internship. So, her attitude has been like sink or swim kind of mentality and it's really stressful. It's starting to get better. It's been pretty rough. I don't have full control over the classroom yet, I'm supposed to pick up the very last subject which is writing to me after spring break and then I will have full control.

[00:05:32]

Moderator: Where was your intern one placement?

[00:05:33]

Tracy: T [REDACTED]

[00:05:33]

Moderator: Amber how is, up to this, point how has internship two been going?

[00:05:42]

Amber: It's been a little difficult because these kids like aside from just teaching the content, it's like we have to worry about behavior management like it's we deal with behavior management more than the actual content. And it's like it's I think it's mainly the area that it's in because they're like we teach them you know not to fight, and you know to be nice to each other. But then they'll go home their parents tell them like if someone messes with you, you do what you gotta do and all these things and it's just like very conflicting. There's. I'm in fifth grade. So, there's a lot of drama. There's a lot of fighting like physically threatening and it's like how on earth are we supposed to stay on You know our time blocks for each subject when every two seconds someone's like threatening to stab another student. It's just it's a little difficult. But there are good days.

[00:06:47]

Moderator: Jaime.

[00:06:47]

Jaime: So, since we were here last time I got four new students all from different classes because they were disruptive in those classes with behavior issues. So that was three and a half weeks ago. Two weeks ago, my teacher walked in one morning and said OK starting today you're teaching full time. I had taught four lessons before that. My class is a bit of a disaster with behavior, so it's really rough because it was literally 10 minutes before the kids walked in she was like oh well starting today you're just going to teach all the time she sits in the back of the room on her phone all day long and only steps in if I've been yelling at them for too long and she decides that it's time for her to scream. And then she pretty much tries to scare them with the grace of God. There's a lot of religion in my classroom. It's very uncomfortable. I don't share the religion with my classroom which is even more uncomfortable. So yeah, it's been really rough.

She definitely takes over a lot of the disciplinary things which make the kids think that I have no credibility when it comes to discipline. So, when she left me in the classroom for 15 minutes by myself yesterday I was very scared.

[00:08:04]

Moderator: What grade are you?

[00:08:04]

Jesica: Second.

[00:08:09]

Anna: Mine's been going pretty well. I'm actually about to start venturing out of my classroom because my principal wants me to get more experience in other classes. So, I'm going to go to like the math side, and go to K, 1, and 2. But like the last couple of weeks have been awful. The kids don't really act out towards me but to the other teacher they feel like she got spit on by one of the kids last week and the other ones we literally had to physically pull the chair out of underneath of him to remove him from the classroom. It's been one heck of a week that's for sure

[00:08:41]

Moderator: So, good stories. I promise at the end of this I'm going to make you all share a positive, so we can leave on a good note. So, our first focus group for those that were here, we kind of talked about stereotypes we heard, we heard about Title I schools. Some of those were you know that there are behavior problems, they're unsafe, lack of support, lots of paperwork, and the students don't care. And then I kind of had you share your perceptions of once you found out which school you were going and when you got there what that was like. So, kind of thinking back to the beginning, have those perceptions that you had changed? Do you think your experience is solidifying that perception you had going in? And if you kind of want to refresh even like this is what I thought going in and this is what I think now. Tracy

[00:09:35]

Tracy: I know for my school the kids definitely care. Like all of my students care about doing the work and getting good grades and I don't have any behavior problems in my classroom. I know there are behavioral problems in other classrooms but from what I hear those behavior problems are caused by like home problems. So, it's not like them just acting out to act out. As for the dangerous area I've heard a lot of nasty stories and we've actually had someone come in, it's not handled well at my school, we've actually had someone come and tell the nurse that you needed a doctor. The nurse is just like a son of one of the teachers. So, they had the school down on lockdown and the only way they told the teachers at the school was down on lockdown was an e-mail saying don't send students anywhere. And that was it. So, it's definitely a dangerous area where I'm at right now.

[00:10:35]

Moderator: Amber.

[00:10:35]

Amber: When I first found out that I was going to be at P [REDACTED] I was terrified, I'll be honest, because it's in a, like according to the sheriff's office in [REDACTED], it's the highest in terms of criminal activity. Very often if there's like a helicopter flying over the school they put this on lockdown because that means that there is like a criminal like on the loose or something. So that happens often I've heard from teachers and when I found out I was there I was scared. I was really scared. But then I was going through it, because I was the police there for my first internship and I fell in love. I fell in love with it because I fell in love with the kids. They have such a need for love and attention and that's like they will attach themselves to you because you give them that love and attention that some of them don't receive. And I actually requested to stay there for my second internship and now I'm going to be teaching third grade there next year. So yeah that's pretty exciting I just found out like last week.

[00:11:46]

Amber: But yeah definitely perception changed so much because again I was so scared, and I was like why would they place me here. You know like you know I was scared just cause it's a dangerous area or whatever. It's really not as bad as I thought it was like it was I fell in love. I love these kids and I'm excited to work there.

[00:12:10]

Jaime: I want to touch on the perception of the paperwork. So, my teacher has showed me a lot of the paperwork that we are supposed to do. I think there is a lack of credibility with that. She showed me the free and reduced lunch paperwork like a month ago maybe. And she kind of was like throwing it out at the table that I sit at my table and she left it there and it's still there. She doesn't take attendance, she doesn't do any of that stuff and she likes to do these little teachable moments with me that she like stops the class and is like Ms [REDACTED] this is what you should know about being a teacher. And she one day stopped the whole class to tell me that it should not be the teacher's responsibility to take attendance because why should we waste our time with that. This was two days before the Stoneman Douglas shooting and I was like This is why do you need to know where the kids are. So that kind of thing and then I'm on like phone duty so every day when the attendance clerk calls I'm the one who has to answer and be like oh like nobody's absent, sorry we didn't have to we didn't do attendance today. So, stuff like that I think that there is a lot of paperwork that's required. But at least like this administration doesn't have any credibility with the teachers to say like you're responsible for this. It has to be turned in because it's not turned.

[00:13:26]

Catherine: I'm having a similar experience. I've heard that there's a lot of paperwork Title I schools, but I've never actually been there long enough to see the paperwork. So, we have a couple, we a lot of EL students and students with accommodations or like IEPs, so I was like looking forward to see like what do I need to do like how should I prepare for this. And so, what I've seen so far is like before we can give a student an IEP you have to document every kind of

like accommodation you're giving them, I think. Kind of with the credibility thing like what you've been saying. It's kind of been like my responsibility to track. They give us like a little sheet with like boxes that show each accommodation that they're getting. And it's kind of been like my responsibility to check whenever like they're using their accommodations. But there have been a couple of days where like I just forgot to do it honestly. Or like we just haven't been like on top of it and then it's like oh wait this is due today like to get to the office for the student they can so they can get their IEP like we know in our heads they've been using them, and we haven't been accurately tracking them. So, let's just fill out the thing and I don't know how I feel, but I feel like there maybe there is a lot of paperwork and I'm just like missing now because it's not like you're not held accountable for it or maybe there's just shortcuts that are being taken. But like I feel like I'm kind of being like I'm going to be unprepared if I am in that situation because I just don't know like the steps on how to properly do it.

[00:14:58]

Moderator: Anyone else have like perceptions going in that either have changed since you entered or kind of solidified what you thought?

[00:15:06]

Abby: So, at first, I had heard about the behavior aspect of it and then the first couple weeks were great. Like I didn't really see that many deeper problems. But as my internship was going on the teachers nonstop complain about the behavior issues with the kids and then like they gossip about it and its to the point where it's so commonplace now with all the behavior issues that there are kids that threaten to stab other kids multiple times and have crisis intervention plans and nothing gets done. They don't get suspended because you can suspend for a certain amount of days. You can't expel them because then it makes the school look bad. From what I've been told which I think is not great because especially with everything that's gone on, a lot of the kids do not feel safe around other students. And I just... that part as kind of been it's sad because I do care about the kids and I love them, but I also know that there were not these behavior issues now that are. So now I'm kind of conflicted on if it's true or not with Title I schools. Because the area that I'm in, like the neighborhood itself, I actually have one of the moms of the student fourth grade she's in my capstone class and her son goes to my school and she was telling me, she's like all the behavior has come from the neighborhood that's directly surrounding the school. But then if you go across the street because she's friends with a lot of the parents, she's like I know that the kids act that way. So, I don't know what the difference is just being across the street. I don't know. I mean the homes aren't drastically different, so I guess it's just maybe those kids have more time to do whatever they want after school, they don't have the support. I don't know.

[00:16:44]

Moderator: Claire you had your hand up.

[00:16:47]

Claire: And this has happened for the last couple of weeks. They take care of me. So, we have a lot of physical fights. There's been a lot of bloody faces. And like I'll have all my students in front of me like you're too close to Ms [REDACTED] you're too close. And they like greet me at my car in the morning and they come in my room. They're like remember Ms. [REDACTED] doesn't like it when it's loud and these are fifth graders. So, I feel like you give them love they'll give you so much more love that I didn't think was possible. So that's been awesome to see. Like it's like they're taking care of each other.

[00:17:26]

Moderator: So, you went "mm hmm" when she talking about behavior.

[00:17:29]

JOHN: Well I don't know if there's something in the air or the water or what's going on, but like this last week like my class just has let loose and I mean it's I, I had a sub for two days and I've had to write at least eight referrals. Well she, she, she told me if they if they act inappropriately and I mean this is fist fighting in the classroom. And I have to physically break them up and then you know call the office to come get them and they send them back to the classroom 30 minutes later. So yes. Yes. With rewards for calming down I guess. But I mean I feel like it at any other school, what some of these students do would be completely unacceptable, inappropriate, and there would be reprimand for it.

[00:18:31]

JOHN: But I feel like they cater a lot to these students just to get them to calm down and do like just to get through the day basically. Because like we have one student like my teachers at the point she's at her breaking point, she's like I can't teach class with this student in there. Because he will talk over her all the time no matter what the situation is like he just has to talk talk talk talk and then if he's not getting attention because you're not listening to him when he talks then he's just going to run around the room to get your attention that way. So, and he's also just like he's a loose cannon you know and he's not the only one. There's multiple students within the class so like I said before I feel like so much of the day is overshadowed by trying to get them to conform to what we want them to do. And it's not like we're really putting a lot on them like we're just like can you please just you know not hit people and not threaten people. And then on top of that it's just continuous chatter from the other students you know everybody's going to put in their two cents and it's just like once once everything has started going, It's so hard to bring it back down. You know.

[00:19:54]

Abby: I agree with that because in my school we have behavior plans for students who can't keep their hands to themselves which is like all the students in 4th and 5th grade essentially. And if they make their goal, if they I think one of them was they have to keep their hands to themselves 70 percent of the time which is to me is just ridiculous that that's even documented on paper, they get a reward and they get like extra time outside with a friend. But shouldn't you keep your hands to yourself 100 percent of the time? I don't.

[00:20:23]

JOHN: Well yeah, and then the ones they get rewarded for they have bad behavior and then they get rewarded for correcting their behavior. What about every other kid in the classroom that was doing exactly what they were supposed to do? So, like those kids see that like well they acted out and then they straightened up. So, then they got rewarded. So why wouldn't I do that same thing?

[00:20:42]

Moderator: So it sounds like some of those percep... in some of our schools those perceptions of behavior are kind of true. With kids acting out in classrooms and some administrators maybe not handling it is that they should.

[00:20:57]

JOHN: Yeah like I like honestly thought because when talking my teacher when I first went in because we were there for the first placement and maybe it was because it was a smaller sample size. We were only there two days a week. So, it was like for those two days I felt like they were always really excited to see me. And you know like those two days were great. And you know she told me the rest of the week was kind of you know iffy but then like now that I'm here the whole time it feels much different than that.

[00:21:24]

Moderator: So now you brought up internship one and this is a question I asked last time. But again, some of our questions are going to be the same just because that was beginning. Now we're in the middle. So, think back. I had asked you know have any of your previous field experiences or internship one impacted how your internship 2 is going? So now that we're in the middle are you thinking back to any of those experiences and comparing? Is anything that and in those experiences maybe now helping you? Are things that you're reflecting back on? Abby

[00:21:55]

Abby: I definitely think that internship one was more of like I was their friend. And that's why they they all like like you. Like oh it's this great person that comes Monday and Tuesday. And I still feel like I have love with the students and they love me back and it's like a whole community thing but it's definitely different I feel more of like an authoritative figure, so they sometimes aren't as happy with me. And it's definitely a change from going from internship one where your friends to well, okay, this is my teacher but it's not my teacher but is my teacher and they don't really know what to think half the time and I feel like with the teacher that never really left you alone. I feel like that's kind of I think all those she threw me in, she didn't really, she would step in to do the behavior part of it. So, the kids still thought they could walk all over me like the first couple weeks cause they were like oh you just teach you don't really reprimand us.

[00:22:52]

Anna: I feel like things are getting more comfortable with me being there. So, we, like the two kids that are kind of behavior issues in our class now are like acting out to where the other day

all the kids in the class basically had a mental breakdown because of the way that kid was acting. He was shoving desks into students, grabbing their necks and digging his nails into their necks. And it was, they sent him down to the office and he came right back up. Absolutely nothing done about it whatsoever and that I never saw any of that in the beginning. He was always there but he literally is not allowed around any students, but they have to have him in the classroom. And it's just sad like the other day he dressed up he wore pants and a shirt and a tie because he wanted to have fun just one of the girls in the class. They literally had to tell him her mother in public "She is not allowed to be around you." And I feel so bad but it's like it's his behavior and the fact that he can't keep his hands off of other students and teachers. He's the one who spit on the teacher. It's just... We know what he's capable of doing that he can be that way and he can he can be like a good student. But he's choosing just not to be because nothing ever gets done about the things that he does.

[00:24:08] So I'm going to jump ahead and go back to the coursework here at [REDACTED] and at the first focus group I mentioned I also talk about Title I and then CARE students, C-A-R-E, the culturally academically racially and economically diverse student population. So, thinking back to courses at [REDACTED], have any of them helped you? Or are you kind of now that your full time and you were doing things have you thought back to anything and been like "oh that's what the teacher was talking about" or "oh let me try and implement this into the classroom that I'm in"?

[00:24:40]

Jaime: Something I've noticed a lot. My school is pretty much all done by the district. The teachers don't have a lot of freedom about what they do in the classroom because...

[00:24:49]

Moderator: Is it STO?

[00:24:51]

Jaime: I don't think it's currently as it's an extra hour school. I don't think it's currently STO, but we have people from the district there every single day in and out of the classrooms, in all our meetings. But we have like a very boring PowerPoint slides like black and white. All we do all day long and the materials don't go with like we don't have the correct materials to teach what we're teaching. So, I've definitely noticed which we talked about a lot in our classes like what an effective teacher is and what an ineffective teachers. I think the way that the district is forcing us to teach is forcing us to be ineffective teachers. I just noticed with my kids at my school it's expected that every classroom on the grade is on literally the same PowerPoint slide at all times. And it's on Google Drive so they can check, like they can literally see what PPT slide you're on. And our classes are just so diverse like just across the grade and I've seen that because we've gotten kids from every other class now that just like come in and they're there for the day or like now there our students and it's really just like impossible to because like you can kind of change a little bit like as long as you don't change the actual PowerPoint slide of you to say something different than that's on the slide. But the way that they have it focused in there, like it isn't even

really possible to teach lessons that are effective and that engage the students because all it wants them doing is sitting reading they read the same story every single day for a week.

[00:26:13]

Jaime: They're so bored that by the end of the week I'm bored of it like I'm reading out loud to them and I'm like "Are you kidding me?" Like I could I could read it without a book right now. And so, they're very bored. So, I don't think that it's effective at all. They're not they're not growing from what they're doing because they're so bored with the lesson.

[00:26:29]

Moderator: Abby.

[00:26:29]

Abby: I agree with that. My teacher is part of a district PLC. And she focuses on close reading and they take one article and each day we break it down until like Friday. It's the same thing and the kids are bored, and it doesn't really help them because when it comes to FSA the kids don't have time to do that and they even said because they do close reading with math too. The kids don't have time to sit there and close read a math problem and circle the vocabulary they don't now. It really is making us ineffective and these kids are struggling because they can't get what they need to do because the district is like "you have to do this."

[00:27:02]

Moderator: Catherine I see your hand up.

[00:27:04]

Catherine: (inaudible) my school too, something that I tried to talk about with my teacher is like tell her things that I've been learning at school and like "would this be OK for me to use so we have like a lot of diverse students?" So, our schools really big on close reading and they kind of give us the passages that we have to read. So, something I've been trying to do is like what can I use like children's literature like you can still connect that back to the standard. So, I've been trying kind of like her like I don't know like have some kind of leeway with that because I want to bring in like those things that I've learned from class but just depending on how administration is like if your school was like dropped a letter grade last year. All of these things are like not in your control kind of dictate what happens in your classroom. And I've never not been in a Title I school so I don't know if this is like something that's just here or if that affects schools that aren't Title I but I've been trying to like I feel like sometimes she says it's because it's Title I. I wouldn't know the difference, but I feel like because it's so structured the way that it is I have to kind of like sneak around to do things that I know are effective. Which kind of sucks but we kind of talk about like well if the principal walks in we can switch back and do what they all want us to do on the days where we are feeling like sneaky we can do like the fun stuff.

[00:28:27]

Moderator: You giving me time or (inaudible) you are raising your hand. I didn't know if you were raising your hand or giving me the time

(Participants had to be back on time for a Google training test)

[00:28:33]

Moderator: So, it sounds like and please jump in and correct me if I'm wrong. So that I can get this when I'm transcribing. It sounds like most of you are in situations where you are kind of tied to what the district wants the classroom to do. I see lots of head nods. And as far as bringing in your own creativity and lesson edits do you feel it's something you are able to do?

[00:28:57]

Moderator: Amber

[00:28:59]

Amber: I was in first grade for one of my internship one placements and, sorry let me say this was I was in third grade first. And it's like they said, you know black and white, just worksheets for their reading lessons. They get like a text set and it's just on a worksheet. All black and white just very boring. Same with fifth grade. But then when I was in the first-grade class like I feel like with the younger ones they have more freedom to do like fun things like for centers she had them doing stamps to learn how to do letters and like stamping like coloring and doing all these you know it was so full color that room. Like I don't know if that makes sense. You know it was just that had they had more freedom to do different things for centers. Yes, they had to follow the same things for their like whole group lessons. But even with the whole group lessons they all sat on the carpet and like they did fun things to engage them. And it's like so different with third and up. It's because I was only going first like the primary for one placemen, but with third and up it's like all black and white worksheets, smart presentations and that's it.

[00:30:17]

Moderator: And then just because we have a few minutes and I know we kind of dumped a lot feel like I want you guys to leave here happy about what we talked about so just share like a positive that's come out of at least the first half of your internship. Any positive story? Did a child say something that really kind of stuck with you or did you have an experience that kind of really...?

[00:30:45]

JOHN: No, it's not a no no.

[00:30:47]

Claire: In third grade, his grade gets the worst rep of our entire school. It does get a pretty bad rap. And what I've seen he handles it very well.

[00:31:03]

Moderator: Anyone else have a positive? Abby

Abby: It's not like a huge positive but when I was starting to feel like the kids weren't liking me again when I was taking over. I left on Tuesday to proctor all day in an ESE room, so it took longer than obviously normal testing would take. And I came back, and the kids were like kind of battling... The kids were freaking out running out we should sit down you should because most of the time I was a good reminder that the kids don't care even after they feel like you feel like they're mad you.

[00:31:42]

Moderator: Catherine

[00:31:43]

Catherine: I feel like this internship like despite all the academic struggles that are happening has been like a really great example of like a teacher student relationship I feel like that's something I didn't really get to see and my first internship. I feel like my teacher has done a great job of creating like a classroom community and making me feel like a part of me too because I never felt that way in my first internship. And I feel like she's showing me and like explicitly teaching me like how to connect with students that maybe you don't have like the same experiences with or like how to talk to them or how to just like see them as a person. Because I know specifically we've gotten like a new student before I was there that that like a terrible reputation like nobody really want to really deal with him.

[00:32:27]

Catherine: But like coming in like I've seen how much he's like grown and I really think it's because of like the time she put into him and like just daily letting him know like how great he is how like like all the positive things like each person have. And I feel like that's why I feel like I don't deal as much with like behavior issues. Just because on the team like I've heard of a lot of stories and feel like sometimes I can't relate but I feel like that's a good thing. I feel like that's a really good thing.

[00:32:59]

Moderator: Claire

[00:33:01]

Caitlin: I don't know how my student and I got this conversation, but he said, "Ms. [REDACTED] You don't make no Benjamins here?" No, I don't make no Benjamin. Why. You need money and I think because I care about you guys. Like all other eye balls lit up they were like you make money but you're here helping us. And ever since then it's been like, they've just like taken me right in. So, I just I always remember that "Ms. [REDACTED] you don't Make no Benjamins"

[00:33:37]

Tracy: I have a student who has a terrible home life he has literally been sent on the wrong bus to a different school and there have been times where his bus will come back because no one's there to pick him up when he gets home. When I was first in the internship he would like any work, he did it right after he finish it he would just crumple it up and throw it away because that's what his mom does at home. And recently, Now that I'm thinking about it, He brings his stuff home he is Very excited to answer questions he's always like Ms. C. Ms. C. did you see what I did did I do it right and he's incredibly smart just give we hope.

[00:34:14]

Moderator: And I think that's a great spot to end on someone who I can respect and make sure you get back on time for your Google test. But I'll stop.

Focus Group 3 - Group B (4.20.18)_1.mp3

[00:00:01]

Moderator: So, let's go ahead and get started. So welcome to our last focus group. Again, you guys did awesome really quick work and effective discussion during the member checking activity and then I'll be using this within my dissertation and comparing it to what I came up with and actually it looks like you came up with almost the same exact categories I did which is awesome to see and compare that. I just have our focus group norms up just, so we know that are there and again whatever we talk about in here stays in here. Like I said I will use the data for my dissertation but then some of the stuff that has come up will also be really good for the future of placements. And hopefully internship experiences and classroom experiences at the university here. And really anywhere that serves the same population of students.

[00:00:51]

Moderator: So, I'm not going to ask just now how things are going. And so maybe we want to get to the end. We kind of have a talk session and kind of share experiences at the very end. But just to kind of don't jump right in. So, thinking back to the very beginning of internship one and we kind of have some of them on the table here. There were certain perceptions we had we talked about stereotypes of Title I schools and possibly working with CARE. Those culturally academically racially and economically diverse students. Some perceptions you had either changed or stayed the same. Has anything happened with those perceptions since our last meeting?

[00:01:32]

Moderator: Has anything else changed in your mind regarding Title I or CARE students or has anything just been solidified in your mind regarding those perceptions?

[00:01:42]

Abby: I think for me I think the second time we came into the focus group I had just come off a really rough week, so I think I was really negative because I was just learning about all my students you know behavior problems and what they were going through at home. But now I have a better understanding of who they are as small adults and just who they are as people. And I feel like once you get that kind of relationship with them the behavioral issues kind of go to the wayside because now I connected with them. My interning teacher and I have like worked to try to get that connection. And we see significant change in behavioral issues. We barely have any anymore in our classroom which is a huge difference because we had most of our kids on behavioral plans or tally charts and now none of them we use any of that for anymore.

[00:02:32]

Tracy: I know for me that um for the students' part of being in a Title I school it's completely changed from when I first went into the internship because I had all the same, Like pre-ideas that it was going to be awful these kids were just going to be little monsters and they're not they're actually wonderful kids. The community is still terrible though and that is still definitely a very strong image in my mind maybe as I do more Title I work I'll learn differently. But for now, I know that all the rumors about kids, false. They care. They want to be there. They enjoy being there. I've been told multiple times that I'm like their favorite teacher. So, I enjoy being there with them. But the community still really scares me.

[00:03:22]

Jamie: I think one of my preconceived notions about these schools was that they basically treated the kids like criminals and it was like just all discipline. What I realized is that my school I realized from experiencing it and also from talking to people at my school um my school is not, does not allow discipline at all. So, I have kids, Last week I had two kids carried out of my classroom by a police officer and back in my room after lunch and nothing happened. They went to the PASS room which is like the detention room, but they don't get in trouble. Sometimes the parents get called um most of the time they don't have they just come back. So, I think that a lot of the behavior that we see at my school is that the kids are almost getting rewarded. And I always thought that they treated the school like a jail. But it's kind of more of a free for all.

[00:04:13]

JOHN: To build off that I kind of see the same thing at our school. And that it's really for my class, We have overall a good class and many of the students are engaged. But there's you know there's one person two people that are the catalyst for all the negative behavior. And there's no reprimand for the things that they do in it. For one of them, he makes it virtually impossible to teach class. And my supervising teacher and I've exhausted every everything that we could do to try and figure out how to, while he's in there, operate and function as a normal classroom but it's like, like she said you know they get in trouble. We send them out of the room and then they're back in there by the end of the day. So, you just run into the same issues constantly and it's every day. Like they said the ones that get in the most trouble is always at school. They're never not there. So.

[00:05:21]

Claire: To build off JOHN one of the rooms that they would go to has a basketball net, they have computers. They sing songs in there. Another option for them for my fifth graders just to go help out when the kindergarten and to be like the teacher's assistant and then they come back with noble bucks or some sort of rewards. And they never go home or stay in PASS. Any work that we send out of the room doesn't ever come back.

[00:05:56]

Moderator: So would you say your specific school, Ivy Lane, is sort of perpetuating that behavior stereotype in the way they're handling behavior in the school

[00:06:06]

JOHN: Yes absolutely.

[00:06:08]

Moderator: Anyone else. I know Amber Catherine, Anna, did your perceptions, did they change with from beginning to now with any of those kind of stereotypes we talked about with communities, student behavior, paperwork?

[00:06:21]

Anna: Definitely with student behavior. We have a student who constantly just disrupts learning like he like nobody can listen, nobody can read. They all stood there and cover their ears because the kid is just slamming his desk on the thing and they always what they do and just like everybody else they take him out. They have a little chit chat and he comes right back. It finally escalated, and he shoved the teacher. And that is when they finally I guess gave him a suspension. So, he was out for a couple of days which was actually the day that they had FSA and it just kind of disappointing to me that that's the kind of like that they let them get to that level before they do anything about it. And so that it definitely solidified my whole perceptions of the behaviors, the things that they don't do about anything. So yeah.

[00:07:09]

Abby: I was going to say that happened at my school too, same kinda thing. But this week I was taken out of my class to proctor fifth grade. A group of ESE students including all the ones that have really bad behavioral issues that are in fifth grade. And I think a big part of it in Title I schools are the teachers are just so exhausted with all of the behavior issues that they don't give the care that these kids need because you eventually kind of give up I've seen. Because I was with one of the kids that's apparently the worst kid in the entire school for the entire day. He was great for me because I just you know I try to listen to him because he only speaks Spanish like I try to communicate with him and I feel like a lot of these teachers are so exhausted with everything else they have on their plate. They're just like they don't want to deal with it. So, the kid acts out because they want attention and that only they know how special and they don't speak English.

[00:07:55]

Catherine: I know for me one of the beliefs I had about Title I schools was it's very rigid with like curriculum and how you teach and something that I was, I thought was being solidified was I know me and my teacher were struggling with like well they can't even read like real books in the classroom or like we can't even read to them because we have to be on a PowerPoint and I know we talked about that a lot. And just in the past couple of weeks we kind of just decided like I know we talked about sneaking around. And she was like well you know what like I'm just going to do anyway and if the principal walks in like I'm just gonna be like you know research shows that like kids need to hear someone model like fluency in this way. And you know like if it's not tied to a standard that we're supposed to do that day then you know I'll take the heat for that. So, I'm not really sure. I'm trying to think if that has changed because I'm kind of feeling now that it depends on the principal and what school you're at because I've talked to a lot of other principals just from you know trying to see if this is how all schools are and kind of what I'm feeling is it depends a lot on like school culture. And then also if the teacher is being the person to kind of advocate for those like best practices in the classroom. So now I'm kind of feeling it's not maybe all Title I schools but just there's other factors like your administration and then knowledge of teachers and other things.

[00:09:22]

Moderator: Amber did you want to add anything?

[01:35:24]

Amber: Mine, about the behavior and the discipline. It's kind of different from mine because they actually do discipline but it's kind of like a mix. Because I see that like all what you guys were saying with the rewards and stuff for like bad behavior turned good. I guess they do do that, but they also discipline them like for example one of my students brought a taser to school and he got arrested. He got taken to jail like juvie jail. And like he was suspended for ten days and they had a meeting, it was called Level 4, And he had a meeting whether he was going to be expelled or not and they didn't expel him. But now he has a clear backpack and I don't know. That was discipline, But at the same time like it is like I feel like he should have been expelled. Like what if he had brought like a gun to school or something because like I know a tasers not as bad, but like you know what else could he get his hands on. And but they do... When it comes to discipline like I feel like the strategies they use don't really work. Because when he came back to school he was clowning around. He acted like he wasn't suspended for ten days and didn't have a lot to do like he wishes he didn't care like he was just disrupting and like I feel like I don't know what's going to make it work. And it's almost disrupting, we sent him out of the room to the next-door teacher for like 5/10 minutes. And it's like I feel like they view it as like oh OK, so I don't have to do work. You know I don't have to, I could just go chill in this other person's class. I don't do anything.

[00:11:09]

Amber: And some teachers they have like sheets, think sheets or behavior reflections, So if a kid gets sent to their class they say they'll have a behavior reflection and they think that's annoying. But like at the same time they just write anything down and like OK go back to class. And so, it's kind of a mix it's like a mixed feeling like they do discipline. But is it enough?

[00:11:37]

Moderator: On to some repetitive questions. So, thinking back still to internship one and prior service learning and field experiences, JA, have you been able to think back to any of those and have they had any impact on what's going on right now within your placement?

[00:11:57]

Abby: I can tell you something that my interning teacher actually said to me. She said when I came to her she said no offense, but you were not prepared. She said I don't think you were prepared to be in a school such as this one and she said she's seen tremendous growth but she says she doesn't think that a lot of... Because she's often a senior intern teacher. She has a lot of them and she got a junior intern this year and she feels that just between junior and senior like there's a huge difference. And we like you [REDACTED] is not sending us prepared to be in these rough schools in these rough areas because they paint this kind of pretty picture that it's not that bad. But then we get put in these communities that scare us and deal with these kids and it's something you just have to learn by doing I think, rather than because you can't really teach it. You could try but it's not the same.

[00:12:49]

Moderator: Anyone want to add to that?

[00:12:50]

Amber: The school that I like went to JA in, and did I hourly experience it was completely different from the school that I'm at now. So, it's it kind of didn't really help in a way because also when I was at those schools I was basically just observing and just working with small group here and there it was only there for like an hour or two a day for like one day or two days a week. So, it was completely different. I wasn't there from the beginning of the day before school started to the end of the day after school ended. That was completely new to me when I went to internship.

[00:13:31]

Moderator: Would you say maybe those previous experiences, and I'm going to use a term, were like almost like parachuting in, where you just kind of came in and then left?

[00:13:40]

Amber: Yes.

[00:13:41]

Moderator: There wasn't really much substance there? Right. Yeah.

[00:13:44]

Jamie: I felt the same way, parachuting almost in internship one. Honestly because being there only Monday and Tuesday. Like yes you see the beginning of the week can you see what happens on a full day. But by the time you get back the next Monday everything is changed. You have no idea what happened there rest of the week because it's not like you're getting an update from your teacher every day. Like maybe you guys did, I never did. Like saying like This is what we did today whatever. Like I had several times that I planned to do a lesson and then walked in Monday and my teacher was like I got ahead I taught it already and then I'm kind of like well what do I do now like I was supposed be an observation.

[00:14:18]

Jamie: So, I still felt like I wasn't really part of the class. I was just kind of like there randomly. Like, it was, the kids loved me being there, but it was more like I was just like a fun visitor than their teacher.

[00:14:31]

Moderator: Were you going to say something Tracy?

[00:14:32]

Tracy: No, I'm just agreeing with everyone.

[00:14:35]

Catherine: I'm thinking back to my first internship and I would agree with what you said it felt very very disconnected just being there Monday and Tuesday and I also felt like during first internship there was... Depending on I guess what teacher you have, There was this gap in I guess understanding or communication between the responsibility of the intern the supervising

teacher and then the role of the coordinator. And I know we should always try to advocate for ourselves but sometimes it was just kind of feeling I know a lot of us felt very tense at times trying to explain like what our purpose was during internship one. Or sometimes I would explain assignments to my internship teacher placements and like not feeling like so much support at one end. But then going back to [REDACTED] and expecting like a different kind of I guess product felt very weird at times so. I know supervising teachers take like a mentor class, But I felt like it would be it would be a lot more beneficial if maybe there was a more streamlined way of communicating just so everyone is on the same page or maybe someone comes to [REDACTED] to see like what we're supposed to do. I'm not sure but I know communication between just those three areas sometimes felt lacking.

[00:15:56]

Moderator: Anyone else want to add anything?

[00:16:01]

Jamie: I mean I would agree with that that also went into internship 2 for me. My coordinator expected a lot and did very little communicating. Basically, I was under the impression that I needed to be slowly taking over as my teacher felt fit. And with the amount of behaviors in my classroom she was like I don't feel like you can handle this and like she was like honestly no teacher should have to handle it. I don't want to throw you into it and during my midpoint conference. I actually had to have it by myself my teacher wasn't there that day, and my coordinator was just like I can't believe you haven't taken over completely already. I'm calling your internship teacher without you. And called her and my internship teacher was like she doesn't want you here I'm not going to let you listen. And the next morning my teacher was like OK you're teaching full time good luck. And has sat in the back of the room on her phone the rest of the semester. Which like I figured it out, But that's like not how it should be. Like I should have known or there should be, Honestly there should be dates saying by this date You need to have one subject that you've taken over by, by this date you should have two, by this date three. like something like that so it's not, like I was literally thrown into it like at eight ten and my kids walked in at eight fifteen.

[00:17:14]

Abby: I would say agree with that. And my teacher kind of did the same thing because she's had other interns before like I said, so they kind of told her the same thing. So, it was like week one, OK we're going to kind of easy you into it, week two it's all you for the rest of the semester until FSA where I have to take them back and then it's you again. And like that involves all the behavior problems. I didn't even know what a behavior chart was going into internship. I was very confused I'd never seen it because I was not at a Title I school so I had to figure out how to

fill those out every day and on top of like teaching and then trying to manage a classroom, it's just, definitely something you just have to learn by doing.

[00:17:49]

Claire: Can I add another level to that since I was in my own room. The Supervising teacher gets a lot of e-mails a day and I don't have access to those e-mails and because we changed our entire way of teaching now we just went to a small group. The district came in for a lot of walks and they were in my room many many times I didn't know they were coming. I knew they didn't like what they were seeing, but I was given materials that this is what you're teaching this is how you're teaching it. And it was very uncomfortable having eight to 10 district people with their laptops and just shaking their heads. It was so uncomfortable. No intern to ever been in a spot with all of these very important people. And it's just me.

[00:18:45]

JOHN: Yeah, no support.

[00:20:03]

Claire: At least a warning maybe I could have had an anchor chart up or done something extra so that they could see that I was trying. And then they would have their meetings and I wasn't invited. So, if they wanted to talk to the fifth-grade teachers at the end of the day sometimes they would just ask for the teachers. So, they're seeing me at 30 minutes to an hour at a time and then I never get feedback on that. And I don't feel like I was... My full potential was not even coming close to what I know that we as teachers can do.

[00:19:24]

Abby: I feel like they use this a lot for behavior management and we're referred to as the intern or so and so's intern. And when you're in a meeting whether it's you know an IEP meeting or an MTSS or anything like that they're just you know you don't really get to speak up and if you speak up you feel out of place but yet you're the one that works with the student the most because they give it to you, the student to you.

[00:19:46] So, it sounds like prior field experiences really have no impact, positive or negative, towards your internship, internship experiences. But it sounds like there's a lot of inconsistency with going from that service learning to internship one and then transitioning from internship one, internship two because they're just vastly different in expectations and requirements. So, thinking back again here is another repetitive question, do you think any of the content that you received in courses regarding working with students we see in Title I schools mostly that

culturally academically racially and economically diverse population have helped you at all or impacted your internship two placement?

[00:20:35] I think when it comes to relationships. I mean UCF stresses relationships with students and how it's very important, so we go into the internship knowing that we have to create these relationships with our students that would be the big thing that I took out of all the course and then carried into the tile one that I'm in.

[00:20:53]

Abby: I wish I had gotten more strategies on how to work with behavioral problems. We got a lot of strategies on how to make lessons more interactive. How to get the kids more engaged, how to work with ESOL students how to work with ESE students. And like no preparation on what do you do if the kids are having a tantrum in the back. Other than like ignore him and hopefully it'll stop.

[00:21:15]

Tracy: Yeah, I agree. I feel for ESE class that we had, just one. It was mostly focusing on like what to do if a kid has a hearing impairment or visual impairment. Which yes, it's important to know, but you're not going to have a class full of hearing impaired students unless you're like at a special needs school. You're more likely going to have a class with kids with behavioral disabilities which is all of my ESE are under behavior. And I've, I had no idea how to deal with them and I had no idea. But walking in the first day like seeing the things that happened I never could have imagined because nobody ever warned us.

[00:21:51]

Anna: They give us so many classes about reading. It's all reading, reading, reading. Maybe took one or two math classes maybe. And one social studies class or whatever and it was just like yeah it was all reading and what to do for your ESOL students. That was pretty much. So, I definitely agree there was not anything about behavior.

[00:22:11]

Catherine: I'm gonna add to that because there were I felt like I was lacking in like math and science and social studies because I remember it was, well I know for reading it was I felt like it was very involved and you know like you were explicitly taught like guided reading lessons and like the specific assessments to do and then I remember going from those classes and then going to my math class. I remember hearing a lot about strategies you can use teach like fractions for example or for very specific things. But having I guess like I felt like I was lacking in I guess the

pedagogy, is that the word I'm trying to look for? Just like it didn't feel as involved it felt more like here's strategies to teach certain, I guess content areas that you know you come up with a sample lesson rather than holistically.

[00:23:09]

Claire: I feel like we can learn the content like when we go in, but it's the other stuff the classroom management and that we need help with. We can always learn content, but how to teach that content would be more beneficial focusing on those behavioral issues. I think we're all experiencing some sort of behavioral challenge that definitely can disrupt and entire lesson which is difficult.

[00:23:38]

Moderator: Tracy you were going to add

[00:23:39]

Tracy: Yeah, I've also noticed that the way they teach us to plan, I don't know if it's the same for you guys, but like at my school lesson planning and the way it's formatted is incredibly different from what's in the school. Like it is outdated. My teacher was like disgusted with the way I was setting up a lesson plan. And I feel like they either need to change it or.

[00:24:04]

Abby: Do something.

[00:24:04]

Amber: Yeah, I kind of wanted to touch on the ESOL strategies of the classes. And we were given many many strategies to use for ESOL. But like yes, they helped to an extent, visuals, hand gestures, all these things helped to an extent. But these kids there are kids in my class and classes that I've had in the past that don't speak any English at all. And the one thing that they're learning by throwing them into this class is English. Yes, it's a very fast way for them to learn English to be surrounded by English speakers and like they learn. I've seen my kids grow from like very Not at all to he can understand what I say to him, But they're not learning what everyone else is learning. They're not learning how to write. They're not learning how like math or any of these things. And for my school, I don't know about you guys' schools but like it doesn't count for him. For writing, writing essays, he would literally just rewrite the prompt and like he would just write a bunch of letters. For technology like for one near pod or like any type of technology, If you're answering question he literally just writes a bunch of letters. He doesn't even try. And I know that it's like now is viewed negatively to have a separate class for ESOL

students, but I really do feel like they should have a separate class for ESOL students and with a teacher that speaks their language. Because when you talk to them they will literally go like this like I don't know you're saying to me.

[00:25:42]

Abby: Like no matter how many gestures or visual aids present to them because they just.

[00:25:46] Yeah.

[00:25:46]

Tracy: They get frustrated and they shut down.

[00:25:48]

JOHN: And then I don't know if you've noticed this but like does the teacher tend to, not ignore them.

[32:04:33]

Abby: But place them on computers.

[370:41:05]

JOHN: Yeah glaze over it because they know that there's so much work involved to get them to where they need to be. But there's not enough time.

[00:26:06]

Tracy: They just brush it off.

[00:26:07] JOHN: And you have to also focus on every other student in the class because you could have students that do speak English that still have no idea what's going on right now. So, they're behind and it's just kind of like this chain reaction of like a lot of the teachers overwhelmed with the different levels of the kids in the class. I mean I know it's horrible to say but I know that some of the teachers like they know like. It all comes down to FSA scores and they're like if they they can look at a student say they have no chance of passing. So, let's focus more on the ones that are bubble students or the ones that we know are going to pass.

[00:26:49]

Moderator: Have you heard teachers say that?

[00:26:50] (multiple) Yes yes.

[00:26:53]

Anna: Our school, we do have like a bilingual program so every grade up until third grade has like a bilingual class but even then, like the kids are so behind, they're not on their very level and the school has a no retention policy so they're just passing them along. So, they're just they're not getting a chance to be successful to like I guess complete the things that they need to learn in order to move on because they're just staying at the same place because nothing's really improving.

[00:27:24]

Abby: My school is the same way we have a student which is one of the ones that I've heard teachers say oh he has no chance in passing but he was in the bilingual program says kindergarten, came to third grade still completely lost. It'll be a miracle if he passes the FSA because he has no idea. And he's also a behavioral problem because he doesn't understand anything.

[00:27:43]

JOHN: And I've also seen scenarios at our school play out to where they, I don't know how it happens but they like negotiate with the administration. Like we had a girl that was in third grade, She'd already been retrained twice.

[00:27:59]

Claire: I have her now.

[00:27:59]

JOHN: And she has her now. So, she should be in sixth grade this year. Technically. But she was in third grade And they told her if she could pass the FSA she could go to fifth grade. So completely bypassing 4th grade and all the standards that she needs to learn there and just put her in the fifth-grade class because she passed the third grade FSA. So I don't know. Like it's.

[00:28:28]

Claire: But then she doesn't get the writing from fourth.

[00:28:30]

JOHN: Exactly.

[00:28:31]

Claire: And it shows.

[00:28:32] JOHN:

Yeah. It was just it was I don't know how it happened, but it was like they it's like the parents like they come in and they just like it's like they work a deal with the admin and I don't know how that how that happens but I'm just like so because I had her last semester as part of my internship one because I was in the fifth grade class. But it really does, it shows like they there are years behind where they should be. And they just.

[00:29:04]

Anna: It's also an issue in our school because parents come in and they want to hold their kids back. They want them to get that and the principal just says no. So even like when you are a parent gets involved and they're trying to help their kid the principal says no.

[00:29:19]

Moderator: So, from what I'm hearing for that question for that last question about the coursework and seeing that play out in your internships it sounds like and correct me and then I'll ask for comments after I have summarized. I hear relationships are one thing that you hear about and you see within the classroom. But a lot of what is lacking is strategies to deal with behavior. Your methods, other than reading, you don't feel that you got a lot of or are strong enough in going into your placements, lacking a lot of pedagogical strategies. And then again just that continual need for more classroom management because that seems to be hindering teaching in these classrooms. And then we talked about you know we learned about ESOL strategies, but some students come in lacking any English so therefore there therefore they're kind of falling further behind or teachers are disregarding them to focus on the other students.

[00:30:19]

Tracy: I would also say the like the lesson planning that I was talking about because I basically had to re-learn how to write lesson plans based on the way OCPS and my school does it.

[00:30:32]

Moderator: The lesson planning you're seeing and having to implement is vastly different than what was kind of used here.

[00:30:39] Yeah.

[00:30:41]

Claire: Can I add one more thing that wasn't touched? Yes.

[00:30:43]

Claire: I don't know where it would fit in, but I feel like going through [REDACTED] we heard all about these great technology things. My classroom, I have PowerPoint, a smartboard to display the PowerPoint and a document camera to show what the packet looks like. I don't know what a near pod is, sounds really cool. I'm going through, especially social studies class, we're seeing all these virtual reality things and all of these tools that we can use when we get to the classroom. All the students don't have their own technology that we have been hearing about. They're getting everybody's getting a device for computers. I have four computers for my class.

[01:43:47]

JOHN: My supervising teacher she doesn't add any additional technology into her lessons. Everything that we do is reading prompts and answer packets.

[00:31:35]

Claire: Yes, we know that technology can help them but in our school at [REDACTED] we haven't seen any of.

[00:31:44]

Amber: That's completely different from my classroom. They have what they call what they call fully digital and just this year they finally got to 1 to 1 tablet computer laptop to student ratio. And like everyone has their own laptop cart we have the smart board we have the doc cam. It's called a ladybug. They all got new ones. And they she does like implement extra effort for technology in the lessons. Like near pod to explain what near pod is. It's a Web site and you can make lessons like PowerPoints and they can access it on their computers. And so, what is displayed on the board and also on the screen in front of them. And you can control it on your

iPad if you want and like when you click next slide it moves it for them as well. And like you can make questions. So, for example if it's like a response the short response you can click short response you type your question and they're able to type their response.

[00:32:52]

Amber: And then all of your other responses come up on your teacher version like the iPad is what I use. And like we are able to use Kahoot, and quizzes and all those things and it's really like They love it. And I feel like it's super beneficial for them because we live in such a technology filled world. So, it's going to like help them a lot for when they grow older because when I was in elementary school there was no laptops and there was no such thing as a laptop. And like we had one special that was called technology and it was all like the Big Apple Computer Macintosh computers the colored ones and we were like oh yeah like it's going to be really beneficial for them when they grow older.

[00:33:38]

JOHN: Do you use that for assessments though? Or is it just to kind of push the information like direct teaching part of it?

[00:33:46]

Amber: Some time, like some assessments we have used on there like they they all have we use Google Classroom and she can post a assessment on, she can make a google doc, and then they just they have their own like Gmails and stuff like the click the link and then they fill the question that answers and some assessments are on there. Some are not. I don't know if every school was like this, but they take the FSA and the computer. All right.

[00:34:14]

JOHN: So, the reading part too? Or.

[00:34:16]

Amber: The reading and the math.

[00:34:18]

Abby: Depends what grade.

[00:34:20]

Abby: Fifth is all digital, But third is just the math FSA. But I heard next year they are going back to all paper pencils for a third because they are not mature enough.

[00:34:29]

Moderator: It sounds like that there's definitely a disconnect between what's happening in courses and what you're experiencing. There is also a disconnect between school to school because you're in a school that does not have technology, you're in a one to one, Orange Center is completely one to one. I watched kindergartners use laptops and close read the other day.

[00:34:52]

Moderator: You wanted to add?

[00:34:53] Yeah. Whenever we had the opportunity in a course to do like do a behavior thing or do a parent teacher conference through TeachLive, it always got canceled.

[00:35:03] Yes.

[00:35:04]

Anna: Any time we had the opportunity to do something like that, I'm pretty sure we used it once and I think everybody saw it. It was for an ESOL activity.

[00:35:16]

JOHN: But we were on a satellite campus, so I don't know if that had anything to do with it, but like it shoots right every time that they would say we're going to have live teach and then the day of they would be like oh yeah, we're not doing that.

[00:35:29]

Anna: When I did my first year at Valencia we did it. Like OK so they offer it to Valencia but I'm at [REDACTED] and we can't even use it. So.

[00:35:39]

Moderator: So, it was a parent teacher conference, and what else where you expected to do?

[00:35:44]

Anna: There was something where we were gonna, you were supposed to give a lesson, but they were going to like vary the behavior issues and things like that and that didn't happen.

[00:35:49]

Claire: My teacher drew straws to see who would teach at the teachLive and like 4 kids out of the whole class.

[00:35:54]

Tracy: Oh yeah, I was in that too. I was in the same class.

[00:35:58]

Jamie: Can I just add something real quick?

[00:36:00]

Jamie: Something that I feel like I've heard from most of us, except for you, you seem like you're having great time. The disconnect for me has been that I've had all these amazing professors learn all these amazing things here. And I out of my three internship teachers, I've only had one that is how you used anything that is like best practice. And I think that honestly, I could have had a much better internship experience if I had a good teacher. And it sounds really bad but my teacher she's not a effective teacher.

[01:51:24] Your supervising teacher?

[02:33:37]

Jamie: For Her it's all about like, trying to get the kids through the day and like, like she screamed that them. She literally threw something at a kid yesterday. Like, she doesn't teach since like since I started doing the majority of the teaching like the kids have actually done things but I'm like oh you do you want me to collect this and she's like why

[00:36:53]

Claire: Is she doing this for tuition money?

[00:37:21]

Jamie: No, This is her second career she worked in banking she made a lot of money. She talks about it lot. Yeah. And she's like this is my calling. There's a lot of like Jesus in the classroom. She's just not like a best practice teacher and I don't know if there's a way for [REDACTED] to screen them.

[00:37:14] I was gonna say.

[00:37:26] Honestly like there's there should be a way for [REDACTED] to see...

[00:37:17] Like a survey system.

[00:37:17] ... Is this going to be a good teacher? Like my last semester teacher I had a teacher who is retiring this semester and she was like I don't care what are they going to do, fire me? Like all day long was just like I'm not doing that I'm not doing that. Like why should I have to do this. Like I'm leaving.

[00:37:34] They should have to go observe them. (inaudible)

[00:37:38]

Amber: I was thinking that this whole time like my supervising teacher. I don't make assumptions, but I feel like she just wants the intern because she doesn't want to teach. She doesn't want to do her job. And like she's she talks to me in a very condescending way. She's rude and every all the other teachers just say look that's her personality that's how she is and I'm like that's no excuse to, you're supposed to be helping me and you know. My Past two supervising teachers were outstanding. Just caring. They still like contact me and say I have yet they still contact me and say I have a box of school supplies for you. I have all these books for you that I want to give you and all these things. This one now just doesn't care like she doesn't. It seems like she doesn't like me for some reason. She thinks that I'm like. Like for the career fair I told her I'm not going to be here because I have to go to this mandatory career fair. She thought that I was like lying to her and she like she didn't say a word to me about it. And then when we had our final meeting with [REDACTED] she said so this Friday thing this career thing. And then, and then I, oh you a career fair like I'm I have nothing to hide like. And then how many of you are for the last week, Is that normal I've heard that you guys were like go into other classrooms and observing?

[00:39:06] Yeah.

[00:39:06] No

[00:39:06] I've been teaching kindergarten first.

[00:39:08] We have FSA next week so I have to proctor.

[00:39:10] I'm going back already.

[00:39:12] But like I've heard but not often heard of some people doing that right. I told her that and she says no no that's no that's not normal that's not a thing. And then I said OK I'll ask my coordinator my coordinator said it was perfectly fine.

[00:39:27] My coordinator said no.

[00:39:27]

Abby: It's that disconnect. because my teachers the same way she always she she took it out on me. She one day full on straight up like yelled at me you were out too many Fridays. This is not helping. There is no consistency. I will not take another intern. If this is what they're doing. And it's not it's not yeah it's because they're stressed out and they they try to lean on you for that support they're not getting from administration and then they take it out on you which I don't think is fair because I've had a very stressful experience because of that kind of thing.

[00:40:04] (mutual agreeance).

[00:40:07]

Moderator: I'll give us time after, we can come back to this. But I have to ask the million dollar question. I will go around and get everyone's response. So my last one is kind of based on all of this your you know reframing those perceptions and those stereotypes of Title I, your prior field experiences, your coursework building up until this internship placement, what you've experienced through this internship placement. After graduation, which is in two weeks, do you intend to pursue a career in a Title I school?

[00:40:33]

Moderator: Claire, we've already talked about this but now you're going to talk about it again.

[00:40:37]

Claire: I love the kids. If I Can find that principal that supports their teachers. Absolutely 100 percent. I will not go through the same experience with our leadership team and the lack of support from leadership. It is so stressful. And those kids are the ones that matter. I would do anything for those kids but not at the expense of.

[00:41:13] Your life.

[00:41:17]

Claire: It's the adults...

[00:41:21]

JOHN: So I've been offered and accepted the position at a non-Title I school and I wouldn't say that I would never teach at one. But like Claire said it's got to be the right fit you know because I've talked to some other principals at other Title I schools and hearing about some of the different experiences that they've had. Like it's not all the same. It can't all be bad. But I think just getting my feet wet I probably wouldn't go that route.

[00:41:53]

Jamie: I don't currently plan on working in a Title I school. I would be interested in working in a Title I school that's not extra hour. I think extra hour brings a whole other level to it that honestly it's nearly impossible to teach especially for that last hour of the day. It does not make any sense that we make these kids sit in a classroom for a whole extra hour. We don't get anything done. But I'm not currently planning on working in one because of how terrible this experience has been. And I don't think that it's all title on. I think it's more my school and some other similar schools but I don't want to be in a position like I've currently been questioning whether or not I want to be a teacher which is how I felt a lot of days in this internship.

[00:42:37]

Amber: I will give it a yes because I've accepted a job at the school but it's because the school that I'm at..

[00:42:45]

Moderator: Third grade right?

[00:42:46]

Amber: Yes, well they just told me it's either going to be third or second which I'm happy either I'm all primary. But really the reason why I have so many complaints is because I'm in fifth grade and it's not. I'm not like I'm way more for the little ones for sure. And I'm an intern and they don't they don't take me seriously as Like if I was their teacher. When I have my own classroom things are gonna be completely different. And when I'm not with this teacher supervising teacher things are going to be different. I'm going to be happy. I'm not going to dread going there and having to deal with her attitude and all these things. And also, the administration is just outstanding they give you so much support. And I've heard this from other teachers especially first year teachers that work they're saying that they've been to many schools and they haven't had any type of support that the school does have. And so, I'm like really thankful for that and excited.

[00:43:49]

Moderator: You're at P [REDACTED] right?

[00:43:50]

Amber: Yes. P [REDACTED] needs fourth and fifth grade teachers if you guys want to get a job there they will hire you for sure.

[00:43:59]

Moderator: Abby.

[00:44:06]

Abby: I think this experience made me a little bit more apprehensive because I got offered and accepted a position at a school that's currently not title but it has a chance to be this upcoming year. So it's makes me a little nervous. I just think for beginning teachers in general we kind of try to stay away from that Title I school to get a better experience and stay in the field. But I feel like later on I'll be more inclined to want to willingly go into a Title I.

[00:44:32]

Tracy: Um I wouldn't say I'm willing or not willing. And it doesn't really matter to me if the school's been labeled as a Title I school because through this experience I know that I'll enjoy the kids no matter what I'm going to enjoy the kids. I'm sure I'll my behavioral problems and I'll figure it out and I figure it out. The problem I have is the community outside the school and

within the schools. So if that doesn't fit my style then I would have a problem working with a Title I school but that could be any school. It's not a Title I or otherwise.

[00:45:06]

Catherine: I say yes. I've accepted a position at a Title I school for second grade. And just because all my experience has been in Title I schools and all of my experiences have been so different. I feel like the positive and negatives that I've experienced have been for so many reasons besides the school being Title I and the school I'm currently entering had just lost its Title I status and the principals saying nothing is going to change so it's making me realize, I mean I know each school is different but it's making me realize a lot of the things have been other factors not just Title I and I do love the kids and love the community and I want to stay kind of within that population.

[00:45:50]

Anna: My school is the same. They were Title I last year and they won't be next year and they're going one to one. And I have been offered a job there and I would work in a Title I but it would have to be a school like what I am at. They all... That's a very good community. They all trust each other. The administration is on their side. So if after hearing other people's experiences I would not want to work at a school where the community was not supportive.

[00:46:20]

Moderator: So it sounds like you just either we have different experiences based on the different reasons that the schools were either already burned out and seeking other options or due to so many vast differences in the label of Title I. It just depends on the support of administration and the supportive community and culture in and around the school. Am I correct in saying that.

[00:46:46]

Moderator: Anyone want to add anything else?... I'll turn this off and then we can have a um, if you all want to keep chatting off the record that's completely fine.

APPENDIX F: ANALYTIC MEMOS

Group A

February 10, 2017

STEREOTYPES

When first discussing the stereotypes it was interesting to see how the participants removed themselves from each stereotype they were listing, i.e. “people automatically assume” or “everyone thinks.” Then when discussing their own perceptions they came off a little less harsh with their ideas. One participant mentioned murmurings from students that I found powerful. She said that she has heard students say, “I don’t deserve to be here.” Are these stereotypes society places on Title I schools impacting the beliefs of the students who attend? It was also interesting to hear multiple participants mention that there are differences within Title I schools and not all have a large population of students living in poverty.

COURSEWORK

Several participants had certain stereotypes reinforced during district orientation or through teacher preparation coursework. But they’ve also heard honest stories and information about Title I from their professors. When discussing diversity, they mentioned that there was a very strong push for understanding how to accommodate EL students in the classroom. Where then can a preparation program fit in accommodations for students other than EL and ESE? Is that the responsibility of the content instructors? Classroom management?

March 1, 2017

STEREOTYPES/PERCEPTIONS

After several more weeks within the placement, the participants are starting to see some of the stereotypes vanish, but some are being perpetuated. One participant noted that she doesn’t see evidence of funding being utilized within the school she is interning, while in the school her child attends (Title I also) she sees an abundance of technology being purchased and used. Another participant mentioned the principal talking to her and saying things like “well in a school like this” which seems to only perpetuate the stereotype of a Title I school being rough to work in. It was interesting that they brought up, again, the difference between Title I schools and students.

COURSEWORK

Several participants noted that the material they are learning in their coursework is not being implemented in their placements. They are not able to implement the strategies themselves due to time constraints, but they are also not seeing these “best practices” implemented by their supervising teachers. One participant mentioned that within a non-Title I placement she was able to implement the research-based practices, but now that she is in Title I she cannot. Another participant mentioned that they are being prepared for the “ideal classroom”

yet they are unable to implement what they are being taught. A few participants also noted that they feel unprepared.

April 6, 2017

STRESS (?)

After thinking back to the previous focus groups and thinking about this final one, stress is starting to emerge more and more. Stress was initially introduced as a stereotype that was “known” about Title I schools and touched on in the first focus group. During the second and third focus groups, participants expressed their own dealings with stress. Some came from students and behavior, but most came from the support, or lack of, from the supervising teachers and other individuals in the school.

COURSEWORK

It was noted again that several participants felt unprepared for the placements that they were in. Some noted that while Title I was introduced and talked about in courses, those discussions were “sugarcoated” to perhaps try and not “scare” them away from entering a Title I school. Again, preparation was aimed towards the ideal classroom, but implementation of strategies was unrealistic in some classrooms.

INTENTIONS

Out of the seven participants, three stated that they do fully intend to work in a Title I school upon graduation. One participant accepted a job at their current internship placement. Two participants stated that they would be fine “either way.” Their focus was on obtaining a job no matter what, so if they ended up in a Title I school they would be fine with it. I thought it was interesting that one participant did specify that they would teach in Title I, as long as it wasn’t their current placement. The remaining two participants stated that they were “burnt out” and were actively seeking employment in non-Title I school settings. One stated that she wanted to see what working in a more affluent area would be like, while one stated she wanted to see what having parental involvement looked like.

I should have probed more with the participants who stated “either” school settings as their intention. Throughout our focus groups they seemed to have the least stressors placed on them in the classroom during their internship. This could have been a factor in their decision. The ones who shared the most stressful experiences during the focus group were the ones who said they had no intention of teaching in Title I upon graduation.

Group B

February 19, 2017

STEREOTYPES

It was interesting to see how to the point this group got when discussing stereotypes of Title I schools. They brought up behavior issues, lack of support, safety concerns, and paperwork. When talking about CARE students within the Title I schools they talked about them not caring and being behind where they needed to be academically. When addressing their own perceptions of the schools, the participants discussed the physical appearance of the schools as well as behaviors within the school. One participant mentioned the differences noticed between Title I schools.

RACE/ETHNICITY

Unlike the first group, a few participants in this group addressed their race when discussing their internship placements. One mentioned that she wasn't sure how she would be accepted being a White, female. She has come to realize that she is respected and cared for by her students, but that provided her some trepidation at the beginning. Another participant had the same worry. Being one of the only White males in the entire school building had him also wondering how the students would view him. A third participant mentioned her race when recounting a story of how the students asked if she was the supervising teacher's sister. She had to explain to the students that she wasn't her teacher even though they were both White.

I found it rather interesting and refreshing that this group felt comfortable with addressing their race and possible limitations this may have had with connecting with the students. Another student brought up the realization that some students under the ESOL umbrella may speak no English and therefore communication becomes a limitation as well.

COURSEWORK

This group mentions some experiences they had talking about Title I or CARE students within their methods courses. It was mentioned that they hear about accommodations and are given examples within classes, but they lack practical application. While EL and ESE students are talked about, they expressed the need to learn more about accommodating students who need behavior modification or students who are multiple grade levels below where they should be academically. Another student mentioned a Title I tour in which some of her previous perceptions were challenged and changed. Had she not had that experience, her expectations of going into a Title I placement would have been slightly more negative. Another participant mentioned that although there weren't any specific assignments for Title I schools and CARE students, she did remember the conversations that were had.

March 12, 2017

ACCOUNTABILITY

I found it interesting that this group brought up the paperwork portion of being a Title I school. From personal experience I understand the importance of paperwork especially when proving you can keep your Title I funding. Participants mentioned that they've heard about there being a lot of paperwork but neither had actually seen this come into fruition. This brings up an accountability piece for the teachers in Title I schools. Interns are getting a false sense that paperwork doesn't matter. (It was shocking to see attendance being so casually treated especially following the Stoneman Douglas shooting.)

There are also concerns with accountability in regard to lesson planning and instruction. It sounds like the district has its influence on multiple schools. Most of the schools are provided with lesson plans and activities that lack rigor for the students. Participants are required to use these lessons when they teach and have noticed that students get bored of them. While the district feels like it is doing what's best, is this really what these schools need? Are these non-engaging lessons leading to behavior problems.

BEHAVIOR

A strong theme out of this week's focus group was the behavior management problems several of the participants were facing. Instead of just focusing on the students themselves, the participants laid most blame on the teachers and the administrators. They recognized that behaviors were not being handled appropriately which led to only more behavior problems. Several schools made the choice not to suspend their students in order to keep them in the classrooms. Ideally this would ensure students do not miss instructional time and can remain on schedule with what they are learning. From what came out of the stories told, this did not sound like it was the case. In some cases it sounds like students are almost "rewarded" for their bad behavior. This does not discourage them from acting the same way when they return to their classrooms.

April 23, 2017

BEHAVIOR

Behavior seemed to be a strong theme again. Two participants stated that their perceptions of behavior problems in Title I schools were solidified. They see teachers and administrators handling situations without consistency. They feel that they should have received more instruction on how to deal with behavior problems in the classroom.

This caused me to reflect on the current opportunities for behavior management instruction. Should there be a full-term course that talks solely about classroom management to support preservice teachers? How well-equipped are the preservice teachers that students are having to be sent out of the classroom rather than handling the situation in the classroom?

PREPARATION

I thought it was interesting that one of the participants mentioned that her supervising teacher told her that she wasn't prepared enough, that UCF did not prepare her enough. They

talked about disconnects between service learning, internship I, and their current internship. It sounded as if each experience didn't really build on each other to help prepare them for their final internship. It sounded as so each experience was treated as an independent piece and their final internship isn't exactly "culminating." Isn't that the point of a final internship? Shouldn't all their experiences build and prepare them for their final placement? How can an experience like that be created?

COURSEWORK

There was an interesting discussion on UCF coursework. Some participants claimed that they received strong instruction in reading strategies but lacked in math and other content. To go along with that while the reading instruction was extensive, they were unable to implement the strategies into their classrooms. Another participant noted that, in time, the content can be learned while engaged in teaching. It was behavior management that they felt they needed more preparation for.

There also a gap in lesson planning. Lesson plans participants are expected to prepare for preparation courses are not relevant to the style that is used in schools. It would be helpful to understand that templates local schools are using and try to implement that into courses. But what happens when so many different schools are using various templates? This may be an issue that cannot be addressed.

INTENTIONS

This group was split down the middle with intentions to teach at Title I schools. Two of the participants accepted jobs at their current internship placements. They both were confident in their decisions and excited to begin their teaching careers. Two participants said they would intend to teach in Title I, but with conditions. One participant stated that she would only stay in Title I if the school culture was similar to the one she was in. Another participant had similar conditions but seemed a tad more flexible with where she ended up.

Four participants, half the group, said they do not intend to teach in Title I. Two of the participants were offered and accepted jobs at Title I schools. Due to the strenuous nature of her placement, one participant said she does not intend on teaching in Title I, and she also is beginning to question her desire to become a teacher. Through her speech and actions the final participant appeared burnt out from her experience. During the member-checking activity she informed me that she was considering pursuing her Master's degree full time rather than going into the classroom. She felt she needed a little more time to reignite her passion for teaching.

REFERENCES

- Acocella, I. (2012). The focus groups in social research: advantages and disadvantages. *Quality and Quantity*, 46(4), 1125-1136.
- Alexander, K., Entwisle, D., & Olson, L. (2014). *The long shadow: Family background, disadvantaged urban youth, and the transition to adulthood (American Sociological Association's Rose Series in Sociology)*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Allen, J., & Labbo, L. (2001). Giving it a second thought: Making culturally engaged teaching culturally engaging. *Language Arts*, 79(1), 40-52.
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Amankwaa, L. (2016). Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 23(3), 121-127.
- Anderson, L., & Stillman, J. (2010). Opportunities to teach and learn in high-needs schools: Student teachers' experiences in urban placements. *Urban Education*, 45(2), 109-141.
- Anderson, L., & Stillman, J. (2013). Student teaching's contribution to preservice teacher development: A review of research focused on the preparation of teachers for urban and high-needs contexts. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(1), 3-69.
doi:10.3102/003465431246861.
- Archambault, J., & St. Pierre, R. (1980). The effect of federal policy on services delivered through ESEA Title I. *Educational Evaluation & Policy Analysis*, 2(3), 33-46.
- Azano, A., & Stewart, T. (2015). Exploring place and practicing justice: Preparing pre-service teachers for success in rural schools. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 30(9), 1-12.
- Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. (1997). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*. Boston:

Allyn & Bacon.

Banks, J., & Banks, C. (2013). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (8th ed.).

Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Berghoff, B., Blackwell, S., & Wisehart, R. (2011). Using critical reflection to improve urban teacher preparation: A collaborative inquiry of three teacher educators. *Penn GSE Perspectives On Urban Education*, 8(2), 19-28.

Bryant, L., Moss, G., & Zijdemans Boudreau, A. (2015). Understanding poverty through race dialogues in teacher preparation. *Critical Questions in Education*, 6(1), 1-15.

Buck, R., & Deutsch, J. (2014). Effects of poverty on education. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 11(2), 1139-1148.

Bullock, L., Gable, R., Carrero, K., Lewis, C., Collins, E., Zolkowski, S., & Lusk, M. (2013).

Facing the challenges of today and the future: Ensuring successful outcomes for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Preventing School Failure*, 57(1), 2-6.

Byrd-Blake, M., Afolayan, M., Hunt, J., Fabunmi, M., Pryor, B., & Leander, R. (2010).

Morale of teachers in high poverty schools: A post-NCLB mixed methods analysis. *Education and Urban Society*, 42(4), 450-472.

CAEP. (2015a). *History of CAEP*. Retrieved from <http://www.caepnet.org/about/history>

CAEP. (2015b). *Standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.caepnet.org/standards/introduction>

Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). 2005 presidential address: The new teacher education: For better or for worse? *Educational Researcher*, 34(7), 3-17.

Cicchelli, T., & Cho, S. (2007). Teacher multicultural attitudes: Intern/teaching fellows in New York City. *Education and Urban Society*, 39(3), 370-381.

- Cochran-Smith, M. (1995). Uncertain allies: Understanding the boundaries of race and teaching. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(4), 541-570.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2000). Blind vision: Unlearning racism in teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 70(2), 157-190.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). 2005 Presidential Address: The new teacher education: For better or for worse? *Educational Researcher*, 34(7), 3-17.
- Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2005). Teaching as a profession: Lessons in teacher preparation and professional development. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 87(3), 237-240.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D., Gatlin, S., & Heilig, J. (2005). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, Teach for America, and teacher effectiveness. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 13(42), 1-51.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2014). Strengthening clinical preparation: The Holy Grail of teacher education. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 89(4), 547-561.
doi:10.1080/0161956X.2014.939009
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). Can value added add value to teacher evaluation?: *Educational Researcher*, 44(2), 132-137.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Research on teaching and teacher education and its influences on policy and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 45(2), 83-91.
doi:10.3102/0013189X16639597
- Delpit, L. D. (2012). *"Multiplication is for white people": Raising expectations for other people's children*. New York, NY: New Press/ Perseus Distribution.

- Emdin, C. (2016). *For white folks who teach in the hood-- and the rest of y'all too: Reality pedagogy and urban education*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Esteban-Guitart, M. (2016). *Funds of identity. Connecting meaningful learning experiences in and out of school*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Firestone, W. (1993). Alternative arguments for generalizing data as applied to qualitative research. *Educational Researcher*, 22(4), p. 16-23. doi: 10.3102/0013189X022004016
- Florida Department of Education. (2018). Title I, Part A: Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7767/urlt/1718TitleISchoolsList.pdf>
- Florida Health. (2010). *Florida's rural counties, 2010 U.S. Census* [Map]. Retrieved from http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/rural-health/_documents/ruralcountiespdf.12.pdf
- Forner, M. (2016). *Hardball leadership: How to achieve student academic success in a rural school district*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Fraser, J., & Watson, A. (2014). *Why clinical experiences and mentoring are replacing student teaching on the best campuses*. A White Paper. ERIC ED 562 067.
- Gall, M., Gall, J., & Borg, W. (2007). *Educational research: An introduction*. Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Goodman, W. (2001). *Living (and teaching) in an unjust world*. In W. Goodman (Ed.), *Living and teaching in an unjust world: New perspectives on multicultural education* (pp. 1-25). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- González, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Haberman, M., & Post, L. (1992). Does direct experience change education students' perceptions of lowincome minority students? *Midwest Educational Researcher*, 5(2), 29-31.
- Hensley, M. (2005). Empowering parents of multicultural backgrounds. In N. González, L. C. Moll, C. & Amanti, N. (Eds.), *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms* (pp. 143-151). Mahwah, NJ: Routledge.
- Hoffman, E. (2006). *Listening to student voices: Fifth graders' perceptions of their mathematics learning within the context of a mathematics reform effort*. Orlando, FL: University of Central Florida.
- Hollins, E. (2012). *Learning to teach in urban schools: The transition from preparation to practice*. NY: Routledge.
- Huysman, J. (2007). *Rural teacher satisfaction: An analysis of beliefs and attitudes of rural teachers' job satisfaction*. Orlando, FL: University of Central Florida.
- Hyland, N. (2005). Being a good teacher of black students: White teachers and unintentional racism. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 35(4), 429-459.
- Johnson, J., Showalter, D., Klein, R., & Lester, C. (2014). *Why rural matters 2013-2014: The condition of rural education in the 50 states*. Arlington, VA: Rural School and Community Trust.
- Jones, H. (2016). Discussing poverty with student teachers: The realities of dialogue. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 42(4), 468-482. doi:10.1080/02607476.2016.1215553.

- Keener, E. (2012). The truth about girls and boys: Challenging toxic stereotypes about our children. *Psychology Of Women Quarterly*, 36(3), 382-383.
- Kerssen-Griep, J., & Eifler, K. (2008). When cross-racial contact transforms intercultural communication competence: White novice teachers learn alongside their African American high school mentees. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 6(4), 251-269.
- Kincheloe, J. (2010). *Why a book on urban education?* In Steinberg, S. (Ed). *19 urban questions: Teaching in the city*. New York, NY: Peter Lang
- Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 16(1), 103-121.
- Kozleski, E. (2010). Culturally responsive teaching matters! *Equality matters: In learning, for life*. Retrieved from http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/sites/default/files/Website_files/CulturallyResponsiveTeaching-Matters.pdf
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that's just good teaching!: The case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Toward a theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2008). "Yes, but how do we do it?" *Practicing Culturally Relevant*

- Pedagogy*. In Ayers, W., Ladson-Billings, G., Michie, G., & Noguera, P. (Eds.) *City kids, city schools*. New York, NY: New Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dream-keepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lapan, S. D., Quartaroli, M. T., & Riemer, F. J. (2012). *Qualitative research [electronic resource]: An introduction to methods and designs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, R. E., Eckrich, L. T., Lackey, C., & Showalter, B. D. (2010). Pre-service teacher pathways to urban teaching: A partnership model for nurturing community-based urban teacher preparation. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 37(3), 101-122.
- Lin, M., & Bates, A. (2010). Home visits: How do they affect teachers' beliefs about teaching and diversity? *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(3), 179-185.
- Lizelle, B., & Alewyn, N. (2015). Exploring the meaning and origin of stereotypes amongst South African employees. *SA Journal Of Industrial Psychology*, 41(1), 1-13.
doi:10.4102/sajip.v41i1.1234
- Llopart, M., & Esteban-Guitart, M. (2018). Funds of knowledge in 21st century societies: Inclusive educational practices for under-represented students. A literature review. *Journal Of Curriculum Studies*, 50(2), 145-161.
- Llopart, M., Serra, J. M., & Esteban-Guitart, M. (2018). Teachers' perceptions of the benefits, limitations, and areas for improvement of the funds of knowledge approach. A qualitative study. *Teachers And Teaching*, 24(5), 571-583.
- Matsko, K., & Hammerness, K. (2014). Unpacking the "urban" in urban teacher education: Making a case for context-specific preparation. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65(2), 128-144.

- McKinney, S. E., Haberman, M., Stafford-Johnson, D., & Robinson, J. (2008). Developing teachers for high-poverty schools: The role of the internship experience. *Urban Education, 43*(1), 68-82.
- McMahon, M., Forde, C., & Dickson, B. (2015). Reshaping teacher education through the professional continuum. *Educational Review, 67*(2), 158-178.
doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.846298
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2017). *Urban*. Retrieved June 11, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/urban>.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2018). Norms. Retrieved June 21, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/norms>
- Miles, E., & Crisp, R. (2014). A meta-analysis test of the imagined contact hypothesis. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 17*(1), 3-26.
- Milner, H. (2012). But what is urban education? *Urban Education, 47*(3), 556-561.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice, 31*(2), 132.
- Moll, L. & Arnot-Hopffer, E. (2005). Sociocultural competence in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(3), 242-247.
- Morgan, D. (1995). Why things (sometimes) go wrong in focus groups. *Qualitative Health Research, 5*(4), 516-523.
- Morgan, D. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2013). *Scarcity: Why having too little means so much*. New York, NY: Times Books/Henry Holt.

- Mungal, A. (2016). Teach for America, relay graduate school, and the charter school networks: The making of a parallel education structure. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 24(12-18), 1-26.
- National Center for Children in Poverty. (2017). *Child poverty*. Retrieved from <http://www.nccp.org/topics/childpoverty.html>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2017). *Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp
- National Center on Education and the Economy (2017). *How do high performing education systems in other countries prepare and develop their teachers?* Retrieved from <http://blog.centerforpubliceducation.org/2017/06/08/how-do-high-performing-education-systems-in-other-countries-prepare-and-develop-their-teachers/>
- National Education Association. (2014). *Teacher residencies: Redefining preparation through partnerships. Report 2014*. Retrieved from <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Teacher-Residencies-2014.pdf>
- National Education Association. (2017). *Why cultural competence?* Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/home/39783.htm>
- NCATE. (2010). *Transforming teacher education through clinical practice: A national strategy to prepare effective teachers*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncate.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zzeiB1OoqPk%3d&tabid=715>
- Nelson, A. (2016). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act at fifty: A changing federal role in American education. *History of Education Quarterly*, 56(2), 358-361.
- Nieli, R. K. (2008). Diversity's discontents: The "contact hypothesis" exploded. *Academic Questions*, 21(4), 409-430.

- Nolan, J. (2017). Kernels of truth yield bushels of stereotypes. *The Times Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.thetimes-tribune.com/opinion/kernels-of-truth-yield-bushels-of-stereotypes-1.2155443>
- O'Connor, C., Mueller, J., & Neal, A. (2014). *Student Resilience in Urban America*. In Milner, H. & Lomotey, K. (Eds.). *Handbook of urban education*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Office of Education. (1971). *Questions and answers: Programs for educationally deprived children under ESEA Title I, 1971*. ERIC ED 072 155.
- Oortwijn, M. B., Boekaerts, M., Vedder, P., & Fortuin, J. (2008). The impact of a cooperative learning experience on pupils' popularity, non-cooperativeness, and interethnic bias in multiethnic elementary schools. *Educational Psychology, 28*(2), 211-221.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Paul, A. (1998). Where bias begins: The truth about stereotypes. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/199805/where-bias-begins-the-truth-about-stereotypes>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2000). Does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? *Recent meta-analytic findings*. In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 93-114). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pettigrew, T.F. (2004). Justice deferred - A half century after Brown v. Board of Education. *American Psychologist, 59*(6), 521-529.
- Pettigrew, T.F., & Tropp, L.R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*(5), 751-783.

- Pinto, L. (2013). *From discipline to culturally responsive engagement: 45 classroom management strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Polakow, V. (2007). In the shadows of the ownership society: Homeless children and their families. In S. Books, S. Books (Eds.). *Invisible children in the society and its schools*, (3rd Ed.) (pp. 39-62). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pomerance, L. (2017). States can insist prep programs take steps to make student teaching more effective. *National Council on Teacher Quality*. Retrieved from <http://www.nctq.org/commentary/teacherPrep/profiles.do?id=368>
- Project Implicit. (2011a). *About the IAT*. Retrieved from <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html>
- Project Implicit. (2011b). Frequently asked questions. Retrieved from <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/faqs.html#faq1>
- Rajagopal, K. (2011) *Create success: Unlocking the potential of urban students*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Rodgers, B. L. & Cowles, K. V. (1993). The qualitative research audit trail: A complex collection of documentation. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 16(3), 219–226.
doi:10.1002/nur.4770160309
- Rodriguez, G.M. (2013). Power and agency in education: Exploring the pedagogical dimensions of funds of knowledge. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(2), 87-120.
- Rosenthal, R., Jacobson, L., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. New York, NY: Holt.
- Rosenthal, M. (2016). Methodology matters: Qualitative research methods: Why, when, and

- how to conduct interviews and focus groups in pharmacy research. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 8(4), 509-516. doi:10.1016/j.cptl.2016.03.021
- Roza, M. & Lake, R. (2015). *Title I: Time to get it right*. Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education & Edunomics.
- Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd Ed.). London, UK: Sage.
- Saldana, J., Huberman, A., & Miles, M. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Slattery, P. (2013). *Curriculum development in the postmodern era* (3rd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools: Research and the overwhelming presence of Whiteness. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52(2), 94-106.
- Sousa, S., & Armor, D. (2016). The effectiveness of Title I: Synthesis of national-level evidence from 1966 to 2013. *Universal Journal Of Educational Research*, 4(1), 205-311.
- Stewart, D., Shamdasani, P. (1990). *Focus group: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Stewart, D., Shamdasani, P., & Rook, D. (2007). *Focus groups: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tatto, M., Savage, C., Liao, W., Marshall, S., Goldblatt, P., & Medel Contreras, L. (2016). The emergence of high-stakes accountability policies in teacher preparation: An examination of the U.S. Department of Education's proposed regulations. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 24(21), 1-54. doi:10.14507/epaa.24.2322

- Taylor, S., & Sobel, D. (2011). *Culturally responsive pedagogy: Teaching like our students' lives matter*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing.
- Telgen, D. (2005). *Brown v. Board of Education*. Detroit, MI: Omnigraphics.
- Templeton, B. (2013). Why is that child so rude? *Educational Leadership*, 70(8), 72-74.
- The White House. (2015). *Fact sheet: Congress acts to fix No Child Left Behind*. *Statement & releases*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-pressoffice/2015/12/03/fact-sheet-congress-acts-fix-no-child-left-behind>
- Tieken, M. C. (2014). *Why rural schools matter*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2012). Bracketing in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice*, 11(1), 80-96. doi:10.1177/1473325010368316.
- U.S. Department of Education. (1997). *America's teachers: Profile of a profession, 1993-94*. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs97/97460.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Title I – Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015a). *Laws & guidance*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/landing.jhtml?src=ln>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015b). *Programs: Improving basic programs operated by local educational agencies (Title I, Part A)*. Retrieved from: <http://www2.ed.gov>.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *The state of racial diversity in the educator workforce*. Retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2017). *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. Retrieved from

<https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>

- van der Klaauw, W. (2008). Breaking the link between poverty and low student achievement: An evaluation of Title I. *Journal Of Econometrics*, 142(2), 731-756.
doi:10.1016/j.jeconom.2007.05.007
- Walker-Dalhouse, D., & Risko, V. (2008). Homelessness, poverty, and children's literacy development. *Reading Teacher*, 62(1), 84-86.
- Weiner, L. (2003). Why is classroom management so vexing to urban teachers? *Theory into Practice*, 42(4), 305-312.
- Wernet, S., Follman, C., Magueja, C., & Moore-Chambers, R. (2003). Building bridges and improving racial harmony: An evaluation of the bridges across racial polarization program. *Social Thought*, 22(2/3), 63-79. doi: 10.1080/15426432.2003.9960342
- White, M., & Murray, J. (2016). Seeing disadvantage in schools: Exploring student teachers' perceptions of poverty and disadvantage using visual pedagogy. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 42(4), 500-515.