STUDENT TEACHING IN THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

By

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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STUDENT TEACHING IN THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

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Student teaching experiences lie at the heart of many teacher education programs. The age of accountability, however, potentially jeopardizes the opportunities for teacher candidates to transform theory and knowledge into practice in authentic contexts. Knowledge about the role accountability plays in teacher preparation is particularly important as universities respond to calls to usher teacher preparation towards a clinical model. This study explores how the increased spotlight on high-stakes standardized testing has shaped student teaching in Florida and addresses the following question: What are teacher educators' perceptions of the impact of accountability measures on student teaching experience in teacher education programs? The research is positioned within a theoretical framework that combines governmentality, surveillance theory, and incentive theory to help make sense of how the sociopolitical context of accountability has shaped student teaching.

In order to address the research question, semi-structured interviews were conducted with sixteen teacher educators and student teaching coordinators. These participants represented nine of the thirteen CAEP-accredited teacher preparation institutions in Florida.

Findings suggest that accountability mandates have shifted the student teaching landscape across the K-20 spectrum. Out of fear of interns' effects on student achievement, many principals and mentor teachers increasingly deny internship placements. Further, the ways that tests have constrained teachers' instruction has had a ripple effect on interns' opportunities to teach and design instruction. With test scores now linked to their evaluations, mentor teachers are reluctant to relinquish control of their classrooms, particularly in heavily tested subjects. The participants in this study also expressed concern that devices such as pacing guides and scripted curricula are preventing novices from developing the professional skills they need to be adaptive teachers.

This study suggests that the age of accountability has led to a culture of anxiety that has consequential outcomes on student teaching. Moreover, student teaching socializes teacher candidates into a career in which teachers' professionalism is questioned, usurped, and highly managed. Implications for teacher educators include the need to consider coteaching as a potential antidote to the culture of anxiety and to develop strategies for helping student teachers negotiate the terrain.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The body of research on the connection between teachers and student learning has led some scholars to contend that increasing teacher effectiveness will improve education more than any other factor (see Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2004; Rowan, Correnti, & Miller, 2002; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997). This assertion rests on evidence suggesting that students taught by highly effective teachers learn more and achieve at higher levels than those taught by less effective teachers (e.g., Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Jordan, Mendro, & Weerasinghe, 1997). Accordingly, efforts to improve student learning also need to focus on teacher learning and improvement. With implications for improving teacher effectiveness, studies on teacher learning show that authentic learning experiences can support pre- or early-service teachers' development of a more expert practice (Darling-Hammond & Macdonald, 2000; Koppich, 2000; Snyder, 2000). In the realm of traditional teacher preparation, such authentic learning experiences occur within the context of student teaching.

Based on the solid relationship between years of teaching experience and teacher effectiveness (Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor, 2007; Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2006), student teaching experience lies at the heart of many teacher education programs. Strong partnerships between university teacher preparation programs and schools play a vital role in this endeavor (Clifford & Millar, 2007; Grossman, 2010; Howey & Zimpher, 2010; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2010). University-based preparation programs rely on the willingness of schools and teachers to open their classroom doors to teacher candidates as they learn

to transform theory and knowledge into practice in authentic contexts (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008). Mentor teachers play a particularly important role in preparing future teachers by modeling pedagogical thinking, providing timely and relevant feedback, granting opportunities to teach and design curriculum, and challenging assumptions about teaching and learning in the context of authentic classrooms (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Clark, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2014; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007; Woullard & Coats, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

The age of accountability, however, potentially jeopardizes the quality of student teaching experiences and schools' and mentor teachers' readiness to host future teachers in their classrooms. Florida's A+ Plan for Education (1999) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002) brought accountability into sharp focus, as states began to hold schools responsible for students' achievement results by threatening sanctions if students do not make adequate yearly progress. In line with the goals of the federal Race to the Top Initiative launched in 2009, nearly half of states, including Florida, currently require teacher evaluations be based on student learning gains and in fourteen of these states, evaluations can lead to teacher dismissal (National Council on Teacher Quality [NCTQ], 2011a). With the government's watchful eye on students' progress and teachers' jobs potentially on the line, policymakers and school leaders need to understand how the age of accountability affects the preparation of future teachers. This study explores how the increased spotlight on high-stakes standardized testing has shaped student teaching in Florida's teacher education programs.

Knowledge about the role accountability plays in teacher preparation is particularly important as universities respond to calls to usher teacher preparation

towards a clinical model based in real classrooms (Grossman, 2010; NCATE, 2010; NCTQ, 2011b; US Department Of Education [US DOE], 2011). While traditional student teaching experiences typically last between 10 and 14 weeks (NCATE, 2010) and are disconnected from university coursework, the clinical model places classroom-based experiences at the center of teacher education programs. However, such transformation towards clinical models will not be possible if principals and practicing teachers are reluctant to open their classrooms and grant teaching responsibility to student teachers due to the potential impact of increased accountability. The personnel who coordinate teacher preparation programs are uniquely positioned to help us understand the ways in which student teaching experiences may have changed as a result of accountability mandates.

This dissertation describes the ways in which teacher educators across Florida have seen student teaching shift in response to increasing mandates related to high-stakes testing. Chapter 1 presents the purpose of the study, the research question, and relevant background information related to accountability mandates in Florida. Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to student teaching, as well as accountability's impacts on teacher education. Within this chapter I also provide an explanation of the theoretical framework guiding the study. In Chapter 3, I describe the study's data collection and analysis methods. Chapters 4 reports the findings of the study. It details the ways in which both K-12 educators and teacher educators have had to navigate shifting demands in this high-stakes climate. Further, it describes how pressures related to accountability have led to challenges in securing student placements, as well as constrained student teachers' opportunities to teach and design instruction. The chapter

concludes with a discussion of how teacher educators are adapting and responding to the age of accountability. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the dissertation with implications for teacher educators and future research.

Definition of Terms

Before continuing, it is necessary to explicitly state the ways in which I use particular terms throughout this dissertation. First, the phrase *age of accountability* and variants of it refer to the totality of mandates related to holding teachers, schools, and teacher education programs accountable for student learning. The age of accountability encompasses aspects of education such as mandated standards, high-stakes tests, policies dictating incentives and sanctions related to those tests, and so on.

Preservice teachers and *teacher candidates* both refer to individuals enrolled in a teacher education program.

Student teaching is the culminating experience preservice teachers experience in traditional teacher preparation programs as they work in K-12 classrooms full-time alongside a mentor teacher. In Florida, student teaching lasts at least ten weeks (NCTQ, 2013). Oftentimes, student teaching is used interchangeably with *internships*. As such, preservice teachers may be referred to as both *student teachers* and *interns* to refer to their role as an apprentice in a mentor teacher's classroom. *Student teaching* will be defined as clinical experiences that last at least eight weeks. This is an important point to make, as some preservice teachers spend short periods of time in schools in which their purpose is mostly to observe and assist. Student teaching, however, necessitates that the preservice teacher is embedded in the classroom and takes responsibility for some of the teaching, assessing, and managing of the classroom.

Student teaching will be used interchangeably with *internships* throughout this dissertation.

The terms *mentor teacher* and *cooperating teacher* will be used interchangeably, as well. I favor the term *mentor teacher* because it positions teachers as playing an important role in providing guidance and support to student teachers. The term *mentor teacher*, while still used by many in the field, is growing out of favor for its connotation that the teacher's role is to meet the needs of the teacher preparation program. This shift in language is reflected in the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) Blue Ribbon Report (2010), which solely uses the term *mentor teacher*. Throughout this dissertation, I will use *mentor teacher* except for when I am quoting a participant or research.

The History of High-Stakes Testing in Florida

To provide a context for understanding how accountability has affected student teaching in Florida, this section provides an overview of the state's history with high-stakes testing and how it fits within the larger national context. It begins with a summary of Florida's legislative mandates related to the standards students are supposed to learn and how they have been tested over the last twenty years. Next it explains the "high-stakes" in testing: incentives and sanctions aimed at schools and teachers as they are held accountable for student achievement. Due to federal and state mandates, in recent years value added growth models (VAM scores) have been used to evaluate teachers, a move that has consequences for Florida teachers' salaries and job security. The section ends by explaining how teacher preparation programs are also being held accountable for K-12 students' learning growth.

Twenty Years of Reform: Standards, FCATs, and the A+ Plan for Education

Florida forged its own high-stakes accountability path years before No Child Left Behind (2002) became federal law. As early as 1995, the state started to identify critically low performing schools based on norm-referenced tests and its own High School Competency Test (FL Department of Education [FL DOE], 2007). After Florida adopted the Sunshine State Standards in 1996, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) was developed to assess students' proficiency in mathematics and reading and was administered for the first time in 1998.

Student performance on the FCAT lies at the heart of Florida's enduring and aggressive A+ Plan for Education, which was signed into law in 1999. Pursuant to the A+ Plan for Education, the state ranks schools by letter grades in an effort to communicate to the public about how well schools are performing. The law rests on the premise that students should make at least one year's growth each academic year. The formula for letter grade determination has shifted numerous times in the years since the law passed. At the law's inception in 1999, schools received grades based on the percentage of students scoring at grade level in mathematics, reading, and writing. By 2002, when three years' worth of assessment data were available, the state developed a system to assess individual student growth over time. This key measurement became a core component of the state's grading system, and also led to increased numbers of schools receiving "F" grades (FL DOE, 2007). The grading formula underwent another revision in 2006, as the learning gains of the lowest 25% of students became another grading criterion. Grades hinge on the improvement of the most struggling students, as school grades decrease if the lowest performing students do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading and math or if at least 75% of students do not score

satisfactory or higher on the FCAT reading test. Since 2006, school grades continue to be based primarily on student achievement in math, reading, science, and writing; students' annual learning gains in math and reading; and the improvement of students in the lowest quartile.

In an effort to increase the rigor of the grade-level expectations, in 2011 Florida replaced its previous standards with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and brought with it a new version of the FCAT, FCAT 2.0. This new assessment debuted with FCAT 2.0 reading and mathematics in 2011, eventually adding science and writing by 2013. In addition to the FCAT 2.0, starting in 2011 student performance on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards is now assessed by computerized end-of-course exams. Currently the state administers end of course exams for Algebra I, Biology I, Geometry, U.S. History, and Civics.

Shortly after the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards were implemented and assessed, the State of Florida once again revised its expectations of what students should know and be able to do when it joined forty other states in the adoption of the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010. These standards, which stress college- and career-readiness, are a complete overhaul of Florida's former English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards and with them came new assessments for students. Florida planned to phase in the CCSS starting in kindergarten classrooms during the 2011-2012 school year, with full K-12 implementation in 2014-2015. This plan, however, was derailed due to political concerns.

Despite his initial enthusiasm for the CCSS, by 2013 Florida governor Rick Scott felt pressure from conservative groups who feared that the CCSS were a federal intrusion on local school control (McGrory, 2014). He thus decided to pull Florida out of the consortium of states who developed the CCSS and issued an executive order in September, 2013 to terminate Florida's relationship with the organization charged with assessing CCSS in Florida, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) (Fla. Executive Order No. 13-276, 2013). In early 2014 the state came out with its own version of college- and career-readiness standards dubbed the Florida State Standards, which are nearly identical to the CCSS. In March 2014 Florida DOE Commissioner Pam Stewart announced her selection of the non-profit group American Institutes for Research (AIR) to create the assessment that would be used in the upcoming 2014-2015 school year to assess students' proficiency in the ELA and mathematics Florida Standards (FL DOE 2014a). These fresh standards are being implemented for the first time during the 2014-15 school year, and AIR has developed the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA), scheduled to be administered for the first time in Spring, 2014, when students in grades 3-11 will take the ELA FSA and students in grades 3-8 will take the mathematics FSA.

In light of the little time teachers and schools have had to transition to these new standards and the upcoming assessments, some fear that school grades are going to be negatively affected (Sherman, 2014). As a result, the Florida House initially passed a bill in spring 2014 that grants a one-year transition as schools adjust to the new standards and assessments. According to this legislation, schools will still receive grades, but schools receiving low grades for the 2014-2015 school year will not be

penalized. After many schools encountered technological problems with administering the FSA in March 2015, the Florida Senate proposed a bill in Aril 2015 that would suspend the use of FSA test scores for evaluating teachers or determining school grades until an independent review of the tests is completed (McGrory & Solochek, 2015).

School-Based Incentives and Sanctions

In Florida, the A+ Plan for Education is more than simply a ranking system for schools, as it also stipulates incentives and sanctions for schools based on adequate yearly progress (Greene, Winters, & Forster, 2004). Schools receiving an "A" letter grade or improving by at least one letter grade receive cash rewards. In 2012, over $135 million was awarded to schools meeting the school recognition criteria (FL DOE, 2013). On the other hand, schools receiving an "F" grade two years in a four-year period are identified as "needs improvement" schools in accordance with NCLB. Under this rating, schools must provide additional services to students and allow transfers to other schools. If a school continuously falls in the "needs improvement" category, the state can order a restructuring of the school. Options for restructuring schools include opening the school as a charter school, replacing all or most of the faculty and administration, or granting power to a private entity to operate the school.

The Use of Value Added Models to Evaluate Teacher Effectiveness

Beyond using test scores to assess school-wide quality, many states, including Florida, have recently moved to using test scores to determine individual teacher effectiveness. Aiming to attribute student growth over the course of an academic year to an individual teacher's effectiveness, value added growth models (VAM) gauge teachers' effects on students' progress by comparing a student's projected and actual

scores to reveal his learning growth. In its statement on using VAM scores to measure educational effectiveness, The American Statistical Association (2014) describes VAM scores as predicting “the ‘value’ a teacher would add to student achievement growth, as measured by standardized test scores, if each teacher taught comparable students under the same conditions” (p. 3).

Race to the Top and Florida’s Senate Bill 6. VAM scores are a key component of the federal government’s Race to the Top Act (2011). Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Florida has received $700 million in Race to the Top funds, which have been used to finance an overhaul of the state’s teacher evaluation system (US DOE, 2013). This move towards using VAM scores to determine teacher effectiveness coincided with the passing of Florida’s Student Success Act in 2011, frequently referred to as Senate Bill 6 (Florida Senate, 2011). Arguing that the previous evaluation system relies “on a completely subjective review and does not sufficiently, if at all, take the performance of students into consideration in determining the effectiveness of instructional staff” (FL DOE, 2011, p. 1), the state moved towards using VAM scores to tie teacher effectiveness to student performance. This law and Race to the Top require that 50% of teachers’ evaluations depend upon their students’ learning growth, as measured by standardized test scores (US DOE, 2013). Race to the Top also requires states to expand their teacher evaluation system to include “highly effective,” “effective,” “needs improvement,” and “ineffective” (Dixon, 2011).

The evaluation system under Florida’s Student Success Act (Florida Senate, 2011) will have lasting effects on teachers’ careers. Beginning in the 2011-2012 school

year, teachers' evaluations and annual contracts depend on VAM scores. Their annual contracts will not be renewed upon one of four conditions: the teacher receives a) two consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations; b) two unsatisfactory evaluations in a three-year period; c) three consecutive needs improvement evaluations; or d) a combination of three unsatisfactory or needs improvement evaluations in three consecutive years.

Concerns over VAM scores. The move towards using VAM scores to measure teachers' effectiveness has been met with much controversy. Weighing in on the debate, the American Statistical Association (2014) recently released a statement cautioning the use of VAM scores for high-stakes purposes. Proclaiming that "VAMs are only as good as the data fed into them" (p. 4), the ASA argues that test scores do not accurately measure all a teacher offers students and the school, nor do they accurately measure students' long-term learning. The organization explains that the scores measure correlation, not causation, and that any correlation between teacher effectiveness and students' scores may be due to factors unrelated to the teacher and not captured by the model. Further, they contend that the statistical models are highly complex and come with noteworthy limitations that should be acknowledged and thus require extraordinary expertise and precision when attached to high-stakes, such as teachers' evaluations. The ASA warns that placing too much weight on any singular quantitative measure can be damaging to improving the quality of teaching and can lead to unintended consequences such as the narrowing of the curriculum or difficulty in retaining teachers if they fear their VAM scores will suffer at hard-to-staff schools. Despite resounding concerns raised by ASA, the Economic Policy Institute (Baker et al., 2010), the American Federation of Teachers (Weingarten, 2014) and scholars (Amrein-

Beardsley, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2013; Ravitch, 2013), VAM scores remain a predominant measure in the evaluation of teachers today.

Federal Legislation and No Child Left Behind

Florida was already in the midst of what has been dubbed “the nation’s most aggressive test-based accountability measure” (Greene et al., 2004, p. 1124) when No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was passed in 2002. According to the U. S. Department of Education (2004), this reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act aimed to continue “the legacy of the *Brown v. Board* decision by creating an education system that is more inclusive, responsive, and fair” (p. 13) by holding schools accountable for students’ learning.

As Florida already had many of NCLB’s requirements in place when the law was passed, it only needed to make a few adjustments under the new federal law. With NCLB’s goal of 100% proficiency in reading and math for all student subgroups by the 2013-2014 school year, the FCAT was supposed to be used as a diagnostic tool to assist schools in identifying students who need extra academic support and which schools were making AYP (Wald & Losen, 2007). Under NCLB, assessment results are disaggregated by race and socio-economic status in an effort to highlight schools that are not meeting all student subgroups’ needs. Making AYP depends on students in the subgroups testing proficient in reading or math based on annual proficiency targets determined by NCLB.

In 2011, the federal government took steps to assuage two major concerns on the horizon related to NCLB’s legislation that affected both federal and state departments of education. First, the 2013-2014 deadline for 100% proficiency in math and reading was quickly approaching, yet many schools were not meeting the federal

test score targets. The other main concern related to the fact that there were discrepancies between the federal law's requirements and those of many state governments. These two problems were evident in Florida where the state's accountability was governed by two conflicting systems (FL DOE, 2014b). This meant that by 2011, 89% percent of Florida's schools did not make the projected test score targets based on NCLB's criteria, although 58% of schools received an A rating under Florida's school grading system (Dillon, 2011).

The convergence of these problems led U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to issue an opportunity for states to apply for NCLB waivers. In an op-ed piece for *Politico* magazine, Duncan (2011) wrote, "NCLB is creating a slow-motion educational train wreck for children, parents and teachers" (para. 5). He went on to explain that NCLB:

> makes no distinction between a high-performing school with one or two subgroups underperforming and a low-performing school where everyone is struggling. As a result, states and districts are spending billions of dollars each year on one-size-fits-all mandates dictated from Washington rather than on locally tailored solutions that effectively reach the students most at risk and close achievement gaps. (para. 6)

Florida was one of the first states to receive NCLB waivers in 2012. Today 41 other states and the District of Columbia have received waivers as well. Waivers eradicate the requirement for schools to use AYP to identify struggling schools and instead allow states' accountability systems to prevail. Thus, Florida's grading system now supersedes NCLB mandates. To conform to waiver requirements, Florida changed its grading formula such that 25% of a school's students must read on grade level or else the school would receive an "F" grade (FL DOE, 2014b).

Florida's standards, the accompanying tests, and the resulting school grades have undergone many iterations in the past two decades. The present school year (2014-2015) has been particularly challenging with the introduction of brand new standards and testing. Teachers and schools are scrambling to make sense of these changes, not only because they affect how teaching and learning are facilitated in their classrooms, but because of the high stakes attached to them.

Holding Teacher Education Programs Accountable for K-12 Student Learning

K-12 teachers and schools are not alone when it comes to being held accountable for students' learning, as teacher education programs now face increased pressure to use VAM scores to prove that their graduates are effective teachers (Henry, Kershaw, Zulli, & Smith, 2012). Traditionally national accreditation organizations such as The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)[1] have evaluated teacher education programs based on a variety of components including coursework and types of field experiences offered (NCATE, 2008). Perhaps surprisingly, such evaluations have not included a direct link between preparation programs and the academic success of the students taught by the programs' graduates. The federal government's Race to the Top initiative, however, ushered in a new era of accountability for teacher education programs by calling for them to:

> (i) Link student achievement and student growth…data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State. (U.S. Department of Education, 2010, pp. 19504-19505)

[1] CAEP was formerly known as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 2013 NCATE consolidated with the Teacher Education Accreditation Council to form CAEP. Throughout this dissertation, CAEP will be used except when referring to a document published or commissioned under the name of NCATE.

In light of this mandate, Florida now requires teacher preparation programs to report the performance of K-12 students, as determined by the state's learning growth formula, who are assigned to the program's graduates (Florida State Statutes, 2014). Furthermore, teachers receiving an evaluation rating of "developing" or "unsatisfactory" within their first two years after completing a program "shall be provided additional training by the teacher preparation program at no expense to the educator or the employer if requested by the employing school district." Much as VAM scores are criticized as a way of assessing effective teachers, some caution that this method of evaluating teacher preparation programs is ineffective and misguided (Floden, 2012; Ginsberg & Kingston, 2014).

In today's educational climate, Florida's teacher preparation programs and the teachers they graduate are being held accountable for student achievement as measured by standardized tests, tests which have undergone several iterations in recent years. Teachers' job security and salaries are tied to such accountability measures, as are schools' funding and reputations. With these high-stakes in mind, this study seeks to understand how student teaching may be affected by this sociopolitical context.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

Some anecdotal evidence suggests that NCLB has had negative effects on schools' willingness to host student teachers (Selwyn, 2007). Other studies have found that preservice teachers feel a disconnection between the pedagogy espoused by their university instructors and the pedagogy typified by test preparation that their mentor teachers expect them to use (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Brown, 2010; Costigan, 2002;

Stillman & Anderson, 2011). In their study of one preservice teacher's experience teaching second grade language arts, Stillman and Anderson (2011) found that the preservice teacher experienced tension in trying to enact student-centered pedagogies in a school that required her to teach a mandated and scripted curriculum. In an earlier study of six student teachers' experiences in high-needs schools, Anderson and Stillman (2010) reported that the pressures to compromise hands-on learning and critical thinking in favor of independent work and test preparation were particularly strong in schools that were underperforming as determined by high-stakes tests. Similar findings related to teaching compromises emerged in Costigan's (2002) study on how six new teachers navigated the high-stakes testing environment after graduating from a teacher preparation program. Reflecting on their student teaching experiences, participants shared that they were required to teach test preparation daily, which clearly disappointed their university supervisors during observations. The results in these studies, while important contributions to the field, were incidental to the focus of the research. Further, because NCLB mandates that students begin standardized testing in the third grade, the vast majority of related research focuses on elementary classrooms and teachers (see Bushnell, 2003; Finnigan & Gross, 2007; McCarthey, 2008; Vernaza, 2012). There has yet to be a purposeful investigation devoted to understanding how accountability measures have affected K-12 student teaching in broad and complex ways. In the hopes of shedding light on this aspect of teacher education, the research question guiding this study is:

> What are teacher educators' perceptions of the impact of accountability measures on student teaching experiences in teacher education programs?

In Chapter 2 I provide a review of the literature and an explanation of the theoretical framework in order to establish the foundation upon which this dissertation's investigation rests.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study was designed to understand how teacher educators across Florida perceive how state and federal accountability mandates have affected student teaching experiences in their teacher preparation programs. This chapter, therefore, presents a review of the literature related to student teaching and accountability and provides the theoretical framework used to explain the issues inherent in this investigation. It begins with an explanation of the role student teaching plays in teacher preparation and some of the salient features of quality student teaching experiences. I then introduce the theoretical framework that provides a lens through which to understand how high-stakes mandates influence educators' behaviors broadly and student teaching in particular. Recent scholarship on mandates, such as the use of students' test scores to measure teacher effectiveness and pay-for-performance programs, is briefly reviewed. Finally, literature on the ways in which teachers have responded to these mandates and how teacher preparation has been impacted will be shared.

The Role of Student Teaching Experiences in Teacher Learning

Like their students, teachers learn by doing, reflecting, collaborating, and analyzing their work (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Basing preservice teachers' learning in authentic classroom settings builds on what is known about the role of situated cognition in teacher learning (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Bransford, Derry, Berliner, & Hammerness, 2005; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Cognitive psychology suggests that knowledge cannot be separated from the contexts and activities in which it is developed (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In other words, *what* we learn is inextricably linked to *how* we

learn it. Teaching preservice teachers new skills and methods alone will not result in their learning of teaching behaviors that are different from how they were taught. In order to shift their knowledge, learning must be grounded in authentic teaching experiences in which teachers can observe, enact, and reflect on their new learning (AACTE, 2010; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; M. Levine, 2010). Clinical experiences ranging from short practicums to student teaching allow novices to do what Ball and Cohen (1999) refer to as "learning about practice in and from practice" (p. 10). Because teaching is a highly complex activity requiring teachers to simultaneously experiment, assess, and improvise their instruction, Ball and Cohen argue:

> [P]ractice cannot be wholly equipped by some well-considered body of knowledge. Teaching occurs in particulars—particular students interacting with particular teachers over particular ideas in particular circumstances…much of what [teachers] have to learn must be learned in and from practice rather than in preparing for practice. (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 10)

This is not to discredit the need for teacher preparation programs to equip preservice teachers with a foundation of pedagogical knowledge. In their brief for the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, Alter and Coggshall (2009) compared teachers' work to that of other clinical practice professionals, such as medical doctors, noting that education for clinical practice first relies on an academic grounding in both subject matter and an understanding of how children learn. This forms a conceptual base upon which teachers can apply their learning to the "particulars" of teaching they experience through clinical practice.

Such experiences also help preservice teachers with the problem of enactment (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hammerness et al., 2005; Kennedy, 1999). In order to overcome the obstacle of transforming theory into practice, novices need authentic

experiences in which to practice and mentors with whom to reflect on what they are learning. Enactment has been difficult for many novices because the theory and methods they learn in the university setting are too often isolated from actual practice. Student teaching experiences thus help preservice teachers “create bridges between the universal terms of theory and the gritty particularities of situated practice” (Shulman, 1998, p. 519).

Furthermore, student teaching plays a key role in helping novices shift from being a student to becoming a teacher. Preservice teachers come to the field with notions about teaching they have developed in their experiences as students (Cole & Knowles, 1993). Lortie (1975) called this an “apprenticeship of observation” (p. 61), describing how the many years novices have spent observing their own K-12 teachers obfuscates their understanding of the myriad skills involved in good teaching. This phenomenon stands in contrast to other clinical practice professions, such as medicine or law, in which novices enter their field with an awareness of how much they do not yet know. Thus, student teaching experiences can play a critical role in (re)shaping what preservice teachers know about teaching (AACTE, 2010; Fosnot, 1996; Graber, 1996; Gunstone, Slattery, Baird, & Northfield, 1993; NCATE, 2008). Without careful mentoring and instruction during these experiences, preservice teachers run the risk of falling back on the ways they were taught themselves (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

With a firm belief in the need for teachers to learn in the context of schools, NCATE (2010) recently called for teacher education in the United States to be “turned upside down” (p. ii), with more emphasis to be placed on clinical training and less on coursework that is disconnected from real students and schools. Working in the

dynamic setting of real schools allows teacher candidates the opportunity to cultivate the skills and dispositions needed to be effective teachers. While pedagogical skills and content knowledge are undoubtedly key aspects of teacher preparation, experienced and novice teachers alike say the opportunity to work in schools constitutes the most important part of their preparation (A. Levine, 2006; NCATE, 2010; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002).

Relying on the importance of situated cognition—the idea that the conditions in which we learn affect what we learn—some scholars believe strong student teaching experiences should allow for candidates to gradually assume responsibility for the classroom so they are better prepared to take the helm in their future classrooms (Hammerness et al., 2005; LePage et al., 2005). In fact, NCATE's Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions (2008) denotes that "clinical experience should allow candidates to assume the roles for which they are preparing under the supervision of clinical faculty" (p. 32). AACTE (2010) outlines that these experiences should include "observing, assessing, diagnosing, prescribing, and adjusting practice to reflect new knowledge" (p. 1) in K-12 classrooms alongside mentor teachers.

The opportunity to teach independently under the instructional mentorship of a mentor teacher is vital to quality student teaching experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Fives et al., 2007; Grossman, 2010; A. Levine, 2006). In her case study of seven exemplary teacher education programs across the U.S., Darling-Hammond (2006) found that all of the programs sequenced field experiences so that preservice teachers would gradually assume responsibility in the classroom by the time they completed

student teaching. Levine's (2006) extensive study of over 1,200 teacher education programs in the U.S. found similar results. The study included surveys of college deans, education program faculty, alumni, and school principals, in addition to 28 case studies of education programs. He ranked approximately a quarter of the programs in his study as exemplary based on nine criteria, including balance between theory and practice and curricular coherence. Four of these programs were profiled in the report, each of which included a student teaching experience in which teacher candidates managed the class and planned and taught their own lessons. The opportunities to practice what they learned in their methods classes were an important aspect of the field experience for the student teachers. A study conducted by Fives et al. (2007) further linked student teachers' efficacy with their opportunities to practice teaching in the context of a highly supportive cooperating teacher. Surveys of nearly fifty teacher candidates completing student teaching in elementary and secondary schools showed that high levels of guidance and support from mentor teachers lead to a significantly higher level of efficacy in the intern's instructional practices.

Teacher preparation programs structure student teaching in a host of forms, ranging from two-month student teaching experiences to year-long apprenticeships. As many programs are now lengthening their student teaching experiences from one semester to a full year, questions still remain about the optimal duration of clinical experiences. For example, AACTE (2010) proposes that while clinical practice should ideally last a year, the minimum requirement should be one semester (or 450 hours). Others call for at least 30 weeks of extended clinical experience interwoven with coursework (Hammerness et al., 2005). In response to the push to extend clinical

experiences, Grossman (2010) points out, “Although there is evidence that a lack of student teaching experience is negatively related to student achievement (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2008), it does not necessarily follow that more experience is always better” (p. 3).

A growing body of scholarship echoes the suggestion that it is not simply the length of a clinical experience that matters, but rather its quality (Chambers & Hardy, 2005; Grossman, 2010; Moore, 2010; Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012). In the first large-scale study of its kind, between 2008 and 2010 Ronfeldt and Reininger (2012) surveyed 1,000 preservice teachers in one urban district directly before and after their student teaching experiences to understand how the length and perceived quality of student teaching affected their preparedness, efficacy, and career plans. The findings show that “as length of student teaching increases, the effect of student teaching quality weakens” (p. 1099). Student teaching quality was most significant and greatest in magnitude for the shortest teaching experiences (between one and twelve weeks long). Further, the internship length had no significant effect on career plans nor teachers’ efficacy. These results resonate with the findings in Chambers and Hardy’s (2005) study of 55 secondary preservice teachers who participated in either a semester or yearlong internship in Texas. Surveys taken at the conclusion of the field experiences show no difference in student teachers’ efficacy or classroom management styles.

Even a traditionally short experience with a poor mentor teacher or in a poorly functioning school can be disadvantageous to preservice teachers’ development, as they learn more about what *not* to do, rather than what *to* do (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Grossman, 2010). This was a major concern in

Anderson and Stillman's (2013) literature review of teacher preparation for urban and high-needs contexts. The authors posit that field experiences can play critical role in challenging and changing preservice teachers' beliefs and skills. But when internships are not well structured they can actually backfire and perpetuate deficit thinking, which was evidenced in their own study of their student teachers' opportunities to teach and learn in urban placements (Anderson & Stillman, 2010). Focusing on the experiences of three teacher candidates in an east coast program and three from a west coast program, they found that while the student teachers formed relationships with students and gained some knowledge about urban contexts, their knowledge about students as learners in these contexts was quite shallow. As a result, the student teachers left their placements with little understanding of how to best teach students in high-needs schools. Further, the participants worked with mentor teachers who did not model equity-minded practices and did little to help with curriculum design, as some did not plan until right before school started or not at all. These issues created dissonance between the values and practices promoted by the teacher education programs and those the interns were socialized into during their student teaching experience, leading the authors to conclude, "The idea that student teachers' placements presented more opportunities to learn about what not to do than what to do represents the core lesson we take from this study" (p. 127).

With these cautionary assertions in mind, lengthening a clinical experience might exacerbate the negative effects of a poor placement. Grossman (2010) underscored this point in her policy brief for AACTE and the National Education Association, arguing that "more time in a problematic setting is not necessarily better than less time in a high-

functioning classroom with a strong mentor" (p. 3). In her report commissioned by NCATE, Moore (2010) also suggested that longer placements will not lead to improvements in teacher preparation "unless those placements are part of a more thoughtful, comprehensive preparation program" (p. 7). Taken together, research suggests that quality student teaching experiences are marked by the opportunity for preservice teachers to work in a classroom for an extended period of time and to experience independent teaching. We do not yet know, however, the ways in which accountability mandates may be affecting the amount of time and nature of student teachers' experiences in the classroom.

Selection of Student Teaching Placements

As previously indicated, strong placement settings are an essential component of student teaching (AACTE, 2010; Moore, 2010). Due to the impact schools have on teacher development, Grossman (2010) argues, "placements should never be left to chance" (p. 4). Ideally, university preparation programs make sure to place their teacher candidates in carefully selected schools rather than simply relying on schools that willingly accept novices into their classrooms. According to NCATE's (2008) Professional Standards, teacher education programs and schools should "jointly determine the specific placements of student teachers and interns for other professional roles to maximize the learning experience for candidates and P-12 students" (p. 29). This imperative is supported by a study of all first-year teachers in New York City in 2005, which showed that first-year teachers who graduated from programs in which the program or the K-12 school selected their mentor teachers were significantly more effective than other first-year teachers (Boyd et al., 2008).

Placements should be selected for their high quality teaching, collegial and collaborative faculty, and advancement of both teacher and student learning (Burant & Kirby, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Graham, 2006; Grossman, 2010; Howey & Zimpher, 2010; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Solomon, 2009). With this in mind, under ideal circumstances teacher preparation programs take steps to ensure their students are placed in schools where not only children learn best, but where preservice teacher learning is optimized as well (Darling-Hammond, 2006; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). Further, they seek out schools whose values align with theirs in order to help preservice teachers apply theory to practice (Alter & Coggshall, 2009; Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammerness et al., 2005; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002).

For their part, mentor teachers should be highly effective teachers in their classrooms and also keenly interested in preparing teacher candidates (see LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009). Through their mentorship, high quality mentor teachers play a key role in helping student teachers navigate what Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) refer to as the “two worlds pitfall” that describes the frequent disconnection between teacher education programs and K-12 school placements. For example, programs featured in Darling-Hammond’s (2006) case study of exemplary teacher preparation programs (described above) specifically selected mentor teachers, rather than simply classroom placements. In fact, teacher educators in the study reported that this was the highest priority because, as one advisor indicated, “one year is a very short period and field experiences are lasting influences” (p. 173). In these programs, preservice teachers were matched with mentor teachers based on their expertise. This purposeful selection of mentor teachers was possible because of the

close relationships the teacher educators had formed with the schools and veteran teachers. The resulting conceptual coherence among program and field experiences has shown positive impacts on teachers' ideas and practices.

While we know the importance of purposefully selecting student teaching placements, teacher education programs often have to make compromises when determining placements (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Hammerness et al., 2005; A. Levine, 2006; Selwyn, 2007). In Anderson and Stillman's (2010) study described above, for example, the authors compromised high quality placements for the desire to have their teacher candidates in high-needs and urban schools. Selwyn (2007) described the opposite predicament in his article on preparing teachers in today's high-stakes and accountability-driven culture. In describing the program in which he teaches at Antioch University, he noted that although the program wanted to prepare its students to teach in urban contexts, they often ended up placing interns in schools that did not reflect the diversity they would like. He attributed this to two factors. One, fewer principals in urban schools were willing to take the risk of having an intern since they felt the pressure of raising their students test scores. Secondly, the program wanted student teachers to learn in placements that reflect best practices. Unfortunately, the urban schools often relied on practices that conflicted with Antioch's approach to teaching and learning, such as using scripted curricula. As a result, the program had to make compromises by placing student teachers in non-urban schools more frequently than they would have preferred.

Rather than specifically selecting mentor teachers who can provide an optimal learning environment for student teachers, determinations are too often based on how

many student teachers need placements and how many in-service teachers match the required criteria (A. Levine, 2006; Zeichner, 2010). In his large-scale study of teacher education programs across the U.S., Levine (2006) argued that placements have become a “numbers game” (p. 40) in many programs. This lack of intentional pairing of student teachers and mentor teachers is exacerbated by the fact that these decisions are often made by a central administrative office, not by the faculty who know the interns and mentor teachers well. Drawing on evidence from multiple teacher education programs, as well as his thirty years in teacher education, Zeichner (2010) described this process as “outsourcing” (p. 90). Compromises are made when school districts or university program administrators place students in available classrooms without much consideration of the mentor teacher’s instructional quality, ability to teach adults, or interpersonal skills.

The State of Florida requires mentor teachers to have clinical educator training; at least three years of PK-12 teaching experience; and effective or highly effective ratings on the previous year’s performance evaluation (Florida State Statutes, 2014). Beyond these requirements, teacher education programs in Florida have leeway in how they select the mentor teachers with whom they partner. The current study aims to understand how the high-stakes accountability climate may also be impacting student teacher placements and experiences in a variety of schools.

Most importantly, field experiences matter for children’s learning (AACTE, 2010). A key study on teacher preparation and student achievement showed a positive relationship between [what kind of] student teaching and preservice teachers’ future students’ achievement (Boyd et al., 2008). To ascertain this relationship, the

researchers studied nearly 800 first year teachers in New York City during one year. They correlated students' achievement scores at the end of their teacher's first year in the classroom with teacher surveys that asked about their student teaching experiences and how congruent they were with their current job. The researchers found that student achievement gains were higher when teachers came from programs that included extensive student teaching and opportunities to practice the complex aspects of teaching. Further, their higher achievement gains in classrooms in which teachers' student teaching placements were congruent with their current jobs in terms of subject matter and grade level.

With mounting pressure to raise test scores, though, the possibility exists that some schools and teachers will be hesitant to open their classrooms to student teachers (Selwyn, 2007). Others may still host teacher candidates, but reshape the traditional role of student teachers in the classroom to a more collaborative model such as coteaching (Bacharach, Heck, & Dahlberg, 2010; Hoppey, Yendol-Silva, & Pullen, 2004). Furthermore, previous research has well documented that standardized testing has resulted in a narrowing of the curriculum (see Au, 2011; Bates & Burbank, 2008; Crocco & Costigan, 2007) and teaching practices focused on the transmission model of learning (see Au, 2009). With this in mind, we need to understand how student teachers' learning experiences may be affected by the lack of coherence between the student-centered pedagogy championed by their teacher education programs and the rigid curricula many public school teachers are required to teach (Anderson and Stillman, 2010; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Demko & Hedrick, 2010). This study will help

us understand how the high-stakes climate has affected student teaching in Florida's teacher education programs.

Educative and Experiential Learning in Student Teaching

Preservice teachers are in a precarious position as novices who are learning and must follow the lead of their mentor teacher, while at the same time being expected to show initiative and confidence with students: they are both student and teacher at once (Fives et al., 2007). Mentor teachers, on the other hand, balance the responsibility of managing student teaching experiences in which both their own students and the preservice teachers learn and grow (Clarke et al., 2014; Graham, 2006). They also have powerful influence due to their ability to control the preservice teachers' access to students and independent teaching experiences (Grossman, 2010).

It is no surprise, then, that both mentor teachers (Russell & Russell, 2011) and preservice teachers perceive allowing for autonomy as one of the key features of a good mentor teacher (Koerner, Rust, & Baumgartner, 2002). In an effort to understand how mentor teachers and interns described a "good cooperating teacher," Koerner et al. (2002) administered questionnaires to 21 student teachers and their mentor teacher in Chicago. Over half of the participants in both groups responded that good mentor teachers give autonomy by letting the student teacher take over instruction. Russell and Russell (2011) further explored the nature of student teacher autonomy in their qualitative study of nine mentor teachers' perceptions of mentoring. The participants reported wanting to provide flexibility for their student teachers to assume gradual responsibility and to apply what they have learned. Further, they wanted their interns' confidence to grow through scaffolded experiences in the classroom.

Providing autonomy, though, does not mean prematurely handing over a classroom full of students to a novice teacher. The distinction should be made between a classroom marked by experiential learning and one that is educative: a quality placement should be both. High quality mentor teachers couple modeling and ongoing feedback with a gradual increase of student teachers' autonomy in the classroom (Fives et al., 2007; Grossman, 2010; Hammerness et al., 2005; Koerner et al., 2002; Torrez & Krebs, 2012). In an effort to understand what makes a high quality student teaching placement and experience, Torrez and Krebs (2012) surveyed 174 teacher candidates and 80 mentor teachers in one K-8 teacher preparation program in the Southwest and conducted follow-up interviews with master teachers. Their findings emphasized the importance of mentor teachers providing a "safe place for teacher candidates to experience teaching, to try new strategies, to make mistakes, and to interact in positive relationships with students" (p. 488). Thus, while it is essential to provide student teachers opportunities to take the helm of the classroom, these experiences need to be supported through reflection and feedback.

Some evidence suggests that the degree to which mentor teachers offer an educative experience to interns might reflect their beliefs about how student teachers learn best. Valencia, Martin, Place, and Grossman's (2009) longitudinal study on the complex interactions in nine triads of student teachers, mentor teachers, and university supervisors in one teacher preparation program found that only two of the nine mentor teachers thought novices learn best through experimentation with support and scaffolding. In these classrooms student teachers experienced what one mentor teacher referred to as "grounded experimentation" (p. 310) characterized by co-planning,

observations, and detailed lesson debriefing. Twice as many mentor teachers, though, believed in experimentation, but without the accompanying guidance. Echoing the findings of other studies (see Koerner et al., 2002; Russell & Russell, 2011), these mentor teachers believed their primary role was to offer students a classroom in which to practice teaching. In their efforts to avoid what they perceived as micromanagement, this trial and error method of mentoring led student teachers to feel neglected and unsupported.

The final third of the mentor teachers were what Graham (2006) referred to as "maestros." Mentor teachers with this orientation took over the classroom and wanted the teacher candidate to teach just like them. Unfortunately, this mimetic approach to cooperative teaching is not uncommon (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Clarke et al., 2014; Fives et al., 2007; Graham, 2006; Koerner et al., 2002; Valencia et al., 2009). Seen literally as role models to be emulated, some mentor teachers will teach a class in the morning and expect the student teacher to imitate the lesson for subsequent classes. Similarly, Clarke, Triggs, and Nielsen's (2014) review of the literature on mentor teachers identified *modelers of practice* as one of eleven categories of mentor teachers. While they recognized the importance of preservice teachers observing their mentor teachers in action, the authors argued, "concerns arise when the modeling of practice exists as the primary modus operandi in the absence of other practices that would also contribute to learning to teach" (pp. 15-16). Clarke et al. suggested that rather than expecting the student teacher to reproduce the mentor teacher's actions, ideally mentor teachers would model at first, followed by "a gradual move to a more reflective and independent way of engaging with student teachers signaling a shift from mimicked to

more independent and reflective practice" (p. 16). These findings resonate with Anderson and Stillman's (2013) literature review on teacher preparation for urban and high-needs contexts. Much of the research they reviewed depicted situations in which teaching was viewed as performance-based. In these instances, preservice teachers were expected to replicate what their mentor teachers or supervisors taught them, rather than adapting instruction to suit their own teaching style and students' needs.

In order to align themselves with their mentor teachers' expectations, in some cases student teachers feel they have to act in ways that conflict with their own ideas about teaching and those they learned in their coursework (Lloyd, 2007; Valencia et al., 2009). For example, Lloyd's (2007) study of the strategic compromises one student teacher had to make during her internship in an urban school highlights the student teacher's frustration with having to use a curriculum she felt was inappropriate for her students' needs. Based on their longitudinal study of student teaching triads, Valencia et al. (2009) cautioned that:

> When student teachers are not able to experiment and not guided by their mentors to become thoughtfully adaptive teachers (Duffy, 2005), they lose an opportunity to deepen their understanding of pedagogical approaches they have studied in coursework and to learn by interrogating new approaches they experience in the field. (p. 319)

Thus, when mentor teachers structure the student teaching experience such that there is little opportunity for the novice teacher to actively engage in the particulars of teaching, the student teacher does not learn "about practice in and from practice" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 10), but rather as a somewhat disengaged actor. For her report commissioned by NCATE's Blue Ribbon Panel, Moore (2010) spoke with fifteen accomplished teachers across the U.S. about clinical preparation who emphasized that interns should not "tag team" with their mentor teachers, but rather should be regarded

as true partners who negotiate the classroom together. While there exists a collection of evidence suggesting the importance of quality student teaching placements and experiences that are both educative and experiential, we do not yet know how teacher educators perceive that increased accountability measures might be affecting student teaching.

Theoretical Framework

Three theoretical lenses work together to help us understand how the sociopolitical context of accountability has shaped student teaching (see Table 2-1). Foucault's (1991) broad notion of governmentality describes the ways in which governments use various technologies of domination to manipulate individuals' behaviors to meet its needs. Surveillance theory and incentive theory allow us to further understand how high-stakes accountability measures serve as technologies of domination in our schools. Surveillance theory explains how authority figures keep a watchful eye on individuals' actions, leaving individuals with the perception of always being watched. Incentive theory accounts for the ways in which rewards and punishments are used to motivate individuals to act in the face of external policy mechanisms. These three theories represent complementary angles for understanding how accountability has shaped student teaching.

Table 2-1. Theoretical framework.

Theory	Brief explanation of theory
Governmentality (Foucault, 1991)	Use of tools to manipulate citizens' behaviors
Surveillance theory (Foucault, 1979)	Sense of being monitored affects individuals' behaviors
Incentive theory (Fennigan & Gross, 2007)	Use of rewards and sanctions to motivate individuals

Governmentality

Foucault's notion of governmentality helps to frame our understanding of how accountability measures are being used to shape the educational landscape (McCarthey, 2008). In his explanation of governmentality, Dean (1999) explains that, "government entails any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of our behaviour according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends" (p. 10). In their pursuit of shaping behaviors to meet specified agendas, governments rely on a variety of technologies of domination, ranging from the severe to the subversive.

In her study on the impact of NCLB on writing instruction through the lens of governmentality, McCarthey (2008) asserted that the "intention of [NCLB] is to control others by structuring the field—a set of rules such as requiring teachers to be competent in their fields that are enacted through technological means, in this case, standardized tests" (p. 464). Through interviews and observations of 18 third grade teachers in high- and low-income schools in Illinois and Utah, she found that NCLB constrained teachers' curricular decisions and pedagogical strategies, as they felt pressured to prepare students for the high-stakes tests. While teachers from all schools criticized NCLB, teachers from the low-income schools experienced closer monitoring of their teaching and had little power to challenge NCLB's mandates. Teachers in these schools were mandated to teach from prepackaged programs and students' writing practice was relegated to preparing for the state test. Their counterparts who taught in high-income schools, on the other hand, had more leeway to teach literacy outside of the prescriptive mandates, and thus taught a more complex curriculum that included strategies such as writers' workshop. Pockets of resistance emerged in the low-income schools, however, as individual teachers subversively incorporated creative instruction

into their teaching. Using the lens of governmentality, McCarthey argued, "resistance can result in a teacher taking a more autonomous stance where an individual can transform her own subjectivity within the discourse of power" (p. 499). The technology of testing, while oppressive, was not immune to teachers' resistance.

Surveillance Theory

The close monitoring of teachers' and schools' performance amounts to a form of surveillance used to keep tabs on teachers. Foucault (1979) theorized about surveillance in his studies of prisons. He used the panopticon—the round, tall structure in a prison that allows guards to see all prisoners at all times—as a metaphor for how government keeps a watchful eye on its citizens. Because the inmates do not know when or if a guard is watching them, the perception that they might be being watched affects their behavior. Foucault and others have applied this theory to schools, with the teacher as prison guard and the students as inmates (Bushnell, 2003; Kohl, 2009).

Bushnell (2003) argues that the panopticon metaphor also illustrates how the high-stakes accountability measures are a mechanism of surveillance used to monitor teachers' and schools' performance: "Rather than focusing on the control of students, schooling can be mapped as a panopticon in which teachers are in their cells, observed and monitored. Their regulators are administrators, parents, politicians, and boards of education" (p. 256). Hearkening as far back as 1904 when unionist and teacher Margaret Haley spoke of the teacher as an automaton who has been "factorized," Bushnell argues that teachers have been objects of surveillance technologies since the early twentieth century. One hundred years later, her qualitative study on the relationship between surveillance and sense of professionalism among eight New York City elementary teachers suggests that high-stakes tests and the corresponding

mandates act as tools of surveillance used to monitor teachers' choices and thereby demote their professionalism.

Incentive Theory

To reach the government's goals, accountability measures such as NCLB do not rely on teachers' willingness alone. Instead, they tie a variety of rewards and sanctions to schools' and teachers' abilities to meet predetermined benchmarks. This method of motivation lies in incentive theory, which posits that individuals' motives are driven by external policy mechanisms that create benefits and punishments to promote desired results (Finnigan & Gross, 2007). The use of high-stakes accountability measures tied to incentives as a motivation for teacher improvement rests on the belief that teachers will not work hard to improve student achievement out of an intrinsic motivation, but rather need external pressure to reach government-determined outcomes. A key element of federal and Florida state legislation mandates that schools that persistently fail to meet annual yearly progress, calculated largely by test scores, face the threat of restructuring (e.g., hiring an entirely new staff) or closure. Incentive theory works in tandem with governmentality and surveillance theory to explain individual teachers' performance in response to high-stakes accountability. In the context of Florida's schools, this plays out through pay-for-performance measures that tie teacher pay to their performance as measured by student achievement.

Holding Schools and Teachers Accountable for Student Learning

This section outlines the high stakes for schools and teachers that have been attached to standardized test scores. First, I will explain Florida's version of a pay-for-performance programs and will review research on the effectiveness of this approach to

accountability. I will then review literature on how high-stakes accountability has affected teachers and their work.

Pay-for-Performance Programs

The roots of pay-for-performance programs lie in incentive theory. They are the embodiment of a market-based approach which posits that teachers will be motivated to improve their effectiveness if rewards or sanctions are attached to their performance. Pay-for-performance programs take a number of forms and have increased in popularity across the nation in the last fifteen years (Springer et al., 2010; Turner, Bibilos, Maul, Briggs, & Diaz-Bilello, 2014; Yuan et al., 2013). Florida uses individual and collective pay-for-performance rewards based on students' test scores. Since Florida passed the Student Success Act in 2011, both teachers' evaluations and VAM scores play a key role in the legislation's pay-for-performance provision. The law stipulates that individual teachers' pay increases will be based on their evaluations, 50% of which is calculated from students' test scores. Salary increases will also rely upon test scores for teachers hired after July 2014. Teachers with "effective" or "highly effective" evaluations will receive salary increases, whereas those receiving "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" evaluations will only receive their base salary and no pay raise. As noted above, schools also receive monetary rewards based on the school's letter grade.

In their study on incentive programs, Yuan et al. (2013) propose that pay-for-performance programs rely on three different mechanisms. First, incentive programs that provide individual rewards to teachers presume that teachers will be motivated to improve their practices because of the incentives. Collective reward programs, those that reward groups of teachers, further rely on the hope that they will bring work environment improvements. For example, if teams receive rewards, then perhaps their

cooperation with each other would increase. Finally, collective rewards rely on the notion that they might improve the supply of teachers by attracting better candidates to schools. Each of these mechanisms is a manifestation of incentive theory, which makes sense of policy-makers' presumptions that teachers need external rewards to motivate them to improve their practice.

Educational research, however, suggests that the incentives model is shortsighted (Alexander, 2006; Finnigan & Gross, 2007; Fryer, 2011; Springer et al., 2010; Yuan et al., 2013). Finnigan and Gross (2007) posit that it does not take into account teachers' desires for the outcomes nor their beliefs about whether the goals are realistic (i.e., expectancy). Their mixed methods study of teacher motivation in ten low-performing elementary schools on probation in Chicago found that the longer a school was on probation, the less likely the teachers expected the school would be able to meet the target accountability goals. Teachers who experienced pressure and feared job loss also had lower expectancy of student success and their own sense of agency. Further, teachers reported that they wanted students to be successful mostly because they valued the standardized test as a measure of success, not simply because they wanted to alleviate the pressure of being on probation. In other words, the teachers' desires for student success were not motivated by incentives.

A focus on motivational mechanisms also discounts the importance of a school's capacity for meeting NCLB's mandates (Alexander, 2006). Alexander's (2006) analysis of school-level data from all Massachusetts eighth grade public school programs to assess organizational capacity, especially with regard to small, urban and rural schools, showed that incentives alone will not change results; schools need the necessary

resources as well. She argued that while states have a right to mandate that schools succeed in improving student achievement, states also have a responsibility to ensure that schools have the resources they need to make this happen.

Although incentive programs are designed to increase student achievement and teacher retention (Turner et al., 2014), students of teachers in incentive programs do not outperform their counterparts (Springer et al., 2010) and in some cases student achievement may decline as the result of teachers' participation in such programs (Fryer, 2011). Other studies show that paying teachers based on their students' performance does not lead to changes in teachers' instructional practices (Fryer, 2011; Springer et al., 2010; Yuan et al., 2013). The findings in these studies suggest that attempts to manipulate teachers' behaviors through devices such as incentives does not lead to improved teacher quality.

From 2006-2009, the National Center for Performance Incentives conducted a controlled experiment, the Project on Incentives in Teaching (POINT) (Springer et al., 2010; Yuan et al., 2013). Nearly 300 middle school math teachers in the Metropolitan Nashville School Systems voluntarily participated in the study, which sought to ascertain the effect of providing incentives to teachers whose students make unusually large gains on the state's standardized mathematics assessment. All participants received $750 for participating in the study. The authors of the report explained:

> The experiment was intended to test the notion that rewarding teachers for improved scores would cause scores to rise…POINT was focused on the notion that a significant problem in American education is the absence of appropriate incentives, and that correcting the incentive structure would, in and of itself, constitute an effective intervention that improved student outcomes. (Springer et al., 2010, p. xi)

Believing that teachers might not strive for the incentives if they were of modest amounts, the researchers offered treatment teachers a maximum $15,000 bonus if their students' scores reached "a level that historically had been reached by only the top five percent of middle school math teachers in a given year" (p. xi). Smaller bonuses of $5,000 and $10,000 were given to teachers whose students scored at the 80th and 90th percentiles of the same historical distribution. This incentive design meant that teachers were not competing against one another, but rather aiming for a fixed target they all could attain. A total of $1.27 million was awarded over the three-year period and 34% of treatment teachers received a bonus at some point over the course of the experiment. Despite the amount of money paid out to teachers, results indicated that treatment teachers did not outperform control teachers on student achievement scores over the three-year period.

In order to understand teachers' perceptions of POINT, Springer et al. (2010) administered annual surveys each spring throughout the three-year period. Throughout the study, a steady 65% of teachers in both conditions said they agreed that teachers should receive extra compensation for outstanding improvements in student achievement, however 69% of teachers felt POINT did a poor job of determining effective teachers. Further, each year they were surveyed over 80% of treatment teachers agreed with the statement, "I was already working as effectively as I could before the implementation of POINT, so the experiment will not affect my work." These results suggest that the incentive program did not affect teachers' practices and their students' achievement scores.

Fyer (2011) conducted a randomized control trial to study New York City's implementation of the School-Wide Performance Bonus Program (SPBP) in high-needs K-12 schools from 2007-2010 (Fryer, 2011; Yuan et al., 2013). Nearly 350 teachers participated in the study, which was designed to examine the impact of incentive programs on student achievement. Schools, not individual teachers, received monetary rewards in this pay-for-performance program based on a combination of variables. While student achievement was weighted the heaviest in the calculations, graduation rates, attendance, and climate surveys completed by students, teachers, and parents were also considered. Schools who met performance targets earned $3000 per staff member; those meeting 75% of performance targets earned half that much. Importantly, each school established a committee to decide how money should be disseminated among its teachers. The bonuses fluctuated throughout the three years, with 62% of schools earning incentives the first year, 84% in the second year, and a mere 13% in the final year of the study.

Fryer (2011) investigated the relationship between the SPBP incentives and several variables including students' achievement scores in math and ELA. His analysis showed that the incentive program did not increase students' achievement. In fact, effects of incentives on student achievement were negative in both elementary and middle schools, with a statistically significant negative effect in middle schools. Further, there was no evidence that the program improved student attendance or graduation rates, nor changed teachers' behaviors (i.e., teachers' absences and retention in the district). In light of these data, Fryer argued that the SPBP program and incentive programs in the U.S. in general likely do not work because their schemes are too

complex and do not grant teachers enough agency in the process. Once again, the findings in this study contradict incentive theory's supposition that monetizing teachers' work will result in better outcomes.

Based on the premise that incentive programs should affect teachers' behaviors, Yuan and colleagues (2013) investigated three incentive programs to determine if they have similar effects on teachers' motivation and practices. Two of the programs are described above (POINT and SPBP); the third is a Texas program that rewarded teacher teams for student performance. Across the three programs, 1,055 teachers in the treatment groups and 852 teachers in the control groups completed online surveys designed to determine teachers' understanding of their respective program, their motivation, and their instructional practices. Results indicated that the incentive programs had no effect on teachers' motivation or their instructional practices. Teachers also reported no difference in the numbers of hours they worked since starting the incentive program. Across the three programs, only one measure of teaching practices showed a significant difference between the control and treatment groups and this occurred among the POINT teachers. Surveys revealed the incentive-eligible teachers emphasized test preparation over their peers who were in the control group. Nevertheless, there was neither a positive nor significant association between time spent on test preparation and students' achievement scores. To explain the disconnection between the incentive program and teachers' motivations and practices, the authors proposed that bonuses do not have much effect on teachers' effort because they are often viewed as an acknowledgement of hard work rather than an incentive to work harder. Hence, although incentive theory drives the creation of pay-for-

performance programs, findings from this study and others (Fryer, 2011; Springer et al., 2010; Turner et al., 2014) suggest that teachers' behaviors are not positively influenced through reward systems.

At their worst, incentive systems have been linked to numerous educator cheating scandals across the United States (Gabriel, 2010; Jacob & Levitt, 2003). In April 2015, for example, eleven educators in Atlanta were convicted for their role in one of the nation's largest ever cheating scandals (Blinder, 2015). In the wake of this scandal, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2013) launched an investigation and found that possible incidents of cheating have occurred in 40 states in the last two years alone. Using administrative data for all Chicago Public School students in grades 3-7, Jacob and Levitt's (2003) analysis of the prevalence and predictors of teacher cheating found that incentive systems, and their corresponding sanctions, lead to educator cheating and other distorted behaviors.

Florida's evaluation system that relies on VAM scores to determine teacher pay is relatively new. Thus, we do not yet know how it may be impacting the preparation of future teachers, either in terms of access to placements or the degree to which student teachers have the opportunity to teach. The next section outlines what we do know about how teachers have responded to the increased high-stakes accountability climate in recent years.

Effects of High-Stakes Accountability on Teachers and Their Work

Teachers are not wholly opposed to accountability in principle, but rather take issue with how it is determined and used. Many teachers disagree with the use of standardized tests to measure student learning (Jones & Egley, 2004; Reese, Gordon, & Price, 2004; Yuan et al., 2013), some suggesting that classroom assessments are a

better tool for informing teacher instruction (Flores & Clark, 2003). For example, in a study of over 900 K-12 teachers in Texas, 90% of teachers responded that they believe teachers should be held accountable for their students' learning, yet only 15% of them believed the state's standardized test was an accurate measure of student learning (Reese et al., 2004). In Vernaza's (2012) survey study of over 60 Title I third grade teachers' beliefs about Florida's high-stakes accountability measures, teachers reported feeling capable of implementing Florida's Sunshine State Standards, but said their school contexts prevented them from effectively teaching the standards, leading to penalization under the *A+* policy. Further, nearly a decade before the Student Success Act of 2011 tied teachers' evaluations and pay to test scores, a survey of over 700 Florida elementary teachers showed that 93% of participants did not think it was fair to grade schools based on standardized tests, 80% said that the FCAT was not taking education in the right direction, and nearly half felt the test negatively affected teacher motivation (Jones & Egley, 2004). One teacher from a 'B' school noted:

> When teachers feel their salaries will one day be based on student performance, many of us say that will be the day when we will walk out on the profession. A teacher can't force a child to perform to the best of their ability on the test. (p. 20)

With mentor teachers' salaries now based on student performance, we do not yet know how teachers' willingness to participate in student teaching may be changing.

Increased accountability measures have also been shown to have deleterious effects on teachers, as they often feel their pedagogical creativity has been usurped because they have to teach to the test (Costigan, 2002; Hamilton et al., 2007; McCarthey, 2008). From the theoretical lenses of governmentality and surveillance theory, the impending tests and their use to evaluate teachers' performance serves as

devices to constrain what and how teachers conduct their work. The teachers in Valli and Buese's study (2007) expressed fears that the focus on testing would result in locally created curricula being replaced by that made by publishing companies. This resonates with the teachers in McCarthey's (2008) study on NCLB's effects on writing instruction (described above) who reported that increased accountability has led to a focus on test preparation and a loss of creative license in teachers' instruction. Further, the high-pressure environment leads to low morale among teachers (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Finnigan & Gross, 2008; Hamilton et al., 2007; McCarthey, 2008) and the sense that the surveillance of their work has stripped them of their professionalism (Bushnell, 2003).

Teachers' professionalism is also thwarted by pacing guides, which act as tools to usurp teachers' decision-making and ensure all students are learning the same content at the same time in preparation for the high-stakes tests. Oftentimes designed at the district level, rigid pacing guides strip teachers' curricular control and hinder their ability to differentiate for students' needs, in effect turning teachers into managers of curriculum, rather than constructors (Apple, 2009; Au, 2009; Bushnell, 2002; David, 2008; Meyer, 2002). This is especially true as many urban schools now have "tight-tight school cultures where tight reforms…are tightly monitored" (Anderson and Stillman, 2010, p. 112) and where teachers are mandated to use scripted curricula (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Demko & Hedrick, 2010). The surge of strict pacing guides and scripted curricula in high poverty schools arose in the wake of No Child Left Behind, as the law ties Title I school funding to schools' use of an evidence-based school-wide program. Kohl (2009) argues that devices such as scripted curricula have turned schools into

“educational panopticons” (para. 5) and “teachers into mechanical delivery systems” (para 8). Further, he decries the use of these devices of surveillance because they underestimate children’s capabilities and force teachers’ to act in ways that contradict their conscience and professionalism.

Through the framework of governmentality, we can further understand how the pressures to focus on highly tested subject areas such as reading and math has also led to a narrowing of the curriculum, wherein non-tested subjects are rarely taught or not taught at all (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Au, 2009; Au, 2011; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Valli & Buese, 2007). The American Statistics Association (2014) cautions that the use of VAM scores to evaluate teachers might exacerbate this problem, as teachers may gear their instruction towards heavily tested subjects and topics. Au (2007) took up these issues in his qualitative metasynthesis of 49 studies related to high-stakes testing’s impact on curricular control. In 84% of the studies, teachers changed the subject matter they taught due to testing. More specifically, nearly three-quarters of the studies showed a contraction of content and narrowing of curriculum, such as when teachers no longer teach social studies because it is an untested subject. These curricular adjustments in response to high-stakes testing mostly occur in secondary classrooms and in English language arts and social studies. In addition to affecting curricular content, Au found that high-stakes testing has also shifted the ways in which teachers teach their content. For example, 65% of the studies showed that teachers moved toward a more teacher-centered pedagogy characterized by lecture or the transmission of facts. This often occurred in tandem with

a fragmentation of knowledge, whereby teachers taught content in terms of discrete facts or procedures as opposed to broad and conceptual content-based thinking.

To understand how the climate of accountability has affected teachers' curricular choices, Crocco and Costigan (2007) interviewed over 200 novice English and social studies teachers from New York City multiple times over the course of five years. Teachers in the study described their autonomy in making curricular decisions as "shrinking space" (p. 521), believing that their work had been deprofessionalized by the mandated and scripted curriculum. Teachers found these scripted lessons oppressive, particularly in middle school and English classrooms. Many participants described a disconnection between their perceptions of good teaching and that of their administrators who were more concerned with adherence to the curriculum. Rather than tailoring their teaching to their particular students' needs, teachers felt test preparation was prioritized and that they had to move at a "frenetic pace" (p. 522) to cover the curriculum. Some teachers responded to such mandates by either "toe[ing] the party line" (p. 526) or subversively avoiding the requirements. As a result, participants felt they were not growing professionally as much as they could because they felt discouraged from exploring their craft and trying out new ideas in the classroom.

As part of a longitudinal mixed methods study of approximately 125 fourth and fifth grade reading and mathematics teachers from 25 schools with moderate to high levels of poverty, Valli and Buese (2007) investigated how teachers' roles changed as high-stakes accountability became a pervasive factor in their daily work. Drawing from four years of interview and focus group data, a task analysis revealed that mandates shaped teacher work as the pressure on AYP increased. Specifically, teachers reported

new tasks such as curriculum pacing, curriculum alignment to state tests (e.g., teacher-generated questions that match the test, back-mapping), and other data-related duties. Overall, Valli and Buese found that the increased and intensifying tasks affected teacher work and professional roles. Further, teachers lamented that their work with students shifted, with some feeling they had to engage in pedagogical practices that went against their beliefs, such as focusing on students' deficits. Teachers were also frustrated that task intensification led to a reduction in their interactions with kids.

Fear and anxiety also underlie many teachers' responses to increased accountability mandates. Although incentive theory suggests that teachers will be motivated by rewards linked to accountability systems, evidence suggests that often they are instead motivated by fear. Teachers in schools on probation fear job loss if they do not raise students' achievement scores (Finnigan & Gross, 2007) and others fear retribution if they do not comply with their administrators' or districts' expectations that they strictly adhere to mandates such as pacing guides (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Valli & Buese, 2007). Teachers in Valli and Buese's study (2007) felt the sharp focus on data was a form of surveillance, with one teacher describing data meetings as "a witch hunt" (p. 544). Other teachers described the anxiety that accompanied administrators' walk-throughs, which participants perceived were intended to check if teachers were meeting mandated expectations. Principals shared that while they tried to avoid these walk-throughs feeling like a "gotcha," they knew teachers still felt "under the gun" (p. 544) to exhibit teaching behaviors on the spot that would earn them a favorable evaluation. Surveillance theory helps explain why teachers felt anxious about administrators' spontaneous walkthroughs even when principals attempted to seem nonthreatening.

Regardless of whether teachers support their state's accountability system, they and their students are beholden to it. With mounting pressure on how students will perform on high-stakes tests and how this might affect school and teaching evaluations, this study seeks to understand how teacher educators perceive student teaching may be affected by the increased scrutiny over high-stakes tests.

Teacher Preparation in the Age of Accountability

This section reviews literature related to accountability and student teacher placements, as well as the ways that student teachers have responded to the accountability-related pressures. It concludes with an overview of the ways in which teacher education programs in Florida are also held accountable based on K-12 students' performance on standardized tests.

Accountability's Impact on Student Teaching Placements

The high-stakes climate has clearly affected teachers and their work. We know less, however, about the relationship between accountability measures and student teaching experiences. Preservice teachers are entering many classrooms where teachers stick to a script, students complete worksheets, test-taking strategies are emphasized, and little critical thinking is present (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Apple, 2009; Au, 2011; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Meyer, 2002; Selwyn, 2007). In response, student teachers sometimes experience a dissonance between what they learn in their teacher preparation programs and the sorts of activities their mentor teachers expect them to teach in preparation for mandated testing (Bates & Burbank, 2008; Costigan, 2002; Selwyn, 2007).

Some evidence suggests that the high-stakes accountability climate has exacerbated the difficulty of finding high quality student teacher placements (Anderson

& Stillman, 2010; Parot-Juraska, 2009; Selwyn, 2007). To understand the perceptions that frame student teaching placement decisions, Parot-Juraska (2009) used a three-stage interview method to speak with five principals and five mentor teachers from one large, urban district. Participants expressed that pressures associated with high-stakes testing caused them concern with relinquishing instructional control to preservice teachers. Principals indicated that math and English teachers were especially deterred from taking interns because they wanted to focus on preparing their students for the test, and working with a student teacher during that time could complicate their work. Ultimately, participants expressed fear that accountability measures would impact schools' and teachers' willingness to take student teachers. One explained:

> Stakes are becoming so high that teachers are losing their perspective…and if you're afraid of what your test scores are going to be…you are less apt to have a student teacher and I don't think you'd…get an asterisk next to your scores that say, 'Had a student teacher for 16 weeks.' (pp. 8-9)

Such fears led participants to suggest that the timing of field experiences should avoid state testing periods because testing affected their approval or denial of student teachers. One mentor teacher shared, "If it was during [state standardized test] time and I knew that a student teacher was going to have a direct impact on my kids' [test] scores, I would be very choosy, without a doubt" (p. 7).

Selwyn (2007) echoed these concerns in his essay on NCLB and teacher education. He offered anecdotal evidence regarding the challenges he and his colleagues at other universities have faced in placing student teachers in schools:

> At least four or five schools we've previously worked with have said that they can no longer "afford" to take student teachers because of the pressures of NCLB. They are not willing to risk having an inexperienced student teacher spend weeks working with their students because the students might score lower on the standardized test. (p. 132)

Selwyn also recounted speaking with an administrator of a small teacher education program who argued that it takes courage for principals to accept student teachers and the accompanying risk that they might affect students' test scores.

While these observations add to our understanding of the current teacher education climate, to date no empirical research has specifically examined teacher educators' perceptions of how student teaching experiences may have been affected by accountability pressures. Furthermore, with Florida's high-stakes testing beginning in March and ending in May, we do not know how spring student teaching placements may differ from those that occur in the fall.

Student Teachers' Experiences in the Age of Accountability

We do, however, have evidence that the high-stakes climate affects what student teachers experience during their placements. For example, increased accountability mandates have constrained some mentor teachers' autonomy, and in turn curtailed the experimentation necessary for student teachers to learn how to become adaptive teachers (Anderson & Stillman, 2010), a case that is particularly true at the secondary level (Valencia et al., 2009).

In their multisite study on the constraints on teaching and learning experienced by student teachers placed in urban, high-needs schools, Anderson and Stillman (2010) found that the sharp focus on accountability in low-performing schools left preservice teachers with "shallow understandings of students as learners and…what is involved in providing equitable learning opportunities for all students" (p. 117). The preservice teachers had little to no opportunities to learn about curriculum and lesson design, as their mentor teachers relied on the pacing guides and planned their daily lessons right before school or not at all. Feedback to the preservice teachers was rarely constructive

or critical; the feedback they did receive often focused on moving away from student-centered learning (which was advocated in their teacher education program), and returning to the mandated curricula and scripts.

Other studies have also found that preservice teachers experience a dissonance between the student-centered methods espoused in their programs and the realities of teaching in a school under governmental scrutiny. For instance, White, Sturtevant, and Dunlap (2003) conducted a longitudinal study with 64 teacher interns in Virginia over a three-year period to understand how high-stakes testing affected teachers' literacy beliefs and practices in a professional development school partnership. Student teachers reported that they perceived a great deal of contradictions between the instructional practices they learned in their program and the methods they were expected to use in their placements and that their instructional decisions were influenced by high-stakes testing.

Some student teachers make "strategic compromises" when faced with such curricular constraints (Castro, 2010; Lloyd, 2007). Lloyd (2007) conducted observations and interviews of one student teacher's math instruction in an urban kindergarten class to understand how the teacher coped with the situational factors associated with high-stakes testing. The student teacher made strategic compromises in the face of teaching a mandated mathematics curriculum that went against the type of instruction she believed in, as it was mostly worksheet-based. She made strategic compromises by both accepting that her pedagogical interests might need to be modified and by finding ways to adapt the material to suit her interests. For example, while the student teacher used the mandated worksheets to a certain extent, she supplemented them with

materials she created and activities that matched her views on math instruction. She also modified her desire to have a very hands-on curriculum to match the school culture, which prized rules and policies about behavior. Lloyd pointed out that although the kindergartners did not take high-stakes tests in this school, they were being prepared to do so at an early age. This reflects the fact that often high-poverty schools have tightly controlled curricula as they attempt to respond to mandates with rote materials that focus on the development of basic skills that are typically targeted in high-stakes tests (Anderson & Stillman, 2010).

Preservice teachers made similar compromises in Castro's (2010) study of the challenges of teaching for critical multicultural citizenship in the age of accountability. This case study focused on three preservice teachers in central Texas, all of whom were racial minorities teaching in racially diverse schools. These participants believed in the tenets of critical multiculturalism that were promoted by their program, yet had to negotiate constraints during their student teaching experiences in order to teach from this perspective. The teachers felt pressured to prepare students for high-stakes tests, to cover a great deal of material in a cursory fashion, and to adopt policies they felt conflicted with their beliefs about citizenship education. To respond to this, the preservice teachers attempted to deemphasize the importance of the test by embedding test preparation into their activities, rather than dedicating time specifically to test preparation. One of the preservice teachers committed small acts of subversion by sneaking in aspects of multicultural citizenship in the regular curriculum.

These studies highlight how some student teachers perceive that accountability has contributed to a misalignment between their teacher education program's values

and what they face when they enter their student teaching placements. We do not yet know, however, how teacher educators perceive the ways in which student teaching has broadly been affected by high stakes accountability in Florida’s elementary and English classrooms.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 has provided the context of K-20 accountability within which teacher preparation programs send their student teachers into the field to learn from mentor teachers and practice teaching in authentic contexts. Facing increased accountability measures, schools either strive for increases in the school grade in the hopes of possible rewards or hope to maintain a decent letter grade to avoid punishing sanctions. Teachers’ job security and paychecks rely on their students’ growth from year to year on the standardized tests. This study contributes to the scholarship on teacher preparation by investigating teacher educators’ perceptions of how accountability mandates have impacted the availability and quality of student teaching placements and the experiences their preservice teachers have within them.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In Chapter 3, I describe the research methods used in this study. I begin with an explanation of the methodological perspective that guides my inquiry, which is followed by a description of my justification for participant selection and the interview process used in data collection. Next, I will explain how I used codes derived from the research question and the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2, as well as emergent codes, in the data analysis process. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how I established trustworthiness in this study, as well as the role my subjectivity plays in the data collection and analysis processes.

Methodological Perspective

This study aims to capture teacher educators' unique understandings of how student teaching has been affected by high-stakes accountability. The research is rooted in a constructionist epistemology that posits that meaning is constructed through our interactions with one another and our world (Crotty, 1998). This perspective eschews the positivist notion that an objective, singular, and value-free reality exists and that the researcher's aim is to discover it. Instead it recognizes that multiple realities coexist and "*looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world*" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67, emphasis in original). Constructionism rests on the notion that humans construct their knowledge of the world based on their own experiences and beliefs, and that these understandings are never fixed, but rather shift as we interact with and in the world. Further, it acknowledges how our positions in the world affect our interpretations of it.

Research Design

Consistent with an interpretivist paradigm, I sought to gain understanding in this study by interpreting participants' perceptions of their lived experience. This paradigm recognizes the role the researcher's subjectivity plays throughout the research process, as my interpretations are also influenced by my lived experiences (Crotty, 1998). I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with teacher educators about the ways in which accountability mandates may be impacting both the structure of student teaching as well as the learning experiences of the student teachers in their teacher preparation programs. This study focuses on teacher preparation programs in Florida that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Because accountability mandates particularly focus on reading standardized test scores, I sought to interview faculty who coordinate student teaching experiences in elementary and secondary English classrooms.

Participants

Thirteen higher education institutions in Florida offer bachelors degrees in initial teacher preparation, all of which include a student teaching experience (NCATE, 2014). Nine of these institutions are public colleges; four are private. All of the thirteen institutions have an elementary education program and eight have a secondary English program. In total, twenty-one programs were targeted for inclusion in this study.

I identified the coordinators of these programs through their university's websites and then used snowball sampling to recruit these participants' personal contacts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I began the recruitment process by sending a recruitment letter via email to the program coordinators in each of these programs. In this letter I indicated my interest in speaking with a person in each program who is both responsible for student

teaching placements and familiar with the program's students and pedagogy. In many cases teacher preparation programs rely on a separate student teaching coordinator who oversees student teaching for the entire college. In cases such as these, the recipients of my initial recruitment email suggested specific personnel in their program who were better suited to address the study's questions. In cases in which I did not receive a response within a week of the initial email, I followed up with at least one phone call and another email.

The final group of sixteen participants represented nine of the CAEP-accredited teacher preparation institutions in Florida. Thirteen participants were women; three were men. In order to mask their identities, throughout this dissertation participants have been assigned random numbers. For example, P1 refers to Participant #1. P1-P6 worked at medium sized institutions and P7-P16 worked at large institutions. Four of the participants were teacher educators in elementary education programs and four worked in English education programs. Eight of the participants held positions related to student teaching placements across programs in their college. There are four institutions from which I had more than one participant. In two of these cases the participants represented different programs or roles in the institution. In the other two cases, participants requested that I conduct a group interview with two of the participants at the same time.

Most participants alluded to their previous experiences as K-12 teachers prior to serving in their current role. Five participants had 0-5 years of experience in their current role; 5 participants had 6-10 years of experience; 1 had 11-15 years of experience; and five participants had over 16 years of experience. Fourteen participants

held doctoral degrees in education. Five of these doctorates were in educational leadership or a related field and nine were in curriculum and instruction. The other two participants served as field placement directors for their institutions.

Data Collection

In order to ensure a “sharedness of meanings” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 371) between my participants and myself, I began each interview by briefly defining two terms: *student teaching* and *accountability mandates*. Student teaching was defined as internships that last at least eight weeks. I also indicated that the terms *student teacher* and *intern* would be used interchangeably. *Accountability mandates* refers to mandates from the federal, state, or district levels that hold students and teachers accountable for student learning. Examples include FCAT testing, FAIR testing, school grades, and teacher evaluations based on students’ test scores.

The semi-structured interview protocol included wide-ranging questions about student teaching in the teacher preparation program, followed by subquestions that address the connection between student teaching and high stakes accountability (see Appendix A). This design aims to first elicit participants’ natural responses about the issues that impact student teaching without biasing their responses with the suggestion that accountability mandates have played a role in student teaching shifts in recent years. These questions addressed both the structure of student teaching, as well as student teachers’ learning experiences.

The protocol began broadly by asking how student teaching experiences are coordinated between the teacher education program and the district. Subquestions included, “How are student teaching placements determined?” and “What influences the decisions about student teaching placements?” In an effort to understand the teacher

education program's expectations for student teaching in terms of issues such as autonomy, I asked coordinators questions regarding how much they think interns should teach and design curriculum. Follow-up questions such as, "To what extent do you feel your views are shared by the district and cooperating teachers?" were aimed at determining whether the coordinators perceived discrepancies between their expectations for student teaching and what the district and/or school expected (and whether these discrepancies are accounted for by the accountability systems).

University coordinators, as the "suppliers" of interns, are uniquely positioned to observe the districts' and schools' behaviors over time in regards to student teaching. As a result, they were asked questions such as, "Tell me how or if accountability mandates have affected the schools' willingness to take interns?" and "What, if any, impacts have accountability mandates had on the role student teachers play in the classroom?" I also asked these participants if they noticed any differences between fall and spring internships due to FCAT and other high stakes tests. Because accountability repercussions predominately affect high poverty schools (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Demko & Hedrick, 2010; Kim & Sunderman, 2005), participants were asked, "What differences, if any, do you notice between student teaching placements in Title I schools that might be attributable to FCAT and other high-stakes tests?" Last, I asked participants about the challenges they faced in guiding their teacher candidates to turn theory into practice in the high stakes environment, such as using innovative teaching strategies in schools that require a more didactic approach to teaching and learning (Bates & Burbank, 2008).

All fourteen interviews took place over the phone in the fall of 2014. Two interviews were conducted as group interviews with two participants; the rest were conducted individually. Two interviews lasted fewer than 30 minutes; five interviews lasted between 30-45 minutes; four lasted between 46-60 minutes; and two lasted approximately 90 minutes. Eleven interviews were recorded digitally and then transcribed verbatim, resulting in 183 single-spaced pages of transcripts. Three participants (P4, P5, and P15) did not give permission to be recorded. I took detailed notes during these interviews and immediately wrote them up as field notes, resulting in thirteen pages of transcripts.

Several steps were taken to ensure the integrity of the research. All identifiers were assigned pseudonyms, and all data were stored on Dropbox, which is password-protected online storage. As an additional layer of security, individual files containing identifying information were encrypted with a password. In the case that it might have been necessary to listen to the original files, the audio files have been stored and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research project.

Data Analysis

Although the bulk of data analysis occurred after data were collected, I utilized an iterative approach (Huberman & Miles, 1994). As Merriam (1998) explains, analysis begins "with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read. Emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or reformulation of questions, and so on" (p. 151). As I interacted with participants, I engaged in an initial analysis of the phenomenon under study. While I maintained the use of my interview protocol throughout data

collection, I asked more specific follow-up and probing questions based on emerging data.

After data collection, I conducted analysis of the raw data using a hybrid approach to coding (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This approach combines a priori codes determined based on the research question and theoretical framework (Crabtree & Miller, 1992), as well as codes that emerged as I interacted with the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This technique describes what Strauss and Corbin (1990) refer to as moving between inductive and deductive analysis, both seen as legitimate approaches to qualitative work and consonant with a constructionist epistemology (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

A preliminary codebook, or template (Crabtree & Miller, 1992), included codes reflecting both the research question (see Table 3-1) and the theoretical framework (see Table 3-2). Sample a priori codes related to student teaching experiences included "power sharing in the classroom," "pedagogical strategies," and "preservice teacher autonomy." The theoretical framework (comprised of governmentality, surveillance theory, and incentive theory) also informed the development of codes and included "organizational decision-making affected by mandates," "pedagogical strategies influenced by mandates," and "job security."

Working within an interpretive paradigm, I added codes during data analysis as I interacted with participants as well as with the data (see Table 3-3) (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Crabtree & Miller, 1992). This inductive approach to code development necessitates that participants' perceptions and experiences shape the analysis. I continually revised the codes throughout the analytic process, recognizing that some

Table 3-1. Codes related to student teaching experiences.

Code name	Definition of code
Coherence	Comments about the degree to which there is coherence between the teacher education program and the district/school's expectations for student teaching.
Curr. decision-making	Descriptions about the role student teachers have in determining curriculum/lessons.
Curriculum	Comments about texts, materials, pacing guides used during student teaching. Do not code if already coded as *curricular decision-making.*
K-12 Partnerships	Mentions of the relationship/partnership between the teacher preparation program and the district/schools.
Student teachers' instruction	Comments about the instruction student teachers are allowed to provide in the classroom; comments about how instruction may be organized in the classroom.
TE beliefs about student teaching	Mentions of how teacher educators think student teaching should be (not necessarily as they are).

Table 3-2. Codes derived from theoretical framework.

Code and element of theoretical framework*	Definition of code
Accountability_misc (G)	Comments about accountability that are not already coded as *job security, school grades, teacher evaluations, teacher pay,* or *VAM scores*.
Acct perceptions_ teachers/principals (G)	Comments from teacher educators about what they perceive principals and teachers may think about student teaching in the era of accountability.
Emotions (I, S)	Comments that reveal educators' emotional responses to mandates (e.g., fear).
Instruction_Testing (G, S)	Comments about how high-stakes tests (e.g., FCAT) affect instruction in general. Do not code if already coded as *Pedagogical strategies affected by mandates.*
Job security (G, I)	Comments on educators' fear of losing their jobs, desires to keep their jobs, or other comments on job security.
New Stand. & Assmt. (G)	Comments about the new FL standards and assessment.
Pedag. strategies_ mandates (G)	Descriptions of decisions about classroom instructional strategies used during student teaching that are based on mandates. Do not code curricular materials here. (Can be double coded with *student teachers' instruction*.)
Placement_willing (G)	Comments related to teachers', districts', or principals' willingness or reluctance to host interns.

Table 3-2. Continued

Code and element of theoretical framework*	Definition of code
Reactions to mandates_ negative (G, I, S)	Comments about federal, district, state, or school mandates in negative terms. Do not code references to VAM, school grades. Code those under specific codes.
Reactions to mandates_ positive (G, I, S)	Comments about federal, district, state, or school mandates in positive terms. Do not code references to VAM, school grades. Code those under specific codes.
School grades (G, S)	Comments about school grades.
Shared teaching time (G)	Comments about the amount of time preservice teachers teach in the classroom; comments about cooperating teachers sharing time; control.
St. teachers_help (G)	Comments related to the idea that student teachers benefit the classroom; student teachers as helpful with accountability.
St. teachers_hindrance (G)	Comments related to the idea that student teachers may negatively impact the classroom or kids' learning; student teachers as harmful with accountability.
St. teachers' instruction (G)	Comments about the instruction student teachers are allowed to provide in the classroom; comments about how instruction may be organized in the classroom.
TP accountability (G, S)	Comments about accountability mandates related to teacher preparation programs.
TP programmatic changes (G)	Comments about changes made in the teacher education program related to accountability.
Teacher evaluations (I, S)	Comments about teachers' evaluations. (May be double coded with VAM scores.)
Teacher pay (I)	Comments about educators' pay being tied to test scores.
Testing (G, S)	Comments about standardized testing.
Title I (G)	Comments about Title I placements.
VAM scores (I, S)	Comments about VAM scores. (May be double coded with teachers' evaluations.)

* G=Governmentality; I=Incentive theory; S=Surveillance theory

Table 3-3. Emergent codes.

Code Name	Definition of code
Advice to interns	Comments about how teacher educators help student teachers negotiate student teaching in era of accountability.
Feedback_ teachers & principals	Comments from teacher educators about what teachers and principals have said to them about student teaching in era of accountability.
Interns' feedback	Comments from teacher educators about what interns have said to them about teaching in era of accountability.
Participant's role	Comments about the participant's role in the teacher preparation program.
Placement_ procedures	Comments about how student placements are determined.
ST across grade levels	Comments about how student teaching may be different across grade levels.
ST in content areas	Comments related to student teaching in various content areas.
ST in spring vs. fall	Comments related to the difference in placements during the spring vs. the fall related to accountability. (Do not double code w placement/acct.)

were not applicable and that others were too broad or narrow to glean meaningful interpretation of these data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes that emerged from the data included "advice to interns," "student teaching in spring versus fall," and "student teaching in content areas." These codes captured specific issues raised across participants.

I coded the text using HyperRESEARCH qualitative software. Coding captured meaning units, which included sentences, groups of related sentences, or entire paragraphs that illustrated a corresponding code (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Not all text was coded, and some meaning units were assigned more than one code at a time. Once all texts had been assigned codes, I ran code reports that displayed all data within each code. I then read data within each code with respect to the research questions and

wrote memos to capture my initial understandings of the data. Finally, themes were derived based on patterns evident in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Establishing Trustworthiness

A number of measures were taken to establish trustworthiness. First, to ascertain that the data accurately reflected the participants' intentions, I engaged in member checking by asking each participant to read their transcript and provide any corrections they deemed necessary prior to analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Over half of the participants responded to this request by either accepting their transcript or making revisions to it. In a further effort to ensure that the findings were true to the multiple realities expressed by the participants, I conducted an iterative analysis in which codes were developed and revised as I interacted with the data. Further, for the purposes of confirmability, I maintained an audit trail of the entire data analysis process. This included keeping process notes to record adjustments in my procedures and a record of code development (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Subjectivity Statement

I was guided by an interpretivist paradigm in conducting the interviews and analyzing the data. Such an approach recognizes that individuals' interpretations of the world are "culturally derived and historically situated" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). This is true for the participants as they interpret and convey their experiences within the historical and cultural moment of increased high-stakes accountability. Further, my interpretations of participants' experiences are also mediated by my own experiences and beliefs. As Stake (1995) explains, "For assertions, we draw from understandings deep within us, understandings whose derivation may be some hidden mix of personal experience, scholarship, assertions of other researchers" (p. 12). As such, I would be remiss not to

mention how my past experiences as a mentor teacher and internship supervisor play a role in this research.

I earned my master's degree in education the year NCLB (2002) was signed into law. I then was a mentor teacher for seven of my eight years teaching eighth grade language arts—a subject and grade level in which test scores have serious repercussions for students. As an example of the all too frequent disconnection between K-20 partnerships (Sykes, 2008), student teaching always occurred during the months leading up to the state tests. Despite my deep commitment to teacher education, I often felt conflicted about relinquishing control of my classroom to novice teachers during this time. The testing pressure on teachers and schools has only heightened since I left the classroom. As a former mentor teacher who is now affiliated with the state university, my insider-outsider persona likely played a role during the interviews (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Sharing my experience as a mentor teacher and a teacher educator with the participants might have helped to establish trust. While I acknowledge how my subjectivity played a role in the questions I pursued in this study, I was careful to ensure that the participants' own words guided the data analysis. For example, although my experiences resonate with some of those shared by participants, I ensured that claims I made were supported solely by the data.

Limitations

Although this study has the potential to contribute a complex understanding of how high-stakes accountability mandates are shaping student teaching, its limitations must be acknowledged. First, although I contacted personnel in all thirteen CAEP-accredited institutions across Florida, I only spoke to teacher educators in nine of them. Further, within these institutions, I was unable to make contact with teacher educators

and coordinators across all elementary and English education programs. Although I attempted to access participants over the course of two months, perhaps more time would have allowed me to make other contacts in these programs who would consent to participate in my study. Finally, in the interest of accommodating participants' preferences for phone interviews, some rapport-building may have been compromised due to the inability to communicate using nonverbal elements such as body language (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to understand how teacher educators perceive that accountability measures have impacted student teaching experiences. Based on interviews with sixteen teacher educators in nine of Florida's teacher education programs, Chapter 4 describes how these participants view accountability's impact on student teaching. It is organized into four sections. The first section provides a broad overview of how participants perceived that the educational climate has shifted for both K-12 public schools and teacher education programs in recent years. The second section describes how accountability has impacted the availability of student teaching placements, which are increasingly difficult to obtain. Here I present the ways in which student teachers may be seen as either a help or a hindrance to schools and how these perspectives might affect teachers' and principals' willingness to accept student teaching placements. The next section highlights how participants believe that accountability concerns have shaped the pedagogical decisions made during the student teacher experience. It will begin with an examination into the ways mentor teachers structure student teachers' opportunities to teach and then will delve into issues related to student teachers' abilities to be curriculum decision-makers in the face of pacing guides and scripted curricula. Finally, this chapter ends by turning to teacher educators' reactions to the age of accountability, how they are responding to it in their work, and how they see it as part of the ever-moving pendulum of educational reform.

Navigating Shifting Demands in the Age of Accountability

In recent years, Florida's educators in K-12 public schools and in teacher preparation programs have had to acclimate to a seemingly constant barrage of

changes in mandates. Collectively, new standards and their accompanying tests, new evaluations based on VAM scores, and new legislation tying these evaluations to teachers' pay and job security have increased expectations for teachers and principals. As a result, student teachers enter schools today in which teachers and principals are under a tremendous amount of pressure related to teaching in the age accountability. The swiftly shifting climate has also affected teacher preparation programs and their student teaching experiences, as they are also being called upon to demonstrate their impact on K-12 student learning. This section will provide an overview of participants' perceptions of the ways in which these new expectations are shifting the landscape for student teachers in Florida's schools.

Increased Mandates Have Created a Culture of Anxiety in Public Schools

The participants in this study shared their perception that the rapid pace of legislative mandates and the increased pressures to hold teachers accountable for student learning have taken an emotional toll on educators. Teachers and principals are trying their best to keep up with the changing tides in education, but as one teacher educator put it, "Constant change just wears everybody down" (P14)[4]. Participants captured the heightened emotions experienced by educators with words such as "very concerned," "apprehension," "a lot of anxiety," "feel the burden," "feel the pressure," "fear," "uncertainty," "risky," and "overwhelmed." Such emotions have led schools to have a culture of anxiety, which has had marked effects on student teaching.

Increased top-down mandates paired with the many other expectations teachers must fulfill have resulted in a collective sense of anxiety among teachers and principals.

[4] As indicated in Chapter 3, participants will be identified by a randomly assigned number (i.e., P1 represents Participant #1).

Participants remarked that mentor teachers are committed teachers who want to both help their students be successful and also to devote time to improve the profession. They also recognize that taking on an intern can be one more thing on top of an already stressful job. As one participant said, “I can kind of see it from a teacher’s perspective with so much more demands put on them as the years go on” (P10). She acknowledged that what “teachers have to deal with now is so much more stressful” than what she encountered in her twenty plus years as a classroom teacher. Without exception, the participants in this study respect mentor teachers and principals and understand that these educators make the best decisions they can under challenging political circumstances.

Noting that educators are under a lot of pressure related to testing and VAM scores, teacher educators recognized that, “to ask them to take an intern is really kind of just like more work” (P12). One participant explained, “There’s so much going on in the classroom and there’s so much stuff that they have to do…that it’s just overwhelming and they want a break from it” (P14). For example, the new state standards and assessments have created a sense of uncertainty among educators who are protective of their time and want to ensure they are free of distractions as they focus on adjusting to the changes. A participant explained, “All of those changes at one time and teaching anxiety over those changes led to—and we’re still in many ways not through with those changes yet—placements have been more of a struggle than they were the five or six years before that time” (P1). Noting that similar anxieties became amplified in recent years due to increased testing, another teacher educator said, “In fact, when EOCs came out a few years ago, the end of course exams, there was a

whole category of folks that said, 'I don't want an intern this year. We have to get this launched" (P14). When asked if he thought teachers were fearful that interns would have a negative impact on their students, he said that he would not couch it that way, but rather understood that "the teachers' experience has driven this bus – to put it that way – for a long time. They know what it takes and they want to be the one that doesn't have to deal with anything else but keeping that bus on the road."

Other teacher educators shared these concerns, one pointing out that teachers' anxiety is particularly strong this year because, "They don't know what this test is going to be like" (P15). Such uncertainties arise at least partially out of fears that teachers' pay is affected by how students perform on these new assessments with which teachers are not yet very familiar. One participant explained that she was sympathetic to the ways in which accountability pressures are affecting mentor teachers' desires to work with student teachers:

> I can understand that, when their salaries are based on the achievement of their students. Like, I would say 99% of our interns are amazing, but there are always a couple that may not be the strongest and it takes a lot of time and effort to work with a student teacher. If they truly are being a guide and mentor, you have to be willing to set some time aside to work with that person as well as your regular students, so I can kind of see it from a teacher's perspective. (P10)

Another participant said, "You tie everything to their pay [and] to their ability to make AYP or not, and, you know, even a teacher who is very committed to keeping the profession strong really has to do a lot of soul searching" when it comes to taking on an intern (P1).

Other teachers are doing a different kind of soul searching. One teacher educator spoke of "some really good directing teachers" who have worked with her program for many years, but who are "questioning the profession itself (P2). They don't want to put a

student [teacher] in that position where they can't be motivating, they can't be positive with them." She shared that these teachers have said to her, "'I cannot do this anymore. I, in good conscience, don't feel that because of the climate around education I can be motivating to the student [teacher].'" These teachers take their role as mentor teacher seriously and therefore do not feel comfortable mentoring new teachers into a profession fraught with anxiety and pressure.

These data highlight teacher educator's perceptions of how overwhelmed educators are by the bombardment of mandates in recent years. Teachers are scrambling to learn the new standards and are anxious about how their students will perform on high-stakes tests that are new to students and teachers alike. With recent legislative changes that tie teacher effectiveness to students' test scores, they also worry about how their pay and jobs will be affected by these new assessments. These myriad factors work together to create a culture of anxiety in schools. We see that stepping away from hosting student teachers is one way that educators are attempting to ameliorate some of the stress. In the next section, we turn to how recent accountability mandates have also shifted the work of teacher preparation programs.

Responding to Calls to Demonstrate Teacher Preparation Program Impact

The education landscape is not changing for K-12 alone. Teacher preparation programs are preparing teachers for an accountability-driven climate while being beholden to accountability mandates themselves. This section will discuss the ways in which teacher preparation programs have had to answer to mandates requiring them to demonstrate that their student teachers make a positive impact on student learning.

New requirements of teacher preparation programs have arisen out of a sociopolitical context in which the public and politicians are dissatisfied with teachers

and those who prepare them. The nature of school grades in Florida reveals the challenges some schools have with improving student achievement by publicly broadcasting which schools are "failing" and which are not. One participant noted that complaints against teachers are rampant, "As long as schools fail, in whatever benchmarks there are out there, the public thinks the schools are terrible and teachers are awful because they don't do anything, and they never work and the students aren't learning" (P14). The public outcry about the state of education has shined a spotlight on the institutions that prepare them, resulting in legislation requiring accountability for teacher preparation programs. One teacher educator summed up the scrutiny over teacher preparation:

> Teacher education colleges and colleges of education are coming increasingly under attack because they're saying, "Well, why do we need these people? They've produced a generation of teachers and our students still can't read and write and do math. So let's test and audit them, just the way we're going to audit the public schools. Are they producing teachers who are going to make a difference in the classroom? That's why, Secretary [of Education] Duncan, when he was first appointed, made it a point of saying, "Well, we're going to revamp teacher education programs. We're not going to just hand out money to everybody and say, 'Isn't that wonderful?'" (P13)

As alluded to by this participant, pursuant to the Race to the Top initiative and state legislation, Florida's programs are required to demonstrate that their graduates positively impact student achievement. Regulations for determining teacher preparation program impacts are currently under review in which, "VAM scores will be used to measure teacher preparation programs. So VAM scores of our graduates will be linked back to the program where they were trained" (P9).

The Teacher Work Sample. In addition to using data from their graduates to demonstrate impact, teacher preparation programs are also now required to collect data

on interns' impact during student teaching. One teacher educator explained, "We now have to show that…every one of our students makes an impact on the entire class…so that comes from the very top and filters down really quickly" (P1). Teacher preparation programs have responded to such mandates by requiring student teachers to complete a data-based project on their teaching. Called an "action research project" by one participant and part of a student teaching portfolio by another, the majority of the participants referred to this project as a Teacher Work Sample (TWS). The TWS requires student teachers to hone in on one class in particular, focusing on knowing the academic strengths and needs of each student. They administer a pre-test to identify their students' learning needs, design and implement two weeks of lessons, and then use a post-test to determine if there are learning gains. Once the data are collected, student teachers "disaggregate the data they collect based on those AYP subgroups of the students that they teach" (P9). In some ways, this project replicates the scrutiny over teacher performance and student data that interns will face once they become public school teachers.

The TWS requirements have caused problems for some student teachers, reflecting a tension between teacher preparation programs' expectations of interns and the realities in some K-12 schools. On one hand, the TWS requires interns to "develop lesson plans that are rigorous that are tied to the standards and then [use] assessments that they either create or use" (P9). For interns who teach in classrooms marked by curricular inflexibility, however, finding a way to meet this requirement poses a dilemma. One participant explained:

> Accountability pressures seem to kind of restrict what they can do in the classroom and it kind of affects what they know that they're supposed to

be doing according to our program. So, for example, if they can't plan their own lessons, then how will they do a TWS? (P12)

When asked what advice she gives interns in negotiating the TWS requirements when they are expected to teach from scripted curricula, she recounted what happened with a particular student teacher: "She was basically told to do what she was asked to do [by the teacher]. As it just kind of fits the TWS in however she could." In this instance, the classroom teacher's scripted lesson plan superseded the intern's need to design original lessons for the TWS.

Dilemmas such as these expose a paradox in the accountability movement's hold on teacher preparation. On one hand, student teachers are required to show their impact by assessing students and developing curriculum that responds to students' needs. However, they cannot do this in classrooms in which their curriculum is predetermined by district pacing guides or mandated curriculum that does not allow teachers to make curricular decisions based on student need. In an era of accountability, such tightly controlled curricula ensure that teachers are covering the standards in preparation for standardized tests. Participants explained that predicaments like this worry interns because they want be successful in their programs, yet do not want to "rock the boat" (P13) in their internships in order to do so. At the same time, teacher educators have to hold them accountable for the TWS project, which creates a challenge for both parties. One participant explained that her interns do not want to complete a "fake" assignment for the TWS and have asked if they can use their teacher's lesson plans, a request she has not allowed.

> So, [the TWS] kind of affects and impacts how everyone can do their job and how the students can learn. They're not really able to be autonomous, I don't think. Not as much as they used to be. But then again, I think the

cooperating teachers are not able to be as autonomous as they used to be. (P12)

Another teacher educator noted that student teachers “really rely on their clinical faculty member to help them” as they negotiate the challenge of designing curriculum for their TSW (P9). He and his colleagues encourage their interns to “blame it on us. They basically say, ‘My program requires this so there is really no option.’”

One teacher educator recalled an instance in which she had to advocate for her intern’s TWS amidst strict curricular controls. The intern encountered resistance when she tried to give a pretest because although the district was giving post-tests, it was not first assessing what students know. The school did not want her to give the pre-test because “they wanted [every classroom] to do exactly the same thing for issues of equity” (P1). Since other teachers did not have an intern, the school leaders felt it would be unfair that one class would have a pretest and others would not. The participant explained that she intervened and “was able to advocate for one pretest on that unit. Because you can’t measure gains if you don’t have a pre- and a posttest.” On the bright side, she pointed out that for the past two semesters her students were able to complete all aspects of the TWS, noting, “that was unheard of before Common Core.” Scenarios such as these illustrate the challenges teacher educators face when accountability pressures at both the teacher preparation level and the K-12 level affect their program.

For their part, some teacher educators feel stymied by having to promote an assignment they personally to not believe in. One participant criticized the value of the TWS for demonstrating teacher program impact because it is “only a snapshot of maybe a two-week period of time. That’s not an accurate way to demonstrate impact but it’s a

way of doing it" (P9). In the face of mandates requiring programs to demonstrate student teachers' impact, he said, "We're trying to wrap our brains around on how we would link student teaching to VAM scores," especially when accounting for the short duration of student teaching paired with "many other variables associated with the student teaching experience." Approximately a third of the teacher educators featured in this study share his concerns that they have to enact instructional practices that philosophically conflict with what they perceive to be the purpose of teacher education. As one participant boldly stated about the TWS, "It's not teaching. I mean, teaching is neither an art or a science…What people try to do in education is draw straight lines where straight lines can't be drawn" (P13). Nevertheless, teacher educators know they are responsible for helping their students successfully complete the TWS and for preparing them for the educational climate in which they will work.

This section has established that the educational climate has shifted for K-12 educators and teacher education programs in recent years. In the midst of rapid changes and policy shifts, educators across the K-20 spectrum are trying to wrestle with the realities of teaching in an era of accountability. As the next section will highlight, teacher educators across Florida are contending with student teaching placement challenges that arise out of accountability pressures.

Securing Student Teaching Placements Amid Competing Demands

Teacher educators across Florida are responding to a number of challenges when it comes to organizing and ensuring a high quality student teaching experience in today's climate of accountability. For nearly all of the teacher educators in this study, the first challenge arises when they need to make placements for their student teachers. Currently these decisions occur within an educational climate in which schools and

teachers are judged and then rewarded or sanctioned based on their students' achievement scores. According to the participants in this study, this political reality shapes placement decisions and whether principals and teachers view student teachers as a hindrance or help when it comes to impacting student performance.

When discussing the placement process, the majority of participants cited the state-mandated criteria for selecting mentor teachers: they must have at least three years teaching experience, have clinical educator training, and be rated effective or highly effective on their evaluations. One teacher educator explained that the criteria regarding mentor teachers' evaluations were recently established to address Race to the Top standards. She worked with four of her program's partner districts to incorporate these criteria into their policies. She noted, "I believe that the districts thought that the changes that they negotiated with their unions and partners were going to strengthen the mentoring dyad [by making] a more rigorous student teaching placement" (P1). In retrospect, however, she realized, "that did not necessarily work out that way because when you added a lot of changes to curriculum and to school climate and to the way teachers are evaluated, and you expect them to do more with less and to do more," fewer mentor teachers were willing to take interns. This comment reflects an irony in the accountability movement: The pressure on teachers to get strong teaching evaluations, which they need to become mentor teachers, prevents some of them from being willing to take interns at all.

Beyond using the state's criteria for selecting mentor teachers, some participants regretted that they could not individualize placements by matching individual student teachers with mentor teachers who they believed would make a strong dyad. One

participant further explained, “We just don't have the ability to do that in our circumstances. Number one, because of our volume and number two, because of the number of players that are involved in the process” (P9). Due to these constraints, teacher preparation programs rely on principals who act as gatekeepers in determining whether and how student teaching can occur at their schools. According to the participants in this study, these decisions are guided by principals’ perceptions of the impact student teachers may have in their school: they either view them as a hindrance or an extra pair of hands.

Student Teachers: A Potential Liability

In this era of accountability, many teacher educators believe their interns are seen as a potential risk to teachers and schools because they may negatively affect student achievement or distract teachers from focusing on teaching their students. The vast majority of the participants described increasing difficulties with finding placements for their student teachers. One noted that the difficulties with finding new placements for student teachers “is just about to kill us all” (P14) and another said her program has to “beat the bushes to get people to do it” (P2). Another participant echoed these placement challenges, noting, “Our pool of volunteers has been shrinking rather dramatically” (P8). While she did not have solid evidence for why this was occurring, she did have a hypothesis:

> I do suspect that the standardized assessments are influencing who's willing, both teachers being willing and administrators being willing, to take novice teachers into their classrooms when the stakes really are so high.

Other participants’ experiences affirm this suspicion that issues related to accountability are impacting student teaching placements. One participant who has worked with student teachers for over fifteen years at her university noted that finding placements

has always been a bit of a challenge for teacher preparation programs, but that educators are even more reluctant than they have been in the past because of the high stakes climate:

> More teachers are saying that “because of accountability I can’t do this.” Or “I don’t feel comfortable doing this.” Or “I’m only going to do it once a year versus twice a year.” Or “I’m only going to take this type of student versus a full-time intern.” So I’ve seen that the numbers increase in terms of individuals who just say, you know, “I don’t…I don’t have the time for this. I need to be in control of what’s happening.” (P2)

This sentiment was heard from others, as well, with one participant saying that her program has to “twist their arm a little bit” to get mentor teachers because, “They're concerned about it affecting the test scores. I've heard that from the very first day I've been here” (P7).

Principals have also voiced their concern to participants over student teachers’ impacts on test scores. One participant recounted hearing from a principal that the message sent by the district was, “You’ve got to be careful with interns because teachers are being held accountable and this can come back to bite you” (P11). She understands why principals are wary of hosting interns in today’s climate and explained that:

> [Some principals have] seen this evolution occur over the years [in which] this intense focus on testing, test scores, school grades, and now teacher evaluations are tied to student achievement and [it’s] the principal’s responsibility is to verify that these children were taught by this teacher.

According to the teacher educators in this study, principals’ and teachers’ concerns over student teachers’ impacts on student learning have posed a challenge for teacher preparation programs.

Two participants recounted instances in which student teachers were pulled from their placements due to fears over student achievement. One described how this occurs:

> Each semester for the past five semesters I've received phone calls from principals that say, "This is a nice kid, but they're just not teaching to the high level that I need taught to in order to make AYP so would you please, I'm asking you to remove them." Through no fault of the student teacher…now this isn't a lot, but that would never happen when I first started. When I call and say, "Did they breach ethical standards?" "Oh no, no, no, it's nothing they've done, they're just not teaching at the high level that we need at this building at this time." (P1)

When asked how these principals assess the student teachers' impact on student achievement, the participant explained that principals conduct walkthrough evaluations of student teachers in the same way they assess classroom teachers and then evaluate the data to determine if the student teacher should remain in the placement. If "the data for that classroom has fallen, has taken a dip," then the principal might call and ask the student teacher to be removed because "they do not tolerate much of the slippage." In some cases, the principal may allow the student teacher to remain in the placement, but would ask that she does not teach a high-stakes subject area, such as reading. Because the college needs to maintain a positive relationship with the schools, the coordinator feels her hands are tied. She shared, "And my response will be, 'Well of course I will honor your request, but how will this novice professional learn to become a math teacher?' 'Well, they're not going to learn on those kids.'" She bemoaned that we are in "a climate where principals will call you and say, 'They're a liability and I can't have a liability in my building.'" She said she responds to these concerns by being proactive in promoting the benefits of having an intern.

Another participant described a similar situation in which one of her student teachers “actually had to find another placement because the teacher was so concerned about her VAM scores that she refused to give the student teacher more than one class to teach” (P12). She noted that this is an extreme example of teachers being reluctant to give up control in today’s climate. In her experience, some educators consider student teachers “a detriment, even though we have a very strong program and [the schools] hire our student teachers, but they don’t necessarily want their teachers to focus on mentoring our students.” This creates a paradoxical scenario whereby some schools do not want student teachers, yet these are the very same individuals who will be hired as brand new teachers.

Ten participants linked teachers’ reluctance to accept interns to fear of getting a poor evaluation, which would affect teachers’ pay according to recent legislation. One teacher educator indicated that teachers have shared with her that:

> They just don’t want to give up the classroom…because 50% of their evaluation is based on the learning gains that their students make and they just don’t want to take the risk of allowing someone else to come in who’s an unknown quantity to them and make them responsible for some of the learning initiatives during the course of that year. (P2)

Another participant shared what he hears from mentor teachers related to this point:

> The main one now is, “I have to get my students to achieve a certain level and my pay and my tenure is dependent on that, and so I don’t think I want to turn my classroom over to a student [teacher] right now.” (P14)

According to participants, these concerns are especially prevalent with teachers of highly tested subjects such as math and reading. Despite the fact that anxieties related to high-stakes testing and salaries lead to limited placements for their student teachers, participants empathized with teachers’ fears.

Of the participants who oversee programs that place student teachers in K-12 classrooms, half said that it is more challenging to secure placements in secondary classrooms than elementary. One participant explained that while elementary has always been more receptive than secondary, “[Secondary teachers] are even more reluctant now than they were before” (P2). Another teacher educator who has seen similar trends in secondary teachers’ reluctance attributed it to the fact that “[teachers are] worried about lots of things,” and that hosting an intern in the midst of increasing mandates is just too much right now (P14). This is not to suggest that elementary programs are not without their struggles to find placements. Within these programs, coordinators find that K-2 teachers are more open to having interns than “teachers that have FCAT responsibility or assessment responsibilities” (P2). Elementary coordinators reported that third grade placements are the most difficult since it is such a high-stakes testing year in Florida.

School leaders’ rationalizations for not allowing interns. Eight of the programs in which participants work have contended with entire schools that have decided to not take student teachers due to issues related to accountability. While participants pointed out that this is not a rampant problem, it is one that is increasing in recent years. A few participants mentioned that principals’ fears and concerns related to their jobs have affected their willingness to take interns. One participant remarked, “I think administrators, like teachers, are under tremendous amounts of pressure about standardized test scores…because schools can be shut down. Administrators are moved around like chess pieces” (P8). Turnover has contributed to scenarios in which schools that used to be reliable placements are no longer accepting student teachers.

For example, principals new to schools have said to one participant, “I have too much at stake right now to have to deal with interns” (P16). She said she thinks this hesitance stems from lack of experience with interns, positing that principals use end of course exams (EOCs) and other reasons “more [as] an excuse because they don’t want to have to maybe manage that extra element when they’re going into a new school.” Another participant described an elementary principal who has a “high need of control” and mistrust of teachers, and therefore will not allow student teachers in her school:

> She does not trust what's going to happen and does not trust teachers to make those decisions [about hosting an intern]. Because if teachers really thought that was a negative impact on their student achievement, especially given the high stakes now, they would never request to have an intern in their classroom. She just doesn't trust them. (P11)

With the weight of their entire school’s success on their shoulders—and their own job security at stake—principals play an important function as gatekeepers who choose whether student teaching will occur at their school or not.

Some participants reported that schools whose grades are low or who are under state control are especially hesitant to accept student teachers. One participant who has worked with student teachers for nearly ten years shared that concerns over accountability have ramped up in recent years, making student teachers particularly risky in struggling schools. Participants explained how the increased anxiety experienced by these schools makes their leaders wary to take on anything that might become a distraction. This is particularly true of schools that are under state control because they have received low grades for consecutive years. A participant explained, “Sometimes it’s simply because you know maybe they’re an F school and they’ve got so many people in there from the state that they just feel that there’s no way with all these

other individuals that are there that they can focus on what they might need to do with interns" (P2). Another teacher educator described that, "it's a circus with all the people coming in now" to failing schools, which has led some of them to "shut down any outside students coming in" (P14).

When asked to comment on any differences she notices with internships in Title I schools, one teacher educator expressed disappointment that student teachers were not able to work in struggling schools. Her program tries to prepare student teachers to work in high poverty schools, yet opportunities are not always available because the pressures from the state trickle down to the district that makes decisions about student teaching:

> It's the district who is controlling those schools more because the state is controlling those schools more. And for example, one year we just had a blanket policy delivered to us from the [school board] saying there would be no interns in any school that had a D or lower. And those tended to be Title I schools, which was disheartening because we're trying to encourage our interns to teach in those settings. (P11)

She explained that was concerned with fidelity of implementation of district-mandated curricula because the schools want to make "sure their programs that they put in place are implemented" as intended. The participant conceded that, "our interns may not teach in accordance to those programs or philosophies. A lot of those programs are rote kind of learning programs and not what we would be teaching our interns to do." This comment reveals a lack of coherence between the goals of the teacher preparation program and the district. Below we see more lack of coherence in the dilemmas teacher educations face when they need to place students in spring internships, timing which interferes with high-stakes testing.

Testing curtails placements in the spring. Overall, participants reported that it is easier to secure student teacher placements in the fall due to spring testing, especially for grades three and up. One coordinator summed it up:

> Spring, no matter what the placement is, whether it's internship or pre-interns, it is much more difficult. It's much easier to get buy-in from schools and teachers in the fall than it is for spring. And they will tell you it's because of FCAT or whatever assessments they're going to be using in the future. (P11)

Another participant who also experienced some difficulties with spring placements said elementary principals have said to her, "'We don't want interns in during the spring because FCAT is just too hard to figure out" (P16). She added the caveat that "very few would say that," indicating this is not a widespread pattern her college has experienced.

One teacher educator explained that in some cases principals' concerns over school grades trump existing relationships the teacher preparation programs may have with the school. She described a recent scenario in which the principal was

> transferred into a building that I've been very, very effectively placing students in in the past…and she was transferred there in order to make sure that the school increases school grades. And so she called me right up and let me know not to contact her at all in the spring. (P1)

This principal reluctantly agreed to keep the fall interns in order to honor the previous principal's agreement with the program, "but don't call her again until the school grade goes up and she 'works everything out.'" This example reflects the view that student teachers interfere with the school's focus on improvement. She has also faced similar challenges with securing placements in the spring with struggling schools and emphasized that her program has not had any problems in 'A' schools,

> but a Title I school who is trying to make AYP and the principal is on his last year there because if they don't increase their grade, his own

livelihood is at stake…it is not unheard of to have entire buildings here in this area closed to us during the spring semester.

To compensate for the lack of placements in such schools, she has specifically forged strong relationships with A and B schools so that she is more likely guaranteed placements for student teachers in the spring.

The majority of teacher educators in this study shared that mentor teachers and principals with whom they partner have concerns that student teachers could be a hindrance to their students' academic performance, concerns that manifest in increasingly limited student teaching placements. As the next section will highlight, however, some K-12 educators have welcomed student teachers during the era of accountability due to their belief that student teachers are an asset in reaching the schools' goals.

Student Teachers: An Extra Pair of Hands

With increased pressure on schools to implement new standards and raise students' test scores, four participants explained that some of the educators with whom they partner view an extra teacher in the room as a tool for improving student achievement. These participants mentioned the phrases "another pair of hands" and "more hands on deck" when describing the benefits of having a student teacher. Notably, this view of student teachers was shared predominately in relation to elementary placements where classroom teachers are accustomed to differentiating instruction. One participant commented that elementary teachers have "maximized on the additional pair of hands. I think that it's easier for them to truly have fluid and flexible grouping because now they have another adult in the room who can also work with a small group or one-on-one" (P9). Because student teachers are in the classroom every

day, mentor teachers can also rely on them to provide the assistance to students needing intensive Tier 3 support as part of Response to Intervention (RtI). These participants believe that mentor teachers and principals who embrace interns as “a positive force within the building” (P1) are motivated by a belief that student teachers can positively impact students’ learning.

As discussed above, many programs experienced challenges with placing student teachers in struggling schools, but that was not the case for one participant. An outlier, she noted that the struggling schools with which her program works appreciate the contributions interns make to the school. These schools “feel like the more hands available, then the better because they can work with those students one on one or take them to the computer lab…do small group instruction, do the tutorial that’s needed to help bridge that gap” (P3).

Two participants explained how they use the language of VAM scores to sell the benefits of interns to schools. When asked to discuss how accountability has affected student teaching in his program, one of these participants explained:

> Principals have seen that accountability is impacting teachers and so what principals are doing is they're starting to realize that we cannot do this alone…I think what's happening right now in this new era of accountability is district leadership is also changing. And so people are starting to see teaching and learning in a very different way. As the leadership changes, as new blood comes in to the educational arena, we definitely have been able to sort of slowly push the envelope in that way. (P9)

Because of the close relationship his college has formed with partner districts, he supposed that principals believe, “If I’m going to get an intern from [this college], this is somebody who’s going to help me with accountability. This is somebody who’s not going to be a burden, but is going to be another pair of hands…and everybody [needs

to] pitch in.” He also pointed out that having a student teacher in the classroom reduces the class size ratio, which can have a positive impact on student learning:

> We have some principals who have used the term with parents that they have a B.O.G.O. - a Buy One Get One - and it doesn't cost them any extra tax dollars. They have free labor and they're helping another trained professional. And so, I think the principals are helping us spread the word that it really is a value added model.

When principals hold the view that student teachers can be an asset to their school rather than a burden, they are readily willing to host student teachers in their classrooms.

In the wake of high-stakes testing and the pressures that come with it, sometimes it takes convincing for district educators to see that interns can be beneficial to students’ learning. Another participant shared her program’s experience when it moved to a yearlong internship. She explained that initially “the district got very controlling over the process…because if an intern is going to be in there for an entire year, they want to make sure it’s a really good, strong mentor teacher” (P11). A chief concern of the principals was “that their student achievement will go down because you have an intern versus a qualified teacher doing too much of the instruction.” The participant learned that one principal revealed her wariness about interns by asking her colleagues at a principals’ meeting, “Do you feel the interns have negatively affected teaching or the achievement results for any individual teacher?” This question reflects genuine concerns of principals who are both looking out for their teachers and concerned about their building as a whole. Although some principals in the district will never allow student teachers in their building, the coordinator shared, “What the

principals who had interns regularly were stating is, 'They enhance their teacher effectiveness.'" She expanded on this:

> In our programs, because [student teachers] are in classrooms for so long and so much before they're interning, they go in pretty ready for this internship. And so they found that having two individuals with those qualifications in the classroom enhanced achievement and allowed for more small group work, allowed for more innovations.

For educators in this program's partner district, initial concerns about interns' effects on student learning have been somewhat allayed by hearing principals share their positive experiences with other leaders in the district.

Recognizing that the district's principals were concerned about student achievement and teachers' VAM scores, the teacher preparation program examined the VAM scores of the teachers who had interns that year and compared them to the state average VAM scores. They found that "a pretty high percent…of those teachers individually had higher VAM scores than the state average" (P11). This information has been shared with educators in the district as a way of making the case that interns are not detrimental to teachers' VAM scores. In making this case, the participant acknowledged that VAM scores might not be an accurate way to measure teacher effectiveness, but they are the currency used in education today. She explained, "So, I don't buy that interns may lower their ability to get, or their capacity to get, that high VAM score. But who knows, those VAM scores are all over the place." Beyond looking at VAM scores, the program also conducted follow-up interviews with mentor teachers who "expressed that initially they were concerned and then within a month, all their concerns disappeared because they realized they could do much more having that

coteacher with them." The program is building on this positive approach to the yearlong internship by promoting its benefits to other teachers and principals across the district.

While in the minority, these participants' experiences suggest that the belief by educators that student teachers are an asset to student achievement has safeguarded their programs from some of the placement challenges others have faced. The next section will outline the ways in which the student teaching experience has changed in recent years due to the era of accountability.

Student Teachers' Constrained Opportunities to Teach and Plan Instruction

As shown above, teacher educators perceive that pressures related to accountability have affected the ability of many of Florida's teacher preparation programs to secure student teaching placements. Once placed in mentor teachers' classrooms, student teachers next contend with issues related to opportunities to teach. Many participants expressed a lack of coherence between the pedagogy they espouse in their programs and the pedagogy their student teachers are exposed to in their placements. As one participant explained, this misalignment is "a dilemma because we really want them to be in classrooms that exemplify what we think is important to happen in a classroom" (P11). While this frustration is not a new one for teacher educators, the high-stakes accountability culture has exacerbated the divide between teacher preparation and reality. When asked about alignment one teacher educator asserted:

> I personally don't see any [alignment] at all…And it's so funny that you ask that because I've been wondering what the role of English education is going to be, or should be. Because they spend a lot of time – they spend two years – learning theories in pedagogy and research-based practice just to go into classrooms to be told something completely opposite. I hear it all the time. (P12)

She explained that she only sees about half of her student teachers teaching in a manner that aligns with her program's values. She attributed this partially to teachers' attitudes and beliefs, "and then some of it might be the actual standardized testing culture, where some teachers do really believe that you have to teach to the test." While teacher educators have long lamented the lack of coherence between their programs' values and those student teachers see in K-12 schools, participants in this study emphasized that such disconnects have grown steadily throughout the years due to pressures related to high-stakes testing.

Teacher educators champion student teaching because it provides the opportunity for student teachers to learn how to teach independently and design and implement instruction. This section will reveal how participants perceive that student teachers' opportunities to learn through these authentic experiences have been thwarted due to mentor teachers' concerns over high-stakes tests and other issues related to accountability. It begins by discussing participants' descriptions of how accountability pressures are affecting some mentor teachers' willingness to relinquish control of their classrooms. Next it will describe how some programs and mentor teachers structure student teaching and how these decisions may be shaped by accountability. Finally it will explore the ways in which participants believe the era of accountability has curtailed the role of teachers as curriculum decision-makers and how this affects student teaching.

Mentor Teachers' Reluctance to Share Teaching Responsibilities

As this section will show, participants perceived a frequent lack of coherence between the teacher preparation program's goals for student teaching and what their

student teachers experience. This participant's description of student teachers' roles and responsibilities echoes the expectations shared across programs:

> [Student teachers] need opportunities to design lessons, to implement them, to learn how to use data on an ongoing basis, to help inform their planning and their teaching. They should be immersed in managing that classroom on all different levels, from managing behavior to the instruction to time to even the distribution of materials, you know really taking on all of the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher for an extended period of time and maintaining that consistently. (P2)

According to participants in this study, the ability of student teachers to fulfill these expectations, however, depends upon how comfortable mentor teachers are with sharing teaching responsibilities with a novice.

In the traditional model of student teaching, interns gradually assume full responsibility for the classroom, starting with observing the mentor teacher and eventually planning, teaching, assessing, and managing the classroom on their own for an extended period of time. Over half of the participants in this study, however, indicated that they have encountered mentor teachers who are reluctant to relinquish control of their classrooms because of accountability pressures. This creates a dilemma for teacher educators who want to ensure that teacher candidates have high quality and productive student teaching experiences, while at the same time honoring mentor teachers' desires to control the experience. One participant explained:

> We're now experiencing some challenges with accountability in terms of its impact on student teaching. We're now facing the challenge where cooperating teachers, a number of them, are reluctant to relinquish their teaching, to give our students adequate time to do teaching, or to take over the teaching process…The teachers are very concerned about evaluation, student gains, that kind of thing, we understand that. So it is difficult sometimes for some of our students, depending on schools and the teacher, to get in adequate teaching of the different subject areas. (P6)

Mentor teachers' fears related to control lead to limited opportunities for student teachers to teach. One participant described this scenario:

> I've worked with teachers who really don't want to give up any control, they don't want to leave the classroom for a minute and I'm like, "You've got to let the student have the opportunity to have the experience to be in the classroom by themselves." It doesn't mean you have to leave the school grounds, just kind of wean yourself out of the class a little bit. (P2)

With nearly two decades of experience behind her, she expressed that she has witnessed an increase in the anxieties around control and attributed that to issues related to accountability. According to participants, mentor teachers who are reluctant to loosen the reigns are concerned not only about their students' learning, but also their own VAM scores and how those will affect their evaluations and pay.

Such concerns are especially present in secondary classrooms and in heavily tested subjects. One participant said, "Secondary teachers, like those who teach AP or honors, truly are a little more hesitant to let go of the control of the class because the accountability really does fall on them for those scores that their students get" (P9). Based on his observations he hesitantly generalized, "Most of the secondary teachers approach pedagogy from an 'I teach content,' rather than 'I teach students' [perspective]." He surmised that this pedagogical perspective combined with pressures related to the state assessments, EOCs, and AP exams lead some secondary teachers to believe, "I don't have the kind of time to really coach [student teachers] up and allow them to coteach or be jointly accountable."

In elementary classrooms, student teachers often have restricted opportunities to practice teaching as mentor teachers maintain tight control over instruction. Some participants explained that mentor teachers will often first give control over non-tested

subjects such as social studies, science, or spelling, and then may eventually give some teaching control over math or reading. Others reported that elementary teachers tend to let interns assist or run a small group for reading instruction, but are reluctant to give student teachers "opportunities to do lengthy teaching time in that particular area" (P6). Another described what she recently observed in an elementary classroom:

> The intern is allowed to do some of the more mundane things, like introduce vocabulary words, but anything with language arts—she's been given some math, like graphing she's been able to do, but anything more complicated or part of language arts has not been given to her in full class form. She's allowed to work in small groups, and do remediation, but the teacher introduces the skills because of the test. (P15)

She attributed the teacher's fear of relinquishing control with recent changes in accountability policies because "with merit pay, test scores, pressure from administration, now teachers are accountable for every second in the classroom." In student teaching experiences such as these, mentor teachers' fears related to accountability constrain student teachers' opportunities to learn in and through practice.

Questions about adequate teacher preparation arose when discussing interns' opportunities to teach reading. One teacher educator shared, "A lot of times [mentor teachers] will never give control over reading. They prioritize reading over everything else…I would say that's universal" (P11). She described the role that student teachers play in reading instruction as a "support role. They will help monitor kids while they're working and the teacher has the reading group." Another participant also mentioned the tight control mentor teachers retain over reading instruction, noting that the student teacher may serve as an assistant, but it is not until "near the end of our students' experience…when they'll start allowing them to do some of the reading and eventually teach some lessons in reading" (P6). As a result of interns' limited chances to teach

reading, she ventured that reading instruction practice “is not at the level that I think we’d like to see it.” Another participant wondered aloud from the perspective of an intern, “If I’m not able to teach reading, how am I going to get the experience to see whether it’s really worked with the students or not, whether it’s successful?” (P3) This concern that novices will not be prepared to teach highly tested subjects was shared by another teacher educator who said, “[Student teachers] can’t do the math, they can’t do the reading. They could do social studies or something like that, and that’s not giving them the kind of experience that they need. That is a definite difficulty” (P2).

When asked if they are concerned that their future teachers—who will certainly have to teach reading—have few opportunities to practice it in their student teaching experience, all of the above participants expressed confidence in their teacher candidates. One responded, “Well, if we didn't have such a strong reading program, I would [have concerns]” (P11). The other educators shared similar sentiments, noting that student teachers gain valuable skills from their pre-internship experiences. According to one participant, “Whether they are actually teaching or not, they are allowed to assist and to observe teachers use the various reading series and strategies. So perhaps some comfort is coming from that aspect of it” (P6). Given the fact that many of their interns do not have opportunities to teach reading in their student teaching, these participants highlight what they perceive as the benefit of previous clinical experiences in providing well-rounded teaching experiences for teacher candidates.

Coteaching: A Welcomed Model for Student Teaching

Approximately a third of participants reported that their programs are responding to concerns over control by redesigning the traditional structure of the student teaching

experience in favor of a coteaching model. In this model, “The cooperating teacher still has a critical piece of accountability to the students while the student teacher is there and vice versa” (P9). One participant in particular has been very proactive in moving his college into coteaching and away from “the antiquated student teaching model where it’s expected that the intern completely take over the classroom.” He justified it this way:

> [Gradual release is] an old model of where the intern really takes over, but yet has no accountability. The accountability falls on the cooperating teacher. Well, because the cooperating teacher is held to a higher level of accountability now and the intern is actually held to a high level of accountability because the law has changed, which measures the performance of teacher candidates in teacher prep programs.

He explained that this move was influenced by a number of factors including his own experience as a mentor teacher who co-taught with student teachers, as well as evidence from his special education colleagues who have had success with coteaching.

One core factor that spurred his college into action was the NCATE (2010) Blue Ribbon report, which he explained, “really charged teacher prep programs and school districts to work together to prepare candidates. That it wasn't our candidates being separate from the districts but it was really working together and talking about some of the coteaching models.” He recounted, “As soon as the Blue Ribbon Panel Report came out, we literally came back here and we started looking at different programs where it made sense.” As of 2014, he said the majority of teaching dyads are engaged in coteaching, noting, “We really took it seriously because it’s something we all already bought into and believed in.” Other participants from his college also spoke of the move towards coteaching in their individual programs.

Finally, he said his college moved to coteaching as a way of responding to concerns about accountability:

> And then we really just listened to what principals wanted and principals said, “We're in a new era of accountability. It's everybody's responsibility to impact student achievement. So everybody who walks into the school, whether it's an intern, or a volunteer, or a parent, or a professional, everyone's responsible for student achievement.”

Essentially, he explained that, “We saw [coteaching] as an opportunity…from a value-added perspective rather than something that had to supplant what was already happening in the schools.” According to this participant, this model has been very successful and accepted by most mentor teachers in partner districts. He noted, “Most of the people have joined the coalition of the willing. But those who just aren't comfortable with that model have chosen not to take interns anymore. And I’m okay with that.” After taking purposeful steps to reorganize how student teaching is structured, he wants to ensure that there is coherence between what his program advocates and what happens during the internship.

Other teacher educators in this study have also joined the “coalition of the willing,” if perhaps a bit reluctantly. One veteran professor explained although he personally favored the traditional model and felt it has been successful in the past, he understood the rationale behind his university’s adoption of coteaching:

> And the reason is because many teachers, rightly so, are saying "Look, if I leave the classroom, and I leave this with my intern, and at the end of the year my students do poorly on the end of the year exam, that's going to reflect on me. And reflect on my salary.” And you can fill in the blank faster that I can. (P13)

This participant’s comments illustrate an acknowledgment that teacher education programs need to shift their practices to accommodate the realities faced by teachers in today’s high-stakes climate. When it moved to a yearlong internship, another program highlighted the success of its coteaching model in the hopes that it might assuage

accountability concerns raised by its partner district. Due to concerns over test scores, the program's coordinator explained that the district "wanted to make sure that the teacher was providing as much instruction as possible" rather than allowing the student teacher to fully take over for a period of time (P11). Based on feedback from mentor teachers and interns so far, the coteaching model seems to hold promise in terms of allaying educators' concerns when it comes to giving up full control of the classroom.

Coteaching presents a possible solution for assuaging mentor teachers' fears of relinquishing control of the classroom. In addition to having restricted opportunities to lead instruction, the next section shows the ways in which student teachers' curricular autonomy is also constrained due to accountability pressures.

Inflexibility with Curriculum and Instruction During Student Teaching

Teacher educators are in the business of training future teaching professionals. As such, they have a vested interest in helping preservice teachers learn how to make curricular decisions. They want to prepare future teachers who can assess their students' learning needs, plan differentiated and standards-based instruction to meet those needs, and assess students' learning. As one teacher educator put it, however, the ideal student teaching experience often does not match its reality:

> Ideally what [student teachers] should be doing is becoming curriculum decision-makers. They ideally should be able to walk into the class, serve the class, work with the teacher, then for a period of time decide what it is they would like to work with when it comes to teaching their students that are in that class. But in the age of accountability that doesn't often happen. (P13)

Another participant shared that her biggest concern about teacher preparation relates to the pedagogy schools require her students to use during student teaching. She explained, "In terms of today's day and age, I think right now our teachers are teaching

enough, but I don’t know if they are teaching in a manner that is helpful with all the testing that is going on” (P4). Ultimately, she said she worries that “teaching to the test” interferes with her student teachers’ professional preparation and confessed, “I don’t know if our student teachers will be ready to teach.” This section will show that these educators’ concerns about the age of accountability’s interference with student teachers’ curriculum decision-making were widely shared across participants.

Three-quarters of participants specifically mentioned that their student teachers are working in classrooms in which the teachers’ lessons are determined by curriculum maps, pacing guides, or scripted curricula. This appears to be a district-by-district, school-by-school decision. In some cases, the individual teacher determines how much curricular decision-making the intern has, as noted by one participant: “It varies a great deal by cooperating teacher. Some mentor teachers are like, ‘This is the curriculum, this is the script, this is what we do and that’s all we do” (P7). Another educator pointed out that there are some teachers who will say, “’I will do this,’ and then close the door and do something else. And others follow it line by line for fear that somebody else is going to take away their job or take away their prized class” (P13). Nevertheless, he noted that, “With the outside forces that impinge on every teacher…they [all] find themselves increasingly boxed into a corner where teachers that don't even want to do what they're doing are forced into it.”

Pressures related to accountability have resulted in student teaching experiences in which neither the interns nor the mentor teachers have flexibility about what and how they teach particular content. Several participants echoed this teacher educator’s comments on accountability. One participant noted that, “In this new era of control and

compliance it becomes more challenging" because principals are even mandated by the districts not to allow teachers to

> deviate from the curriculum that is given to you. So as far as lesson plans go, developing innovative lessons that are related to the standards that they're supposed to teach but might be outside of the textbook that was purchased, is becoming obsolete. (P9)

He estimated that approximately 60% of his student teachers in K-12 classrooms use scripted curricula or stringent pacing guides (particularly in reading), and that 100% of this is due to the high-stakes testing climate. In fact, in one of his partner districts "no one may deviate from the curriculum guide or the program that is being used." Another participant talked about an elementary principal who is "heavily involved in the curriculum," such that the activities for spring semester are planned out in advance and there is also "not a lot of flexibility there" (P3). In cases such as these, mentor teachers and student teachers alike do not have curricular autonomy as they are bound to comply with the mandated curriculum.

According to participants, prepackaged curriculum is particularly common in reading classrooms in both the elementary and secondary levels. Although one participant acknowledged that the basal programs have improved, she argued:

> They still don't allow for real individualization and differentiation and really designing a lesson or curriculum that meets specific needs of your children. There's no way. Because you're taking something that's already prepackaged and then expecting that all students are going to benefit from that and we know that's not the case. (P11)

Secondary teacher educators shared this viewpoint regarding curricula such as Springboard, an English language arts program published by the College Board, and Scholastic's READ 180, a program for struggling readers. Two participants likened the Springboard curriculum to a "cookbook." As one explained, "The questions are there,

everything is there. You could really just walk in and start reading out of the book" (P7). Another participant conceded that Springboard includes "a compilation of lessons that deal with very noble and wonderful themes…that would be of interest to an adolescent," but yet it remains a scripted program that boxes teachers in and does not allow for culturally responsive curriculum (P13). Because "teaching is a thing that happens in the moment," he worried that the "stories and questions and techniques that they feel might not be appropriate to the time they're teaching adolescents." He went on to explain that adolescents come into class with a range of emotions and teachers:

> should have to make those adjustments on the fly. And that's to their benefit and that's the reason that teachers are professional…So when they actually work with kids in the classroom setting they don't just bring a cookbook idea about what has to be done, but an understanding of what it is to be a human being.

Although one participant said she understands that there is more latitude with Springboard than teachers are led to believe, mentor teachers and student teachers alike feel beholden to following the program as it is written (P7).

A few participants shared that these prepackaged programs are found more often in Title I and poorly performing schools. With concerns over student achievement, these curricula are brought in as a way to standardize the content and how it is taught. A teacher educator explained, "Some of the curriculum that they use might be a bit more direct instruction, scripted programs, whereas in the other schools, the teachers as well as interns have a little bit more flexibility in how they teach the standards, but I haven't heard it come back to me as a problem" (P10). When asked if he notices any differences in Title I placements, another teacher educator shared the experiences of his graduate students who have on-the-job internships as current teachers in high

poverty schools. He said these novice teachers have to teach the Springboard curriculum and “express outright frustration at lessons that they don’t feel meet the immediate needs of their students” (P13). He has seen the curriculum and has thought “there are wonderful things in the book,” but what he and his students “object to is having to do everything, and having to do it in that order, and having to do it as it's presented and administrators asking, ‘Why are they going out of order?’” He asserted that teachers should have the freedom to make professional judgments about curriculum and pointed out:

> If they were given that book and said, "Okay, here are some things in this book, that you might like to use in your classroom. Use as you wish." I'm sure 99% would say, "Fine." But when they're handed a textbook and say, "Do this as it is prescribed so that we can get the desired results that we want," then they feel frustrated.

Further, he decried the surveillance associated with top-down curricular control associated with curricula such as this. He stressed, “We’re increasingly in an age where everyone is supposed to be on page six at six o’clock, and if you’re not there, tell me why.” This comment echoes those of other participants who fear that rigid curriculum does not allow teachers to adapt instruction to students’ needs nor design culturally responsive lessons.

Despite the majority of the participants’ disdain over scripted programs and strict pacing guides, a few pointed out that some of their student teachers do not mind using them. One participant suspected this is because most of his student teachers are of “a generation of kids who have lived through high stakes testing so they really don't know any different” (P13). He continued:

> I don’t say that in a way to disparage them. I say that because I deeply believe you can’t be what you can’t see. And if they’ve only known high

> stakes testing, and they've only known a prescribed curriculum, then they think that's the way it is.

Another educator reported that some of her interns welcomed pacing guides and other curricular supports because it takes the pressure off of them to plan instruction: "There's a comfort level there because they're not overwhelmed with trying to come up with all these creative ideas and they have said, 'Actually, the Springboard curriculum is very strong.' They like it" (P7). Nevertheless, she immediately followed this comment with the caveat that the student teachers "don't like being forced to follow a script." She explained that other student teachers, though, have shared negative reactions to strict curricular controls, "The stronger students are the most frustrated because they want to do some creative things and they're just really passionate about testing their wings. And they're frustrated because they're like, 'Well, we've got to use this.'" These comments reflect an essential tension in the use of scripted curricula: while they may be a welcomed support by some novice teachers as they learn how to design lessons, they also constrain teachers' development because they do not have leeway to try out their own ideas with students.

Sometimes student teachers' negative responses can be problematic for the relationship between the teacher preparation programs and their K-12 partners. One teacher educator recalled that a district coordinator spoke with her about some interns who came out of the program with a "negative attitude" about the district's mandated curriculum (P7). She was told, "The problem with that is, we're hiring your interns and they can't come into our districts with a negative attitude." Teacher educators are well aware that their candidates need to maintain a positive relationship with their partner districts in order to gain employment upon graduation. One coordinator explained that

teacher candidates need to be mindful of "this delicate balance between expressing your professional ideas while also realizing that you don't want to burn any bridges" (P9). This is particularly important, he explained, in light of the fact that teachers no longer have a professional services contract in Florida that guarantees tenure. In this climate, student teachers need to be mindful of the political ramifications of expressing frustration with district mandates.

Curricular flexibility with the Florida Standards. In a bit of an ironic twist, a quarter of participants shared the perception that increased mandates related to the Florida Standards might be allowing more freedom for teachers to make curricular decisions. The 2014-2015 school year is the first year teachers are required to teach the math and reading Florida Standards. As of spring 2015, the accompanying standardized test, the Florida Standards Assessment, is being field tested. Despite the uncertainty, and in some cases trepidation, associated with this unknown test, some participants shared that the new standards seem to allow more leeway when it comes to what and how teachers teach. One teacher educator explained that the standards have provided some curricular freedom for teachers because "as long as you teach the standards, it doesn't matter how you teach it as long as that standard is met. So that has helped to move away from just everything being scripted" (P3). Another participant contended, "It's actually gotten a little bit better with Common Core" because prior to this year two of their districts used scripted curriculum and lessons plans from the district office, but "now curriculum maps come from the district office as more of a pacing guide, and last spring semester I noticed that the chains were loosening a little bit" (P1). These looser

chains may come in the form of mentor teachers who allow student teachers more autonomy in lesson planning. One teacher educator applauded this change:

> The teachers we work with, though, have been generous in saying, "These are the Florida Standards you need to meet. If you have another way to meet the standard, talk to me first about your idea and I'll offer suggestions and you can try it." So they've had some freedom with that; the teachers aren't always making them use the workbook. (P15)

Teacher educators who have grown frustrated by curricular constraints welcome such newfound flexibility.

The notion that teachers can create lessons as long as they meet the standards has given permission for some student teachers to implement strategies they have learned in their teacher preparation program. Two teacher educators commented on this. One said that student teachers are expected to stay within pacing guide or the "school's lesson plan, which is usually just kind of an outline, but then they're expected to elaborate on that and integrate strategies and whatever to tweak it, to make it theirs" (P10). The other participant explained that some of her student teachers are placed in a district with a pre-established curriculum that indicates "standards they have to teach by a certain date…but they can teach those using the strategies they have learned in our program" in order to meet those standards (P4). As they work to prepare future teaching professionals, the teacher educators in this study welcome this move away from scripted curricula and towards teachers' curricular decision-making.

How the Logistics of Testing Affect Curriculum and Instruction

The FCAT and now the Florida Standards Assessment occur during the spring semester, typically between March and May. Logistically this poses a dilemma for spring internships, as the testing schedule interferes with student teachers' opportunities to teach and the sorts of learning activities in which they are engaged. For

example, one participant said that “scheduling [observations] becomes a nightmare because the teacher intern isn’t teaching on certain days, they’re preparing for the test,” and the schools’ schedules change with testing (P6).

Opportunities to teach in the spring. Beyond this, over half of the participants noted that mentor teachers retain primary control of the classroom until the testing is over. As one teacher educator described, teachers “have the meat of [teaching]” until the test and then interns can “have a field day” with teaching (P15). Another participant noted that while she has seen her interns teaching both whole group and small group lessons in the fall, in the spring the majority of the interns are relegated to leading small group instruction. Another program that only has a spring internship requires just a minimum of ten days of planning and teaching because they have found it difficult to negotiate for their student teachers to have more autonomy in the spring. Such constrained opportunities to teach are particularly concerning since most teacher preparation programs place their interns in the spring semester.

Others complained that testing takes away “instructional time that [student teachers] would have to plan lessons and implement them” (8). Overwhelmingly, teacher educators also reported differences in the curriculum that is taught in the spring versus the fall semesters. This teacher educator summed up the distinction succinctly, “In the fall you see an opportunity for critical thinking and higher order test questions to take place in the lesson, whereas in the spring it was drill and practice” (P3). Without a doubt, test preparation drives the curriculum during the beginning of the spring semester.

In many cases this means "the teaching is a little more rushed as well as more standards-based and less creative" as teachers attempt to cover all of the standards that may be tested (P4). One participant described a familiar scenario in which "there's a lot of assessment practice, like practice workbooks, practice worksheets, practice tests to prepare for the exam" (P9). Another participant said that the pressure to prepare for the test "takes a little bit away from creativity and originality as far as their lesson plans" and that the student teachers must use the curriculum and materials the mentor teachers want them to use during this time (P10). Further, student teachers are often told that there is not time to conduct hands-on lessons until after the test is over. One teacher educator described that teachers may show a video or perform a quick science demo rather than conducting a science lab with students due to time constraints in the spring (P2). This resonates with the comments of a participant who explained, "I have concerns about the experience they get out of student teaching in the spring" (P4).

Opportunities to design curriculum in the spring. According to participants, student teachers have much more liberty to create engaging curriculum after the tests are over because, as one teacher educator put it, "Everybody relaxes and they really get to do what they're trained to do. Which is sad" (P11). Another participant described this freedom:

> After FCAT now it's like the parents are gone and the babysitter is here now, so we can definitely have students reading lots of literature and now we can read stories. Interns weren't even allowed to read a trade book to kids because there was no time…it upset me to know that students can't even read quality pieces of literature that they might not have discovered on their own. It's all about the accountability piece and with the pressures they face, I understand why teachers are making those choices and don't blame them. (P15)

Similarly, another teacher educator shared what he hears from interns after testing is over: "'Now I can do poetry.' 'Now I can do creative writing.' 'Now I can do something I hadn't done before.' The panic is over…They finally get to do real teaching" (P13). Language arts is not the only subject area which enjoys more freedom after testing. One elementary coordinator noted that she usually hears from interns, "We can finally do science. We can do thematic units. We can do stuff with computers" (P11). Participants expressed a sense of despondence when sharing these stories in which "real teaching" does not occur until testing is over. They speculated about whether their candidates are gaining enough authentic experiences during student teaching to design engaging curriculum for students.

The data presented in this section reveals a picture of student teaching in the era of accountability in which interns' opportunities to teach are frequently curtailed due to mentor teachers' reluctance to relinquish control. Further, mentor teachers and student teachers alike contend with top-down mandates that control the amount of curricular autonomy they have in the classroom. These restrictions on student teachers' ability to have experiential and educative experiences make teacher educators nervous that interns' learning is not being maximized during the student teaching experience. The next section will explore the ways in which teacher preparation programs have adapted to the new realities of student teaching in today's educational climate.

Teacher Educators Adapting and Responding to the Changing Times

This section explores how increased top-down mandates in both K-12 and teacher preparation have impacted the way teacher education programs approach student teaching. First, I explain how teacher educators have responded to declining placements by changing the way they recruit partner schools. Next, the section turns to

teacher educators' reactions to the age of accountability, how they are responding to it in their work, and how they see it as part of the ever-moving pendulum of educational reform.

The Task of "Selling" Student Teachers

As a result of the challenges with making placements in the age of accountability, some teacher education programs have taken to "selling" the benefits of having an intern. This is new territory for some of them who used to have few problems with placements, but now find themselves having to combat the idea that student teachers may be a liability to student achievement. For example, some student teaching coordinators have created recruitment materials for districts and principals to highlight the benefits of having a student teacher. One participant described how her program has responded to educators' concerns related to accountability:

> We were cognizant that this is where teachers are. They're afraid to let go of anything. They're afraid of what's going to happen if they have an intern. So the entire focus [of our recruitment letter to schools] was on what the benefits would be for you as a teacher and for your children. I mean, we are selling now. And we'd never had to do that in the past. (P11)

Similarly, another participant explained his approach to recruitment, "One of the points I try to sell…is 'here's another pair of hands.' Although [the intern is] not a certified teacher yet, here's another wannabe professional…who had preparation and who can join with you to help your students learn" (P14). He stated that this selling point has "gotten some traction" among teachers who are undecided about taking an intern.

Another program also "had to be very creative about how we word things" by promoting the policy changes that have taken place in response to administrators' concerns (P1). For instance, to address the concerns of some principals who would not accept student teachers unless they had already passed their Subject Area Exam,

which was previously only a graduation requirement, the program amended its policy to require this credential prior to starting the internship. This may have allayed some principals' concerns that the student teachers were not qualified, but the coordinator said that these judgments are based on a fallacy about what it takes to become an effective teacher. She asserted, "We all know that the issue is practice" and that just because the novices passed a test does not mean "that [their] pedagogy is strong and it doesn't need to be supported." Nevertheless, she has promoted this policy change and student teachers' ESOL and reading endorsements in her program's recruitment statement, which has been revised in recent years. In the face of dwindling placements, this participant and others are hoping their recruitment efforts will help to assuage principals' and teachers' fears about hosting interns.

Purpose of Education Usurped by Era of Accountability

The participants in this study noted that the current focus on tests and accountability opposes what they value in education and interferes with high quality student teaching. Nevertheless, they know they are responsible for preparing their students for the reality of today's classrooms. Many feel that politicians' need for quantitative data, which is inappropriately determined and gathered, has obstructed what should be at the heart of education: caring for children. Several spoke passionately about this. For example, this participant critiqued the Teacher Work Sample because it standardizes what should be a differentiated process:

> I guess that's a desire from those that establish policy to justify their policy with numbers. Politicians and policymakers like charts and graphs, where teachers in the classroom know that every kid is different and every child has a different need and developmental ability and that they have to adjust what they're doing according to that. And in the end what teachers do during the day, very little of it is really teaching. Most of it is working with kids who are coming of age. (P13)

Others shared the concern that the focus on high-stakes testing is redirecting the focus away from helping children become productive citizens:

> Teaching is more than data mining. Teaching is really touching that human spirit and encouraging its growth and that is more than a number. You shouldn't shoot for only the numbers. You should shoot that we are reaching for strong individuals in a strong country who can be useful, and useful means many things. (P1)

These participants shared a common desire to prepare teachers for teaching the whole child.

Some teacher educators spoke passionately about how they believe the tight control over curriculum may be affecting our teachers and our children. One said:

> I'm afraid of the loss of time they have to develop relationships with students, to develop curriculum, to engage in lesson planning and reassessing what they're doing, maybe changing their paths, you know, having some flexibility. Because, to me, teaching is not foolproof. You don't plan a lesson and then stick to it necessarily. You have to see how students respond…it's not a robotic activity even though I think some of our legislators think it is a robotic activity. (P8)

Two educators commented on the ways that scripted curricula may be detrimental to some students. One wondered, "If it's dull, how are you going to get students to engage? They're going to endure, and that's not learning, to me" (P14). He worried, "What high stakes testing has done is just force kids who don't like school to not like school even more." Another participant struck a similar chord: "I feel like we're tormenting [students] with this stuff. And then so many of them remain on the margins, feel unsuccessful, and are unsuccessful in school. This is a terrible waste of talent" (P8). Although she granted that, "those policies are well intentioned," she worries that the age of accountability is creating an atmosphere where teachers are unable to reach the students who need the most help. She conveyed hope that education will begin "to

move in a different direction so we can really improve our schools for the kids in them and that we don't have this school-to-prison pipeline. It's such a waste and it's so miserable." These teacher educators share a concern that the current educational climate is alienating students, particularly students who may already be disaffected by the educational process.

Concerns over student teaching in today's educational climate. The teacher educators in this study have devoted their careers to preparing a cadre of professional teachers. To this end, many expressed disappointment and offense at the notion that teachers' curricular autonomy has been stripped from them in the form of strict pacing guides and mandated curricula. One educator argued, "There's nothing more important than a professional teacher who knows what he or she is doing in the way of lesson planning, organizing, curriculum building…You just can't import scripted programs and expect to have the same results with students" (P8). This reflects a fundamental tension present in teacher preparation: programs are preparing novices to be able to make professional decisions in a landscape in which decision-making has frequently been taken away from teachers. In essence, there is a lack of coherence between the expectations and goals of teacher preparation programs and the work student teachers are asked to do. This participant's comments reflected this tension:

> We believe in academic freedom. We believe that we are training professionals and professionals know what is best based on the population they serve. So, in an ideal world, we have given our teacher candidates the tools they need to come up with innovative, engaging lessons that really challenge students. (P9)

Whether novices are able to use these tools in today's accountability-driven climate, however, is a concern for this and many other participants. His worries were echoed by

another participant who “deeply believes student [teachers] should become curriculum decision-makers,” but was concerned that they will not have the autonomy they need “to create a safe and productive and engaging environment for the students that come to their class regardless of their ability level” (P13). He shared his fears that highly managed curricula will prevent student teachers from making the curricular decisions they need to make to reach their students.

In the face of an educational climate in which teachers are provided “teacher-proof” curriculum and not given much flexibility to adapt instruction to meet their students’ needs, some teacher educators speculated about the future of teacher preparation. As one participant pointed out, “If it's just going to be a, ‘Here read this page today,’ I don't know why we would want to bother to train teachers so much” (P14). One teacher educator traced the need for pacing guides and scripted curricula to the fact that states “aren’t requiring teachers to get professional preparation and are just hiring people with degrees in a subject area to teach at the secondary level. Many of those people don’t have a clue what to do” (P8). The participant denounced what she perceives as a shortsighted approach to teaching: “It's a vicious cycle and if you do that, that's not helping them learn how to do the work.” While pacing guides and scripted curricula may be a countermeasure to lack of preparation, they are being required of teachers regardless of their level of expertise and professional preparation. This can cause frustration for veteran teachers and those who have professional training who are equipped to design curriculum that meets the standards and their students’ needs, yet are prevented from doing so.

Beliefs about accountability and data. In reflecting on the purposes of education, the teacher educators in this study were quick to note that assessment plays an important role in education: parents and teachers should know if their students are learning. Their deep concerns, however, lie in how assessment manifests in practice and how (or if) their student teachers are being prepared to use data well in their placements. One participant boldly denounced the role testing plays in education, "[Tests are] seen as gatekeepers to future success, graduation, teacher morale, teacher salary, teacher potential" (P8).

Another educator commented on what she perceives to be the misappropriation of student data, which casts a negative light on information that could be useful for teachers to engage with in an authentic manner to inform their instruction. Rather than using data diagnostically, she said, it is most often used as a monitoring tool "to see if the teacher taught what the students were supposed to learn" (P11). She explained that her program would like student teachers to have experience with understanding how to use data to inform instruction, but instead schools are "kind of holding [data] over teachers' heads. They're not really allowing teachers to get their hands dirty and really play with the data and draw conclusions from that," but instead simply inform teachers of their students' scores and tell them what to do with it (P11). This teacher educator's concerns reflect those of several participants who worry that the way accountability mandates are played out in schools results in practices in which teachers are denied opportunities to make professional judgments about instruction based on student data.

Beyond disagreeing with the way student achievement is determined, most participants objected to the use of VAM scores as a way of holding teachers and

teacher education programs accountable for students' learning. This participant's comments echoed those of other educators I spoke with: "We have a long way to go as far as being able to link VAM scores to student teaching. Of course, I have opinions about linking VAM scores to real teaching, so we just have a long way to go to get there" (P9). He expanded on this:

> I think [VAM is] a sliver of measuring teacher effectiveness. I think that it's the state's way of trying to quantify a qualitative process. I think that VAM scores are not an accurate picture of an individual setting. I think it's a way to sort of quantify and aggregate something that really should be differentiated.

This comment reflects distrust in the way that student data is being used, a distrust felt deeply by many of the participants. As the next section outlines, the teacher educators in this study are caught in a situation in which they must prepare their teacher candidates for an educational climate that they oppose.

Supporting Student Teachers in the High-Stakes Environment

Ultimately, teacher educators want their student teachers to develop the skills they will need to be successful teachers who will make positive impacts on their future students. They espouse what they believe are "best practices" in teaching and hope their student teachers have opportunities to have first hand experiences with these practices in the context of student teaching. They recognize the tensions between ideal schools and classrooms and the realities their novice teachers face. The findings in this study clearly show that teacher educators hold high-stakes mandates at fault for many of the problems they see in education today.

Nevertheless, teacher educators shared that it was their duty to support student teachers' development in the high-stakes environment. As one participant stated, "Accountability in general is very good. How it's being played out is what we're all

concerned about. But I do have a responsibility to help my students learn, and I'm going to do everything I can to help them get there" (P14). This comment reflects a tension between a belief that the current system is flawed and an understanding that teacher educators must prepare their students to be successful within this system. For example, one coordinator shared strong critiques about the way teachers and teacher education programs are being held accountable by the state, but in the end quipped, "If you can't beat them, join them" (P9).

Teacher educators see it as part of their responsibility to help student teachers navigate the conflict between their ideals and the realties of teaching. Participants discussed some their student teachers' frustration with teaching in a highly controlled environment because it conflicts with what they believe is their purpose in teaching. One participant shared:

> My student teachers are still naïve and they went into education to make a difference. And so when they see that a significant portion of their students are not ready to move on to the next lesson, their professionalism, their heart for teaching, and their heart for students is bothered and they become frustrated because if you just move on without doing anything about the misconceptions or strengthening students' weaknesses, the domino effect begins to happen. So they are still altruistic and they want to reteach, review, reformulate, all of the things that should be going on, except the message is, "We don't have time for that. Move on because we have this chunk of material to teach before the test happens." And that causes them a moral dilemma and some real anxiety. (P1)

This teacher educator worries about the impact the high-stakes environment has on her students' development as novice teachers. Other participants shared the difficulties student teachers face when they work in a classroom in which they cannot use the strategies they have learned in their programs. For example, in some cases student teachers have to implement existing curricula and practices that go against what they

have been taught in their program. One participant said her interns complain, "'I can't do certain things. I would like to try these types of activities and I can't do them.' Or, 'I wanted to spend more time with this concept or skill because the students need more time, but my directing teacher said we have to move on'" (P2). This urgency to move on and cover material before the test contradicts what teacher preparation programs espouse in terms of providing instruction to meet students' academic needs.

"Teaching to the test" frustrates student teachers and teacher educators alike because, as one participant put it, "[testing] takes away from the kind of work that I wish our interns to be doing" (P8). Another participant said that she prepares her student teachers for the spring by telling them, "You may not be as free to implement all those strategies and everything you've learned here [in our program] in your classroom, but this is 'real-life'" (P10). She said that some of her interns have even heard comments from their mentor teachers such as, "What you did [in your program] is very idealistic and now you have to come to the reality of real teaching and as a teacher in a district where this is required, this is what we're expected to do." She explained that she tries to help her disheartened interns navigate this conundrum by encouraging them to try to "include some good strategies, some good best practices, along with getting the kids prepped to do the FCAT or whatever the high stakes test is." When preparing for the test amounts to rote activities and worksheets—as reported by several of the participants—student teachers are challenged to find ways to infuse what they have learned in their preparation into their classroom instruction.

When student teachers get frustrated by what they may perceive as poor pedagogy, teacher educators try to help them understand that their teachers' hands are

tied by top down mandates and accountability pressures. Ultimately, in this era of high-stakes accountability, participants “understand why teachers are making [their] choices and don’t blame them” (P15). One participant commiserated with the reluctance some principals have with accepting interns when teachers’ evaluations depend upon students’ test scores. She explained, “I can kind of get in their mindset because you're accountable for making sure the teacher really teaches the kids” (P11). Despite their empathy for the pressures principals and mentor teachers face in today’s era of accountability, the participants in this study lamented the choices educators make out of fear of low test scores.

Increased pressure on novice teachers. In addition to their frustration with the ways the accountability climate affects children and teachers in K-12 schools, the effects it has on their student teachers also trouble some teacher educators. With the increased pressures on teachers and principals to increase student achievement, there is less latitude for student teachers to make mistakes and learn from them. Instead, they are expected to have impact on day one. One participant said he lets his teacher candidates know up front at their internship orientation that their student teaching experience will be rigorous and that they are expected to “hit the ground running”:

> I know that this is really philosophically against what a lot of my colleagues around the state might say to students, but I tell our students that this internship is not about you. It’s about the students that you’re going to teach and no longer do we have the luxury of saying, “Well you’re just learning, there’s a lot of opportunities for you to try and fail.” No. There’s really no room for that anymore. (P9)

While he believed that student teachers learn on a developmental continuum, he recognized that expectations for their growth have accelerated in light of pressures on teacher education today.

Another participant commented on what she perceived to be unrealistic expectations of student teachers. She said, “This very high anxiety, high-stakes VAM-driven climate has really had a definite impact on student teachers and their ability to develop their dispositions and their pedagogy at what I would call a typical professional development incline” (P1). She likened this pressure to having to “successfully climb Mount Everest on day one and stay at the top.” For example, some of her student teachers are in schools in which the principals complete walkthroughs to assess their teaching. She explained, “I would be remiss if I did not prepare them for principal walkthroughs. They need to understand that that principal is looking at them as a teacher, not as a novice teacher, but a teacher, and even the state has done this.” This predicament causes her inner conflict; she believes it is inappropriate to assess novices in this manner, yet feels she owes it to her students to prepare them for such walkthroughs.

With teachers no longer being protected by tenure, these participants feel obligated to prepare their teacher candidates for the high-stakes realities of teaching in Florida. One participant said she recognizes that student teachers will want to implement all of the strategies they have learned in their program, but explains to them, “Sometimes you have to do what the district or your principal wants you to do. You have to make some compromises along the way” (P10). Another said speaks honestly with her teacher candidates about the lack of job security in Florida’s schools today. She explained that she leads them through reflecting exercises during student teacher orientation to help them process the realities of their career choice:

> I try to explain to them the powerlessness when you’re working with a top-down driven system…You are the bottom of the system, and you have no

> job protection, and it's a rough world out there. In Florida now, you're no longer safe, you know they can fire you at any day, and so you're going to do what you're told to do. (P10)

Although these participants conceded that their advice to interns is somewhat harsh, they believe it is their duty to prepare their candidates for the realities they will face when they become Florida public school teachers.

A few participants pointed out that student teachers are in a "very fragile time in their life" (P1) and already "have enough pressures just trying to feel successful and graduate" (P4) without the added pressures related to high stakes testing. One teacher educator mentioned that student teachers work in some schools "where the culture is not as friendly, it's highly anxious. There's high anxiety from the principal on down because of mandates" (P10). She explained that this culture "trickles down to the intern," leading some student to "suffer great anxiety…when their teacher is anxious and they're going to meetings where it's all about data."

Sadly, teacher educators reported that the high-stakes culture has some student teachers wondering if they should continue pursing a career in the teaching profession. One participant said of her student teachers, "They begin to look at their profession not as what it thought it was. Now, we all have those a-ha moments. We all do, but you don't go into teaching to…deal with groups of children as numbers" (P1). She even reported that some of her student teachers have had their mentor teachers ask them, "You don't really want to be in this profession, do you? Look around you." She encourages her students to find the passion for teaching within themselves and not to be discouraged by today's climate.

In their discussions about the way accountability has affected student teaching, two teacher educators mentioned a recent event in which a Florida kindergarten teacher refused to administer the FAIR standardized test to her students. One coordinator said that the recent news coverage “empowered some of our interns” who commented, “‘Maybe we can make a difference. Maybe we can stand up to some things’” (P11). Although this incident may have empowered some teacher candidates to feel they can make a difference, it is necessary to note that this bold teacher who stood up to the testing was a veteran teacher who was respected in her local community and supported by district leadership. With the loss of tenure for newly hired teachers, it is yet unclear as to how novices can speak their minds without fear of reprisal.

Compliance as a coping strategy for student teachers. Despite the fact that teacher educators regard teachers as professionals who should have curricular autonomy, the idea that teachers and student teachers alike need to “do as they are told” came up in half of the interviews. Participants recognized that their student teachers are “guests” in the mentor teachers’ classroom and “so they’re less likely to question. If the teacher says, ‘Do this,’ they’re going to do that because they want a job and they want a good recommendation” (P13). For example, one educator said her interns “complained about worksheets being given for test preparation,” an activity she disparaged as “a rehearsal of skills” (P4). Regardless if she agrees with the pedagogy her student teachers have to enact, she echoed the sentiments of several participants other participants: “Our students have to do what they have to do.”

Student teachers have to balance demands that might be in conflict, as they are at the mercy of their mentor teachers for strong evaluations and their supervisors for

good grades. They also have to be mindful that the districts in which they intern may be their future employers. As one teacher educator pointed out, “We really help them navigate through the politics that are involved in teaching” by discussing with interns the realities of working in Florida where there is no longer teacher tenure (P9). Thus, despite the fact that many teacher educators agree with some of their student teachers’ criticisms about the current educational climate, the message they send their student teachers is to do as they are told so as not to jeopardize the program’s relationship in the district, nor the student teachers’ chances of garnering a future job.

The Educational Pendulum: Hope for a More Reasoned Approach to Accountability

While teacher educators are often frustrated with the current educational climate, they acknowledge that this, too, shall pass. As veteran educators themselves, they have witnessed many changes over the years and are hopeful that the accountability era will shift. In reflecting on the inevitable shifts in education, an elementary coordinator remarked, “Well, there’s always concern because what’s happening in schools is never going to achieve the ideal…situation and exactly what we would love to see” (P11). While they have experienced many changes in their years as educators, many participants commented on the rapid and frequent changes in recent years. One K-12 student teaching coordinator commented:

> It’s been a really fascinating time to be in the position because you’re at the apex of many, many, many changes, both at the federal and state levels that have really impacted our entire program and the student teacher portion of that program in a variety of ways. Some positive, some not so positive. (P1)

In the midst of these rapid changes, teacher educators recognize that they have to move with the changing times. One participant started her interview by saying, “I’ve

seen a lot of changes, some good, some not so good…you've got to be flexible, you've got to adapt with it, and you've got to evolve, just like anything else" (P2). She explained that teacher educators must "work within the boundaries that you've been given." The frequent and high-stakes changes have left some educators weary. One participant expressed, "Education has this terrible disease…We just never get it together before something new has come out and now we all have to drop what we were doing, which we didn't master, and now we're doing something else. It's crazy" (P14). Despite his exasperation, he noted, "it's not hopeless by any stretch, but I feel the burden when I walk into those classrooms."

Reflecting on accountability's negative effects on education, the participants shared an optimistic outlook on the future of education. One teacher educator, for example, called the current focus on average test scores as "shortsighted" and wished "we would look at accountability in more realistic terms" (P8). Nevertheless, she shared, "I think somehow, over time, this will come to light and we will have a shift in our policies because I think right now we're on the wrong road…I'm trying to be optimistic." Another participant echoed this cautious optimism: "We'll weather this and when hopefully some sanity prevails we will get assessment a little differently and assessments are reduced on everybody, then it'll be little easier. But, we do what we need to do. And we do it well" (P2). As education veterans, these participants have the benefit of their years of experience to bolster their belief that things will eventually change for the better.

The participants in this study believe in the power of education and want to pass their passion on to their teacher candidates. When asked if his frustration with the current educational climate impacts his enthusiasm in preparing new teachers, one

educator quickly replied, “Oh, I’m always excited to get teachers in the classroom because I know that this too shall pass” (P13). Another educator encourages her interns to be open and adaptable with regards to the changes because in the end, education is about reaching children. Speaking from her forty years of experience in education, she said she said she explains to them, “I have been through every pendulum change that you can imagine, but still every day I get up and I have to yet have a day that I’m not happy to go to a classroom” (P1). She said she encourages them to “find that joy within themselves” and to not get bogged down by the pressures of accountability. At the same time, she shared that she recognizes the current reality:

> I understand life is based on [accountability mandates], so I am positive because I hope that the pendulum will swing back more towards the middle and then maybe in a different direction, but I do encourage them that they need to find joy in what they’re doing or find something else to do.

As the teachers of tomorrow’s teachers, the participants in this study maintain a sense of pride in the profession of teaching. They also hold fast to a belief that their teacher candidates will be able to make a positive impact on their students—and not necessarily in ways that can be quantified.

Conclusion

In Chapter 4, I have described the ways in which the student teaching experience has changed in the era of accountability. In recent years, K-12 schools and teacher preparation programs are contending with a bevy of new mandates related to holding teachers accountable for student learning. As a result, placements are becoming increasingly difficult to secure in light of principals’ and teachers’ fears that student teachers may be a hindrance to improving student achievement. According to participants, secondary educators and those who teach heavily tested grades

predominately hold this view of student teachers as a potential risk. On the other hand, a minority of participants reported working with districts in which student teachers are seen as an asset to accountability because they are another “pair of hands” in the classroom.

Once student teachers have placements, their opportunities to teach and design instruction that responds to students’ needs are constrained by a number of factors related to accountability mandates. Mentor teachers are reluctant to relinquish control of their classrooms to student teachers for fear their VAM scores may be negatively influenced. Many student teachers and mentor teacher alike teach from strict pacing guides and, especially in secondary language arts classes, scripted curricula. The participants in this study expressed concern that these devices are preventing novices from developing the professional skills they need to be adaptive teachers.

Further, this chapter has shown how teacher education programs have responded to mandates requiring that they link student performance to the programs in which students’ teachers were trained. Through the use of the Teacher Work Sample, programs require their teacher candidates to measure the impact their instruction has had on students. This has caused inner conflict for some participants who feel these measures are forcing them to be complicit in an educational system with which they fundamentally disagree. Overall, though, the sixteen teacher educators in this study remain hopeful that the education’s pendulum will swing back to a place in which teachers—and hopefully student teachers, in turn—will have professional license to design instruction that meets the needs of diverse learners.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The teacher preparation landscape is shifting in response to competing demands. On one hand, leaders in teacher education are calling for teacher preparation to move to a clinical model in which teacher candidates work in classrooms throughout their program (Grossman, 2010; NCATE, 2010; NCTQ, 2011b; US DOE, 2011). This push for more clinical work in teacher preparation comes at the same time that states and the federal government are placing increased accountability mandates on both K-12 schools and teacher preparation programs.

With Florida's schools receiving grades based on students' test scores and teachers' pay and job security based largely on their VAM scores, educators are under increased pressure to ensure their students perform well on high-stakes tests. In the 2014-2015 school year, such high-stakes tests will depend on new standards and assessments that were just recently developed and field tested. Thus, at the time of submission of this dissertation, teachers, principals, and teacher educators in Florida are swiftly adjusting their programs and curricula to respond to recent changes handed down from both the federal and state governments.

With the call for more clinical work in classrooms and the push for increased accountability, this study aimed to explore student teaching in Florida during the age of accountability. My research was guided by the following research question: *What are teacher educators' perceptions of the impact of accountability measures on student teaching experiences in teacher education programs?* Data collection consisted of interviews with sixteen teacher educators from nine of Florida's CAEP-accredited teacher preparation programs. Some of the participants were student teaching

coordinators for their entire college and some oversaw individual elementary or English programs. Interviews were transcribed and coded using HyperRESEARCH software with codes that emerged from the data as well as others that were predetermined based on the theoretical framework. This framework draws upon three theoretical lenses that help us make sense of the ways in which accountability might affect student teaching. Taken together, governmentality, surveillance theory, and incentive theory help us understand how accountability policies have shaped various aspects of student teaching in recent years.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the findings in light of this theoretical framework. Within this discussion I consider how: 1) the commitment to hold schools accountable leads to less prepared teachers; 2) teacher education programs are preparing teachers for deprofessionalized work; and 3) accountability has intensified teachers' work and increased anxiety, resulting in teacher educators encouraging their teacher candidates to be compliant. The chapter concludes with implications for the field of teacher education as we continue to prepare teacher candidates in the era of accountability.

Commitment to Hold Schools Accountable Leads to Less Prepared Teachers

Although the primacy of the student teaching experience rests on the notion that novice teachers learn best "in and from practice" (Ball & Cohen, 1999, p. 10), the findings in this study cause concern that teacher candidates' learning is being constrained due to pressures related to accountability. Through the lens of situated cognition (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Putnam & Borko, 2000), we understand how the context in which student teaching occurs affects teacher candidates' learning about teaching. As reviewed in Chapter 2, literature on student teaching indicates that high

quality student teaching experiences are marked by educative and experiential learning in which interns are granted opportunities to teach independently and autonomously (Grossman, 2010; Hammerness et al., 2005; Koerner et al., 2002; Russell & Russell, 2011; Torrez & Krebs, 2012; Valencia et al., 2009). Further, we know that authentic learning experiences contribute to the development of preservice teachers' professional expertise (Darling-Hammond & Macdonald, 2000; Koppich, 2000; Snyder, 2000). Findings suggest, however, that the age of accountability has curtailed student teachers' opportunities to learn from practice.

This study reveals an essential tension between the supposed goals of the accountability movement – to ensure that students have high quality instruction – and the level of preparation student teachers receive in their placements. K-12 educators' understandable responses to accountability mandates have resulted in internships that do not provide novices with adequate experiences to learn through authentic practice, especially in the spring semester. Mentor teachers are reluctant to grant interns opportunities to teach independently for fear of how a novice might affect students' test scores. Findings also showed that mentor teachers retained tight control over heavily tested subjects, leaving student teachers with little experience in these content areas.

Previous studies have established that high-stakes testing narrows the curriculum and leads to a predominance of teacher-centered pedagogy (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Au, 2009; Au, 2011; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Valli & Buese, 2007). Significantly, this study suggests that as the curriculum narrows for K-12 students, it narrows for student teachers, as well. This plays out in elementary settings, for example, when student teachers are denied the opportunities to

design and conduct lessons in subjects that have associated high-stakes tests, such as reading. Because mentor teachers want to retain tight control over reading—the subject matter that has the highest stakes for them and their students alike—student teachers may not gain first hand experience with the complex processes involved in teaching this crucial subject matter. Thus, this study exposes a conundrum in which schools want highly qualified novice teachers – and will hire teacher preparation programs' graduates – but are hesitant to provide those novices with the experiences they need to be prepared for the high complexities of teaching.

Preparing Professional Teachers for Deprofessionalized Work

Despite teacher candidates' professional preparation, this study suggests that student teaching socializes them into a career in which teachers' professionalism is questioned, usurped, and highly managed. The teacher educators in this study aimed to prepare their teacher candidates to be curriculum decision-makers, adaptive experts, and responsive to students' needs. The mandated curricula that many public school teachers in Florida were required to teach, though, did not allow teachers the curricular autonomy they need to adapt instruction to students' needs. This loss of autonomy reflects a deprofessionalization of the teaching force.

While there has been some debate over whether teaching should be considered a profession at all (see Ingersoll, Alsalam, Quinn, & Bobbit, 1997; Milner, 2013), many educational scholars regard it as a clinical practice profession, likening it to fields such as law and medicine (see AACTE, 2010; Alter & Coggshall, 2009; NCATE, 2010, Milner, 2013). The designation of teaching as a profession recognizes that it requires adaptive expertise and professional judgment based on deep content and pedagogical knowledge. The era of accountability, though, has de-skilled the teaching workforce by

divesting teachers of their professional autonomy (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Bushnell, 2003; Milner, 2013). This scenario may seem paradoxical, as the accountability movement might appear to be elevating the profession by demanding high standards of its teachers. Milner (2013) explains in his policy brief on the de-professionalization of teachers that the resulting mandates have, in fact, contributed to the deprofessionalization of teaching:

> Scripted and narrowed curriculum could be said to move teaching closer to professional status by defining what should and will be covered. To the contrary, scripted and narrowed curriculum moves teaching away from professionalization by not allowing teachers to rely on their professional judgment to make curricula decisions for student learning, with the consequent sacrifice of higher-level learning, creativity, flexibility, and breadth of learning. (p. i)

This study and others lend credence to Milner's case and caution that curricular devices like pacing guides and scripted curricula constrain teachers' autonomy and strip them of professional decision-making (Apple, 2009; Au, 2007; Bushnell, 2002; David, 2008; Meyer, 2002).

Moreover, this study also confirms findings described in Crocco and Costigan's (2007) study on teacher accountability, in which teachers' curricular autonomy was described as a "shrinking space" (p. 521) that not only deprofessionalized the work of teachers, but also dehumanized it. They argued that mandated curricula "depersonalized the human connections nurtured by more student-centered curriculum and pedagogy. Standardized approaches to teaching colluded to shrink the space afforded them for devising personal solutions to problems encountered in their classrooms" (pp. 521-522). This study lends empirical support to the notion that student teachers are learning to teach in classrooms in which teachers are denied opportunities to make professional judgments or design curriculum that responds to their students'

needs and interests. English teacher candidates, for example, often complete their student teaching in classrooms in which the College Board's Springboard curriculum is mandated. While some participants acknowledged that Springboard includes quality literature and instructional strategies, the sequential order in which student teachers were required to teach it denied them the opportunity to design curriculum around their students' needs, making both students and teachers "captives of the script" (Meyer, 2002). Ultimately, mandated curricula reflect a field in which teachers' work is increasingly deprofessionalized and deskilled as they are told what to do and how and when to do it.

Such deprofessionalization occurs through control that has to be actively managed, which is evocative of Foucault's (1979, 1991) notions of governmentality and surveillance. In the government's quest to control educational outcomes, it relies on tools of manipulation to control individuals' behaviors, such as surveillance. Foucault's (1979) explanation of surveillance theory draws on the metaphor of a prison panopticon, the windowed perch from which the jail guard keeps a watchful eye on his inmates. This sense of constantly being under surveillance—whether or not he actually is being watched—creates a sense of anxiety that affects the prisoners' moves.

Findings reflect that schools are increasingly becoming what Kohl (2009) describes as "educational panopticons, that is, total control and surveillance communities dedicated to undermining the imagination, creativity, intelligences, and autonomy of students and teachers" (para. 5). In Florida's schools, surveillance is evident, for example, when principals keep a watchful eye over mentor and student teachers with tools such as pacing guides and walk-throughs, which provide a snapshot

of a teacher's practice. In harsher cases, we see principals remove student teachers from placements because they are not demonstrating impact on student learning. Additionally, the state uses students' test scores as a means of keeping tabs on teachers' effectiveness. These actions convey the sense that teachers' practice is constantly scrutinized in order to ensure that they are adhering to top-down mandates. Taken in tandem with governmentality theory, surveillance theory suggests that this scrutiny serves as a tool to manipulate and ultimately dominate educators' behaviors. In considering how surveillance affects the profession of teachers, Bushnell (2003) argues that, "The label of *professional* is a charade as the surveillance of teachers deprives them of the autonomy characteristic of a profession" (pp. 267-268, emphasis in original). Because teachers know their work may be inspected at any time and that ultimately they will be held accountable for teaching the standards set by the state, they adhere to tools such as pacing guides and scripted curricula that strip them of their professional discretion in what and how they should teach.

This research contributes to previous scholarship in proposing that deprofessionalization is also occurring at the teacher preparation level (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; Sleeter, 2008). Rather than relying on teacher educators to determine how best to assess their student teachers, governmental regulations now require that student teachers complete assignments, such as the Teacher Work Sample, in order to demonstrate impact on student achievement. As participants in this study pointed out, it is unrealistic to expect that a student teacher's impact will be evident based on two data points: a pre-assessment and a post-assessment two weeks apart. Nevertheless, akin to the surveillance of K-12 teachers' work, teacher education

is being increasingly monitored and regulated by governmental bodies. This governmental oversight positions teacher educators in a double bind in which they are caught between contradictory demands: those dictated by governmental policies and those dictated by their own belief systems regarding what quality teaching and learning looks like (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2012). Teacher educators want control over their curricular decisions and wish to prepare teachers for a profession in which they, too, can exact their professional judgment.

Participants professed faith that the pendulum of education will swing back to a time when teachers' professionalism is honored and teachers will be able to make professional judgments about their students' learning needs. This belief that teachers need to have curricular autonomy is reminiscent of educational philosopher Maxine Greene's (2013) pronouncement, "To plunge in; to choose; to disclose; to move: this is the road, it seems to me, to mastery" (4th ed p. 138). Although she was writing about the need for curriculum to maximize the learner's potential, these words resonate with the need for novice teachers to have authentic experiences to dive into the work of teaching as they begin their path to becoming a teacher. Unfortunately, as discussed in the next section, in today's climate this path is paved with anxiety.

Intensification, Anxiety, and Complicity

The age of accountability has led to a culture of anxiety that has tangible and consequential outcomes on student teaching. The amount of federal, state, district, and school oversight with which educators contend creates a conundrum where teachers' work is simultaneously deskilled and intensified. Previous scholars have written about the intensification of teachers' work (Apple, 2009; Apple & Jungck, 1990) and how it has been amplified in the wake of NCLB (Valli & Buese, 2007). In anticipation of the rising

accountability movement, Apple and Jungck (1990) argued over 25 years ago that “interventionist styles of management” (p. 233) marked by educational standardization and efficiency result in teachers being asked to do more with fewer resources and less time. Intensification of teachers’ work leads to teachers “cutting corners,” completing only the work that is absolutely essential to the job at hand, and not having time to “keep up with one’s field” (p. 234). The onslaught in recent years of high-stakes mandates, and the surveillance that accompanies them, has amplified this intensification.

Findings in this study suggest that the intensification of educators’ work has negatively impacted student teaching. Mentor teachers and principals are busy trying to stay afloat as they attempt to learn and adjust to the new Florida Standards and prepare their students for the associated high-stakes tests. These stressful conditions occur in addition to the myriad other tasks they are responsible for in running their classrooms and schools. The resulting sense of anxiety has been compounded in recent years by legislation that promises rewards and threatens sanctions based on student achievement. Taken as a whole, Florida’s schools today are riddled with anxiety.

Similar to Finnigan and Gross’s (2007) study on the influence of policy sanctions on teachers’ motivation, these findings suggest that educators’ behaviors were motivated by fear. Educators’ view of interns as a hindrance reflected a fear that student teachers would negatively impact student achievement, which would have a domino effect on teachers’ pay and job security, and the schools’ public standing. While teacher educators have long lamented the challenges of finding a quality student teaching placement (Levine, 2006; Hammerness et al., 2005; Selwyn, 2007; Zeichner, 2010), this

study indicates that increasing numbers of principals and mentor teachers are declining requests for student teacher placements in their classrooms due to accountability pressures. Unless these pressures ease up, teacher education programs are in danger of having few high quality placements for their student teachers. This is a troubling trend, as we know that strong placements are important for teacher candidates' learning (AACTE, 2010; Grossman, 2010; Moore, 2010).

Participants alluded to the fact that placements have become especially challenging in the wake of Florida's Senate Bill 6, the policy that aligns test scores with teacher evaluations and removes the possibility of tenure for new teachers. This policy has its roots in incentive theory: the idea that teachers will work harder if there are incentives or sanctions attached to the outcome of their work. Incentive theory does not, however, account for the ways in which the pressures related to incentives and sanctions might jeopardize the quality of teachers' work. Teachers may be working harder, as evidenced by the intensification of their work as they are asked to do more with higher stakes attached, but is the quality of the work demanded of them in the age of accountability better for children and schools? Findings suggest that the fear caused by mandates that tie teachers' pay and job security to their students' test scores has had a deleterious effect on student teaching and schools' cultures. When paired with tools of surveillance, the promises and threats inherent in incentivized accountability programs lead to a workforce governed by fear.

In recognizing that their student teachers are entering the profession at this political moment, participants often advised their teacher candidates to "do what they have to do." This advice essentially encourages future teachers to be complicit with the

system's mandates because resistance could cost them their jobs. A compliant teaching force has a long history rooted in a patriarchal tradition (Apple, 2009; Bushnell, 2003). Bushnell (2003) explains, "Working within the system means to work within a historically gendered system in which (mostly) female teachers answer to the authority of (mostly) male administrators" (p. 267). Notably, only female participants in this study mentioned compliance as a strategy for coping. By suggesting that teacher candidates (who are presumably mostly female) should quietly comply with the system, teacher educators reify existing power structures. On the other hand, with lack of job security for Florida's teachers, "the option…of protesting seems romantic" (Apple, 2009, p. 176). While it might, then, seem wise for teacher educators to discourage their novice teachers from blatantly resisting the governmental mandates that dictate their work, compliance that arises out of fear might potentially increase the likelihood of teacher burnout (Brown, 2010; Fives et al., 2007). Teacher educators need to recognize the ways in which we may be complicit in the perpetuation of a system that deprofessionalizes teachers. Rather than simply advising that they "do what they have to do," student teachers need strategies for effectively managing their frustrations and fears.

A complicit, deprofessionalized, and oppressed teaching force will not be prepared to take on the complexities of students' needs in the 21st century. The standardization of the teaching profession jeopardizes the heart of why teachers work with children. I echo Cochran-Smith's (2003)'s call for us to consider how a market-based approach to education contradicts the purpose of education:

> What we *do not* need are more teachers who are prepared to be compliant and who are motivated by the fear of losing their jobs. What we *do not* need are school cultures where managers coerce their subordinates into behaving in ways that respond to market threats and

> competition. What we *do* need are more teachers who are fully prepared to teach and who are motivated to make rich learning opportunities a reality for all school children. What we *do* need are school cultures that sustain and support teachers' (and students') learning over the long haul…." (p. 374, emphasis in original)

Teachers need to work in school cultures in which they are able to exercise their professionalism. It is ironic that teachers work in an era in which states require them to implement Common Core standards that are "based on rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills" (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2015), however they are unable to use their own professional knowledge and higher-order thinking skills to design curriculum and instruction. Regardless if teachers are required to use scripted curricula or stringent pacing guides, "the intensification that teachers experience can deprive them of the mental and temporal space needed to understand" (Valli & Buese, 2007, p. 546) how to use the curricula to address students' backgrounds and academic needs. Further, with an increasingly diverse student population in the U.S., teachers need the academic freedom to design culturally relevant curriculum that engages and challenges students from all backgrounds (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). When teachers are denied opportunities to enact their professionalism or when they are complicit with a one-size-fits-all model of curriculum and instruction, students' needs go unmet.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

This study describes teacher educators' perceptions of the ways in which high-stakes accountability measures in Florida affect student teaching. As noted in Chapter 3, however, the research design has some limitations. First, I only spoke with participants from nine of the thirteen Florida institutions accredited by the Council for the

Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Further, the study relies on interviews and does not consider other data sources. Phone interviews may also have impacted the ability to develop rapport and garner rich data from participants.

This study only tells the story of accountability's impact on student teaching from the perspective of teacher preparation program coordinators. It is likely that educators on the other side of the K-20 partnership, such as district personnel, school administrators, mentor teachers, and indeed the student teachers themselves would offer valuable insights into the phenomenon at hand. To gain an in-depth understanding of how teacher education programs and their partner districts have negotiated the challenges related to increased mandates, future research should turn to case study methodology. Interviews with clinical faculty, mentor teachers, student teachers, and principals are needed to understand how each of these stakeholders have addressed these challenges in their contexts. Observations of classroom instruction and the conferences between mentor teachers, student teachers, and university supervisors would also shed light on real-life context of student teaching in the district and how it is influenced by accountability mandates. Lessons learned from such a case study would benefit other teacher preparation programs as they work to strengthen their student teaching placements.

Nevertheless, findings in this present study based on interviews from teacher educators across Florida strongly suggest that the age of accountability has enacted several constraints on student teaching. Teacher educators have a powerful role to play in reshaping what may seem like a bleak educational landscape. Below I offer implications for our practice as educators and suggest directions for future research.

Strategic Scheduling of Student Teaching

The spring semester brings with it a host of concerns for student teaching: increased numbers of teachers decline student teaching placements; educators exude a sense of increased anxiety; instruction focuses on what one participant called a "rehearsal of skills"; and student teachers take a back seat until testing is complete. With these issues in mind, teacher education programs should avoid scheduling student teaching experiences solely in the spring semester when surveillance is at its peak. While it might be posited that novices need to gain firsthand experience with the testing season prior to their first year of teaching, but this should not consume their entire student teaching experience. With evidence that teachers have more curricular autonomy after the test is complete, it is regrettable that many internships end during the testing period and that student teachers never experience curricular freedom. Since internships usually conclude a teacher preparation program, fall internships also pose challenges for teacher candidates who often struggle to find jobs upon graduating in the middle of the school year.

As an alternative to these two options, more preparation programs should consider yearlong internships. This proposal follows recommendations from educational leaders who have called for teacher candidates to have increased opportunities for clinical preparation that last longer than the typical student teaching experience (AACTE, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2014; NCATE, 2010). Rather than a spring internship that takes a brief snapshot of the year and too often shows a picture of disengaging test preparation, full year internships allow student teachers to experience the entire trajectory of a school year. Further, several participants decried that the time spent preparing for and actually testing during the spring denied interns the time to

spend with students. A yearlong internship potentially offers student teachers richer chances of forming meaningful relationships with students. Last, a full year would grant more time for the mentor teacher to build a trusting relationship with the intern, which might allay some anxieties that come with sharing instruction.

Although some research has suggested that longer internships are not necessarily better for student teachers, these studies have not investigated the nature of these internships or the perspectives of mentor teachers (Chambers & Hardy, 2005; Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012; Spooner, Flowers, Lambert, & Algozzine, 2008). For example, Ronfeldt and Reininger's study (2012) reported that the length of student teaching does not impact its quality. In this study, however, the factor of quality was derived from teachers' survey responses regarding their "satisfaction" with their student teaching experience. Similarly, Chambers and Hardy (2005) surveyed student teachers during their internship about their self-efficacy and beliefs about classroom management, finding that there was no significant difference between internship length and self-efficacy or classroom management styles. While these studies contribute to our understanding of how teachers have perceived their student teaching experiences in relation to duration, we need more research on the qualitative differences between yearlong and standard internships.

In light of issues related to accountability, research is needed on whether yearlong internships indeed ameliorate educators' reluctance towards hosting student teachers. Principals and mentor teachers should be interviewed before and throughout yearlong internships to understand their perceptions of how interns impact student achievement throughout the year. Comparison studies of fall internships, spring

internships, and yearlong internships are also needed. Surveys or interview studies, for example, could help to establish the effects timing has teachers' reluctance to host interns. A study that compares students' test scores across these three types of internships might also lend evidence to whether yearlong internships affect student performance.

Coteaching as a Potential Antidote to the Culture of Anxiety

Teacher educators need to combat the understandable reluctance teachers have in giving up control of their classroom, particularly in highly tested subjects. For example, mentor teachers rarely allow student teachers to lead reading instruction until testing is over. Therefore, student teachers who are denied opportunities to learn through practice will begin their first year with few teaching experiences under their belt, a scenario that may have real consequences for them and their future students: What does this mean for the novices' future careers, with their jobs at stake based on their students' performance on reading tests? More importantly, what does this mean for their future students' reading instruction? Thus, in an educational climate in which educators are brimming with anxiety and speak of student teachers as a hindrance to improving student achievement, teacher educators need to find ways to ensure that student teachers are seen as a benefit to the classrooms in which they learn. We also need to acknowledge and accommodate principals' and mentor teachers' fears associated with the increased surveillance of their work. Findings from this study suggest that coteaching, or apprentice teaching, might be a way of addressing these dilemmas. Moving towards coteaching or a clinical teaching model will require teacher educators to retire the traditional model of increased responsibility, which no longer meets the needs of many K-12 educators in today's high-stakes climate.

Apprentice teaching is growing in favor in teacher education (Bacharach et al., 2010) and draws on coteaching, a pedagogical model that originated in the late 1980s and 1990s for addressing the needs of students with disabilities (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989; Friend, Embury, & Clarke, 2014). Because of its prevalence in special education, the term *coteaching* might cause confusion when used to describe a model for student teaching. As one of the leading proponents of coteaching in special education settings, Friend (Friend et al., 2014) recently co-authored a paper in which she and her colleagues proposed that the term *coteaching* is being misused when applied to a student teaching context. They argue that coteaching specifically refers to the inclusion model in which special education teachers teach alongside general education teachers. Instead, they recommend the term *apprentice teaching* to be used when describing student teaching. They differentiate coteaching and apprenticeship teaching based on nine critical differences, key of which is the idea that apprenticeship teaching is an induction model whereby the classroom teacher is mentoring the novice. They applaud both forms of collaborative teaching and suggest that differentiating between the two terms might help to avoid miscommunication that arises when coteaching is used to refer to student teaching.[5] Notably, two of the participants in this study said they adopted apprentice teaching after seeing the coteaching model's success in the special education departments in their colleges.

The participants who reported few placement challenges worked in programs that replaced the traditional gradual increase of responsibility model with apprentice teaching. Apprentice teaching is defined as "two teachers (a cooperating teacher and a

[5] Although participants used the term *coteaching*, in light of the points raised by Friend et al. (2014), I will discuss it as *apprentice teaching* from this point forward.

teacher candidate) working together with groups of students; sharing the planning, organization, delivery, and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space" (Heck, Bacharach, Mann, & Ofstedal, 2005, n.p.). This study suggests that one reason programs that championed apprentice teaching were more successful in securing placements is because it allows the mentor teacher to remain active in the classroom. According to participants, mentor teachers were more comfortable with apprentice teaching because they no longer had to relinquish teaching for up to eight weeks while their interns had the chance to teach independently. Thus, apprentice teaching is poised as a strategy for negotiating the effects of governmentality in student teaching. With the state's panoptic eye focused on teachers' VAM scores and teachers' pay and job security in jeopardy, apprenticeship teaching might be a way to ameliorate mentor teachers' anxiety about giving up their classroom to novices.

Further, the apprentice teaching model is a natural extension of preparing teachers for a clinical practice profession (AACTE, 2010; Alter & Coggshall, 2009; NCATE, 2010). Similar to the medical student who works alongside attending doctors during residency, apprentice teaching allows student teachers the opportunity to practice teaching in an authentic context alongside a skilled mentor. Apprentice teaching has shown some promise both in terms of the development of student teachers (Scantlebury, Gallo-Fox, & Wassell, 2008) and the learning of the students they teach (Bacharach et al., 2010). St. Cloud State University's approach to apprentice teaching has been heralded by leaders in teacher education as an effective and innovative student teaching model (AACTE, 2010; Grossman, 2010; NCATE, 2010). In fact, using results from both the Woodcock Johnson III and state data, one study of over

800 pairs of mentor teachers and interns at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota showed that students in apprentice teaching classrooms statistically outperformed students who were in classes either taught by a single teacher or by a non-coteaching student teaching pair (Bacharach et al., 2010). Other research shows that mentor teachers in apprentice teaching dyads appreciate having someone with whom to share administrative responsibilities, such as analyzing student data, and report having more time to form close relationships with each of their students (DelColle & Keenan, 2015).

A key feature of St. Cloud State's approach to apprentice teaching requires that all three members of the student teaching triad—the mentor teacher, the student teacher, and the university supervisor—receive support and information about the roles and expectations of teachers in a apprentice teaching classroom (Bacharach et al., 2010). They are taught that apprentice teaching can take a variety of forms including parallel teaching, station teaching, and having one teacher teach while the other assists. Such structures recognize that it is important for student teachers' development to have opportunities to teach independently alongside a mentor teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Fives et al., 2007; Grossman, 2010; A. Levine, 2006). For the participants in this study who spoke of their programs' success with the coteaching model, it was also important that all parties understood how apprentice teaching works. The coordinators provided orientations for triad members and materials such as videos and handbooks in order to help mentor teachers transition to apprentice teaching.

While this study and others show apprentice teaching to be a promising practice, more studies should be conducted to examine how it looks in practice and to understand how it may contribute to mentor teachers' willingness to accept student

teachers. In particular, studies should focus on teacher programs' transitions from the traditional gradual increase of responsibility model to the apprentice teaching model. Exemplars would be programs that provide professional development to mentor teachers and principals as they learn new ways to structure student teaching in their schools. Because apprentice teaching is more widely accepted in elementary classrooms, case studies should pay particular attention to secondary classrooms.

Helping Student Teachers Negotiate the Terrain

K-12 educators do not bear the brunt of accountability's ills on their own. Unfortunately, they trickle down to novices who spend at least ten weeks in classrooms and in schools that are laden with anxiety. Novices enter the profession hopeful to make a difference, yet in student teaching they experience first hand the scrutiny and oversight teachers contend with in today's climate. As teacher educators, we must stop advising our teacher candidates to simply be compliant in the face of mandates that aim to strip them of their professionalism. We should also avoid advocating for novice teachers to blatantly resist top-down mandates, which could imperil their careers. Rather, teacher educators need to help their students negotiate the double bind they experience in the frequent and frustrating disconnection between their ideals and the realities they will face in today's schools (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Castro, 2010; Lloyd, 2007).

Teacher educators have an ethical imperative to help their teacher candidates navigate this dilemma and learn how to make "strategic compromises" that balance their professional ideals and the sociopolitical moment in which they are teaching. Sikes, Measor, and Woods (1995) describe strategic compromises this way:

> Teachers might “strategically compromise,” that is to say find ways of adapting to the situation that allows room for their interests, while accepting some kind of modification of those interests…This is a creative process, that may, in fact, in some instances construct new possibilities out of the debris of the crisis. Such creativity, is of course, institutionally governed and mediated. (Sikes, Measor, & Woods, 1995, p. 238)

In today’s accountability climate, teachers’ professional and creative license is mediated through tools of regulation such as pacing guides. Methods courses and student teaching seminars are ripe opportunities to help teacher candidates brainstorm and practice ways of making strategic compromises with mandated curricula.

For example, student teachers could analyze partner districts’ mandated curricula and then determine plans for strategically inserting culturally relevant and appropriately challenging materials for students. To develop their expertise and professionalism, teacher educators should also require students to write research-based rationales for how their instructional choices will improve student learning. This exercise would arm them with the vocabulary that has currency in today’s educational climate, which could benefit them in justifying their pedagogy to their future school leadership. While some research has shown the struggles student teachers encounter in the age of accountability (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Castro, 2010; Costigan, 2002; Lloyd, 2007), future studies should investigate teacher educator practices that equip student teachers with strategies for strategically negotiating the terrain.

Florida Standards: Constraining or Expanding Autonomy?

An interesting and unexpected finding in this study is that the recent move to Florida Standards might actually be loosening governmental reigns on curricular control. Ironically, this possible move closer to teacher autonomy is occurring amid fierce

controversy over the standards, which some argue leads to overreaching federal and state oversight of education. The findings here, however, suggest a different picture of the new standards, as participants noted that schools and mentor teachers have granted more leeway for student teachers to design curriculum as long as the lesson addresses the standards. This finding suggests that these standards may lead to increased teacher autonomy, if only temporarily.

Future research should investigate whether the introduction of the Florida Standards, or the Common Core on which they are based, actually broaden teachers' curricular autonomy. Since the tests that assess these standards are being administered for the first time in spring 2015, we do not yet know if the initial perceptions that teachers have more leeway will shift once education leaders are more familiar with how the standards are tested. Governmentality theory would suggest that teachers' sense of curricular freedom with the Florida Standards arose because the associated standardized test, a powerful tool of manipulation, was yet unknown. There is cause for concern that curriculum and teachers' practices will once again narrow once educators gain more information about the tests upon which their VAM scores and evaluations are based (ASA, 2014; Au, 2009, 2011). Case studies of districts would shed light on how the new standards impact district mandates, such as curriculum maps, pacing guides, or scripted curricula, and how teachers enact these mandates in their instruction.

Conclusion

During the months in which this dissertation was written, Florida's accountability terrain has shifted quite a bit. After a kindergarten teacher refused to administer the FAIR standardized test to her students in September 2014, Florida Commissioner of

Education Pam Stewart lifted the testing requirement for students in grades K-2. The teacher, Susan Bowles, explained in a letter to parents that this was a “professional decision” and “an act of civil disobedience” because she could not “in good conscience submit to administering this test three times a year, losing six weeks of instruction” (Strauss, 2014). She recognized that this refusal was a breach of her contract, for which she might lose her job. She did not lose her job; in fact, she was voted Alachua County’s 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year. In October of this same year, the School Board of Alachua County (2014) passed a Resolution on Accountability in which it derided the state’s over-emphasis on testing, which it argued has created barriers for children including:

> a narrowed curriculum that is often focused on only the standardized test, the introduction of the concept of failure to young students for whom school and learning should be a fun and rewarding experience, the loss or handcuffing of quality teachers, and the loss of public confidence in our public schools. (para. 6)

Other districts in Florida have also joined the fight against the loss of instructional time and high-stakes that are associated with the state’s many standardized tests. Lee County’s school board, for example, voted to opt out of testing, a vote that was later rescinded (Bidwell, 2014). These pockets of resistance from inside the teaching force are an assertion of educators’ professionalism. In the face of strict mandates that have had severe consequences not only for teachers’ work, but for the day-to-day experiences of children, these educators insist on regaining the right to be treated as professionals who have pedagogical expertise about how best to meet their students’ educational needs.

The state, for its part, has been busy compiling information about high-stakes testing in Florida. By February, the FLDOE released an Assessment Investigation

(FLDOE, 2015), which reported on the volume, nature, and time requirement of Florida's standardized tests. It reveals that in some districts, such as Duval, secondary students are taking as many as 23 tests per school year (Strauss, 2015). At the time this report came out, Governor Rick Scott conceded that students are over-tested and issued an executive order to suspend the 11th grade FSA for English Language Arts that was planned to be administered in April.

Further controversy arose in early March 2015, as thousands of students encountered technological glitches when they attempted to take the computerized writing FSA. Reports credit technical issues and cyberattacks for the setbacks, which required many schools to halt testing (Stein, 2015). With teachers' evaluations tied to students' performance on these tests, teacher advocacy groups and some politicians have called for a halt to all tests until problems can be resolved. In the wake of this setback, the Florida House passed a bill on March 18, 2015 that scales back the accountability agenda in the state (Larrabee, 2015). If passed, the legislation would permanently eliminate the 11th grade reading test and prohibit final exams in courses that already require a state or district end-of-course test. It would also reduce the weight of students' test scores on teachers' evaluations from 50 percent to a third.

For its part, the Florida Senate has also put forth a bill related to testing. On April 1, 2015 it added a provision to its testing bill that would suspend the use of this year's test scores in the determination of schools' grades or teachers' evaluations until an independent review of the Florida Standards Assessment is complete (McGrory & Solochek, 2015). It remains to be seen if the House will follow suit.

Politicians' newfound recognition that the testing frenzy negatively impacts schools is indeed a welcomed development. However, the frequency with which these controversies arise and the speed with which decisions are made contribute to educators' overall state of anxiety. Teachers continually scramble to meet high-stakes mandates with the knowledge that these mandates could change at any moment. Further, they may be wary of settling into any new system given such unstable terrain, though they must since their evaluations depend on their students' performance. As long as the state continues to make schools "educational panopticons" (Kohl, 2009) by scrutinizing teachers' effectiveness based on students' test scores and refuses to grant teachers the ability to be adaptive experts in the classroom, educators will continue to work in a deprofessionalized and highly anxious profession. The students in Florida's schools deserve to work with teachers who can use their professional autonomy to best meet students' needs. Further, they deserve to work with teachers who are motivated by the joy of working with children, not the fear of the state's sanctions.

As Ladson-Billings (2011) pointed out, "Student teaching takes place in real classrooms, not ideal classrooms" (p. 391). With this in mind, teacher educators have an ethical imperative to prepare future teachers for the educational context in which they will teach. Currently, this context is one in which teachers' autonomy is increasingly constrained and their outcomes increasingly monitored. I echo my participants' hope that the educational pendulum will soon swing back to a time in which teachers' professionalism is honored as they are allowed to make decisions about how to reach their students' unique needs. There is a glimmer of hope that the new Florida Standards will allow such leeway for teachers. In the meantime, regardless of the sociopolitical

context outside of the school's walls, certain aspects of education will never change: Students will always need teachers who inspire them to think, who show they care by making personal connections, and who find ways to connect the content to their lives. These impacts may not be quantifiable, but for the students in excellent teachers' classrooms, they will be felt for a lifetime. In order to prepare excellent future teachers, we need to ensure that preservice teachers have educative and experiential student teaching experiences in which to learn the particulars of teaching.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Tell me how student teaching is organized in your teacher education program.
    a. At what point in the program does student teaching occur?
    b. How are student teaching placements determined?
    c. What role does the district play in determining student teaching placements?
    d. How are cooperating teachers selected?
    e. What influences the decisions about student teaching placements/?

2. Describe your program's expectations regarding student teaching.
    a. What role should student teachers play in the classroom?
    b. How much should they be teaching?
    c. How much should they be designing curriculum and lessons?
    d. What other experiences should they have?
    e. To what extent do you feel your views are shared by the school district? By principals? By cooperating teachers?

3. To what extent, if any, do you think accountability mandates (e.g., teacher evaluations tied to test scores, school grades) have affected student teaching in the district?
    a. Have accountability mandates affected the schools' willingness to take interns? Tell me about this.
    b. Have accountability mandates affected how cooperating teachers are selected? Tell me about this.
    c. Have accountability mandates affected the role student teachers play in classroom? Tell me about this.
    d. Have accountability mandates affected the curriculum and/or lessons student teachers teach? Tell me about this.

4. What differences, if any, do you notice between fall and spring student teaching that are attributable to FCAT and other high stakes tests?

5. What are your impressions about how student teaching is regarded by the district, especially in respect to accountability mandates?
    a. Over the years, are there schools/cooperating teachers who used to host student teachers, but no longer do? Why are they no longer doing so?

6. Student teaching experiences are changing across the country. Has student teaching changed in recent years in your program? If so, how? Are there additional changes your program has made due to changes in student teaching? Tell me about this.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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