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Cultivating Equity-Driven Teaching Partnerships:  
A Case Study of Developmental Evaluation in an Urban Teacher Residency Program

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in Education

by

Talia Miriam Stol

2018

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Cultivating Equity-Driven Teaching Partnerships:  
A Case Study of Developmental Evaluation in an Urban Teacher Residency Program

by

Talia Miriam Stol

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Christina A. Christie, Co-Chair

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There is a dearth of literature on the potential of evaluation in teacher education for program learning. Integrated, timely, and use-oriented evaluation processes are needed in order to improve programmatic decision-making and support the development of high quality teachers. At the same time, the emergence of developmental evaluation (DE) offers a critical space for teacher educators to think proactively about the educative value of evaluation, as it can facilitate program learning while simultaneously adding to the research base for promising practices in teacher education. This study's empirical contribution to the literature on DE supports Patton's (2011) contention that it constitutes an evaluation approach qualitatively different from formative and summative evaluation.

Drawing upon complexity science concepts and evaluation use theory, DE is “an effort to use elements of systematic evaluative inquiry in ways that support the efforts of program personnel whose work is situated in these less conventional planning and implementation contexts” (Lam & Shulha, 2015, p. 2). This case study explores the extent to which a DE effort informed how a social justice-focused teacher education program attempted to cultivate equity-driven relationships between preservice teachers and their experienced placement teachers, thereby highlighting potential benefits and challenges of the DE process. As such, the study addresses the following questions: *What was the nature and extent of evaluation use that resulted from an Urban Teacher Residency’s developmental evaluation process? What factors promoted and/or inhibited use in this program context?*

Applying the lens of evaluation use theory, this research identifies nuanced and overlapping forms of use evident from analysis of case study data. I argue that the interactive nature of reacting to, interpreting, and questioning data among colleagues inherent in the DE approach demonstrates the constructive potential of goals-aligned facilitation for responsive evaluation practice that supports program development in teacher education. After describing the forms of evaluation use detected, I consider factors that encouraged and inhibited use, paying particular attention to the credibility-dependent, facilitation-centered role of the developmental evaluator and to the challenges inherent in this evaluation context.

The dissertation of Talia Miriam Stol is approved.

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2018

To the courageous teachers, aspiring teachers, and teacher educators who go to work every day  
attempting to build something better against incredible odds.

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- 2017        **Stol, T.,** Alkin, M.C., & Christie, C.A. Volume editor's introduction. In M.Q. Patton, *Facilitating evaluation: Principles in practice* (pp. xi-xiii). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2017        La Torre, D., **Stol, T.,** & Kawasaki, J. Leveraging evaluation and research measures for program learning in preservice teacher education. Partnership Session presentation at the California Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA.
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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the problem

While evaluation plans are a common component of teacher education grants, evaluation reports are often submitted to funders without significant effort to relay feedback to program staff. At the same time, researchers who study teacher education may not offer timely findings to the specific programs at the center of their investigations. Furthermore, externally-imposed metrics do not always reflect the values of preservice teacher education programs that seek to realize social justice outcomes. More research is needed into systematic group inquiry efforts at the program-level.

This case study highlights the potential of developmental evaluation (DE) for internal program development purposes in social justice-oriented preservice teacher preparation programs. Drawing upon complexity science concepts and evaluation use theories, DE is “an effort to use elements of systematic evaluative inquiry in ways that support the efforts of program personnel whose work is situated in these less conventional planning and implementation contexts” (Lam & Shulha, 2015, p. 2). Through deliberate integration of facilitated discussions about program data into routine team meetings, the teacher educators of the Change<sup>1</sup> Urban Teacher Residency embarked on a DE process to inform the way the program develops and supports relationships between student teachers and the teachers in whose classrooms they are placed. As such, the study addresses the following questions: *What was the nature and extent of evaluation use that resulted from an Urban Teacher Residency’s developmental evaluation process? What factors promoted and/or inhibited use in this program context?* Applying the lens of evaluation use theory, this research describes nuanced and overlapping forms of use evident from analysis of case study data. I argue that the interactive

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonym

nature of reacting to, interpreting, and questioning data among colleagues inherent in the DE approach demonstrates the constructive potential of goals-aligned facilitation for responsive evaluation practice that supports program development in teacher education.

### **Summary of findings**

The Change program team spent the 2016-17 academic year supporting preservice teachers and experienced placement teachers while pursuing parallel efforts to hone and solidify its framework for mentoring relationships named the Coaching through the Lens of Equity Model. An evaluative reflective practice instrument, the teaching partnership log, was developed in alignment with the features of the model in order to stimulate discussion of the extent to which the interactional dynamics between teaching pairs aligned with the characteristics of reciprocal, equity-driven relationships the team envisioned. Trends from the teaching partnership logs, as well as other sources of data, were presented at monthly Program Leadership Committee (PLC) meetings, and the author facilitated discussions about the implications of these data for the continued development of the model. Qualitative analysis of PLC meeting transcripts, participant field reports, team member interviews, and program artifacts produced the five key themes.

***Theme #1: PLC participants identified program-based factors that contributed to the dynamics of teacher partner relationships over time.*** When shown evidence that teaching partners' engagement with each other around equity in the classroom decreased over time, program team members hypothesized about the role of university coursework in keeping equity issues at the forefront of daily teaching practice. Those who worked with preservice teachers as instructors reflected on how increased pressures on the preservice cohort to complete credentialing requirements shaped the intensity of social justice discourse in their classes. The team also considered the order of coursework, compared the current course sequence to that of previous cohorts, and traced the prevalence of certain topics in the data to the content of specific

classes. This form of brainstorming highlighted possible future directions for a curricular structure geared towards the maintenance of a critical lens on practice throughout the year-long teaching partnership. It also altered team members' views of when equity-driven conversations should begin earnest. Whereas previous years the program had taken a gradual approach to building teaching partners' capacity to engage in equity conversations with each other, in the year following the PLC discussions the team decided to have teachers dive into these conversations as early as orientation.

***Theme #2: PLC participants debated the extent of program influence on Change teachers' adoption of social justice beliefs and practices.*** Comparing the responses of placement teachers who had previously worked with Change or its affiliated university center to those who had not brought to light differences between the two groups that were contrary to team members' assumptions. Contemplating why certain teachers appeared hesitant to reflect upon their underlying assumptions and beliefs about students led program team members to consider what was reasonable to expect of institutional efforts at inculcating a social justice mindset and an openness to honest conversations about educational equity. In expressing their perspectives, team members drew lines between individual identities, length of time in the profession, and school environments, and the habits of mind and practice required for the teaching partnerships the program team envisioned.

***Theme #3: The developmental process created opportunities for PLC participants to highlight authenticity as a missing piece of critical conversations between teaching partners.***

A recurring frustration with the data presented at PLC meetings concerned the issue of authenticity; the authenticity of responses collected with the evaluative tools used, and the authenticity of the interactions between teaching partners those tools sought to capture. Both

angles surfaced differing perceptions among team members about what qualified as a “critical conversation” vis a vis the coaching model, and underscored the challenge of capturing the substance of teaching partnerships in systematic ways. While the limitations of evaluative tools were sometimes used to dismiss findings, often critique of data served to shed light on the type of information that was most valuable and meaningful to team members as teacher educators in a social justice program. Skepticism about the authenticity of equity-driven interactions between teaching partners contributed to an ongoing dialogue about how the critical conversation piece of the coaching model was viewed by teachers more as a periodic, obligatory exercise rather than as a consistent, intentional practice arising from the daily experience of teaching that held substantive implications for teaching practice. PLC discussions surfaced tensions the team was navigating in seeking to balance structured opportunities for critical conversation skill-building with fostering teachers’ intrinsic motivation to shine an equity lens on their practice even when Change team members were not there to facilitate.

***Theme #4: PLC discussions informed a programmatic decision to emphasize relational trust as a prerequisite for reciprocal teaching partnerships.*** Data discussions ensured that attention to issues of power and authority remained central to the development of the coaching model. Team members acknowledged how power imbalances between preservice teachers and their experienced placement teachers made the task of implementing a coaching model which sought to *disrupt* hierarchical mentoring paradigms particularly challenging for the teachers involved. Preservice teachers’ reticence to name or call out inequity that was reflected in the data resonated with team members’ on-the-ground observations and turned the discussion to ways in which the program could mediate this tendency. While it was implicitly clear to team members that it was important for both parties to feel safe having honest and sometimes uncomfortable

conversations, the conviction that this type of engagement required a baseline level of trust had not been spelled out explicitly. PLC discussions raised and renewed questions about this aspect of the coaching model and influenced the decision to both articulate relational trust as a foundation for equity-driven teaching partnerships as well as plan activities early in the year to build relational trust between preservice and placement teachers.

***Theme #5: PLC discussions reinforced a need to add an explicit action component to the coaching model.*** Though the coaching model always intended to promote praxis (the cycle of reflecting and acting upon one's reality so as to transform it (Freire, 1993)), the teacher educators of Change struggled to link, in the minds of the teachers with whom they worked, the identification of equity issues to shifts in practice. The program communicated this idea – that critical reflection must be followed by action if one's goal is disrupting inequity – through its foundational documents, guiding frameworks, curriculum, assignments, and spoken discourse. However, team members were challenged to develop strategies that guided teachers to make that connection in their teaching partnerships as well. Frustration emerged in response to data showing that even teaching pairs able to *recognize* and discuss manifestations of inequity in their classroom did not indicate tangible ways in which they would commit to *addressing* those issues. These reactions extended the dialogue in PLCs about authenticity to include the premise that if critical conversations did not facilitate meaningful change for students, there was little incentive for teachers to feel personally invested in the model. The subsequent addition of a “co-constructed action” as part of the critical conversation protocol was in part informed by these discussions.

Taken together, these themes reflected both conceptual and instrumental evaluation use, as summarized in Table 1.

*Table 1. Summary of Findings by Form of Use*

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Form of Evaluation Use</b>
PLC participants identified program-based factors that contributed to the dynamics of teacher partner relationships over time.	New theoretical connections made between curriculum and participant behavior	Conceptual
	Incoming teaching pairs engaged in equity conversations earlier in their relationships than in previous years	Instrumental
PLC participants debated the extent of program influence on Change teachers' adoption of social justice beliefs and practices.	Clarifying team member expectations	Conceptual
The developmental process created opportunities for PLC participants to highlight authenticity as a missing piece of critical conversations between teaching partners.	Further operationalizing a core piece of coaching model	Conceptual
	Adding a new feature to the coaching model	Instrumental
PLC discussions informed a programmatic decision to emphasize relational trust as a prerequisite for reciprocal teaching partnerships.	Reorganizing the coaching mode	Instrumental
	Implementing relational trust-building activities during orientation	Instrumental
PLC discussions reinforced a need to add an explicit action component to the coaching model.	Adding a new feature to the coaching model	Instrumental
	Facilitating the creation of a co-constructed equity action during orientation	Instrumental

Overall, the PLC discussions helped the group to further articulate and critically reflect on their vision of equity-driven teaching partnerships, to validate shared challenges and aspirations for the impact they wished the coaching model to have in supporting Change's social justice mission, and to tease out how to translate principles of the developing coaching model into concrete practice.

### **Summary of implications**

This study's focus on the interactional element of program learning in a DE context has several implications for research on evaluation use. The developmental process embodied an approach to learning that centers the interaction between individuals catalyzed *by* data, rather than the interactions between individuals and data on their own. Factors affecting the forms of use detected included a developmental approach to evaluation, program team valuing of evaluation attended by resource allocation for evaluation activities, a pre-existing team culture of reflection, and an evaluator role centered upon embeddedness in the program, the building of credibility, and the facilitation of discussions that emphasized connections to program goals. The study suggests the field may benefit from additional research and training regarding presentation and facilitation techniques that help address the challenges of evaluation in a small program context. It also suggests that when possible, researchers and evaluators should explore opportunities to integrate their activities into the fabric of a program in a way that functions as a learning intervention for participants while also providing meaningful data for program-level discussions. Finally, this case study suggests a convergence between DE and other models of inquiry rooted in sociocultural theories of learning, which could provide a promising framing for future evaluation projects in teacher preparation program spaces.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Teacher Preparation Program Evaluation Landscape

A National Academy of Education report found that teacher preparation programs are subject to five different types of evaluation systems: federal, national accreditation, state program approval, media and independent ratings, and evaluations for program improvement (Feuer, Floden, Chudowsky, & Ahn, 2013). It is notable that only one of these five systems – evaluations for program improvement – carries with it an explicit formative, rather than summative, connotation. Indeed, research synthesizing how teacher preparation programs are, or should be, evaluated by external entities (Darling-Hammond, 2006; May, 2005; Worrell et al., 2014) dominate the literature in this area. This means that many teacher preparation programs' experience of evaluation primarily involves the compilation and reporting of predetermined metrics (e.g., graduation rates, job placement figures, and standardized test scores). Program-specific priorities that are less easily quantified, such as preparing educators committed to equity in public schooling, receive evaluative attention less frequently. This case study seeks to make a contribution to research in the fifth category of evaluation named by Feuer et al. (2013), expanding the knowledge base to include more studies of evaluation *in* teacher preparation programs concerning how programs evaluate *themselves* in order to help them realize social justice goals. Furthermore, it proposed to extend the fifth category itself to include evaluation for program *development* as part of this knowledge base.

In their recent review of empirical, peer-reviewed studies in teacher preparation research, teacher education scholars Cochran-Smith and Villegas (2015) identified “Preparation, Accountability, Effectiveness, and Policies” as one of three research programs into which contemporary trends and issues in the literature could be categorized. Stemming from an analytical framework entitled “teacher preparation research as historically situated social



practice,” the authors further identified four clusters of studies within this research program: alternative certification and pathways, policy responses and trends, testing and assessment, and program evaluation. The second and third clusters correspond roughly to research on the first four evaluation systems identified in the National Academy of Education report. The fourth and final cluster includes “program evaluations and case studies of individual teacher preparation programs designed to assess program effectiveness for local purposes, usually conducted by teacher educators about their own projects and programs” (p. 8). As with the five evaluation systems in National Academy of Education report, only one of the four clusters in the Preparation, Accountability, Effectiveness and Policies area focuses on efforts by individuals embedded in teacher preparation programs to engage in evaluation “for local purposes.” This category is also the least elaborated of the four within this research program. The convergence of these gaps in both evaluation and teacher preparation research speaks to the potential contribution of this study to both fields. I argue that program evaluation, specifically a DE approach, is in fact a critical space for teacher preparation programs to think proactively about the potential of evaluative inquiry to facilitate program learning while simultaneously adding to the field’s substantive knowledge base.

### **Evaluation Use Theory**

Evaluators located on the “use branch” of the evaluation theory tree (Alkin & Christie, 2004) hold that key aspects of evaluation conduct should be oriented towards increasing the likelihood that evaluation results will actually be used by relevant clients and stakeholders. Evaluation use theorists support “intended use by intended users” (Patton, 2008, p. 37) by articulating principles such as sensitivity to context (Alkin, 2013), stakeholder involvement (Cousins & Earl, 1992), and responsiveness to program environment such that evaluation questions are emergent rather than preordinate (Stake, 1980). In practical terms, this means

privileging context as the basis for conceptual and methodological decision-making so as to tailor the type of information collected to users' needs. In my capacity as a facilitator of an evaluative process, my identification with a use approach guided my design, data analysis, and reporting practices.

Evaluation use literature also offers several frameworks that can help researchers identify the ways in which evaluations impact programs. Two foundational constructs relevant to this study include conceptual and instrumental use. Briefly, *conceptual use* refers to enhanced understandings of the evaluand – what is being evaluated – that evaluation helps to facilitate, while *instrumental use* refers to actions taken concerning the evaluand as a result of evaluation findings (Alkin, 2011). In this study, the evaluand was a coaching model intended to cultivate student teaching relationships which embodied ideas of reciprocal learning and a critical stance towards equity in education. A third salient category is *process use* (Patton, 1998), which refers to learning that can occur as a byproduct of participation in an evaluation. Process use can emerge from the process of conducting the evaluation itself, as well as from the findings an evaluation yields. Process use can be conceptual (e.g., greater understanding of evaluative thinking) or instrumental (e.g., building a program's structural capacity for future evaluations). The theoretical constructs of conceptual and instrumental use, combined with the idea of process use of evaluation activities and findings, formed the analytical lens for the construction of this case study.

Because evaluations exist in complex and complicated environments, the lines between evaluation activities and participants' application of those experiences (use) is nonlinear. Alkin and King's definition of use (2017), represented by Figure 1, served as a reference point when constructing and testing hypotheses of evaluation use throughout cycles of observation and

analysis. In particular, the “type of influence” matrix (Figure 1, middle row, left side) was instructive in its assertion that since “people do not live in a world devoid of all stimuli, save for evaluation”, evaluation can function as “one of multiple, cumulative influences” (p.438; 439). This claim suggests analysis of evaluation use can be enhanced when one thinks in cumulative terms, attending to ideas that build and are reinforced over time. Just as decisions accrete (Weiss, 1980), knowledge accretes. The idea of “multiple” influences also encourages the researcher to actively consider compounding (and confounding) factors external to the evaluation itself (e.g., changes already under way, programmatic constraints, individual priorities) that interact with evaluation processes in direct and indirect ways. Fully cognizant of the constellation of prominent variables present in the Change program, and wary of presenting evaluation as a panacea, the assertion of evaluation influence as cumulative, and as only one piece in a larger puzzle, lent me confidence in framing findings in terms of an evaluation process that *informed* changes but did not necessarily *drive* them.

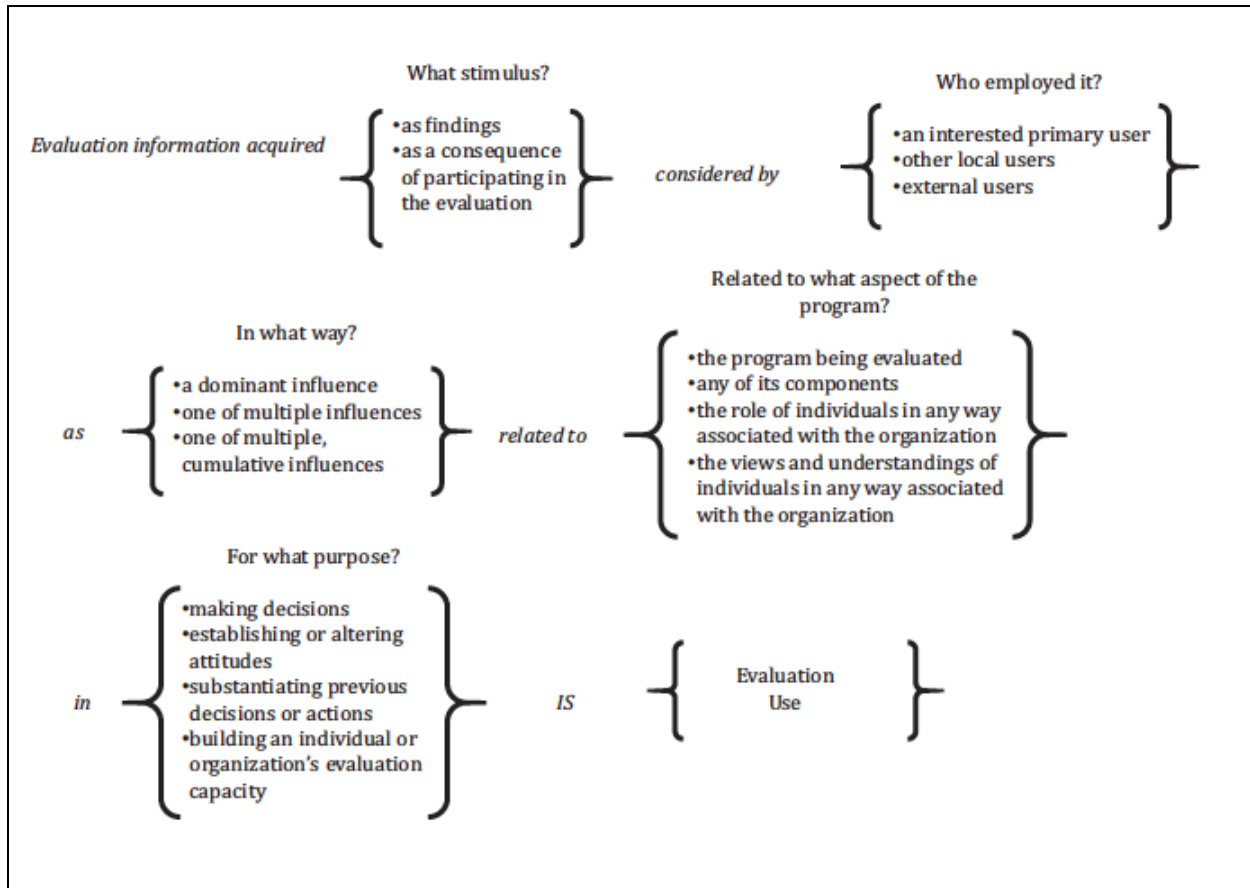


Figure 1: Use defined with an adapted Guttman-scale mapping sentence (Alkin & King, 2017)

The features of evaluation use theory outlined above offered a conceptual framework for collecting and understanding case study data. The premise of DE as a specific form of evaluation offered another layer of framing for this research. In the next section I will outline several features of DE applicable to this study – the nature of the evaluand, the values of the program within which it was embedded, the process that unfolded, and the role of the evaluation researcher as facilitator.

### Developmental Evaluation

*Developmental evaluation tracks and attempts to make sense of what emerges under conditions of complexity, documenting and interpreting the dynamics, interactions, and interdependencies that occur as innovations unfold (Patton, 2011, p.7).*

Finding that the needs of some social innovation programs resist or transcend the standard formulations of formative and summative evaluation (Scriven, 1967, 1996) and even summary-formative evaluation (Alkin, 2011), Patton (1994) coined the term “developmental evaluation” to describe a cluster of processes and purposes desired by intended evaluation users in those environments. As Lam and Shulha (2015) summarized, Patton “observed that exercises in constructing clear and specific goals, finding and adopting ‘proven’ implementation models, and striving toward predefined measurable outcomes, while not totally ignored, are less important to social innovators than realizing the grander vision of enacting positive social change” (p.2). Patton’s emphasis on adaptation resonated with evaluators and program personnel who found themselves in situations in which “while the long-term goals of a social innovation might be well defined, the path to achieving them is less clear” (Preskill & Beer, 2012, p.5). The first justification for framing this study as DE is that the program at its center – the Change Urban Teacher Residency - intended its coaching model to be an extension of the program’s social justice ideologies, shifting notions of what relationships between student teachers and placement teachers can, and should, look like in order to achieve more equitable education systems. A social innovation, in other words, to support larger societal transformation.

At first glance, DE could be perceived as a distinction without a difference; a bundle of practices that come down to good old-fashioned context-sensitivity, evaluator responsiveness, and flexibility long advocated by a diverse group of evaluation practitioners and theorists. Patton addresses this critique by stressing a difference between program improvement and development, asserting that the latter necessitates strategies not offered by formative and summative evaluation approaches. Namely:

Improvement-oriented, formative evaluation focuses on making an intervention or model better.

Developmental evaluation, in contrast, involves exploring the parameters of an innovation and, as it takes shape, changing the intervention as needed (and if needed), adapting it to changed circumstances, and altering tactics based on emergent conditions... Thus developmental evaluation can support the exploration and conceptualization of an innovative idea and help innovators clarify, focus, and articulate what they are trying to do, as they do it. Through this systematic feedback they reflect on and come to know what is unfolding and make sense of the extent and ways in which what is unfolding is what they hoped for, interpret what is not emerging in the desired directions, have data about the differences, if any, between what was hoped for and what's actually unfolding, make sense of those differences, and thereby become more focused and intentional in future adaptations. (p. 39)

More briefly stated, Patton sees improvement as “making it better” and adaptive development as “making it different” (2016, p. 4). DE does not preclude the possibility of formative or summative evaluation approaches being adopted once a program or program component has moved out of a developmental stage. It is simply that evaluators who advocate a DE approach feel “when a formative or summative evaluation approach is applied to an innovation that is still unfolding, it can squelch the adaptation and creativity that is integral to success.” (Preskill & Beer, 2012). Though there may be some shared traits, Patton and others insist upon DE as conceptually distinct from formative evaluation; by highlighting the unique features and emphases of the Change team’s evaluative process, I argue this proposition is strengthened by this study.

The complexity concepts of linearity, dynamical systems, adaptiveness, uncertainty, and co-evolutionary processes inform and guide a DE approach (Patton 2011; Patton, McKegg, & Wehipeihana, 2016). Hence, “the overall implication is to caution evaluators from imposing order on situations that may remain fluid and changing” (Shulha & Lam, 2015, p.4). DE is not

anarchical, however; while advocating an open-ended approach to evaluation design, Patton cautions that DE occupies a “distinct niche” (2011, p.2) that is not universally appropriate for all programs. Specifically, he identifies five purposes for which DE is applicable: ongoing development, adapting effective principles to a local context, developing a rapid response, preformative development of a potentially scalable innovation, and major system and cross-scale DE. (2011, 2015). During the 2016-17 school year, Change program team members continued to build upon the prior two years of work to refine the coaching model as it was being implemented (ongoing development purpose). Their ultimate goal was to articulate, by the conclusion of the grant through which the program was funded, a formal framework that could be disseminated to other teacher preparation programs as well as other forms of teacher education and professional development (development of a potentially scalable innovation purpose). The coaching model thus embodied two of the five purposes listed above.

Like other use-focused evaluation perspectives, DE is methodologically diverse, emphasizing program needs and the accessibility of process and findings over the privileging of quantitative or qualitative methods. The fact that it is “purpose-and-relationship-driven not methods-driven” holds substantive implications for practice. In fact, “the *process* of engagement between the primary intended users (social innovators) and the developmental evaluator is as much the method of DE as any particular design, methods, and data-collection tool.” (Patton, 2011, p. 335). Use-oriented evaluation theorists tend to agree that an evaluator bears some level of responsibility for *facilitating* use within a program; DE simply takes that facilitation role as more central than other approaches. The evaluator is often embedded within the team developing the innovation, and their “primary function is to infuse team discussions with evaluative questions, thinking, and data, and to facilitate systematic data-based reflection and decision making in the

developmental process.” (Patton 2011, p.2). This approach stresses “skills in synthesis, listening and asking difficult questions in a non-judgmental way. The developmental evaluator is a ‘critical friend’ who can challenge assumptions while drawing upon best practices and research, as well as understanding the implications of intervention from a social and political perspective” (Gamble, 2008, p. 41). Thus, a third aspect of DE that makes it an appropriate framing for the process examined in this case study concerns the positioning of the evaluator as an embedded, active thought partner with the program team. This describes my role on the Change team well, and the affordances and limitations of that embeddedness – in building relationships, in facilitating discussion, and in supporting a developmental agenda – will be discussed in Chapter 6 as key takeaways from this study.

As the field of program evaluation continues to expand and diversify, scholars have identified a need for more empirical studies to strengthen existing theory and build a professional toolkit of evidence-based practice (Christie, 2012; Mark, 2008; Miller, 2010). This call is especially acute for DE. Solid “lessons learned”-style reports from experienced developmental evaluators (Gamble, 2008; Preskill & Beer, 2012) and retrospective case studies (Patton et al., 2016; Poth, Pinto, & Howery, 2012) are instructive in highlighting the principles and challenges of DE for practitioner audiences, and for encouraging informed decisions to pursue DE that take the fit of the program’s stage of development and information needs into account. However, the field still lacks a deep bench of empirical case studies that start from a place of intentional documentation, guided by research questions, and subject to rigorous analyses. This case study situates itself alongside studies such as Lam & Shulha’s (2015) thematic analysis of innovation processes occurring during the developmental evaluation of a preservice teacher education program curriculum, and Langlois, Blanchet-Cohen, and Beer’s (2013) action research project



around a community youth initiative in which they identify DE practices that support opportunities for learning.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODS**

### **Qualitative Case Study**

This research can be characterized as a qualitative case study (Merriam, 2009) in which the unit of analysis was the DE process in which the Change program team engaged around its coaching model. Structurally, the case study follows Creswell's definition of a bounded system of inquiry (Change activities and processes) over a period of time (2016 -2017) with multiple sources of data collection (observations, interviews, evaluative data, program artifacts) and reporting in the form of "a case description and case-based themes" (Creswell, 2007, p. 73 as cited in; Merriam, 2009, p. 43).

Furthermore, this study meets the three "special features" criterion Merriam (2009) uses to distinguish the case study approach from other forms of qualitative research. *Particularity* involves a focus on a specific "situation, event, program, or phenomenon" (p.43). *Descriptiveness* refers to the presentation of study findings, in which "thick description" of program context, interactions, and variables are offered to paint a rich, holistic picture of the unit of analysis for the reader. *Heuristic* refers to the goal of increasing reader understanding of the phenomenon of study, to bring about "the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience, or confirm what is known." (p.44). The phenomenon in which I am interested in increasing understanding is how evaluative activities, especially DE, may operate within complex teacher education program contexts, and how our understanding of these processes can inform and improve program learning in that context for the benefit of teachers and their future students.

### **Researcher Role**

Case studies can be informed by a diversity of philosophical orientations and methodological strategies. The case study approach with which this study is most closely aligned

is that advocated by Stake (1995), who takes a participatory view of the researcher's role in case study research, asserting that understanding "requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its context and in its particular situation" (Stake, 2006, p. 2). In contrasting Stake's approach to Yin's (2014) post-positivist conceptualization of case studies, Harrison, Birks, Franklin, and Mills (2017) identify Stake's strong constructivist and interpretivist orientation, and emphasize the centrality of researcher subjectivity inherent in the process:

Stake's approach is underpinned by a strong motivation for discovering meaning and understanding of experiences in context. The role of the researcher in producing this knowledge is critical, and Stake emphasizes the researcher's interpretive role as essential in the process. An interpretative position views reality as multiple and subjective, based on meanings and understanding. Knowledge generated from the research process is relative to the time and context of the study and the researcher is interactive and participates in the study... In seeking understanding and meaning, the researcher is positioned with participants as a partner in the discovery and generation of knowledge, where both direct interpretations...

In this case my participation in the study was twofold. As a facilitator of developmental discussions, I took an active role in posing questions to push conversation towards programmatic implications, drawing attention to some data over others, and voicing my own opinions and interpretations when I felt it was appropriate. As the Change graduate student researcher, I was invested in the process as a member of the program team and was proactive in my attempts to facilitate use of data to support program development. This does not mean I cherry-picked findings to demonstrate success in this endeavor, but it does mean that my commitment to use was an explicit part of the research agenda. Study participants knew of my intention to examine the group process for the purposes of research on evaluation in teacher education. Far from operating under the illusion that my research was in any way "objective," I proceeded from the

assumption that all interpretations of data were subject to affective, contextual, and experiential filters.

Finally, especially since PLC data review sessions often delved into sensitive topics such as race, gender, class, power, and privilege, I strove to remain cognizant of the ways in which my positionality as a representative of an academic department, as a former teacher with less classroom experience than that of program team members, and as a white middle class female, were salient in conversations with a group of clinical educators, half of whom were women of color with lived experiences of the inequities the program sought to disrupt.

### **Site and Participants**

Change is an eighteen-month Urban Teacher Residency program housed within an urban education institute at a public research university in California. The program has an explicit mission to prepare and place teachers in high-need urban public schools, and every year places approximately 32 aspiring teachers (referred to as Fellows) with experienced teachers (referred to as Partner Teachers) at local Title I schools for a full year of student teaching. In their second year, participants are hired as full-time teachers and are referred to as Residents. Residents complete a research project as the final step in receiving their Master's in Education (M.Ed.) degree.

Ten program team members (myself included), rather than Fellows and Partner Teachers, were the focal participants of this study. The team consisted of individuals occupying a variety of roles, all responsible for maximizing constructive learning environments for Fellows and Partner Teachers. In keeping with the urban education institute's mission of transforming public schools to be more equitable, empowering placed for low-income students and students of color, each program team member was committed to implementing curricula and frameworks that

centered social justice concepts. Additional detail about the program and study participants will be provided in Chapter 4.

### **Data sources**

The data sources described in this section were approved for research use by Change's Institutional Review Board application as well as by a separate application concerning only program team member interviews. Consent was obtained from Change program team members for use of audio recordings and field notes from program meetings, as well as interviews. Fellows and Partner Teachers signed a general consent at the outset of the program for the research use of data derived from their participation in the program. This consent covered applications, assignments, observations, and other program artifacts.

### ***Participant Observation***

My main responsibility as the Change graduate student researcher was to develop research strategies to support the team's efforts to develop and describe its coaching model. An outgrowth of this work that in fact came to be its focus was facilitating DE sessions in which the team used relevant data as a jumping off point for deeper conversations about the model. Participant observation was thus the primary source of data for a case study documenting how team members interacted around program data, and the extent to which those interactions led to evaluation use and influence.

*PLC Meetings.* I presented data and/or facilitated discussions about data at eight out of the nine Program Leadership Committee (PLC) meetings that took place during the 2016-2017 school year. The first PLC meeting, which took place in October 2016, was excluded from analysis because it did not include a facilitated data discussion. A majority of focal program team members were present for each of the subsequent eight discussions (Table 2). Participant observation field reports were produced from the first two PLC meetings, after which I obtained

consent from the team to record the remaining seven data review sessions so as to better capture the richness of the verbal discourse occurring. Details on the nature of data presented at each PLC meeting are provided in Chapter 4.

*Table 2. Change Program Team Member Attendance at PLC Data Review Sessions*

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Nov. 2016</b>	<b>Dec. 2016</b>	<b>Jan. 2017</b>	<b>Feb. 2017</b>	<b>March 2017</b>	<b>April 2017</b>	<b>May 2017</b>	<b>June 2017</b>	<b>Total (n= 8)</b>
Barbara		x	x	x		x	x	x	6
Carol	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
Esme	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	7
Greta	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	7
Henry		x	x		x	x	x	x	6
Janet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
Miriam		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
Ora	x	x			x	x	x	x	6
Rose	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
*Talia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
<b>Total(n=10)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	

\*Author name, not pseudonym.

*Partners in Practice Meetings.* During the 2016-2017 school year, the Change program team hosted five professional development seminars entitled Partners in Practice. Teachers met as elementary and secondary groups for one half of the seminar, and as Fellow and Partner Teacher cohorts for the other half. The content of Partners in Practice meetings focused on building familiarity with the coaching model, practicing having critical conversations, and connecting the features of the coaching model to Change’s teaching and learning framework.

*Additional meetings.* Field Reports were written for thirteen auxiliary meetings that occurred outside of PLCs and Partners in Practice seminars. These elaborated reports lent detail, context, documentation, and points of triangulation for the PLC data discussions analyzed more formally (see Analysis section).

*Orientation.* Orientation for the incoming 2017-2018 Change cohort was held over the first three days of August 2017. Field notes taken during my attendance at orientation were included in the scope of the case study for two reasons. First, observation of orientation

activities, as well as the collection of orientation documents, allowed me a first-hand account of how the Reciprocal Learning Partnership Model (as the coaching model was renamed during the summer of 2017) was being presented in relation to the PLC discussions held over the course of the 2016-2017 school year. Specifically, it allowed a point of comparison and substantiation between changes that had been *talked about* (planned instrumental use) versus those that actually occurred (instrumental use). Secondly, because the event took place prior to individual team member interviews conducted later in August 2017, the topic of orientation naturally arose in the course of those interviews. I subsequently referred to orientation field notes in order to clarify and contextualize interviewee comments referencing that experience.

### ***Interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine program team members in order to “learn of the post hoc meanings and significances constructed of the DE process and to garner insights into the role of the developmental evaluator” (Lam & Shulha, 2015, p.10). While interviews added a new dimension of data, they also served the function of calibrating my own understandings of the program with those of participants, triangulating my observations with participant recollections, and testing emergent themes from preliminary analysis for resonance or dissonance with participants’ perspectives. Interviews took place in August of 2017, after the last PLC meeting of the 2016-17 school year and after orientation for the incoming cohort of 2017-2018 Fellows and Partner Teachers.

Whereas PLCs sought to document the group process of facilitated data discussions as they occurred and over time, interviews served as an opportunity to capture how participants’ made sense of the experience and the extent to which it was meaningful in retrospect. Emerging

themes and lingering questions arising from in-process memos informed the development of an interview protocol (Appendix A). Questions in the protocol were divided into four constructs:

1. *Program/Partnership Understandings items* asked the interviewee to share their own definitions of success and articulate the goals of the program in their own words;

2. *Research and Evaluation Climate and Context items* sought to establish attitudes and prior experiences with evaluation and research;

3. *Nature and Extent of Use items* spoke directly to the first research question and asked the interviewee to offer their own assessments of the value of the PLC data review sessions. In this section, I identified four programmatic changes relevant to the coaching model that had occurred over the course of the academic year. I then asked the respondent to reflect on how much they believed the PLC conversations influenced those changes on a scale of 1-10, prompting for elaboration on why they chose that rating; and

4. *Factors that Inhibit/Encourage Use items* spoke directly to the second research question. I viewed this set of questions as an opportunity to solicit constructive critique of my own evaluation practice, and to serve as a dialogic space between myself and the team member to debrief the experience and reflect on use beyond that afforded by group discussions.

Because I appreciated the challenge of asking team members to recall details of PLCs that occurred months earlier, I brought to each interview a reference document listing the data discussed at each meeting (Table 7 contains a modified version of this document).



### ***Program Artifacts***

A database of agendas, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations from PLCs, Partners in Practice seminars, other meetings, and orientation were maintained throughout the study. Other program artifacts were also collected pertaining to program activities, guiding frameworks, grant requirements, and other miscellaneous program documents intended for both internal and external audiences. These artifacts contributed supporting details for the case study, served as a reference for emic program language, and offered a view of program shifts over time. A non-exhaustive inventory of program artifacts is included in Table 3.

*Table 3. Data Sources Collected August 2016 - 2017*

<b>Source</b>	<b>Number</b>
Participant Observation	31
<i>Professional Learning Committee (PLC) Transcripts and Field Reports</i>	10
<i>Partners in Practice Field Reports</i>	5
<i>Other Meeting Field Reports</i>	13
<i>Orientation Field Reports</i>	3
Team Member Interviews	9
Artifacts	NA
<i>PLC meeting agendas, presentations, handouts</i>	
<i>Partners in Practice agendas, presentations, handouts</i>	
<i>Other meeting agendas, presentations, handouts</i>	
<i>Orientation agendas, presentations, handouts</i>	
<i>Change Program Documents</i>	
<i>Teaching Quality Partnership Grant Proposal</i>	
<i>Instructional Quality Assessment</i>	
<i>Classroom Observation Rubric</i>	
<i>Fellow and Partner Teacher Handbooks</i>	

### **Analysis**

This study's research questions necessitated analysis of how program data, once presented, was digested, understood, and used by Change team members as an outcome of the DE process. To address these questions, I embarked on a qualitative analysis of meeting transcripts, field reports, and interview transcripts for evidence of evaluation use.

I pursued an iterative, constant comparative approach to analysis (Glaser, 1965) which consisted of several rounds of coding in order to make sense of the data through the identification of emergent categories and themes. The guiding principle of each round is described briefly below. Though presented chronologically, it is important to note that the analysis was a “complex process that involve[d] moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation” (Merriam 2009, p.176). The qualitative analysis software Dedoose was utilized for the majority of coding.

*First Cycle Coding.* As a preface to detailed analytical coding, PLC transcripts were first segmented into conversational threads. A conversational thread was defined as a segment of conversation in which a central topic could be identified, and for which a beginning and end could be demarcated. This process resulted in 97 conversational threads (Table 4) which would be treated as “meaning units” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 144) in subsequent rounds of coding.

*Table 4. Conversational Threads by PLC Data Discussion*

	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>Total</b>
Threads	10	11	15	8	14	16	14	9	97

\*The October PLC Field Report was not included because no facilitated data conversation occurred.

I then employed eclectic coding (Saldaña, 2013, p. 262) to construct descriptive categories of “What” (i.e., what is the main topic of this thread?) and “what about it” (i.e., what *about* the topic are participants attending to?), with subcodes created in each category specifying a greater level of detail. Because I was interested in how participants were relating to the data through discussion, a third category entitled “nature of interaction” utilized process codes (Saldaña, 2013,

p. 266) to label the type of discourse occurring around a given topic (e.g., “disagreeing”, “agreeing”, “questioning”, “critiquing”).

*Second Cycle Coding.* After this initial “breaking apart” of the data, I homed in on the “nature of interaction” category, moving into the second stage of the constant comparative method in which “comparative units change from comparison of incident with incident to incident with properties of the category which resulted from initial comparison of incidents” (Glazer, 1965, p.440). Focused and pattern coding (Bazeley, 2013, p. 235) in this cycle involved revising and collapsing categories, considering the dialectic between categories, studying code frequency and co-occurrence, and synthesizing patterns in the data informed by constructs of evaluation use. Interview data was used at this point to triangulate analytic conclusions from PLC discussions. Relatedly, interview data was also analyzed for the “staying power” of PLC conversations, focusing on team member reflections on findings and discussions that resonated with the passage of time. This stage was the basis for moving into higher levels of abstraction, resulting in the finalization of themes and superordinate themes.

### **Validity**

Though the terms are problematic for the nature of this research, several strategies to promote validity and reliability – identified by qualitative research scholars and summarized by Merriam (2009) – were pursued to maintain integrity and rigor in analyses. Given my simultaneous insider status as an embedded internal evaluator and outsider status as a data-collecting PhD student, I sought to be consistently and critically reflective about the ways in which my role in facilitating conversations, the personal relationships I developed with team members, and my desire to document the process for research purposes influenced my choices at key decision points. In keeping with Stake’s case study methodology that foregrounds researcher subjectivity and in-context experience, throughout the process I engaged in journaling

and extensive analytic memo writing which encompassed Saldaña's (2013) recommended categories of personal relationship to the study, research questions, code definitions, emergent patterns, categories, themes, and assertions, problems, ethics, theories, and future directions. In some instances these written documents were incorporated into the corpus of data subject to qualitative analysis. In other instances, they were used to inform next steps, course corrections, directions for analysis, and points on which to follow up for clarification with team members. The volume of data, combined with almost two years of building familiarity with the setting, made me feel data saturation had been reached. Triangulation through multiple sources of data (PLCs, interviews, artifacts) were used to confirm or disconfirm emergent findings. Finally, preliminary findings were presented to the program team on January 17, 2018 as a means of member-checking to gauge resonance with team members, and to provide a space for researcher clarification and questions. The ensuing conversation offered consequential feedback on the strength of some themes over others and resulted in modification of the language used to articulate findings.

This study attempts to trace the trail made by PLC discussions to practical consequences for program learning. It's always tenuous to link evaluation activity to subsequent program changes; though I certainly asked program team members to weigh the import of the PLC conversations relative to other experiences and influences, the linkages they reported are subject to the effects of memory and the difficulty of extracting linear connections from complex decision-making processes that occur over time. Even though efforts were made to present the reader a holistic depiction of the Change DE context, the richness, subtleties, and intricacies of the case can never be fully captured.

## CHAPTER 4: CASE DESCRIPTION

### Teacher Preparation Context

Heated debates abound about the future of preservice teacher education, particularly the practical experience teaching candidates have under their belt before entering their own K-12 classrooms. While student teaching has always been a feature of university-based teacher preparation programs, the length of time teaching candidates spend in the classroom before becoming lead teachers has historically varied greatly by state and by program. However, the twenty-first century has witnessed an increased emphasis on the “clinical experience” aspect of teacher preparation, as student teaching has come to be known (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Zeichner & Bier, 2012). One consequence of this discussion is the proliferation of Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) programs. A defining characteristic of UTRs is a full year of student teaching in contrast to the semester-or-less of other models. UTRs have emerged as a model of preservice teacher education that holds promise for addressing the teacher recruitment and retention issues faced by schools serving low income communities (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2016; Hammerness, Williamson, & Kosnick, 2016; Papay, West, Fullerton, & Kane, 2012; Silva, McKie, Knechtel, Gleason, & Makowsky, 2014).

The extended period of student teaching occurring in UTRs means researchers, teacher educators, and policymakers are paying greater attention to the way in which student teaching experiences are structured, developed, and supported. In previous years student teaching was less a partnership between university programs and local schools and more an outside field experience in which university supervisors’ contact with placement sites was primarily logistical. Part of the philosophy of UTRs based in Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), however, is that there should be a concerted effort on the part of the affiliated university to cultivate close relationships with communities, schools, and experienced classroom teachers. The widening of

institutional scope has been accompanied by an increase in institutional outreach. In practical terms, this means university-based UTRs are taking more responsibility for developing and supporting the relationships between student teachers and the educators in whose classrooms they are placed. Various referred to by programs as guiding-, master-, cooperating- and mentor- teachers, the UTR in this study – Change – refers to this group of individuals as Partner Teachers, for salient reasons which will be explicated shortly. While Change has embarked on a deliberate shift away from hierarchy-laden terms such as mentoring and even coaching, this study employs both of these terms as they are still those most commonly used to refer to student teaching relationships in the relevant literature.

Because university-based UTRs like Change serve predominantly low-income students and students of color – populations most affected by educational inequality – many espouse an explicit social justice orientation that influences curriculum and placement of student teachers. For that reason, another dimension of mentoring relationships with which these programs are concerned is the so-called theory-practice gap between required coursework and field placements (Anderson & Stillman, 2013), particularly when it comes to the social justice beliefs and pedagogies they promote. Attempts to integrate and align philosophies and commitments across curriculum and classroom spaces expose areas of disconnect between program aims, field experience, and the realities of public schooling. Scholars have proposed the term “coherence” to describe these issues (Grossman, Hammerness, McDonald, & Ronfeldt, 2008; Hammerness, 2006), and a branch of studies on teacher preparation explore coherence as it applies to compatibility between student teachers’ beliefs and those of their mentor teachers (e.g., He & Levin, 2016; Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004). For Change, seeking coherence meant inviting Partner Teachers to engage in the critical exploration of self, systemic inequality,

and educational access that permeates every aspect of Fellows' university-based experience. Supporting the development of "critically reflective" mentors (Simmie & Moles, 2012) was therefore one piece of the coherence puzzle around which Change made concerted efforts. As much as Change's evolving coaching model was a response to its programmatic responsibility to support Partner Teacher development, it was also a channel for harmonizing the social justice theories to which Fellows were exposed at the university with the reality of their complicated interpersonal relationships with students and veteran teachers in their placement schools.

### **Change Urban Teacher Residency**

#### ***Program overview***

Change is an intensive eighteen-month UTR housed within the Education Access Center (EAC)<sup>2</sup>, an urban education institute affiliated with the education department of a public research university in California. In their first year as Fellows, preservice teachers complete a full academic year of student teaching while completing a full-time graduate course load and fulfilling credentialing requirements under the guidance and supervision of university-based Faculty Advisors. In their second year as Residents, participants begin teaching in their own classrooms, complete a Master's Inquiry Project, and attend a weekly Resident seminar. They fulfill their Master's of Education (M.Ed.) requirements in December but continue to receive field support and assistance transitioning into the partner school district's induction program throughout the remainder of the school year. Fellows receive a \$20,000 stipend and are eligible for a tuition loan program designed to address California's teacher shortage in certain schools and subject areas. Loan forgiveness is contingent upon completing a commitment to teach in high-need schools for three years.

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<sup>2</sup> Pseudonym

While Change shares the social justice mission and much of the curriculum of EAC's traditional two-year teacher preparation program, it is a separate program funded through the US Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grant Program. TQP developed in response to a nationwide shortage of qualified teachers entering and staying in the profession. Grantees "create model teacher preparation programs to grow the pool of quality new teachers" through "reforming existing teacher preparation programs...or by creating new teaching residency programs for individuals with strong academic or professional qualifications, but without teaching experience..." (U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, n.d.). The stated goal of TQP is "to increase student achievement by improving the quality of new prospective teachers by enhancing the preparation of prospective teachers and the professional development activities for current teachers; holding teacher preparation programs at institutions of higher education (IHEs) accountable for preparing talented, certified or licensed and effective teachers; and recruiting effective individuals, including minorities and individuals from other occupations, into the teaching force" (U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, n.d.). Change speaks to these mandates through its residency structure, its professional development opportunities for Partner Teachers, and its emphasis on recruitment and retention of teachers whose backgrounds mirror high-need populations. Change successfully applied for the five-year TQP grant twice, framed as Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the program. The first iteration, known internally by the colloquialism "Change 1.0" spanned the years 2009-2014. "Change 2.0", with a grant period of 2014-2019, was the context for this study.



Per the “P” in TQP, Change is a partnership between three entities; EAC, the Celestino Unified School District (CUSD)<sup>3</sup>, and the education non-profit organization Empower.<sup>4</sup> Empower focuses on educational access and equity in public schools, offering professional development, curricular resources, and other forms of support to teacher, schools, and districts to implement learner-centered practices such as Project-Based Learning. Empower also leads an initiative to build public schools’ capacity to create Linked Learning pathways<sup>5</sup> and engage in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) integration. Empower’s Executive Director leveraged her organization’s network to build partnerships and secure placements for Fellows in schools that maintained a STEM focus and/or were involved in its Linked Learning initiative. Greta, one of Change’s team members (see Table 6), was also an Empower employee. Empower and EAC leaders communicate frequently and substantively with CUSD personnel, forging close relationships over time. Change Fellows benefit from a streamlined interview and hiring process based on agreements reached between the program and the large, predominantly urban CUSD. Residents also participate in a tailor-made, expedited induction process that counts their Master’s coursework towards state and district eligibility requirements. Finally, Change partnered with a community-based non-profit organization that offered professional development for Fellows on integrating art and artistic expression into instructional practice.

### ***Change Cohort 2.2***

The second iteration of Change welcomed its second cohort in the summer of 2016 (Change Cohort 2.2). This case study followed the Change program team’s support of this group of Fellows and Partner Teachers. Because the second TQP grant included a focus on increasing

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<sup>3</sup> Pseudonym

<sup>4</sup> Pseudonym

<sup>5</sup> Linked Learning is an approach to college and career readiness that emphasizes academic rigor, career and technical education, work-based learning, and comprehensive support services embedded into programs of study (Linked Learning Alliance, n.d.).

the supply of STEM educators for high-needs schools, secondary Fellows were aspiring math and science teachers. Elementary Fellows were still bound for a CA Multiple Subject Credential but were aware of the program's emphasis and participated in professional development around STEM and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) integration. The cohort consisted of 32 Fellow-Partner Teacher pairs, 64 individuals total. These can be further divided into elementary groups (16 pairs, 32 individuals) and secondary groups (16 pairs, 32 individuals). The secondary group can be further divided into math (7 pairs, 14 individuals) and science (9 pairs, 18 individuals). Secondary Fellows worked with the same Partner Teacher throughout the entire school year. California credentialing rules require that elementary candidates student teach in both a K-2 and 3-5 classroom, however, so elementary Fellows worked with one Partner Teacher from August through February and switched to a different Partner Teacher for March through June. For this reason, approximately half of the elementary Partner Teachers were lower elementary teachers (K-2) and the other half were upper elementary teachers (grades 3-5). Table 5 summarizes the distribution of Fellows by both grade level and school site.

Cohort 2.2 Fellows were paired with Partner Teachers at ten placement schools within CUSD. These elementary and secondary schools were STEM-focused, served a predominantly low-income student population (60% or more students qualified for the free and reduced lunch program), and had school leaders who shared an interest in Change's social justice mission. In addition to co-teaching and observation responsibilities, Partner Teachers attended a week-long summer orientation with their Fellows and participated in monthly Partners in Practice sessions facilitated by Change team members. Partner Teachers received a \$5000 stipend for their

participation. Partner Teachers also had the opportunity to enroll in Principals Academy<sup>6</sup>, the university’s educational leadership program that awards an administrative credential. Two of the Change program team members were also affiliated with Principals Academy.

*Table 5. Fellows Placement by Grade Level and School*

<b>School</b>	<b>Elementary Grades K-2</b>	<b>Elementary Grades 3-5</b>	<b>Secondary Math</b>	<b>Secondary Science</b>	<b>Total</b>
A	2	3			<b>5</b>
B	2	2			<b>4</b>
C	3	1			<b>4</b>
D	1	2	1		<b>4</b>
E			1		<b>1</b>
F				2	<b>2</b>
G			1	2	<b>3</b>
H			1	2	<b>3</b>
I				2	<b>2</b>
J			3	1	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>

***Program team***

The program team brought together teacher education professionals from a range of backgrounds with decades of combined K-12 teaching and administration experience. Case study participants were ten program team members, including directors, program coordinators, faculty advisors, resident advisors, and researchers responsible for structuring Change in a way that maximized supportive and constructive learning environments for both Fellows and Partner Teachers (Table 6). It is important to note that these ten participants do not encompass the entire Change program team; other EAC staff members and university faculty were involved in administrative, research, and instructional roles, and were vital to Change’s operations and education content. However, because this study focuses on the group process of reviewing

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<sup>6</sup> Pseudonym

program data, only the ten team members who regularly attended and actively participated in those discussions during PLC meetings were included in the bounded case.

*Table 6. Change Program Team Case Study Participants*

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Education Background</b>	<b>Title*</b>	<b>Description of Change Role</b>
Janet	Teacher, Principal, Professional Development Leader, Assistant Superintendent	Project Director	Overseeing all program and grant activities, staff, budget, reporting; managing relationship with school district
Barbara	Independent School founding board member, Project-Based Learning workshop and outreach center leader, Professional Development Leader	Executive Director of Empower	Supervising identification and support of placement sites, Partner Teacher development; advising on implementation of Linked Learning aspects of grant
Carol	Teacher, Principal, Professional Development Leader	Director of Principals Academy	Developing coaching model with Change team members; coordinating Partner Teacher professional learning opportunities through Principals Academy
Ora	Teacher, Principal, Teacher Educator	Partner Teacher Coordinator	Supporting Partner Teacher learning and development through orientation, site visits, Partners in Practice sessions; developing the coaching model; field supervisor for Partner Teachers participating in Principals Academy
Greta	Teacher, Instructional Coach	Program Coordinator	Supporting Partner Teacher learning and development through orientation, site visits, Partners in Practice sessions; developing the coaching model
Rose	Teacher, Professional Development Leader	Elementary Fellow Faculty Advisor	Supporting Fellow learning and development through course instruction, site visits, one-on-one meetings
Esme	Teacher, Teacher Educator	Secondary Fellow Faculty Advisor	Supporting Fellow learning and development through course instruction, site visits, one-on-one

			meetings
Miriam	Teacher, Curriculum Developer	Elementary Resident Advisor	Facilitating Resident seminar; providing Resident field support; supporting Resident completion of Master's project
Henry	Teacher, Instructional Coach, Teacher Educator	Research Coordinator, Secondary Resident Advisor	Organizing and supporting Change research efforts; facilitating Resident seminar; providing Resident field support; supporting Resident completion of Master's project
Talia (Author)	Teacher, Admissions Counselor, Teacher Placement Specialist, Education Program Evaluator	Graduate Student Researcher	Supporting organization of Change research efforts; facilitating coaching for equity model DE process

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\*Titles and roles during 2016-2017; some positions and responsibilities shifted from year to year

### **Change Coaching Model**

The reorganization of university-based preservice teacher education around clinical experience converges with a branch of scholarship reframing school-based mentors as sharing in the work traditionally conceived of as the purview of teacher educators (e.g., Bullough, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, Parker, & Zeichner, 1992). Experts' recognition of the crucial role of placement teachers is reflected in the latest standards put forth by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) in 2016:

Standard 2.2: Partners co-select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider- and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and P-12 student learning and development. In collaboration with their partners, providers use multiple indicators and appropriate technology-based applications to establish, maintain, and refine criteria for selection, professional development, performance evaluation, continuous improvement, and retention of clinical educators in all clinical placement settings.

This standard places unprecedented responsibility on preservice teacher education programs (and UTRs especially) to articulate how they define a “high quality” clinical educator, to capture what mentoring looks like in the context of their program, and to connect the program’s mentoring component to teacher learning and impact on K-12 students. This is a tall order, one that has prompted education research and practitioner communities to explore the nature of these relationships more deeply. Indeed, a recent review of forty-six studies on coaching interactions in preservice teaching (Hoffman et al., 2015) found that cooperating teachers are “mostly unprepared for the coaching role they take on” (p. 100), and that “the relationship between cooperating teacher and preservice teacher is an important consideration within a mentoring model” (p. 107).

The inclusion of “school-based” clinical educators also has implications for the role of mentoring in the career trajectory of a classroom teacher and opens up possibilities for mentoring as an experience equally as formative, meaningful, and educational as that of student teaching. With this repositioning of mentoring comes a critique of previous frameworks that envision relationships in which professional knowledge is merely transmitted from mentor teacher to student teacher, which the mentee accepts or resists to varying degrees. Rather, scholars and practitioners advocate the benefit of recognizing a more complex dynamic in which both parties influence each other and co-construct knowledge – of their teaching practice, of their students, of their teaching identities – together. As a result, some programs are actively rethinking the mentoring relationship away from expert-novice binaries in favor of collaborative approaches in which mentors and mentees engage in co-generative dialogue (e.g., Roth & Boyd, 1999) and mentoring as co-inquiry (e.g., Asada, 2012). Change has been moving towards a conceptualization of mentoring relationships in line with these developments. The Change 2.2

cohort was the first time the terms Fellow and Partner Teacher replaced Apprentice and Mentor, a linguistic shift signaling the program's deliberate positioning of dyad members as co-learners.

Like all EAC programs, Change subscribes to a set of social justice philosophies and concepts that includes humanizing pedagogy (Bartolome, 2014), culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994; 2014), culturally responsive teaching (Villegas & Lucas, 2002), critical pedagogy (Freire, 1993; Giroux, 1988; hooks, 1994), and the positioning of teachers as participants in marginalized communities' struggles for a more just and democratic society (Oakes & Lipton, 1999). Change's vision for cultivating the next generation of transformative education leaders extends to Partner Teachers as well. Furthermore, in striving to articulate a vision of education for social justice, Change embraces evidence that the "bidirectional and recursive" nature of student teaching relationships creates spaces for Fellows to push Partner Teachers to further develop their social justice thinking and practice (Lane, Lacefield-Parachini, & Isken, 2003, p. 65). In Change 1.0, the program developed a framework for social justice teaching and learning<sup>7</sup>; in addition to utilizing a classroom observation rubric<sup>8</sup> developed around this framework to support and evaluate *Fellows'* practice, the program wished to better understand the degree to which its curriculum was translating into reciprocal, substantive interactions around issues of equity between Fellows and Partner Teachers.

In Change 1.0, the program adopted Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 1994) as a foundation for relationships between the placement teachers who were then called Mentors and the preservice teachers who were then called Apprentices. Mentors received training on

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<sup>7</sup> The framework consisted of four dimensions: Classroom Ecology, Content Rigor, Content Discourse, and Equitable Access to Content.

<sup>8</sup> Change 1.0 developed a four-level classroom observation rubric rooted in the four primary dimensions of its teaching and learning Framework.

implementing cycles of planning, observation, and post-observation conferences that emphasized particular forms of constructive feedback to support the development of Apprentices' metacognitive awareness and capacity for critical reflection. Most Mentors became certified cognitive coaches through the organization Thinking Collaborative. At the conclusion of Change 1.0, the team articulated five dimensions of mentoring quality: effective teaching, high quality feedback, professional learning in practice, professionalism, and strong interpersonal and communication skills. At the outset of Change 2.0, team leadership decided to build on the work done in the previous five years to develop an in-house model that sought to further shift the paradigm of mentorship in preservice teacher education. While still maintaining Cognitive Coaching emphases such as teacher autonomy, critical self-reflection, and metacognition, the program moved towards the insertion of an explicit social justice lens on to teaching partners' efforts to develop and improve their practice on a co-equal basis.

Change enlisted the National Equity Project's Coaching for Equity resources (National Equity Project, n.d.) as a foundation for Partner Teachers' work with their Fellows. During orientation, a National Equity Project trainer introduced Partner Teachers to dialogic coaching strategies consistent with and supportive of a commitment to educational equity in the classroom, with a second seminar held for Partner Teachers on January 28, 2017. Change drew upon the relationship-building emphasis of the Coaching for Equity framework as it continued to develop the elements of a program-specific coaching model that would prepare Partner Teachers to work with their Fellows in ways grounded in critical self-reflection around issues of equity in teaching. At the same time, Change team members engaged in committing what was at that point called the "Coaching Through the Lens of Equity Model" (referred to hereafter simply as "the coaching model") to paper, creating and revising documents articulating its core components.



### **Evolution of the developmental evaluation process**

My involvement with Change began on October 5, 2015, when one of the School of Education's professors familiar with my interest in evaluation in preservice education invited me to attend a program research team meeting. At the meeting, Change team members reviewed the program's core components, the data that had been collected about those components, and where the gaps might be that they should plan to fill in the remaining time on the grant. "Roles and development of mentors" was written on the meeting handout (10-5-15 Agenda) as one of three focal "core program components" that "we identified earlier in the year that we are interested in better understanding" (10-5-15 Field Report). As I listened to the conversation, mentoring was cited as an area in which there was a need for more research in the teacher education field in general, and in Change in particular. The EAC Director (who was also Change's Principal Investigator), who was present at the meeting, had recently returned from a conference that brought together grantees of a major foundation. She reported that among the teacher educators in attendance at the conference, "preparing and supporting mentors is the BIGGEST conversation." (10-5-15 Field Report). She emphasized that the demand for evidence lies in the mentoring realm because funding is going towards mentor development.

As team members brainstormed ways to collect data on mentoring, I asked if a log that would look at the relationship as the unit of analysis, rather than solely the actions of either Apprentices or Mentors (as they were still called at that point), would be helpful. While there was some hesitation to add another demand to already full plates, the idea was positively received as a way to increase understanding of mentoring interactions and identify places to home in on for further support. This idea eventually morphed into a graduate student researcher position with Change, and a proposal to the team to pursue a dissertation project on "understanding mentor-apprentice relationships in the Change program" (3-6-17 Presentation).

The evolving nature of the coaching model lent itself well to a DE approach. The model's creators had a vision of what they wanted to see, but they were still workshopping strategies to help Fellows and Partner Teachers *actualize* its core principles and experimenting with formats for articulating the model for dissemination to an outside audience. However, we did not formally refer to our work together as an evaluation; it was only upon reflection that I realized DE was in fact an appropriate description of the process we underwent as a team, and a constructive framework through which to examine the use that resulted from Change team members' interactions with each other around data in a facilitated setting.

### ***Development of the Teaching Partnership Log***

Essentially a special form of a survey, Rowan and Correnti (2009) have convincingly demonstrated "how log data can be analyzed to illuminate the process of curriculum enactment" (p. 121). I hypothesized that logs could be applicable to illuminating the "enactment" of teaching partnership interactions as well. Logs prompt participants to account for a given period of time by completing a checklist form and brief comments related to the practice or behavior of interest. Logs are able to capture variation in the focal activities for both individual teachers *and* across teachers more efficiently than other techniques because they do not require the additional training, time, or coordination of classroom observations. They also can better account for participants' subjective understandings of their experience, which is what Change was interested in capturing. One critique of log as a tool is that it doesn't say anything about the *quality* of instructional practices reported. However, this was less of a concern because the "practice" of interest was relational rather than instructional.

Logs held the potential to capture daily interactions between Fellows and Partner Teachers that could not be observed or consistently documented through classroom observations,

Partners in Practice sessions, or even in meetings with Change program team members. Even though team members worked closely with Fellows and Partner Teachers in those settings, an additional source of information about their daily interactions was a desired piece of the puzzle. By developing a log that asked participants to record and reflect upon the nature of their daily interactions, we hoped to gain a window into what was happening on the ground with respect to the coaching model's emphasis on co-learning and equity-driven practice. Logs held the additional enticing opportunity for Partner Teachers and Fellows to complete parallel forms, thus yielding data not only on interactions over time, but on the extent to which dyad members' perceptions of those interactions aligned. Upon completion of their daily log, Partner Teachers and Fellows were also asked to record a brief audio memo (two minutes or less) reflecting on their interactions with their teaching partner that day. The intentionally open-ended prompt was intended to surface what participants viewed as most relevant or foremost in their mind at that moment. In other words, what they chose to talk about, and not talk about, would be revealing in and of itself. Audio memos added an additional qualitative component to the snapshot of daily mentoring interactions produced by the logs.

The teaching partnership log was developed from January through March 2016 in consultation with Change team members to maximize the likelihood that it would produce meaningful, actionable data for the program. Special attention was paid to developing items which aligned with Change's interests in collaborative teaching relationships and the recognition of educational equity issues that arise in the classroom. As the team members who work most closely with Fellows and Partner Teachers, I first met with Greta, Ora, Rose, and Esme to solicit input on a first draft. I also met with a School of Education professor to think through the methodological implications of response types, length, and level of detail commensurate with the

function and purpose of a log. A second draft was subsequently circulated to team members and discussed at a team meeting. Additional revisions were made, and the pilot log administration took place from April 14 – April 24, 2016 (Appendix B).

Over the summer of 2016, Carol, Greta, Ora, and Janet produced a revised version of the coaching model that included a more formal articulation of three features: identity and positionality, reciprocity, and issues of equity. I realized that the log, too, needed to shift in order to be responsive to this new framework. This coincided with my conclusion that data from the pilot log had been a bit of a “data soup”; too many checkboxes, not enough substantive feedback, and poorly scaffolded for analysis and presentation. The logs underwent another cycle of revision, feedback from the team, and further adjustment. The latest version was finalized in October 2016, a few weeks before the first administration with the new cohort of Fellows and Partner Teachers (Appendix C). During the administration periods, Fellows and Partner Teachers received links via email to the survey platform Qualtrics, and audio files were emailed directly to me. Only myself and Henry had access to the database linking the names of individual respondents to their assigned IDs.

Logs were administered three times during the 2016-2017 school year. Partner Teachers and Fellows completed separate, parallel forms over a two-week period in October 2016 (everyone), February 2017 (elementary pairs), and April 2017 (secondary pairs). These periods were chosen in consultation with school schedules and assignment deadlines in order to minimize burden on participants. The rationale for the two-week administration period was that it covered a natural variation in teaching work (the length of a typical unit), and with it the opportunity to see teaching partnership interactions at different points in the cycle of planning, instruction, and assessment. Multiple time points were desired in order to account for the

evolution of relationships over time, and with it the possibility of seeing differences in the nature of interactions that occur at different temporal points in the teaching partnership. Minor language changes were made to the log between the first and second administrations for clarity, and audio memos were dropped from every day to only the last day of each week based on feedback from participants.

The evolution of the teaching partnership log was a microcosm of the dynamics inherent in a DE environment. The pilot log was based on a set of ideas about the coaching model that were further developed in the intervening summer of 2016, necessitating adjustments. At the PLC on August 29, 2017, I solicited and received team input on proposed changes to the log for 2017-2018 based on lessons learned from 2016-17, and to account for the addition of new elements to the model (Appendix D). In this way, the developmental process continued beyond the scope of this study.

### ***PLC Discussions***

Change had historically held monthly Program Leadership Committee meetings (PLCs) to plan and coordinate the logistics of coursework, trainings, credentialing requirements, classroom observations, and support systems for both Fellows and Partner Teachers. In order to ensure my research with Change remained responsive to program context, needs, and challenges, I began attending PLC meetings in winter of 2016 so I could stay up to date with what was happening at an operational level. For the 2016-2017 school year, however, Henry and I requested that time also be set aside during PLCs to review and discuss data for the purpose of informing program practice. Janet was extremely receptive to the idea, as she had long envisioned the PLCs as a space for professional learning as well as planning.

Labelled alternately on meeting agendas as “Research Conversation”, “Research Conversation – Coaching Logs”, or “Research Conversation – Learning from Coaching Logs”, these data discussions were allotted between 45 and 90 minutes at each PLC, beginning in November 2016. The following questions were used as an overarching guide for these discussions:

1. How do you interpret this data? To what extent is this what you would expect or hope to see?  
How would we define “good” or “success” in this context?
2. How does this align with what Change is trying to do?
3. To what extent does this help us better understand how these relationships are functioning?  
How might this inform our thinking moving forward?
4. Considering our other existing knowledge and experience, what changes might we make based on this information?

While the primary source of data was the teaching partnership log described in the previous section, two other data sources were also reviewed (Table 7). At the time of the November 2016 PLC, I had not yet organized data from the first round of teaching partnership logs. Instead, Fellow and Partner Teacher reflections from the second week of the program served as our first foray into data discussion. These reflections were emailed to Ora and Greta in response to two prompts concerning “moments of congruency or moments of tension” and/or “wow” and “ummm” moments, thus speaking directly to Fellow and Partner Teacher perceptions of their partnership at an early stage of the relationship.

Because data from the second round of elementary partnership logs was not available in time for the February 2017 PLC, per the team’s request discussion at that meeting centered on data from a portfolio assignment called the Instructional Quality Assessment (IQA); a detailed explanation of the IQA is provided as a note below Table 7. Although eight conversational

threads (see Chapter 3) from the February 2017 PLC were identified and coded as part of the corpus of PLC transcripts, that discussion is least represented in the study in terms of both volume (the fewest conversational threads) as well as substance (the least utilized in building case study findings). This is mainly due to the fact that the IQA discussion was a departure from the developmental focus on the coaching model. It was a standardized formative assessment tool of Fellows’ teaching practice, which Partner Teachers did not complete (so there was no possibility of matching teaching pairs’ data). Because the IQA was teaching partnerships “adjacent,” few connections were made to the data in terms of implications for the coaching model. The facilitated discussion dwelled on perceived flaws in the IQA in terms of timing, implementation, and content. Its evidentiary contribution thus lies in findings related to critique as illumination of values-based criteria (see Chapter 5) and limitations of evaluation use (see Chapter 6).

*Table 7. Focal Data by PLC Data Review Session*

<b>PLC</b>	<b>Data</b>
November 2016	Fellow and Partner Teacher Reflections from Week 2: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Talk about any moments of congruency or moments of tension between you and your Partner Teacher.</i></li> <li>2. <i>In the past two weeks working with your Partner Teacher can you tell us one Wow moment and/or one moment that made you say Ummm?</i></li> </ol>
December 2016	Round 1 Teaching Partnership Logs <i>Response frequencies</i> <i>Open-ended responses</i>
January 2017	Round 1 Audio Memos
February 2017	Instructional Quality Assessment (IQA)* <i>Averages by Dimension</i> <i>Averages and scores by Equitable Teaching Rubric</i>
March 2017	Round 2 Elementary Teaching Partnership Logs <i>Response frequencies and averages</i>
April 2017	Round 2 Elementary Teaching Partnership Logs <i>Response frequencies and averages</i>

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*Open-ended responses by “Center Experienced” status\*\**

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May 2017	Round 2 Secondary Logs <i>Response frequencies and averages</i> <i>Selected Open-ended responses</i>
June 2017	Reflection on learning in PLCs

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*\*Note.* The IQA is a teacher and student artifact-based portfolio measure that includes 10 rubrics across three dimensions. The IQA was developed by a university-affiliated evaluation and assessment institute that also partnered with Change as its external evaluator for the TQP grant. While the Academic Rigor and Clear Expectations dimensions of the portfolio were validated measures that predated Change, the institute added a third dimension – Equitable Teaching – to better align with Change’s expectations and to increase the reliability of the measure. Change teachers submitted the IQA twice, once during their Fellow year and once during their Resident year.

*\*\*Note.* This status will be explained in Chapter 5.

Of these conversations, December and April were the lengthiest and most substantive; accordingly, the reader will observe these two sessions referenced more heavily relative to the other six.



## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Insights that emerged in PLCs through team members' engagement with each other around data demonstrated elements of evaluation use. Major themes that emerged from analysis included *identifying program-based factors, surfacing beliefs about the extent of program influence on individuals, and debating the conditions required for authentic critical conversations to occur* between Fellows and Partner Teachers. These outcomes overlapped with and informed decisions about the coaching model such as *grounding the model in relational trust* and *adding an action component to the model*.

### 5.1 Identifying program-based factors

<sup>9</sup>March 21, 2017. *We are responding to slides visualizing decreases between the first round of elementary teacher logs from November and the second round of elementary teacher logs from February; decreases in overall participation, decreases in reported conversations between teaching partners about educational beliefs and assumptions held about students, decreases in discussions that touch upon identity and positionality, and decreases in reported racialized, linguistic, or gendered experiences during the two-week log administration period. While elementary Fellows still checked more boxes relative to elementary Partner Teachers, the number has declined in absolute terms among both groups.*

*Rose is not surprised by this trend, as it is consistent with her experience with elementary Fellows in the seminar she instructs. "I think this also reflects...how they define social justice in the beginning, and how it changes over time. I think just the more that they're in practice, they just get so focused on the logistics and how to teach and just managing things and they're just less focused on social justice in a social justice program! Like I feel like it...goes away."*

*Greta adds, "The Partner Teachers, too. I mean, they stop talking about these things as they get further and further into their career!"*

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<sup>9</sup> The conversational exchanges included in this chapter have been edited and condensed for clarity and anonymity, and to draw the reader's attention to details most relevant to study findings. No changes were made to alter the substantive meaning of speakers' words. Ellipses indicate the excise of intervening discussion not pertinent to illustrating the current theme.

Rose runs with this thought, musing, “But what is the trajectory for a Change or TTP<sup>10</sup> grad?” Using her right hand as a prop, she asks, “Is it you come in like this, (holding her hand above her head), you kind of take a dip because you gotta figure out how to do it all (lowering her hand sharply down to chest-level), and then is there a resurgence (her hand shoots back up to its original height), and then you’re a veteran teacher and then you forget about it?”

Henry nods, “Great question.”

Esme asks, “I wonder if in our alums, it would be interesting to pull out...or if our alums are represented in this, right? The people who are talking about it more frequently, [are they] TTP grads, or Change grads, are they the ones who are speaking about this?”

Going back to Rose’s original comment, Esme wonders how much the edTPA<sup>11</sup> is a factor in Fellows’ preoccupation with logistics in the winter. Rose admits, “This quarter [winter], I tell them, ‘this will be the anomaly quarter, where we are all about jumping through hoops and figuring out how to dot your i’s and cross your t’s.” Chuckling, she reflects, “And maybe that’s what they’re doing, you know?”

The discussion continues, with Rose curious about what the logs would look like in the spring, after edTPA was complete, but when the Fellows are also moving into the job market and dealing with the attendant stressors that entails. Circling back to the framing of the PLC conversations, I offer, “But I guess the question is, to go back to the point of doing this, are there implications for seeing this drop, and knowing the priority of the program is ‘no, they should be somehow continuing to keep this [focus] even throughout these stressful times’? Does this bring up any ideas or thoughts about programmatically what could happen to maintain that?”

Team members continue to consider how coursework may or not be pushing Fellows to center equity issues in their teaching practice. Janet and Esme list the courses the elementary Fellows take in the winter - Special Education, Social Studies Methods, Science Methods, Writing Methods, and Fellows’ Seminar. The team speculates about the influence of the order of courses. In previous years the foundations classes, which are the main delivery system for Change’s social justice curriculum, were spread over fall, winter and spring quarters. This year, however, they were frontloaded in the summer

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<sup>10</sup> The university’s traditional teacher education program

<sup>11</sup> The Education Teacher Performance Assessment is a time-intensive, portfolio-based evaluation which all new California teachers must pass as part of state credentialing requirements.

*and spring. Could this be a reason Fellows are not engaging with their Partner Teachers around these issues as frequently? While Miriam is surprised that Social Studies Methods in particular wouldn't "warrant this kind of discussion," Rose counters that in reality many of the methods courses are very "practice-oriented" where "even if there's a lot of talk about these things, [the Fellows are] thinking 'how do I teach social studies?' or 'how do I teach science?'"*

*Rose concludes the discussion of coursework conceding, "I mean there's so many possibilities on what the input is, and that shapes..."*

*I concur, "Sure. But you can only control the program part. And if there's things that you think would be worth trying [in order] to get it [the focus on equity] back."*

Multiple dynamics are evident in this thread. Rose leads with the hypothesis that Fellows' early enthusiasm for engaging with the social justice core of the program by winter gives way to the demands of every day teaching. Greta voices a parallel phenomenon ("The Partner Teachers, too.") in her work with veteran teachers. This leads Rose wonder about the long-term impact on participants ("what is the trajectory for a Change or TTP grad?"). Esme subsequently expresses interest in disaggregating from the group Partner Teachers who are alumni of Change or TTP programs, to see if it is those individuals who tend be the source of reflection on equity that *is* happening in winter quarter. This line of inquiry, as we will see in Section 5.2, served to surface team members' beliefs about what is achievable within the context of the program.

The discussion returns to the idea of the demands of winter quarter, specifically the high-stakes edTPA. Even though her Fellows' Seminar continues to be a space to discuss and process issues of equity, Rose professes a conscious decision to plan a winter quarter that is lighter on theory and coursework, and heavier on the mechanics of credentialing requirements., These decisions have a justifiable, pragmatic basis: Fellows at this point simply must prioritize the

edTPA if they are to move forward in the program and their teaching careers. The reflection on class content shifts to consideration of the sequence of classes and the role certain classes play in keeping equity awareness and engagement at the forefront of Fellows' minds. Linking this structural component to explanations of log data – which after all is intended to speak not merely to Fellows' experience but to the interaction *between* Fellows and Partner Teachers around equity – reinforces the implicit view that Fellows' engagement with Partner Teachers around these issues is largely dependent on Fellows bringing these issues up in the first place.

The episode above offers one example of theorizing connections between data and program structure. Altogether, we see an explanation started by one team member and built upon by others. The phenomenon of decreased conversations and attendance to equity resonated with team members' experiences; they already recognized it was happening but highlighting it in this conversation solidified and entrenched that recognition more deeply, while also pointing to possible mechanisms the program could target to address the trend. In the process, they determined another rich area to explore – comparing Partner Teachers' responses based on prior affiliation with Education Access Center programs – in order to construct a more holistic picture of factors affecting teaching partnerships.

The decrease in equity-driven conversations and experiences substantiated by the logs left an enduring conceptual mark on several team members – Esme, Rose, Janet, and Greta all commented on it in their interviews. For example, when Greta was asked for her lasting impressions from the year's worth of PLC discussions, she recalled:

... it was interesting to look at the trends of when they [Fellows and Partner Teachers] had these discussions. It seemed like when they had a lot of time together, just having the opportunity to discuss, like in the orientation, we noticed in the beginning of the year we had a lot more conversations around equity in the...first logs versus the second logs. And I just think that speaks

to the nature of teaching, which is [over] the year they almost shift out of...I'm making an assumption, but it could be shifting away from that thinking into more the content-based piece and it just all gets back down to 'I've gotta meet deadlines'...So I think a takeaway from this is how do we keep this momentum so that they keep having these conversations later in the year?

For Greta, the main takeaway was how the evaluation data were consistent with her insights into the “nature of teaching”, in which a preservice teacher can easily and understandably shift away from a social justice focus due to the rigors of daily instruction and the administrative demands of a credentialing system. For her this trend highlighted a need for the program to maintain “momentum” when it comes to encouraging equity-driven discourse between Fellows and Partner Teachers, despite the known challenges.

Rose also touched upon the idea of momentum with regards to this phenomenon:

...it's something that comes up in our conversations and planning, that trend that we saw where in the pairs, they were having these conversations about equity with more frequency... in the beginning of the year and then less so towards the end of the year. And it was curious because you would think as a person is more proficient or more experienced or more comfortable that these things would come up. And we still have a lot of questions about that...the way it influences our planning is 'strike while the iron is hot.' They're open to these conversations now [at the beginning of the program]. It hasn't resolved the fact that they were tapering off later on in the year...But I feel like it just gave us some confidence that now [at the beginning] is a good time to have these conversations. It's not like a thing where you wait, and get to know each other, and start with something mild. It was kind of like, 'No! Just get into it.' Because they're more open to it. And they're actually more willing to share until they find out what the other person's biases are, and they start to reserve some of their identity or some of their positions and views.

For Rose, this particular piece of data stood out largely because it ran counter to her assumption that one would see an increase rather than a decrease in equity-related dialogue between Fellows

and Partner Teachers the more time had passed. Interestingly, though, a conceptual silver lining emerged from this reasoning; if teachers are more risk-averse by the midpoint of the school year, then the beginning of the year is when they are at their most intrepid and receptive. This heightened thinking about the arc of the year had practical implications for planning, too; in a departure from previous years, Fellows and Partner Teachers in the Change 2.3 cohort engaged in their first critical conversation on the second day of orientation rather than waiting until their first site visit or Partners in Practice session. This type of episode demonstrates Patton's "actual-ideal comparative framework" of developmental inquiry, which "can include retrospective and dynamic approaches to both baselines and ideals, updating each as new data and understandings emerge during the change process" (2011, p. 262). In this instance, the original ideal of increased equity conversations over time was reconsidered in light of unexpected findings. Instead of implicitly using the beginning of the year as a baseline for comparison with winter and spring, the issue was reframed as one of "strike while the iron is hot," which itself informed shifts in program practice.

As is usually the case, looking at data brought up more questions than answers. Rose's above comment that "we still have a lot of questions" about the trend reflects the same healthy hesitance to pin the "why" on any one explanation as was seen in the PLC exchange that began this section ("so many possibilities on what the input is"). The next section examines the ways in which the inclination to consider multiple factors surfaced beliefs about the program's influence on individuals and by extension, the feasibility of the team's goals for the coaching model.

## 5.2 Debating the extent of program influence

April 25, 2017. Per the team's request at a previous meeting, I have broken down the elementary Partner Teacher responses into two categories: "Center Experienced" Partner Teachers (those who possess one or more prior affiliation with the Education Access Center<sup>12</sup>) to "non-Center Experienced" Partner Teachers (those who are new to EAC programs). The ratio is fortuitous for comparison purposes; eight and eight. I ask the team to take a minute to think about differences they might expect to see reflected in the logs between teaching pairs that have a Center Experienced Partner Teacher and those that don't. "And maybe you don't think there's difference or there shouldn't be a difference, but just take a minute to think about what your instinct would be."

Greta said she would expect to see, and has seen, higher participation rates from Center Experienced Partner Teachers in terms of Partners in Practice meetings and the equity conversations that occur there.

Rose admits, "It's hard to divorce what I would expect and what I personally know about individuals."

Barbara nods, chuckling, "Right."

I react to this familiar sentiment by acknowledging, "And that's sort of the ongoing challenge of evaluative work...we can't divorce it but..."

Miriam offers, "Well I don't know anything about the specifics, and I would expect that it would really depend on the person almost as much as their background with EAC, and their experience at their school site...I'm not sure about participation and reciprocity but I would think at least for the equity issues, the EAC folks hopefully would have at least the language-ing in a more sophisticated way." Barbara agrees with this assessment.

Ora builds on Miriam's first point: "Yeah I agree. I think context matters. I think how far they're removed from TTP - I think that matters, whether they just graduated or whether they graduated 10 years ago."

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<sup>12</sup> The EAC affiliations included returning Change Partner Teacher, Change Alumni, TTP Alumni, and/or Principals Academy Alumni. Some Partner Teachers held multiple EAC affiliations.

*We have progressed through several slides showing that in the winter administration, Center Experienced elementary Partner Teachers indicated they talked about Item 3 topics<sup>13</sup> with their Fellows less frequently than Non Center-Experienced Partner Teacher. Furthermore, Center Experienced Partner Teachers reported experiencing one of the issues from Item 4<sup>14</sup> less frequently than their Non Center-Experienced counterparts. I point out that across both Center Experienced and non- Center Experienced subgroups, though, ‘none of these’ was selected 50% -75% of the time.*

*Ora shrugs, “I mean I look at it and I can easily see that I don’t touch on, or I would see that I didn’t experience something that touched on – that doesn’t surprise me.”*

*Rose: “So like Ora was saying, context matters. And that one ‘I experienced something today’, that doesn’t necessarily mean in the classroom. And if we think about the new Partner Teachers are who are not connected to EAC, many of them are at Hughes,<sup>15</sup> many of them are PoC. So then this becomes a matter of not necessarily having anything to do with – it just has to do with their own personal identity rather than personal philosophies about teaching and learning.”*

...

*We have been reviewing open-ended responses from the winter elementary logs for some time now, engaged in probing questions about what really constitutes a “critical conversation” (a recurring topic which will be examined more closely in Section 5.3) and who is more likely to consider and address equity issues in the context of day to day teaching. While Rose, a woman of color, admits she is someone for whom “I’m going to talk about race all the time,” she wonders, “I mean let’s say a white person grows up middle, upper middle class but goes through TTP, Principals Academy and all the everything. Does it change their brain in such a way that they are now constantly talking about it?”*

*Miriam, a white female TTP graduate herself, says firmly but laughingly, “Yes. I’m here to tell you yes.”*

*Carol affirms, “All our data says yes.”*

...

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<sup>13</sup> Today My partner and I talked about...: the community we teach in, our beliefs about education, our personal identities in relationship to our students, our personal identities in relationship to each other, assumptions we have about our students, our students’ cultural heritage(s), none of these

<sup>14</sup>I experienced something today that touched upon issues around the following for me...: authority and power, issues around race, issues around gender, issues around sexual orientation, issues around class/SES, issues around language, ableism, none of these

<sup>15</sup> Pseudonym. A school serving predominantly African American students with a high proportion of African American teachers.



*I ask, “Is that part of our goal, to have people, whether they are people of color who are coming through and they have this commitment, and this is something that they’re going to talk about, or a white girl who came through and now is talking about it where they wouldn’t have before? And Carol said that your research says that that is the case, is that what we hope to see? There’s always these individual quirks, but at a program-level or a group-level, what’s the program trying to achieve?”*

*Miriam responds, “All good questions,” which is received with hearty laughter all around.*

*Greta agrees, “That’s really-that’s our dilemma.”*

*Ora: “Good questions.”*

Contrary to the tentative expectations voiced by Greta, Miriam, and Barbara, the Partner Teachers to whom one or more EAC affiliations applied did not demonstrate greater embodiment of the coaching model as it stood at the time, according to log data. They were not necessarily applying an equity lens to their partnership interactions or to their daily experiences more often or deeply than their non-Center Experienced counterparts; on the contrary, they appeared to be doing it *less*. The team considers other factors that may be equally if not more consequential to the coaching model than what Change does to cultivate equity-driven relationships within its scope of work. In the episode above, the factors discussed are the schools the Partner Teachers worked at, and whether or not Partner Teachers had experienced injustice themselves as members of a marginalized group. In the latter case, Rose is skeptical about the extent to which one could expect a privileged preservice teacher to truly shift their mindset, yet Miriam offers herself as proof that this is precisely what this kind of program can achieve.

The Center Experienced episode shows that program-based explanations of data (Section 5.1) gave way to reckoning with implicit beliefs about the extent to which the program could expect to shift the mindsets and practice of Partner Teachers in particular. The team fostered

close relationships with placement school leaders, and as a result, enjoyed a great degree of accommodation in terms of Partner Teachers' ability to participate in Change activities that required time away from their normal school day responsibilities. Still, the fact remained that Change's contact time with Partner Teachers was limited relative to that of Fellows as full-time graduate students. Given this well-known programmatic constraint, it makes sense that team members would hold differing views on the degree to which the program could expect to influence Partner Teachers' practice.

Before the April PLC discussion there was talk of a need to differentiate support for returning Partner Teachers; this proved to be less compelling once we looked at the data – *everyone* needed more practice, more time, more support. In fact, in other conversations the team confronted the fact that Partner Teachers are just as susceptible to the fluctuations of energy and momentum that befall the Fellows. Elsewhere team members also raised the possibility that Center Experienced Partner teachers were only *reporting* equity-driven conversations less frequently because engagement with those issues had become more habitual and thus they were less conscious of it. The implication for those individuals, then, was that their teaching partnerships would benefit from increased *awareness* of their application of an equity lens. Both interpretations would therefore suggest more time, especially up front, within the program to support Partner Teacher development through facilitating and providing space for critical conversations between teaching partners (see upcoming Section 5.3).

Exchanges such as this led team members to reflect upon their individual theories of change. Questions about those theories echoed explicitly and implicitly in PLC conversations throughout the year; How much can people grow? Is there a threshold for immersion that simply cannot be met within the limitations of the program? How much just comes down to the

individual person, who will act the way they do regardless of what they are exposed to in the program? Team members vacillated between resignation and encouragement, between sentiments along the lines of “some things we can’t change” and “if we just do X, Y, and Z enough, we can bring more people on board.” Such back and forth was evident in team members’ interviews as well, exemplified in this reflection from Rose:

I think some of the people who are great Partner Teachers, they just are, and I don’t think we can take any credit for that. I think they are people who just tune in to another person’s needs and feelings, they know how to challenge in ways that are constructive and still encouraging. And I don’t know that we taught them that. I do think there are people who maybe don’t naturally have that type of way of engaging who have picked up some tips along the way... Unfortunately, what comes to mind are these examples of people who are outliers, but they’re people who have repeatedly had challenging relationships with their Fellow, and so those are the ones that stand out. But I would say as a whole, that development has been good. One of the things I grow concerned about is the longer a person engages with ideas of social justice... the more they feel like they ‘get it’ -which of course you want them to get it, but then maybe they don’t challenge themselves necessarily to grow more or implement more... sometimes they know the things about social justice but don’t actually do it in their classroom So I don’t know how to avoid that. I think that’s something we see happen a lot. And I’ve been reflecting on that myself and how... do I fall into that category ever? And for what reasons might a person not engage in the work of social justice?

The internal mix of skepticism and cautious optimism expressed here were paralleled at the team level. Others shared the belief that exemplary Partner Teachers were in a sense self-selecting in that they came *into* the program committed to philosophies that made them successful participants in the coaching model. A second category of Partner Teachers comes in receptive to change, and “picks up” strategies that allow more reciprocal, equity-driven relationships to

flourish. A third group – the “outliers” – may simply be resistant to the kind of deep work the program expects, a situation to which Rose is not unsympathetic. Her comments also touch upon a conundrum familiar to social justice educators, that of being able to talk the talk in program spaces without being able, or willing, to walk the walk in the classroom. Despite having undergone multiple rounds of training with EAC programs, some individuals have difficulty truly adopting practice-shifting beliefs or are unable to translate those beliefs into professional action. Change grappled with what to do with this minority, and how to maximize its influence on the more proactive and receptive majority about which Rose spoke. This line of developmental inquiry involved what Patton (2011) calls “wicked questions,” those that occur “when innovators want to take on really tough issues and are willing to deal with paradoxes, intrinsic ambiguities, and inherent tensions in how change unfolds in complex adaptive systems” (p. 262).

As touched upon briefly above and elaborated on in other instances, the cluster of Partner Teachers who demonstrated the greatest grasp of culturally-responsive pedagogy had a school culture, rather than an EAC status, in common. The deliberation about Hughes and the deep tendrils of that conversation left a lasting impression on team members like Greta, who expressed the following at the June PLC:

I think [PLCs] also helped clarify the dispositions of the Partner Teachers that we’re looking at. Like we had that conversation around people who really stood out to us as having conversations truly around equity, and how it wasn’t necessarily by that they were EAC grads, it was maybe around the culture that they had developed at their school. And that was very telling, and something that we need to figure out a way to encapsulate or...take away.

Discussion of the role of school culture renewed interest in the idea of an exemplar, deepening ongoing conversations about how the program could both highlight and absorb lessons from

partner schools. Or, as Henry asked at a different point during the April PLC, “how else can we slice this [data] to figure out who are the people who are doing these things, and what we can learn from them?” It was a conceptual moment in which team members turned their conscious attention to how the equity-driven behaviors of non-Center Experienced Partner Teachers might intersect with coaching model development.

It is important to note that the detection of patterns pointing to a *lack* of program influence also went in the direction of *affirming* it. There were certainly episodes where team members expressed pleasure at what they were seeing, were heartened and impressed at evidence of teachers adopting the language of the coaching model and reflecting on their relationships through the lens of equity. In fact, the first request to break responses down by EAC-affiliated Partner Teachers came out of a review of log audio memos that elicited comments such as “Wow, this is great” and “I am knocked out by this.” (1-31-17 PLC). In that session specifically, audio memo respondents mentioned the Partners in Practice sessions as catalysts for equity conversations between Fellows and Partner Teachers. This was consistent with a pattern seen before and after January, in which team members deliberated the most appropriate forum for the critical conversations so crucial to the coaching model. At the December PLC, the team was pleasantly surprised with the number of teachers who reported experiencing an equity issue and addressed it in some form with their teaching partner during or shortly after the November Partners in Practice session. For Esme, this “just highlights the importance of Partners in Practice as a space” (12-13-16 PLC). Similarly, as far as Ora was concerned, “It just reminds me how important it is to have the Partner Teacher and the Fellow together during Partners in Practice and practicing coaching around these types of issues (12-13-16 PLC).”

Miriam, who occupied a slightly different position as someone who worked with second year Residents rather than first year Fellows, offered an alternate viewpoint on the function of the PLC meetings for her that was nevertheless of a piece with these positive assessments:

For me to read [the logs] and see what they're experiencing that first year, is really super helpful. And also to see, from your categories, it gave me a better idea of what the goals were for the program and for the level of discourse that the teachers were able to engage in. Because my previous cohort couldn't have had half of those conversations that you reported.

Though other team members did not say the PLCs served a goals-clarification function for them, Miriam judgment that progress had been made on the coaching model was one echoed by colleagues in reaction to evaluation data. In other words, data that made the team question the limits of program influence was not mutually exclusive with positive assessments of the status of coaching model's development.

Following closely on the heels of notions of program influence was a tendency to return to the individual as an explanation for findings (e.g., "It's hard to divorce what I would expect and what I personally know about individuals"). This was sometimes expressed through dissatisfaction with the anonymized nature of the data, which posed a hindrance to interpretation. Other times knowledge of individual situations was used to dismiss or downplay the applicability of a certain response or data point to the rest of the cohort, or to the program as a whole. At the core was a tension between a desire to honor individual experience and relationships while also drawing bigger-picture conclusions. In a program of 64 participants and ten on-the-ground team members, it is unsurprising that dissonance can arise between treating the group as a group versus as a collection of unique individuals.

For programs that operate on a cohort model, any data corpus is attended by caveats and qualifications about group dynamics and individual personalities. On one hand, Change program

team members' day to day concerns are with the individuals they support, and with the individual issues they have to be aware of, manage, and troubleshoot. In fact, several team members raised the possibility that in the future a non-anonymized teaching partnership log format could be drawn upon to identify problematic relationships to target for individual intervention. On the other hand, for a program to be able to learn and move forward *as a program*, it sometimes needs to be able to take a birds-eye view. This is particularly challenging with such a small cohort, where being steeped in the details of personal histories and unique situations simply makes it more difficult to put findings in perspective. Additionally, having small cohorts that change from year to year means lessons gleaned from one year of data may have limited value or application to the next. The intellectual arguments undergirding qualitative research are grounded in an acknowledgement that the complexity of human experience cannot and should not be reduced or simplified. As a qualitative researcher and use-driven evaluator, my instincts and philosophy (and that of the relevant literature) center the importance of context. Those commitments, however, do not exclude the possibility that lessons learned from one unique individual or groups may be transferable or applicable to others. As Esme put it in her interview, "I like hearing the stories or the narratives. For me it's just harder to know how much of that applies to how many." Greta also touched upon this point in her interview:

I think one thing is, and I'm not a researcher, but making sense of the data is sometimes tough for me in terms of ok, I know we're looking at a population of two, or if we're looking by math secondary, the groups are sixteen and eight. So the numbers are small and if they don't all respond...so trying to figure out the weight of certain conversations. Is this an anomaly or is this telling us something?

...I also think [distinguishing between patterns and anomalies] comes when we're looking at trends over not just one year but over multiple years...Because I think if we can start seeing like 'ok, this is still happening' or 'now that we're modifying the way that we're thinking about this partnership and changing it into this model, what things do we see that align with [the model] when we've introduced this action piece, or this trust piece, or the reciprocity piece? Or has there been [any change]? I mean have we not seen any, is this just proceeding as normal?'

Greta's statement about the "weight" of data is profound. This is a common, classic conundrum of researchers, evaluators and decision-makers everywhere. Facilitators of data discussions are challenged to find a balance between respecting complexity and deriving meaning from data beyond individual responses. Greta makes a point that a longitudinal view would help mitigate the tendency to individualize the relatively small n's of each cohort. As the model moves out of the developmental stage, building a corpus of longitudinal data in order to engage in *formative* evaluation of the model could be one direction a program could pursue.

In her response to a question asking if she felt the time devoted to data discussions was "worth" the effort, Rose offered an additional perspective on the usefulness of the developmental process in helping her discriminate between particular cases and broader themes:

Well absolutely, yeah [it is worth the time]. I think otherwise we are just reacting to specific challenges that are brought to our attention. Which I think we did a lot of during my first year. And I think that was a lot of 'here's a fire, put it out', then 'here's the fire, put it out' and then let's let these two fires determine how we think about these relationships, when in fact if we had more data [we] could see that those were outliers. That there were characteristics and traits about those Fellows that were similar and may have affected the way they reacted to circumstances than other Fellows [who] don't react in that way. So I think it's...given us more perspective. Just a bigger picture.



[The Faculty Advisors] in particular are drawn into – partially by choice and sometimes partially not by choice –the personal experiences of our students. Which can be very emotional. And to me when I'm emotional I react, I just react. The data gives me some space to...it just gives me some space. It just gives me some time. To look at the bigger picture, to question is this something that needs immediate attention...is [this] a system-wide problem, or is this due to two types of personalities that just don't fit well together? Because basically we hear the cries of the Fellows, and then we just want to like fix all their problems. And so it really helps to go 'ok you know what, this problem, this one's a problem that they may encounter at other times in their life and they're going to need to learn how to navigate this space.' Or 'this is the type of problem that oh wow, we shouldn't have allowed for this to happen, and we need to step in and make this better.'

I feel like looking at data helps me to distinguish between those.

This reflection actually acts as a counterpoint to the tendency to individualize; examining data with the team allowed Rose to get outside of her more reactive mode of daily instruction and into a more contemplative space that allowed for deeper rumination. The difference is one of triage versus preventative care. While the temptation to zoom in on the individual circumstance is great, so is the opportunity to step back in favor of a broader perspective. This finding weaved between these two tendencies, demonstrating the potential of the process as well as the risk of getting bogged down in individual details in a manner that obscures larger conceptual takeaways.

### 5.3 Achieving authenticity in critical conversations

May 23, 2017. After passing out copies of a document highlighting the responses of eight Fellow-Partner Teacher pairs from the second round of secondary logs, I ask the team to read one pair's set of responses in which both described planning for a sex education lesson. The Fellow and Partner Teacher responses detailed different perspectives on the Fellow's desire to include a graphic video in their lesson. Once the allotted time has passed, I ask, "Ok, so in terms of orienting it towards the coaching model, what are some things you see? Is this the kind of thing you would hope to see from a pair that is absorbing this model, to some extent?"

Rose volunteers, "One thing that I liked seeing is they're engaging. Like they're having conversations, and you can tell there's disagreement, and some discomfort..."

Esme: "They have different views of how it should be discussed and what should be shown."

...

Ora: "So I guess your question, the first one was about the coaching model. And this reflects nothing for me for the coaching model." She obliges when I ask her to elaborate, "Meaning that this is a conversation I would have regardless of whether the coaching model was there or not. Meaning that if we're going to do something about sex education, these are conversations I could see happening regardless of the fact- like 'I'm not going show it [an explicit video], because the parents are going to be upset' ... Because when I think about-and I'm not going to even call it coaching, I'm going to call it like-"

Jocular cross-talk overlays Ora's words, referring back to an earlier discussion in the meeting about removing the word "coaching" from the model altogether. She lands on a term she prefers. "Some reciprocal discourse. That when we look at these [responses -there are no stated goals to what we want to move and shift and change, it's just these are in the moment teaching things that just happen. And we want that to happen, but these are happening organically, regardless of any push or pull from us...So when I'm thinking about reciprocal growth, I'm thinking beyond this. And I don't know if we will capture that this way [referring to the logs]... I'm like Rose, I'm glad that they're talking about it, and thank goodness because if they're going to show- there are some philosophies around sex. I don't think they would equate it back to positionality or identity. Yeah, they wouldn't equate that back to that. Or authority."

I push back a bit by pointing out "They did link it something, though. Because they- so if you look at [Items] 3 and 4, these responses were requested because they checked at least one of these boxes."

Esme: “So I mean here [referring to the Partner Teacher response], to me it was the Partner Teacher reflecting on how they may have been socialized.”

Ora: “That’s right. Because really what they’re saying is, ‘stop being politically correct’, or ‘us being politically correct is sometimes ok.’ That’s really what I’m getting from it, is saying that ‘you come from this big social justice place, Fellow, and you’re coming in here telling me all this let’s move the mountains...sometimes reality is just what reality is.’ That’s what I’m getting, but again that’s an assumption, I don’t know.”

Greta: “But they talked about their identities.” She quotes another part of the Partner Teacher response. “I mean, it’s not specific to the coaching or reciprocal learning piece, but there are issues that are tied into that that I think maybe they are getting at. That maybe they-then it’s speculation of whether or not they would have had that conversation anyway.”

Esme: “It may not be explicit, it may be implicit. We just don’t know how they...”

Rose: “I think the one thing this might be evidence of is the Fellow has taken on the work of the challenging and pushing, and that is a part of the coaching model, or the whatever-we’re-going-to-call-it model...”

Ora: “...It’s hard to-I think in order for folks to even think about reciprocal growth, or coaching, however you think about it, it has to be extremely intentional. That it’s the moment we let it go...I mean it’s not institutionalized anyway, why would they go back and say, ‘you know, we’re going to talk about identity today, let’s do it.’ I don’t see that in there. We have to say, and this is the reason why I think we did site visits, at the beginning ‘we’re going to come in and look at reciprocity and that’s what you have to coach around.’

....

Greta: “How do we capture this piece, I mean that’s a huge question. How are we capturing this reciprocal growth, or this conversation? Because again, it’s that balance of how to let a conversation happen organically versus calling out. Like, ‘that is an example of identity and positionality, this is a-’, So again that’s the- it’s asking questions.”

*Esme suggests asking teachers to write a short reflection after a facilitated coaching conversation, and Ora mentions reciprocal journaling as a possibility. But ultimately, she expresses her belief that “I think we have to go out [to the school sites], just like we did, and be very specific about what we want them to coach around. Because if not, I think we come away with very ambiguous type of information that we really-I don’t know how to draw or make any conclusions to shift in mindset...I just think, you know, if I read [the log response] it’s just what a teacher would talk about because they’re getting ready to- I mean, they would just talk about it. ‘Whether it’s uncomfortable or not, I’m not going to let you show a video if I don’t think it’s good.’ But that’s not because you all said, ‘Come talk about identity.’ ... So I still think the question’s out there, what is the intent? Like Rose said, we want folks to continue to have this practice...We’re going to have to ask them to focus again, like we did before, whatever the focus is...And then have some other questions that we pose that help them think about ‘what would stop them from thinking about working this way?’ I don’t know because I don’t know what motivates-I don’t know how to have a shift yet, to motivate you to continue doing this... what’s the motivation to keep working this way? I don’t know if we’ve captured that or if we know why.”*

*Janet: “But I think that they do see that it makes a difference in kids... So for some reason, as long as these conversations are an exercise, because we’re asking them to do it, they’re not really seeing that it’s making a difference with kids and their classroom practice, [and] it won’t become a part of who they are.”*

In this episode, individual team members differ in the extent to which they share my initial perception of pair interactions consistent with the coaching model. Rose, Esme, and Greta perceive promising signs – engagement, voicing of different opinions, reflection on identity and the challenging of norms. Ora, however, is unconvinced that the pair in question truly experienced the conversation as a critical one in the sense to which the program aspires. The team’s deliberation over whether or not the responses met the criteria for a critical conversation prompts team members to articulate more precisely what those criteria are. Ora’s comment that “they wouldn’t equate that back” to foundational concepts of the model such as identity and positionality reflects a failure on my part to communicate the fact that they *had* in fact linked their responses to at least one of the options on the log checklist. Even upon clarification, though,

Ora still does not believe that the conversation embodies characteristics of the model in the way others do. A key criterion for her is the *intent* to have a critical conversation about equity. It is *not* the ability to connect conversations to equity issues as an afterthought, which is what she feels was occurring.

The question of intent when interpreting data exposed a fundamental question to which the team tended to return as part of the developmental process; is it reasonable to expect critical conversations to occur in the absence of direct program facilitation? The log was built on an affirmation of this premise, namely, the belief that critical conversations occurring in an informal (i.e., non-facilitated) realm would serve as an indicator of the model's success in cultivating equity-driven partnerships. However, it was the structured activities and protocols (i.e., facilitated spaces) that emerged from this process as the preferred expression of the model. Disagreement, then, served as a form of calibration, as team members sought to pin down the often-elusive qualities of a critical conversation they believed necessary to establish equity as a routine foundation for teaching partnership interactions.

In PLC discussions, Ora disclosed that log data did not reflect the model for her, and other team members felt comfortable disagreeing. The limitations of the evaluative tool, or rather, the *discussion of its limitations*, revealed key understandings about how people were operationalizing the evaluand that had not yet been formally articulated. As is evident in the episode above, questioning the appropriateness of the log itself as a tool for capturing equity conversations is inextricably linked to contemplation of informal and formal interaction spaces. Ora is skeptical of the log data as a window into teaching partnerships because she is dubious of the extent to which the context – daily informal interactions – is the appropriate one in which to be looking for critical conversations. This skepticism draws from a place of deep knowledge of

the context (and a deep belief in the *importance* of context) of classroom teaching and of individual Fellows and Partner Teachers. The myriad factors surrounding the substance and nature of the reported interactions rendered the data “ambiguous” for her to the point where it was hard “to draw or make any conclusions to shift in mindset.” Greta’s comment adds the element of the balancing act involved with promoting “organic” conversation that still satisfies the coaching model’s goal for teachers to draw explicit connections between their instructional experiences and issues of equity. Janet’s comment contains this implicit critique as well when she says, “as long as it’s just an exercise”, it won’t lead to meaningful change. One can infer that she is referring to the expectations of the coaching model as much as she is referring to the log itself.

Overall, consideration of the limitations of the data brought the involved parties to a greater understanding about their respective beliefs and perceptions surrounding the coaching model. Greta and Ora cited this in their interviews when asked how much the evaluative data, and the PLC conversations around them, factored into their subsequent thinking and decision-making about the coaching model. Ora reflected:

I think it does influence, it did influence. I think I thought about it as-I know we want to capture the moments in time in the logs, and the purpose was to see if they’re having these interactions. But really, we needed to just be there. What we realized this year is that we needed to have critical space where they actually had these conversations. Cause what would happen in the logs, you would see, is there are just random things that folks would just throw out. But this [upcoming] year we said ‘no, you’re going to create some critical space, you’re going to think about something together, and you’re going to have some questions around it, and you’re going to come up with a co-action and a co-plan.’ So then when we debrief we can go in and say ‘how did you show up for this? What role did positionality play?’ So we can ask these counter questions to

them as we debrief with them...So now we put some definition around what these partnerships should look like, where we didn't have them before.

The logs represented a moment in time – and not necessarily the moment most relevant to Ora. The “random” nature of the log data helped her home in on the intentionality of program-facilitated critical conversations as a mechanism of change central to what partnerships “should look like.” In this way, the PLC discussion involved definition-by-opposition, leveraging what the logs *couldn't do* to better identify *what needed to be done*. They also suggested that the only way to capture the data desired was embedded in the experiential knowledge gained through in-person participation and observation. As part of their support of Partner Teachers, Ora and Greta visited each pair two times per quarter in the 2016-17 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, this was increased to three visits per pair, per quarter. This effort was informed by the realization that more opportunities for facilitated coaching conversations were necessary for Change to better approximate the conditions conducive to genuine, intentional application of an equity lens to teaching partnerships, and that documenting *those* conversations would be a crucial piece of assessing the coaching model's progress.

The question of authenticity Greta raised in PLC conversations also came up in her interview when she spoke about the role log data played in coaching model development:

...they informed the planning and the thinking process. I don't necessarily think we quoted anything because I'm sure none of us could remember verbatim...But I think it at least informed the way we were thinking about this model...And I think a big takeaway, too was the authenticity...if this isn't feeling authentic, we're not going to see that in the logs. So it wasn't like 'oh, now I'm going to ask you a question about reciprocity.'...we weren't hearing that at all in the log, it was clear that people weren't necessarily using that as a script. Which is not necessarily the intention, but it was interesting just to say, maybe this is a question about the

authenticity of the way we have this set up, so we need to rethink the way we want to [have those conversations.] ...to be more realistic... I remember having a conversation about one of them, and we interpreted it differently. Because I was like ‘oh, I do see that they’ve addressed issues of social justice, and I feel like that’s authentic.’ And I think Ora was like, ‘no I don’t think it was.’ (laughs)...But I remember having that ‘oh that’s so funny that you see it that way, because I actually see it as I think they are calling out the questions that we gave them and are using them.’

Months later the most memorable, sticky moments were often those of disagreement and differing interpretations. There are implications of this for the story of group processes, namely, that points of contention can be the most fruitful and probing exploration of a program-in-development. Skepticism of the tool as a valid basis for extrapolation turned the team’s interest to other forms of data which would yield a more accurate gauge of the extent to which the model was being assimilated by Fellows and Partner Teachers (“How do we capture this piece?”).

The connection between authentic Partner Teacher-Fellow interactions and authentic data *about* those interactions resurfaced at the June 6<sup>th</sup> PLC, where we brainstormed ways to make the log a more useful tool by linking it to the Partners in Practice workshops and implementing changes consistent with shifts in the program’s approach to critical conversations between teaching partners. These sentiments pointed to a larger need to have instruments that are meaningful to participants if the data is to be meaningful to a program. As originally conceived, the teaching partnership logs were intended to function as a learning intervention for Fellows and Partner Teachers – a way of reinforcing, reiterating, and enacting the core features of the coaching model (see Chapter 3). From the early stages of log development, efforts were made to frame the logs as a tool for reflective practice. The log’s introductory language reflected this orientation:



This brief log is a tool to help you reflect on your experience, as well as to inform how the program supports Fellows and Partner Teachers. We encourage you to use this process to start conversations with your Fellow/Partner Teacher!

Other efforts were made to support the use of the log by Fellows and Partner Teachers. Each teacher was given a personalized report (Appendix E) so they could see the entirety of their responses over the two-week administration. Hard copies of the reports were distributed at the January Partners in Practice meeting (all teachers), the April Partners in Practice meeting (elementary teachers), and via email to secondary teachers in May.

Additionally, two Likert scale items were included on the final day of the fall, winter, and spring logs that asked teachers to assess the logs' efficacy as a critical, reflective tool (Tables 8 and 9).

*Table 8. Day Eight End-of-log Survey Item 1*

*The process of filling out the logs prompted me to reflect on my interactions with my partner around equity issues.*

	Elementary Fall		Elementary Winter		Secondary Fall		Secondary Spring		Total	
	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT
Strongly Disagree	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Somewhat Disagree	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	3	3
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	4	4	5	2	3	1	1	11	13
Somewhat Agree	4	5	3	3	1	5	2	5	10	18
Strongly Agree	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	6
Total	8	13	8	9	6	10	5	9		

Table 9. Day Eight End-of-log Survey Item 2

*The process of filling out the logs prompted me to initiate a conversation with my partner that I would not otherwise have had.*

	Elementary		Elementary		Secondary		Secondary		Total	
	Fall		Winter		Fall		Spring			
	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT	F	PT
Yes	0	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	6
No	8	10	6	8	5	9	4	8	23	27
Total	8	13	8	9	6	10	5	9		

As the distribution of responses (and the relatively low participation rate for Fellows especially) attests, teachers overwhelmingly felt neutral or tepidly agreed that the logs prompted reflection on their relationship (Table 8). Responses to the second follow up item were even more lackluster (Table 9). The few who responded affirmatively, though, were asked to describe the conversation (response optional). Those who chose to elaborate showed promise as to the potential of the logs. One Partner Teacher wrote, “As I mentioned about two boys with intensive behavioral issues, the log helped me see this difficulty through the equity lens. We think about the causes and effects of their behaviors. We would otherwise have talked more about them as a person.” Teachers were also asked to write any additional thoughts about the logs they wished to convey to program staff, which produced acknowledgements of the logs as “pretty valuable to feeling heard” (elementary Fellow), as conduits to “uncomfortable, but necessary” discussions (elementary Fellow), and as “a bridge to many social justice topics of conversation” (elementary Partner Teacher). Despite these responses, though, the feedback team members received from Fellows and Partner Teachers in person solidified the impression that the logs were not personally meaningful for the majority of teacher participants. Recall Ora’s belief that teachers were checking boxes in the logs because they felt obliged to fill it out, not because the logs truly

created a space for critical conversations. If one looks at group-level trends, then, the hope that the logs would stimulate conversation went unfulfilled. Conversations around participant effort (or lack thereof) only substantiated the need to think about ways to improve that aspect in the future. Program structures (see Section 5.1) and variation in social justice orientation (see Section 5.2) were two ways in which team members explained evaluative data. However, it is clear from the log data as well as from the PLC discussions *about* the logs that team members' responses to data were mediated by the fact that logs were not viewed as a particularly helpful tool for relationship-building and critical conversation practice.

Another dimension of individual participant learning concerned transparency. As a program that situates reciprocity and respect at the heart of its social justice ethos, team members placed a premium on modeling reciprocity and respect between Change program team members and its participating teachers. Team members felt strongly that this commitment should translate into greater efforts to report back findings from evaluation and research to which program participants had made contributions. In that spirit, Greta, Esme, and I presented highlighted results from the first round of logs at the January Partners in Practice seminar. Partner Teachers and Fellows were riveted, asked clarifying questions, and voiced interest in seeing the data configured in different ways. In the Partner Teacher presentation, there was an audible “aww” of gratification from the group when I projected a slide showing how many Fellows indicated that their Partner Teacher helped them reflect on their own thinking and that they had learned something new from their Partner Teacher (1-11-17 Field Report). Greta commented on this in her interview, in the context of a question that I had previously not connected to this issue. I asked, “In your experience or observation, how much of a role does research and evaluation play in program-level decision making, if at all?” She responded,

Well I've seen it shift, a lot, actually. I would say even in this last year...and it was a piece of feedback that we received from the Partner Teachers at least, is that if research is being collected they'd love to have it disseminated and discussed. You know, like what does this mean and what information are you finding out? So I think having transparency around what's being collected is really key, and I think we did a good job of that last year, bringing back the information and sharing it out.

Transparency also offered opportunities to improve data collection methods. When Esme presented the first round of log data to the secondary Fellows, their reactions and comments shed light on practical considerations involving construction of the instrument. They had trouble “coding” responses when relating their experience to the different checkbox categories. (For example, “what does ‘community’ mean? What community are you referring to?”). They relayed that the reason they didn’t necessarily have equity conversations is because they simply didn’t have time during the school day. They were also surprised to see that Fellows had lower participation than the Partner Teachers. Whereas we assumed in the first round it had to do with time pressures on the Fellows, *the Fellows themselves* reported it had more to do with the fact that after they had completed the first couple days of logs and nothing had changed, they thought there was no point in continued participation since there was nothing new to report. They suggested the program send weekly reminders containing a ‘focus’ equity issue to engage with one’s partner about – not just during the log period, but in general. (Field Report 1-11-17). Fellows’ input led to tweaks to the logs between the first and second rounds and put new ideas on the radar of team members as they continued developing the coaching model. Esme subsequently expressed the benefit to the program of concerted efforts to be transparent with program participants:

...when you bring up some of the results [about] the coaching pieces, having a dialogue with my students and what their thinking is, and what their insights are...those are really interesting conversations that help us think about the work...what might be there, not there, where might we want to go.

The bidirectional, co-learning aspect of including teachers in the processing and interpreting of their own data was consistent with team members' vision of reciprocity for the coaching model.

Making a persuasive case for the program's use of evaluation *to teacher participants* was also key to building team members' confidence in the integrity of the data they were using to inform the development of the coaching model. Carol reflected on the importance of participant understanding in her interview:

Well I think [the log] is a good tool. I think the limitation of it is time. That's the only limitation. Or patience. Like do they have the patience to fill that out, over that time period? Do they see that it's important for the program, and that we would use it to make it better for them? So that their feedback isn't just given as feedback because it's a requirement? It's kind of like what I said before, you're just checking off 'ok I did this data collection, I did that data collection.' So I don't think there's anything wrong with the tool, I'm just wondering...you know, what's the message for them?... obviously not everybody [but some] didn't see it as important or they didn't have time! I don't think there are any other choices, really. Or they didn't understand the importance. Like what would be done with it, you know?...[You should] tie it to the vision of Change. So if our vision is to prepare the best, highest quality people to serve as social justice teachers, how does this data collection help us figure out [something] about social justice leadership in schools or social justice teacher efficacy in schools. And we can't do that without your participation.

Concern for participant learning experience and for data transparency was also a matter of concern for data quality. There is a commonsense connection between the two; the internal validity of any measure is threatened when participants do not take it seriously. Research and

evaluation is therefore beneficial for intended users when instruments have educational value and are deemed a worthwhile use of time by program participants. The original motivation for the log was to capture what was happening between teaching partners in informal spaces because team members felt that was important. However, PLC discussions led to questions that problematized this initial reasoning, namely, how realistic it was to expect the logs to detect critical conversations if we don't believe they are going to happen without program facilitation. This logic reframed critical conversations as something you explicitly make space for, and for which the program needs to scaffold, facilitate, and develop skills.

The cluster of findings in this section reflects a dominant mode of discourse woven throughout the PLC conversations: identification of gaps in what was known, and what could be known, about the success of the coaching model given the tools available. What individual Fellows and Partner Teachers chose to write in their reflections, contribute to their internal portfolios, and report in their logs, was limited by their level of comfort with revealing things to the program, their energy level, their frustration, and even their writing skills. Additionally, although the log instrument in particular was created in intentional alignment with the coaching model, the developmental nature of the model itself meant that the data produced would at times be out of step with team members' most recent thinking. The way in which these shortcomings unfolded, however, was nevertheless instructive, as it highlighted concern for authenticity in equity conversations and the environment in which meaningful dialogue could be achieved with program support. Debates about formal and informal spaces led team members to embrace program facilitation as the main conduit for authentic critical conversations. Team consensus on this point informed the ultimate incorporation of "Making space for critical conversations" into the coaching model for the 2017-18 year. These ideas were also inextricably linked to the

growing conviction that additional work needed to be done to build trusting relationships between partners, and to make explicit in the model an expectation that *action* be taken as an outgrowth of critical conversation. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 address these claims.

## 5.4 Grounding the model in relational trust

Dec. 13, 2016. The eight team members present have just completed ten minutes of independent reading of responses from the first round of logs for those who checked the box “Today my partner and I talked about assumptions we have about certain students.” I point to the guiding questions I had written on the white board as a reminder of our purpose in looking at the data at hand:

1. How do you interpret this data? Is it higher/lower/about what you thought? How does this align with what is trying to do? Where would we realistically hope to see change between Round 1 and Round 2?
2. How might this inform our thinking moving forward? How does this help us better understand how these relationships are functioning?
3. Considering our other existing knowledge and experience, what changes might we make based on this information?

To begin I suggest, “These three questions are overarching questions but let’s start with just some general impressions from the assumptions category.”

Carol volunteers, “I noticed that they talked – it was evidence of an assumption, but what was the assumption?” Amidst audible “mmms” and “yeses” around the room, Rose adds “Yeah, it’s like sometimes I wasn’t sure there was an assumption.”

Barbara offers one interpretation: “I think they’re trying to dig under behaviors. And so they’re looking at their assumptions perhaps of what it might be versus grappling with what it really could be.” She adds that the Fellows seemed to mainly be describing behavioral problems.

Rose offers a different hypothesis: “I think they don’t want to reveal the assumptions. I think they’re either protecting themselves or their partner.”

...

The discussion continues, with team members bringing up additional specific responses, especially those where a paired Fellow and Partner Teacher referenced the same incident but expressed different perspectives about the handling of the situation. We discuss the difficulty of teasing out which observations may be specific to one pair versus which ones are indicative of a broader trend across teaching partnership experiences. Carol reorients the conversation after a considered glance at the three overarching questions on the white board: “So where would we hope to see difference between this and



*the second round, would be moving towards being able to explicate an assumption. So maybe they don't know how to talk about an assumption. I mean I don't know, I'm assuming." Her closing words elicit laughter from the group.*

*We agree to change the language in the log to encourage teachers to be as specific as possible in their responses. Rose reflects that the issue goes beyond that of simply providing clearer directions, though: "I will say that this is a common experience I have with them sometimes meeting one on one, is speaking in generalities. It's kind of talking about it and then I'm like 'just say it. Just...you can say it.' So I don't know if it's maybe because it feels formal, like it's a survey so they feel like they need to [be] ...I don't know...A bit professional. Or you know not just name things?"*

*In response I say, "That makes me want to ask, because there is a lot of general talk [in the logs], and not naming things. Do you think that has to do with the format of this, or is that consistent with your experience of how they actually talk to each other? That they do actually talk in these generalities and don't tend to say, 'I'm assuming that because this student is xyz.'"*

*Rose replies, "I don't think that's how [Fellows] talk to each other at the peer level, but with their Partner Teacher I think they might sometimes do that. If the Fellow is uncomfortable bringing something up, then they talk about it in more general terms." She proceeds to give some examples that come to mind of situations in which the Fellow felt they should have had a conversation with their Partner Teacher but did not broach the subject.*

*Ora backs up Rose on this point: "I think they talk in general terms between Fellow and mentor. [I'm] thinking about coaching conversations I've observed, even though I had great ones yesterday. But they do talk in general terms. I think part of that is just the element of 'I have to kind of know you to be specific on my assumption. Because if I'm assuming something I'm also claiming something about who you are. And...even when the mentors tried to push the Fellow on the notion that I consider reciprocity and asking questions, there's this tension between I guess the idea of professionalism or 'If I say something to question you, or question what you did, how comfortable am I feeling that I can say -even talking about folks who know one another, think about how that can be hard. I can feel the tension there.'"*

*I check that my understanding of the implication of the discussion so far is correct: "So the fact that we can see that in the writing, that's not an inaccurate reflection of reality. It's not necessarily just that they don't feel like writing detail."*

Ora confirms, “Right.”

I affirm, “And is that something we are trying to do? To get them to be more explicit?”

Ora: “Yeah, I think that we want them to be more explicit but at the same time just understanding that it takes time that way. And I thought about it when I was out yesterday watching them. I could see the equity, reciprocity, but I also noticed – I just think about myself. You know even if I have a conversation just with Esme, you know, how do I tell Esme something if I don’t like what she did? And I know Esme.”

Circling back to Carol’s comment about being able to “explicate” an assumption as a sign of growth, I ask, “My question, thinking about not just the assumptions but the other responses, is ‘what is good?’ Would you hope to see, because they’ll know each other more in the next round, would you hope to see that some of these types of responses would be more detailed? That they would feel more comfortable saying instead of ‘we had an assumption about the parents’, ‘we had an assumption that the parents don’t do this, and we discussed it’?”

Ora: “I think for some of them we could definitely see that. As they keep moving forward and keep practicing those conversations. Some may need some prompting to figure out how to do that. There were some mentors who pulled out that sheet we gave them from Partners in Practice [a list of critical conversation starters] and said ‘equity, let’s start the conversation’ Others struggled. They struggled, trying, they don’t know how. It’s practice, it’s not the most natural thing unless you’re talking about it. It’s easy to shift back to planning the lesson. I think you will see it.”

Carol: “I know you [Ora] and Greta are doing this, to make it really metacognitive, modeling, which I know you do. Like ‘I thought this, and this was my assumption, and now I think this.’ And how did you get there. This is tough, for all of us. Because you have to take the veil down of ‘I’m going to say something politically incorrect. Or I’m going to reveal something that I don’t want people to know I think.’ But that’s being a social justice person, leader, and teacher, is that you can, and you can move, and you can change. But through the interaction of others, through acquired knowledge. I mean it’s just...I love that you had this thing [in the log] about assumptions because it’s really really really important. Because you can’t carry an assumption that is false and still be a social justice person. It seems like it’s a lifelong journey. So you have to have a model for how to deal with it.”

*Ora: “Yeah, and I think the practice will be good. And you will see some shifts. A prime example is a Partner Teacher who asked the Fellow ‘do you think the students are talkative because they’re girls?’. And the Fellow clearly could have pushed back and said something, but they didn’t. Instead they went along with the assumption. And I think about the power issue, like this Fellow wrote (referring to one of the responses in front of her). That was an assumption the mentor made that wasn’t challenged by the Fellow. I think as time – if we think about Partners in Practice this way and how do we handle it, that more of it will happen. That’s the hope.”*

The resonant challenge here is that the equity issues teachers claimed to be talking about in the logs were not actually being addressed explicitly in their writing. At stake is the idea that because people are uncomfortable saying what they really think, the underlying assumptions that maintain inequitable educational environments go unchallenged. Multiple team members affirm the extent to which the lack of “naming” assumptions they see in the logs corresponds with their field experience. Rose contrasts evidence from the logs to her own experience with Fellows in class. Namely, that they do not talk in generalities in her Fellows-only seminar. This reinforces the notion that it is not necessarily a matter of Fellows’ *awareness*, but rather of their sense of empowerment in the student teaching realm. The exchange also opens up a space for Ora to bring in her recent experience in the field facilitating on-site triadic “coaching conversations” between Fellows and Partner Teachers, and for her and other team members to confirm what they would hope to see change as time goes on. Additionally, she expresses her belief that being able to explicate assumptions with another person is a skill that takes practice, hence the need for opportunities to practice during site visits and Partners in Practice sessions.

As exemplified in the above episode, PLC discussions were also full of empathy for the teachers involved in these interactions. Carol acknowledges that it is “tough” for anyone to engage in uncomfortable conversations where they feel they will be judged for what they reveal about how they think. Ora points out that it would be challenging for her to bring up a

disagreement she has with Esme, with whom she has a well-established, collegial, relationship. Superseding these factors, though, is an inherent power dynamic between Partner Teachers and Fellows. The issue of power and authority emerged as a trend in log data in the form of Fellows' reports of feeling uncomfortable bringing up what they perceived as problematic assumptions related to gender, class, or race made by their Partner Teachers. For instance, later during the same discussion in December, I showed the team the writing of a Fellow who responded affirmatively to the question "I experienced something today that touched upon issues of power and authority." The Fellow had further indicated that they did *not* address that issue with their Partner Teacher. When prompted to explain why they chose not to address this experience, the Fellow asserted:

Change can re-coin the term from "mentor" to "partner" but at the end of the day, someone has state credentialed authority and someone doesn't. Someone is writing the letter of rec and someone is asking for it. Someone will be staying at that school, and someone won't. There is a power imbalance that I think Change advisors should acknowledge and provide support toward instead of minimizing its complexity with a change in name.

In light of this response, I asked the group what they felt their role is in pushing Fellows to challenge Partner Teachers, given the reality of the power dynamics at play. In the exchange that ensued, various team members expressed their perspective:

*Ora: I mean just personally, I believe that part of the program is we want as many people out there that can push against the status quo. That's my belief system and that's what I believe the program is set up to do. At the same time, I do think when I read this comment it does speak to the fact that... I mean this resonates with me. And I do think that some of it is the way we think about preparing Partner Teachers just looks a little different because of time and the way we can structure it, than it is with Fellows."*

*Esme: "I think maybe we call it out to the Partner Teachers. We need to tell them that they should expect this and not have it affect their letters of recommendation. They should know we are encouraging these*

*critical conversations and should expect to have them. Know that part of what we want to do is disrupt the system. And this is a way to disrupt the system. So expect that your Fellows might bring these things up, and please don't hold it against them. I can imagine some of our Partner Teachers responding favorably to that and some not."*

*Ora: "I think the majority of the Partner Teachers fall in line, do exactly what they're supposed to say. Which is 'Of course I will.' And there are many examples in my head right now that do that. I think that the reality is though that we have some really good Partner Teachers who are of that mindset and we have others who I think we have done a decent enough job...And just personal conversations with Partner Teachers that we've had about this. The program in itself is not mind-shifting for Partner Teachers because of the way they interact with it. It's not going to be a shift of some of them in the way they think about positionality and power and changing the system. That I know that no matter when I walk out that door that she's going to back to exactly right back to the way she was. And it's a process, right? It would take some time. I don't know the needle for some Partner Teachers...But I do think we've called it out. I do think we've said this over and over and over and over, to Partner Teachers. But their investment in it honestly just looks and feels different than their Fellow's investment..."*

*Carol and Barbara wish they knew more about the specific relationship the Fellow is in, suspecting that some of the frustration stems from interpersonal dynamics on top of frustration with the Change program itself. They acknowledge that the context of a system of district and statewide credentialing policies is unlikely to change, and so there will always be an element of uneven power structure in whatever they do. Yet this fact should not prevent Fellows from challenging the system as they progress through their careers.*

*Rose: "I do think it's Change's responsibility to ask them to put [social justice principles] into practice. Like we talk about theory and practice and we read all this stuff about challenging the system, and yet when we talk about theory and practice we're usually talking about like 'teaching strategies' or-" Her voice goes higher as she brackets the term with air quotes, "'-culturally relevant pedagogy.'" But actually engaging in conversations with your Partner Teacher or potentially administrators is also part of practicing it. And I feel like this is student teaching, this is a pretty low-stakes situation, and we have Partner Teachers who have agreed to this, this is the time to practice developing these relationships and learning how to have these conversations..."*

This example is illustrative of the ongoing dialogue within the team, seen in previous sections, about how to encourage critical conversations. It also illuminates a collective sense that, even if Partner Teachers do *not* adopt a reciprocal, collaborative mindset, Fellows should still respectfully challenge Partner Teachers as part of their process of learning to challenge systems. However, it also reiterates the importance of efforts to level or flatten the expert-novice hierarchy in order create an environment where uncomfortable issues could be broached without fear of backlash. There is an acknowledgment that building relationships like that take time and require trust.

Theorizing about program influence (Section 5.2), is also folded in to this discussion. Ora admits that she doesn't know where "the needle" is for some Partner Teachers in terms of shifting social justice mindsets because the way they interact with the program is fundamentally different than the Fellows' immersive experience. Her reflection points to the known problem of the "language gap" between Partner Teachers and Fellows, and a lack of support "in context" (i.e., in most schools) for the pursuit of this type of social justice-oriented goal (11-15-16 PLC). That is, as full-time graduate students, the Fellows are fed a steady diet of social justice in the form of class discussions, readings, assignments, and faculty advising. In contrast, Change's contact with Partner Teachers at the time consisted of orientation, two quarterly classroom visits, and the monthly Partners in Practice seminars.

Overall, the discussion reveals a shared belief that adopting an equity lens extends beyond culturally responsive, democratic pedagogical practices into the network of *adult* relationships involved in being part of a school community. While program team members agreed that addressing equity issues is core to the social justice mission of the program, they also appreciated the vulnerability and potential conflict that comes with what they were asking

teachers to do, especially Fellows who hold less power in the relationship than their Partner Teacher. Esme astutely labeled this dynamic the “tension between the contractual and relational trust” (8-8-17 Interview), where the former refers to Fellows’ need for Partner Teachers to give them a positive recommendation and the latter refers to the interpersonal acceptance the program hopes will develop. Team members echoed this sentiment in data review sessions throughout the year. They acknowledged and empathized with how uncomfortable it can be to have critical conversations but agreed that learning to “sit in discomfort” (4-25-17 PLC) as they navigate these issues is a skill the program is in fact trying to cultivate. Fellows’ reported hesitance in the logs to address equity issues head-on for this reason reaffirmed a commitment to building greater reciprocity into the fabric of the teaching partnership. Ultimately, this commitment took the form of grounding the model in the idea of “relational trust” as a prerequisite for reciprocal, equity-driven teaching partnerships.

The summer 2017 orientation foregrounded relational trust in the materials presented to the incoming cohort about the coaching model, by then renamed the Reciprocal Learning Partnership for Equity Conversations and Action Model. The first day’s presentation walked the new cohort of Fellows and their Partner Teachers (many of whom were returning from the previous year) through the components of the revised model; Relational Trust, Identity and Positionality, Reciprocity, Critical Space for Equity Conversations and Action. Relational trust was presented to Partner Teachers and Fellows using the following statements:

Relational trust creates and supports the conditions to tackle inequities in schools and creates a space and the conditions for change to occur.

There are no set of prescribed steps in building relational trust. Instead, it develops through **interactions, conversations, tension and critical collaboration OVER TIME.** (emphases original, 8-1-17 Orientation PowerPoint)

During the three-day orientation, time was spent on activities intended to build rapport and relational trust between pairs to an extent unprecedented in previous years. Program team members acknowledged to the new cohort that what they were asking Fellows and Partner Teachers to do was hard, and fraught with power imbalances. They also made clear that the program was committed to helping teaching partners build rapport and trust. Orientation facilitators asked participants to reflect on their own “trust” patterns, how they prefer to engage with others, and what life experiences have influenced their outlook. They were introduced to guiding questions and active listening techniques in a revised framework. They had multiple opportunities to practice having critical conversations that were grounded in the wealth of experience each member of the partnership was bringing to the classroom, rather than grounding them in site-specific conversations in which the Partner Teacher’s instructional and institutional knowledge would inevitably be privileged. And team members repeatedly, explicitly connected presentations and activities to the idea of relational trust as essential to the program’s approach to reciprocal teaching partnerships.

In their interviews, team members were asked how the PLC discussions that took place in the context of the DE activities informed the development of the reciprocity piece of the model, if at all. Barbara reflected on the impact the process of questioning had on pushing the team to continue thinking deeply about the relational aspect of the teaching partnerships, especially how to reconcile the differing perspectives of the Fellow and Partner Teacher:

I think it was just more in the wonderings or questions that we had left [after reviewing and discussing the data]. I’d really have to look back at my notes because I can’t recollect off the top



of my head, but I think it would have come up in sort of program improvement, and certainly got to this whole thing of the reciprocal learning. Because I think that we were still grappling, even though we changed the names from mentor to Partner Teacher, [with] the relational quality. I don't think that we were seeing enough of that difference. And so really thinking, if we're getting to equity, what was the relational part of that equity? And how can we maybe not get into some of the conflicts that have happened between the Fellow who is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed and has a lot of great, ethical impetus of what equity should like, and then the Partner Teacher who's been drumming away and pounding at the wall on this and it's not...as easy. And how does that person coming in reenergize that person to what they felt like when they first started, and then how can the person that's been doing it for a while share some of their struggles? And so I think the whole idea of building relationships and what we spent time [doing], in that first day especially, and continued to in subsequent days, really is crucial.

This quotation encapsulates the idea that the DE process wasn't happening in a vacuum. Rather, it was in many ways an extension of conversations that were happening outside the PLC space – an example of evaluation as one of “multiple, cumulative” influences on the program (see Chapter 2). The “wonderings or questions” stimulated by the PLC discussions became an opportunity to further develop the reciprocity piece of the model through engagement with corroborating data.

When I posed a question to Carol asking if the PLC process caused any of her ideas about the model to shift, she answered candidly that it had not. However, she qualified her response by elaborating on the validating function those conversations served in developing the model:

I think because Janet and I have a very particular way that we wanted the partnerships to look, and they're moving towards that direction, without a lot of the-it's just through questioning, maybe. So what came up-it didn't change my idea of what [the partnerships] should look like, but it did bring up and validate what assumptions that we had. And the assumptions were that the

[Partner] teachers, it would be hard for them to give up power. And it would be hard for them to diminish their voice in order for another voice to rise up. And for the Fellows, it wasn't surprising that they were somewhat...critical of their Partner Teachers because all student teachers are critical of their master teachers. But it was interesting to note that even though they were critical, that they had some self-doubt. But I saw through your work, some of the work that you presented to us, that they were questioning their own ideas about equity. And I think that was really impressive to me...And I thought that was really important. So I think from those pieces...particularly this year, they [other team members] designed- I can't say [I designed it]-I had a voice in it, but really the design for the [orientation], those first three days together, really reflected what some of those data said. Which were about 'well what does this partnership look like?' So the activities were engaging in 'well how could you have trust?' So that you could share whatever you're thinking, whatever values you have, and how could you start to see one another in a more, as Esme would say, 'humanizing' way? So that you can build a relationship that will endure the ups and downs of the year.

A constant concern and driving purpose for the DE process was to stimulate thinking about how the team might maximize limited program time to support Partner Teacher development and mutual buy-in to the egalitarian, dialogic basis of the coaching model. Team members saw some benefit in looking at data relevant to the model – data that substantiated roadblocks to reciprocity in teaching partnerships that they believe existed all along. But Barbara and Carol located the value of the developmental process in the *questions* that arose from the team's probing of data, questions that created a space to zoom in on the "relational part of equity" and imagine what a programmatic emphasis on it might look like in more concrete terms.

## 5.5 Adding an action component to the model

June 6, 2017. The team is considering other forms of data that could be analyzed and discussed in the upcoming year in order offer a more holistic view of teaching partnerships as they relate to social justice education practice. The conversation takes a turn towards revisiting how the coaching model – now being referred to as the Reciprocal Learning Partnership model – connects with the big picture of Change.

I ask, “If the goal is helping partners cultivate relationships that embody this model that is centered on reciprocity and equity, identity and positionality, what’s the point of doing that? Why do we care about having those kinds of relationships? Isn’t it because we think that it will lead to the preparation of social justice [educators], better teaching?”

Ora: “Yes, that’s it.”

Henry: “Right, we’re not preparing friends, we’re preparing teachers.”

Janet: “I mean that’s why I’m thinking looking at rubric<sup>16</sup> data [would be helpful], but it depends on how we use the rubric. It’s a critical piece. If we don’t see that the Fellows are doing more of that in their practice, then...we need to think about the critical conversations. And even if I’m identifying it as an equity conversation, if it’s not manifesting in my practice then it’s great that you’re having an equity conversation but...”

Ora: “Right. Yeah. If you don’t shift anything, then...”

Esme: “If you don’t shift in your practice...Yes.”

Talia: “So what I’m hearing is this...theory that we haven’t quite articulated explicitly, that these conversations should be the foundation for, or they directly inform, practice.”

Janet: “Well I think that was the attempt at Partners in Practice this year. That was the attempt in bringing the rubric in to the Partners in Practice, but I think with the feedback and just observing the

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<sup>16</sup> The classroom observation rubric was developed in the first iteration of Change to align with the its social justice teaching and learning Framework, which identifies four dimensions of teaching quality – Classroom Ecology, Rigor, Discourse, Equitable Access to Teaching.

*Partners in Practice meeting, correct me if I'm wrong, was people still weren't making the connection between the day to day conversations that they were having in the classroom with their Fellow and their Partner Teacher and...[the practice piece]."*

*Talia: "So that's where I'm starting to think-and what Esme was saying-the focus this year wasn't on the four dimensions of teaching quality...really it was more on the relationship and figuring out how we can gauge the relationship. Part of maybe next year, in terms of PLCs, is how can we bring data that is helping us understand if this connection is happening? And that's where multiple sources...so if we can look at those partnership logs and that pair's rubric data, or whatever other artifact that somehow represents the practice, maybe we'll get a better sense of that."*

*Esme: "A better sense of yeah, how it's translating to practice...It's sometimes like they compartmentalize these conversations. Like 'I'm talking about this this and this, ok.' But then they drop it and they go the old way of teaching."*

*Janet: "Because you [Ora and Greta] were both making the connection, you were attentive, but I don't know that [the teachers] ever did really."*

*Greta: "Right, again it goes back to the authenticity part...are they really taking anything away?"*

*Ora: "I think about it as me exercising. I say I'm going to, and then I go home and I don't do anything... So it's not surprising to me that when they leave Partners in Practice...you go back and you fall into regular norms, right?...This is why the reciprocal conversations to me have to be much more explicit to target the action piece. Because if we don't have an action linked to it that we can even come back and talk to, then they'll more than likely go back to what they've always been doing...I think last year we didn't tie anything to an action, [but] we expected it. So I think part of the piece is coming in and saying [to them] that the point of the partnership is to improve teaching and learning and become better social justice educators. And we know that if we're going to do that, then we need to make some shifts, and we have to take some action.*

...

*Barbara: "So what kind of action would they generate to take? Based on what they were seeing in the classroom in their own practice, right? So how are they setting the goal, or some SMART goal or something. [I'll use] the exercise analogy because I have the same struggle. I'm going to be really specific about what I need to do if I need to exercise, right? Three times a week, 20 minutes a day, and*

*I'm going to have a couple of people check up on me, too. I need some kind of pressure because I won't have enough pressure to get over my own resistance. And then it could become habitual, at a certain point it's going to become habitual. So for me it's really thinking about, for them...what kind of change do they want to see? What are they working towards and then how can we measure if they're actually getting there? It's a little bit of a different way of looking-it's more like an improvement kind of methodology."*

*Esme: "Kind of like improvement science, yes. Like small cycles."*

*Barbara: "Yes, improvement science. Right, the short, small cycles. So I'm just wondering if maybe there's something to that. Where we're wrestling with these ideas of more permanence, if there's a shorter cycle where they're looking at specific things that they may actually have said they want to measure, within this [reciprocal learning] framework. To see if they're getting to whatever outcome they would like to see, whatever problem they're working on together, right? So that it's not just us doing the program to them, but they'll actually have some skin in the game of what they want to accomplish."*

*Esme: "No I appreciate that, I appreciate that they're choosing what they're seeing in their own practice that they want to change."*

*Barbara: "Yeah, it's getting to the idea of ownership. So one of the challenges I think is where is the ownership lying? It's more here in this room, I would posit more than maybe...out there..."*

*Ora: "Yeah, that's where I struggle. Because I keep thinking that the conversations to even get them to the place where they have these-that they investigate, we have to bring forth. They don't generally bring them out...but I understand exactly what you're saying, because...I don't know how to get them to think deeply about something unless I put it in front of them."*

The June PLC discussion represented both a debrief of the year and a preview of plans for the newly-christened Reciprocal Learning Partnership model going forward. In thinking about data that would be useful to incorporate into PLC data discussions in the upcoming school year, the team expresses a desire to see more confirming or disconfirming evidence of social justice practice, particularly using observation data to test the theory that pairs who embody

features of equity-driven partnerships also enact practices that embody those ideals. The tie to action is also inextricably tied to the idea of authenticity (Section 5.3) and, relatedly, the need to strike a balance between facilitating and imposing ideas – the issue of “ownership” – upon teachers. It’s a hard needle to thread, and though the methodology remains unresolved, they come down on the side of setting change as an operating principle more explicitly, building in mechanisms for teachers to set goals. In terms of evaluation, the team has moved from a developmental mode (fleshing out the model through data-grounded discussions) to a more formative or summary-formative one (linking implementation of the model to instructional outcomes). This exchange notably does not make direct reference to the logs or the PLC data discussions. However, the consideration of program data that would be useful to collect, analyze, and discuss in the future indicates a continued investment in the group learning process.

The June PLC was not the catalyst for the emergence of an action piece in the model; rather, it acted as a culminating forum that brought discussions occurring among a smaller group of Change team members into a space where they could all weigh in. Similar moments – in which team members referenced outside discussions and used the PLC space to build upon emerging ideas – were detected throughout the year. For instance, in the context of questioning the level to which the log was a viable indicator of critical conversations at the May 23 PLC, Janet said, “We’ve also talked about modifying things so that the pair has to identify an *action* to be taken as a result of this conversation, so it’s not just a conversation but they co-construct an action. So it’s not just ‘we had a conversation about identity, so what?’” Indeed, team members’ inspiration to alter the model may be said to come down to that “so what?” sentiment. So what if they’re naming assumptions, acknowledging their positionality, noticing inequity based on oppressive assumptions? What happens next? How does this recognition change how they

approach and enact their work with youth? The DE process underscored this frustration and added to the momentum for movement towards an action component.

By the time the summer 2017 orientation commenced, the model included as its fourth component “Critical space for equity conversation *and action*.” The concept of a critical conversation was expanded, in the most literal sense, to include a commitment to action as its defining feature. One orientation activity had pairs decide on an equity action they would implement in the first few weeks of teaching to create an inclusive classroom. The team modified the format of Partners in Practice for the incoming cohort to ensure that at each session teaching pairs would co-construct an equity action (and put it in writing) related to one of the dimensions of teaching quality from Change’s framework for teaching and learning that they planned to implement in their classroom. Greta and Ora would ask each pair about that action during subsequent site visits. They also added the question “What are we willing to do now to move forward?” to the written guide they created to facilitate critical conversations. The logs were also repurposed to act as a follow up to those Partners in Practice conversations and co-constructed actions, rather than existing as standalone exercise (Appendix D).

Team members tended to agree that the process substantiated a need to make the critical conversation piece of the teaching partnership model more action-oriented, as in this comment from Greta:

...I know exactly where the action piece came into play. I remember having this conversation in the PLC, and it stemmed from the conversation coming out of the authenticity. Like it’s not enough to talk about it, what are you going to do? Otherwise what’s the point of having this conversation? So the action piece, I don’t know that it specifically was a direct response to the logs. I think it’s just been hearing the need is that maybe they won’t have the conversations – which is kind of what we were hearing in the later part of the year – they weren’t necessarily

having these conversations that we'd been bringing up in Partners in Practice and how to have them, unless there was some sort of outcome...I'd say it was helpful...we couldn't have gotten to that realization, but was it the impetus to say 'well, people in the logs we heard were saying we don't have an action so we're not going to produce anything out of this?' [No.] But it definitely informed the idea of they're not going to continue to talk authentically unless they're committing to some sort of action.

Greta's reflection represents what most interviewees said in some form, that the PLC conversations were a factor, but not necessarily a driver, of the addition of the action component. Janet reiterated how the logs drove home the point that the direct tie to teaching and learning outcomes had been lost or not centered in teachers' understanding of the coaching model:

[The action component] to me was more a function of the development of the teaching partnership model, and realizing that just looking at whether or not we were having conversations about these issues was not really the question. It was about 'is your practice changing?' And so we knew that we were going to need to add a piece, to ensure their practice was changing...I think the coaching log data was a piece of that conversation, in that we saw what they were talking about maybe, and we saw that they weren't really connecting that to practice.

Finally, Ora, whom other team members acknowledged as the prime mover of the action piece, offered this reflection:

...looking at the [data] was a piece of saying 'we gotta have an action, because if not it's not' - I mean we always thought about it we just didn't know how it was going to...it was good to see the snapshots [from the logs], because you realized what it couldn't capture. And we needed to have the engagement in the PLCs with one another to have a question on what we felt was missing.

The core of Change's mission is the preparation of social justice educators who will infuse consciousness of how inequity operates in schools into their everyday practice and leadership.

The disconnect between an equity mindset and shifts in practice was consistent with the



experiential knowledge, professional expertise, and critical mass of institutional memory that Change team members brought into the room. They agreed the goal of the model was to promote equity-driven *practice* – critical conversations were not the end goal in and of themselves. The recurring push back in terms of what the tool *wasn't capturing*, due either to the way teachers responded or to the way in which it was constructed, served to reify ideas emerging parallel and in conjunction with PLC data discussions. Ora's identification of collegial engagement as a catalyst for formalizing the action piece is key to understanding how the DE discussions contributed to the accretion of knowledge and decisions that informed the modification of the coaching model.

## Summary

In offering reasons for why we were seeing what we were seeing when reviewing coaching-model aligned evaluative data, team members contemplated program structures, school cultures, individual characteristics, and the qualities of critical conversations. In the equity conversation decrease case, findings were explained by a combination of program curriculum, instructor emphases at various times of the year, and new teacher trajectories (Section 5.1). In the Center Experienced Partner Teacher case, the team agreed that external factors – the background of teachers and the culture of a particular placement school – explained the variation more so than their level of prior EAC experience (Section 5.2). Team members’ interpretations revealed beliefs about how much influence the program could realistically expect to have over Partner Teachers when seeking to shift their pedagogy as social justice educators in the context of reciprocal teaching partnerships with Fellows. In confronting the limitations of the log for capturing meaningful equity discourse, team members’ differing interpretations of data ultimately contributed to clarity around critical conversation criteria, and justified increased program time devoted to facilitating those conversations (Section 5.3). Team members found that interactions around equity topics often only “scratched the surface” of deeper issues (Ora, 4-25-17 PLC), leaving underlying assumptions unnamed and therefore unaddressed (Section 5.4). Having identified a lack of mutual trust within teaching partnerships as a primary reason for this, they determined to make relational trust a more explicit pillar of the coaching model. But PLC discussions also highlighted gaps that went beyond the lack of “naming” or “noticing”, beyond merely “explicating” assumptions. A third instrumental application of the developmental process stemmed from the team’s conclusion that perhaps the logs’ emphasis on conversation failed to get to the heart of Change’s theory of change (Section 5.5). In cases where an assumption was named, or even discussed, the logs and other evaluative data reviewed did not

indicate what behaviors or actions on the part of the teachers involved may have subsequently shifted. In other words, having Fellows and Partner Teachers discuss how their identities influence their teaching styles, habits, and beliefs is only a first step, albeit a necessary and often challenging one; the true goal is to encourage teachers to shift their practice *as a result* of these critical conversations. Critique of what was *missing* from evaluative data was also constructive in that it led to deeper conversations about what was valued as most foundational to the whole enterprise; not only having an equity lens on education, but having that lens inform teaching and learning in schools.

Overall, the process of individual voices engaging in collective theorizing, against the backdrop of a common-but-uniquely-experienced professional endeavor, served to both affirm and push peoples' thinking about an embodied, operationalized coaching model. Having those discussions in the PLC space, with the support of purposefully collected data, offered a stronger foundation from which to forward with coaching model development.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Teacher preparation programs require approaches that enable them to gather, analyze, and interpret locally meaningful data. Formative and summative evaluation approaches offer facilitation techniques, data collection methods, and theories from which to draw appropriate indicators and metrics, articulate outcomes, and measure progress towards these goals.

Alternately, when a program desires to use evaluative practices to promote social innovation, DE offers a framework for supporting that goal as well. The Change case study offers an example of how, when evaluators, researchers, and teacher educators work together to institutionalize spaces for discussion of data, DE can act as an exercise in reflective practice and critical inquiry as well as a practical tool for program development. Though the programmatic challenges brought to light by PLC discussions were far from new, the space for dialogue grounded in program data funneled the Change team's attention to specific areas which the in-development coaching model could potentially target. In this chapter I will discuss how this study offers further substantiation of factors that promote and inhibit evaluation use in social justice-oriented preservice teacher preparation contexts; deepens empirical research on the role of the developmental evaluator, the literature on evaluator credibility, and the contours of a facilitation-centric approach; and highlights potential challenges for programs wishing to utilize DE. Finally, I will discuss how this work points to areas of convergence between evaluation and teacher education practice that could strengthen the efficacy of approaches to program learning in both realms.

### **Factors affecting evaluation use in the Change Urban Teacher Residency program**

Context conditions what one can expect from any evaluation process, and this chapter considers the contextual factors most significant to the conceptual and instrumental evaluation use that occurred in this case study. Intentional thinking about the presence or absence of such factors may serve as a constructive foundation from which to build program capacity to

undertake meaningful evaluation endeavors. In Alkin and King's recent analysis of research on evaluation use (2017), they identified four categories of evaluation use factors: evaluation factors, user factors, organizational/social context factors, and evaluator factors. While these categories are inevitably intertwined, they are nevertheless useful organizational constructs for understanding evaluation use. *Evaluation factors* refer to the procedural contours of the evaluation itself – the activities, processes, and methodological strategies involved. *User factors* refer to individual orientations towards evaluation, including both positive and negative associations a person may hold. *Organizational/social context factors* take into account organizational characteristics, decision-making hierarchies, and institutional cultures. *Evaluator factors* include the background, personal style, commitment to use, and credibility of the individual or individuals leading the evaluation. This section is organized according to these categories.

### ***Evaluation factors: A developmental approach***

The ability to match one's evaluation approach to programmatic needs is a cornerstone of evaluation use theory. Although metrics such as admission criteria, credentialing rates, credit requirements, and professional retention are important, they are not easily translated into accessible data for formative or developmental feedback to programs. Furthermore, the ways in which teacher education programs are evaluated do not tend to be oriented towards the type of radical transformation many social justice educators have in mind when they speak of creating equitable systems. Janet encapsulated this sentiment when she described a survey she had been asked to complete from a consortium of teacher education programs:

...there must be twenty questions on there about 'how does your program address...?', and there is nothing, not a single question, about issues of social justice...It's all about 'Do you have a focus on core practices?', 'Does your community believe in a common set of practices?', 'How

do you work on reflecting on those?', 'Do you encourage your students to take risks?' But those risks are really specifically related to practice. So it's interesting to have to contextualize every single answer based on what the goals and values of this program are. So I know what we're doing is very different than what other teacher education programs are [doing]. So trying to capture this in some way and say a) can you do it and b) can you do it successfully is more of a challenge.

This comment speaks to the difficulty of charting one's own course as a program committed to social justice principles, and to subsequently show evidence of those principles in action. As Carol, who has extensive experience with the formulation of state and national credentialing policy asserted in her interview, "It's a fight to get the social justice included. I mean it's wonderful to see that now the standards have culturally responsive pedagogy...it's still a fight." Given this reality, the more a program team is able to identify and operationalize internal priorities concerning the preparation of educational change agents, the more meaningful evaluative processes will be for programs that align themselves with philosophies of disruption. The extent to which evaluation can truly inform these types of programs, then, is contingent upon the extent to which evaluative activities are designed with internal, practical use in mind.

While Patton is clear in his contention that DE is not appropriate in all cases, this study offers an empirical, descriptive look at what happens when it is. Change was an excellent candidate for DE because, as Janet phrased it, the coaching model is an attempt to "shift the paradigm of what we are aspiring to create in this relationship between the Fellow and the Partner Teacher." Since this model is unique to Change – the type of social innovation for which Patton suggests DE is appropriate – the *only* way to engage in evaluation is to build evaluative processes around its goals, and not the goals of external stakeholders or even other models of mentorship in teacher education.

***User factors: Action-backed belief in the value of evaluation***

A concern for data use practices are not uncommon in K-12 schools, nor in schools of education. Discourse on evaluative data is typically concentrated around assessment of student work, methods for evaluating teacher performance, and the setting of education policy.

Furthermore, the ability to use data to inform practice is a concept familiar to most teachers, and a skill emphasized by teacher preparation programs. Despite the prevalence of “data-driven decision-making” as a watchword, however, these ideas translate less frequently to formal *internal* program evaluation efforts. Janet touched upon this dynamic in her interview:

I'm a real believer in using evaluation data to inform program. In my experience I haven't seen that to be the case. So in many grants, most grants, with which I've worked in the past...the evaluation data was a report that got written at the end of the year. And people scurried around at the end of the project to try to collect what they needed for the report...but I really believe that assessment informs instruction. I think it's true in the classroom, I think it ought to be true in the project.

As Change's Project Director, Janet's use orientation was a crucial factor. She determined the agenda for PLC meetings, and it was her interest in using data to support the development of the coaching model that permitted the DE initiative to move forward. She was willing to go above and beyond existing research and evaluation activities in order to create a space for focused discussion grounded in the data collected.

In addition to Janet, other Change team members also possessed a use orientation in their openness to using data as a catalyst for exploration of what was happening in the program. Their capacity for reflection, their receptivity to feedback from Fellows and Partner Teachers, and their responsiveness to perceived successes and failures of their practice *as individuals* constituted a

favorable “personal factor” (Patton 2008). The team culture this created is considered in the organizational/social context factors section.

Even if evaluation is valued in theory, it will remain an abstract aspiration if not reinforced in practice. Henry used a personal anecdote to describe his perspective on the commitment required for programs to engage in meaningful evaluation:

I remember even as a teacher, I took an out-of-the classroom job, and we had all those periodic assessments...And it was aligned to all the different standards that you were supposed to be teaching for that quarter...And then you get a [data] dump, with all your kids... And what I would do, because I was out of the classroom, was I would take it, and I would ask all the department chairs, ‘Do you want me to kind of mine this, and organize it, and bring it to a department meeting?’ And they’re like, ‘Yes! Please!’...If we [Henry and I] didn’t collect the data, if we didn’t make a very intentional effort to collect data, it wouldn’t get collected. [Team members] want it, but they don’t have the time or necessarily the skill set to be able to do it. So how do you provide that? Do you train them? Or do you get a dedicated person to do it? So I just think a dedicated person to do this is *what* makes it work well. And even when there is a dedicated person, we struggle, right? We struggle but we’re *learning*. The struggle is productive, because it helps us think *better*...so that we can make next time a little more productive.

Henry’s reflection again draws a parallel between data use in teaching and data use in teacher education. He describes how educators’ desire to make data-informed instructional decisions must be coupled with institutional mechanisms that allow them to take advantage of available data. Delegating data-related tasks which require some degree of specialized knowledge is one efficient way to ensure this happens. This could take the form of giving a motivated program team member who possesses a certain skill set release time to pursue data collection, analysis, and facilitation, as in the case Henry describes above. Alternately, it could take the form of



enlisting an additional collaborator for whom evaluation is the central priority. In the Change case, I was the “dedicated person” who held responsibility for coordinating data collection and whole-team facilitation around that data. That reality was only made possible, however, by an initial willingness on the part of program leadership and team members to take a chance on allocating resources – a graduate student researcher position, time at PLC meetings, Fellow and Partner Teachers’ energy – to the integration of a DE approach as a means of supporting coaching model development.

Even with a dedicated person in place, learning benefits will be diminished if opportunities to *review* data as a team on a regular basis are not institutionalized. Ambitions to discuss data at some indeterminate time in the future often do not constitute solid commitments; unless there are specific, logistical “when and where” conversations, the necessary discussions are unlikely to happen routinely. Since every program has fewer hours in the day than hours of work to do, leveraging *existing* spaces for collective reflection and inquiry is the route Change took to balance competing demands on team members’ time. And as the findings demonstrate, PLC data discussions created opportunities to critically reflect on trends and issues that were already known. Instead of, and in addition to, having those conversations spread out across various permutations of team members in other spaces, they were able to do it in an environment where everyone was in the room at the same time, with the added advantage of having reference to data collected with intentionality with respect to the coaching model. Approximating the ideal of a dedicated person who can corral data and massage it into a group-ready format, however, depends not only on a valuing of evaluation and a subsequent allocation program resources; it also depends on team dynamics and the relationships between the developmental evaluator and

the program team members with whom she works. The following two sections examine the role of these factors in the Change case.

***Organizational/social context factors: A team culture of reflection***

As one can see from the honesty and depth of PLC exchanges included in this case study, Change team members had a level of comfort and familiarity with each other that allowed for open theorizing, disagreement, and application of learning to occur. Team members worked together often, sometimes on a daily basis. This was particularly true of the four individuals responsible for directly supporting Partner Teachers and Fellows – Ora, Greta, Rose, and Esme – who all confirmed in their interviews that they enjoyed an unusually collaborative, communicative, and trusting relationship that included frequent thought-partnering, planning, and troubleshooting together. Greta and Ora also met regularly with Janet, Carol, and Barbara to continue developing the coaching model. Outside and inside the PLC conference room, I was impressed with the team’s collegiality, the way they supported each other, and their team-oriented attitudes. Miriam commented on how important this dynamic was in the context of team discussions:

I think having a space with all those different stakeholders to reflect on the same thing, just to have that set aside time was really good...I think everyone on the team is also really thoughtful, and...reflective. So I think with a less reflective group it might have been less productive, but I think it was productive because everyone’s super-invested in making sure our students are having a positive, productive experience themselves.

Miriam’s comment about how simple but important it was to “just to have that time set aside” echoes Henry’s earlier quotation regarding dedicated resources. However, the heart of this excerpt touches on the respect and appreciation team members held for the opinions and thoughtfulness of their colleagues. Whereas in other teams, evaluative conversations may have

served to foster an atmosphere of critical reflection, in this case they only leveraged an already strong foundation, enabling deeper probing of mechanisms and beliefs about how realization of program goals could best be achieved through the teaching partnerships.

A shared sense of purpose also permeated the team culture. Team member interviews all contained a variation of Carol's sentiment that "We're [all] really pushing for 'what does social justice look like in practice', that's what it's all about" (8-11-17). As is the case with any group, though, a united mission is not mutually exclusive to diversity of perspective and opinion. The team dynamic was such that the different strengths and tendencies each member brought were welcomed and integrated into the endeavor of co-constructing knowledge. Ora was the resident data skeptic; shining a light on the shortcomings of the log illuminated underlying issues of worth, the value placed on interpersonal relationships, and the importance of individual personalities and dispositions. Rose tended to turn data inward, integrating findings as a provoking force for how she viewed her own practice as a social justice teacher educator. Greta was an astute connector of Partner Teacher patterns and the broader institutional environment of career urban educators. Esme proposed comparisons across time and subgroups that catalyzed thinking about different dimensions of program influence. Carol ensured discussion of the coaching model centered theories of sociocultural learning and humanizing pedagogy. Janet constantly strove to link the insights that emerged to implications for programmatic support of Fellows and Partner Teachers. Miriam's perspective as a Resident Advisor extended and deepened conversations about trajectories after the student teaching period, and connections that could be made to the model even when teachers no longer shared a classroom with their Partner Teachers. In his dual role as Resident Advisor and Research Coordinator, Henry pushed the conversations in directions to focus on what the data *could* teach us, despite its limitations, and

how we could connect data to the bigger picture of classroom teaching and learning. Barbara brought a data-driven decision-making lens to the conversations and encouraged the team to seek out more meaningful ways to involve teachers in the coaching model's development. The perspectives, opinions, expertise, and positionalities of each individual contributed to a process that uncovered a greater swath of issues than any were likely to come to on their own. Of course, these are all general, simplistic statements based on the relative contributions of each participant in PLC conversations and interviews; all engaged in critique, interpretation, reflection, extension, and articulation of beliefs at different times.

To summarize, this study suggests that evaluation endeavors are most meaningful to social justice teacher education programs when efforts are made to align data collection tools with program-specific goals, to build evaluation capacity through the allocation of time and personnel to internal efforts, and to foster of a culture of inquiry among program team members where individuals are empowered to engage in honest dialogue about program challenges. The next section will delve more deeply into an exploration of the fourth category of “evaluator factors” specific to DE, namely, the role of the developmental evaluator.

### ***Evaluator factors: The role of the developmental evaluator***

As outlined in Chapter 2, the developmental evaluator typically occupies a more hands-on role in a program than in other evaluation contexts. This study constitutes an empirical contribution to understanding the nature of this role, specifically the need to establish credibility through relationships and the centrality of facilitation to DE practice. The following sections discusses what it took to engage the Change group productively in terms of credibility and facilitation. By no means do I submit these efforts as unequivocally successful. Rather, given the paucity of real-life illustrations of the complex and messy reality of DE, I wish to contribute a

realistic perspective on the role of the developmental evaluator, especially in the preservice teacher education context, in order to assist those who wish to pursue similar work in the future and continue to improve the toolkit of DE practice.

### **Building credibility**

A core component of evaluation theory and practice is the notion of evaluator credibility (Alkin, 2011; Patton, 2014). The most recent standards issued by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson, & Caruthers, 2011) list Evaluator Credibility as the first standard in the “Utility” category, evidence that it is more than a concept crucial to professionalism; it is an evaluation *use factor*. That is, evaluator credibility influences the extent to which forms of evaluation use occur. When evaluation guidance and conclusions are perceived as coming from a trusted source, they are more readily adopted. Conversely, poor evaluator credibility can be naturally conflated with the credibility of the evaluation itself; findings and processes emanating from a less credible source may be perceived as fruit of the ambivalent, if not outright poisonous, tree. This section will consider what the building of credibility meant and “looked like” on a practical level in the Change case, arguing that embeddedness within the program provided opportunities to demonstrate understanding of Change’s social justice goals, to build trusting relationships with team members, and to create a participatory space for discussion. This in turn allowed me as a developmental evaluator to engage in connection-based facilitation that increased the likelihood of evaluation use.

In her interview, Janet offered this advice for programs looking to engage in meaningful evaluation when a goal is program development or improvement: “Work with an evaluator who’s very responsive. And is a part of the program. And takes the time to truly understand and live the program so that the information coming back is meaningful.” Janet identifies evaluator

proximity to the program as a key lever of evaluation use; it's ideal for that person be immersed (to "live") in the program enough to make decisions about what information will be most relevant and feasible to obtain given their knowledge of locally-defined goals. This is consistent with Patton's recommendation that developmental evaluators be embedded or otherwise integrated into the innovation team to a greater degree than that found in other evaluation approaches. As described in Chapter 4, I started with Change in fall of 2015, officially joining the team in summer 2016. During these early months, I sat in on research meetings (which included nearly all of the program team members who attended PLCs), asking clarifying questions and attempting to revoice what I was hearing in an attempt to calibrate my understanding of the coaching model with those of team members. I also began to observe online Partner Teacher seminars and Partners in Practice meetings in order to gain first-hand experience of those program components, a practice that transitioned into formal participant observation in the summer of 2016. Attendance at program events served multiple purposes. First, I was able to observe how the coaching model was being presented to teachers, and their responses to it, rather than relying solely on team members' accounts. As I developed the log, first-hand references to the program-in-action allowing me to bypass more basic "*what* do you do?" questions in favor of "*why* do you do?" questions in order to better align the principles of the emergent coaching model with the data collection and analysis undertaken as the basis for PLC discussions.

Most evaluation practitioners would agree that familiarity with program context is essential for use-focused evaluation. This study supports the claim, however, that achieving context knowledge through some level of entrenchment in the program matters for DE in particular. In order to maximize evaluation usefulness, it is helpful if the developmental

evaluator is able witness developmental elements as they unfold. This case study suggests that it is preferable for programs to collaborate with an evaluator who is able to occupy an insider/outsider position, simultaneously being part of the program team but still able to bring “fresh eyes” to evaluation problems and exercise their own professional judgment.

In addition to program knowledge, trust was also an essential component of the credibility puzzle. This is especially true in education, where individuals may have negative associations with evaluation, particularly in the context of the post-No Child Left Behind accountability discourse of public schooling. These experiences may lead education professionals to view evaluation as a hoop to jump through rather than a meaningful activity, as a bureaucratic exercise divorced from the nuances of on-the-ground realities, and/or as an imposition of objectives determined by precisely the kind of institutionalized powers they are seeking to disrupt. In other words, evaluation is a loaded term, and trust must be built in order to overcome stigma and skepticism. In line with other evaluation theorists on the “values” branch of the theory tree, I believe evaluation should be employed in the service of creating a more democratic society, and that one’s commitment to this principle should inform the conduct of an evaluation (e.g., Hall, Ahn & Greene, 2012). This does not mean allowing biases and personal preferences to dictate findings or cherry-pick results, but neither does it mean affecting an attitude of complete neutrality or disinterest. Being honest about my philosophical orientation to evaluation and transparent about my own research agenda was part of building trust, and hence credibility, with the team.

Furthermore, I was keenly aware of my positionality as a middle class white woman operating in a space seeking to empower teachers and students of color. I brought some methodological expertise but Change team members were experts in the program and in their

own lived experiences, including intersectional identities different from my own. I found that focusing on connecting discussion back to program goals and practice helped me navigate attempts to act as a “critical friend” without imposing my own preconceived notions of what social justice looks like, and to guide discussions without dominating them. I embraced my role as a co-learner in that space, wishing to gain clarity not just for the evaluation but because I genuinely wanted to support the program’s mission *in a manner appropriate to that mission*.

Time spent *within* a program ideally establishes not only a level of what Change would term “relational trust” between the facilitator and program team members, but also a level of comfort interacting with team members on the part of the facilitator. I posit that an investment in building credibility is required to increase sensitivity not only to program nuances, but to the nature of individual team member personalities as well as general group dynamics. Having time to listen to people in staff meetings *and* observe them in their work gives one a sense of history, internal politics and hierarchies, interpersonal dynamics, learning modalities, and engagement styles. Observation of these patterns over time afforded by the embedded nature of my role in turn influenced my decisions as a facilitator, prompting me to draw on the different sources of experiential knowledge, insight, and tensions in the group to strategically question, challenge and build upon ideas, and to adjust to changes in tone and energy. After each PLC discussion I would reflect upon moments of confusion and conversational dead-ends, as well as times when things seemed to “flow,” considering how I might approach things differently the next time. I learned that being able to “read the room” is an emotional intelligence skill upon which a developmental evaluator must constantly improve.

Crucially, though, in this work I was also able to leverage an existing culture of reflection (see the organizational/social context factors section). As detailed earlier, the PLC



space merely extended and enriched the conversations that were already happening outside of those meetings; strong norms of participation already existed around the internally-developed coaching for equity model. Questioning, soliciting dissenting opinions, and encouraging elaboration on responses were my main strategies for attempting to reinforce those norms so that team members felt comfortable putting their ideas on the table there as well. Absent this “pre-existing condition,” the task of building such a culture from scratch would have made the implementation of a DE process infinitely more difficult; leveraging and maintaining that culture in the PLC space was a less daunting task.

### **Connection-focused facilitation**

Carving out time for reviewing timely, accessible, goals-aligned data is one logistical factor that may increase the likelihood of evaluation use. However, deeper ramifications for use lie in how that time is spent. One challenge for me as a facilitator was how to make PLC discussions last outside of the two hours or so a month in which they occurred. Through trial and error, I realized that “making it last” depended on making connections. Namely, it is important that efforts are made to connect the content of meetings to the work that happens outside of them, and to maintain continuity of emergent ideas by bringing them back and building upon them. With Change, this took the form of starting PLCs with a brief summary of key points from the previous meeting, highlighting instances when new data served to confirm or contradict previous assertions, interjecting with a reminder of a theme from a previous discussion relevant to the current topic at hand, or flat-out asking “what, if anything, does this mean for the development of the coaching model?” Embeddedness in the program helped here, too, as I could point to real-life examples or pose realistic hypotheticals to make those connections. The practice of constantly making connections between data and the day-to-day work of Change was in

essence a capacity-building project; conceptual use in the form of ways of thinking as a team about how we were approaching the work.

In addition to in-the-moment decisions of *how* and *with whom* to engage in discussion, informed by my program experience, there was also a level of deciding *when* intervention was necessary to keep us focused on the data and its implications. Just as Change team members identified with critical conversations, talking about something is only a halfway mark (see Chapter 5.5). It is not enough to surface the thought-provoking, the unexpected, the troubling, or the novel. For learning to stretch beyond the confines of a stimulating conversation, discussion must constantly bring discussants back to how it relates to what a program is trying to achieve. For example, in the opening example of Chapter 5.2, considering questions of how much a person can/can't grow and change was an interesting, fruitful conversation until it started to become repetitive. Reintroducing the question of what we as a program think is reasonable, and how could we take steps to address that through the model, allowed us to reorient, and reconnect, to the evaluand. I wasn't always able to steer the discussion in this manner, though, a challenge I will explore in the final section of this chapter.

### **Attending to In Vivo Use**

The facilitated, dialogic emphasis of Change's DE process yielded rich conversations in which programmatic insights about coaching model development could be identified. In interviews team members could recount, to varying extents, ways in which the yearlong process informed development of the model, could cite trends that stuck with them, and could point to examples of instrumental use. However, these impressions were necessarily generalized when filtered through the complex cognitive processes of memory and did not reflect the details of insights that emerged from interactions between team members during specific PLC

conversations. I propose the term "in-vivo use" to describe the type of in-the-moment conceptual use that manifests in extemporaneous flashes of understanding, and the posing of deep questions in response to data and to one another. This study suggests that in vivo use has high potential to occur, and to be programmatically meaningful, in DE settings. The emergence of in vivo use supports the existing literature on DE in its emphasis on process but argues that integrating a sociocultural perspective is useful for framing and appreciating how we learn in ways that aren't necessarily directly traceable but are no less consequential for use. In other words, analysis of evaluator-facilitated conversations with program team members around program data remain understudied as a locus of evaluation use and influence.

The power of facilitated data discussions and the in vivo use that can occur locates the value of evaluation not so much for the data it yields but for the opportunity for inquiry and reflection that occurs during the process. In vivo use is situated within a shift in the field towards increased stakeholder interaction and engagement, with its emphasis on innovative data collection tools and dissemination. Indeed, if a key lever for use lies in the social and distributed cognition processes articulated by sociocultural theorists, then written reports – oriented towards the solitary reader consuming information without the benefit of a team with which to process, respond, question, and build upon – seem an even less efficient deliverable than presentations influenced by data visualization best practices and the type of discourse strategies teachers learn about for use with their own students. Future evaluators (especially those with an interest in DE) could benefit from more training energy invested in developing facilitation competencies and familiarity with group processes. In other words, possibilities for use expand when evaluation is viewed as a “pedagogical undertaking” designed to stimulate learning through dialogue (Schwandt, 2003, p. 357).

## Reflections on challenges

### *Distinguishing productive versus unproductive struggle*

Despite evidence of use and identification of conducive use factors, the DE process was not a straightforward case of PLC discussions equal use. Times in which PLC discussions devolved into critique of the partnership log testify to the limitations of responsiveness, and to the drawbacks of creating evaluation instruments in a developmental environment. Namely, when ideas are in flux, it can be hard to anticipate data needs. It's true that critique of what the tool *didn't* show led to conversations that clarified what we *did* want to see (see Chapter 5.3), both in terms of data and in terms of coaching model activities such as critical conversations. However, other times critique constituted a tangent that was a hindrance to facilitating the type of connections described in the previous section. It was difficult to discern where inquiry into the nature of ideal data ended, and dissonance in being confronted with data that doesn't fit with what one believes to be true begins. In other words, it was healthy that we struggled with where the tool was helpful and where it wasn't helpful. But the reason for the struggle varied, and those variations meant the difference between productive critique and unproductive dismissal of data. Pinpointing that difference posed a unique facilitation challenge.

Another area in which it was challenging to maintain connection-focused facilitation concerned how well program team members knew individual Fellows and Partner Teachers. This proved to be a double-edged sword as team members wrestled with how responsive they should be to data vis a vis the coaching model. On one hand, intimate knowledge of program participants helped team members contextualize data and be more discerning when determining what was applicable broadly versus what may have been particular to a specific situation. On the other hand, when the tendency to individualize was a dominant response, we ran the risk of

rationalizing bigger picture findings away. This case study suggests that in programs with a strong one-on-one component (i.e., where program staff work very closely with individuals and know their situations well), personal connections are an asset but can also be a liability when it comes to program learning.

Both dimensions of the productive struggle quandary – when to intervene in discussion of tools and when to intervene in discussion of individual data points – are consistent with the literature on how evaluations are used in decision-making, namely, with how working knowledge of the program interacts with evaluative evidence (Kennedy, 1982). Alkin and King (2017) classify a use factor of “particular significance” to be “the relationship of the evaluation to existing competing information either generally available or as part of the working knowledge of major players in the program” (p. 447). Various heuristics and cognitive biases (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974) dictate that prior knowledge and personal experience is inevitably a filter through which evidence is interpreted, and acceptance or rejection often dependent on how well new data can be integrated into prior beliefs about what is happening. It must be acknowledged and considered that PLC discussions frequently served a confirmatory or affirmative function rather than an exploratory one, as captured in Carol’s interview comment, “a lot of the information validates ‘this is where we need to go’” (8-11-17). This situation begs a question for future research with both theoretical and practical implications: what practical strategies can we use to overcome the confirmation bias (Wason, 1960; Nickerson, 1998) that causes us to filter out information contrary to established belief? As evidenced by crises in spheres ranging from medicine to politics, this is a challenge for which data moderators of all stripes need better tools to address.

***Creating multipurpose tools for individual and program learning***

Chapter 5.3 highlighted the Change team's concern for Fellows' and Partner Teachers' experience with research and evaluation activities. As a group of educators, they were constantly asking how a given activity would support participant learning. They wanted teachers to *gain* something from their participation. The logs and audio memos were intended to act as a tool for learning even as they set the program up for greater insight into the nature of its teaching partnerships. The log items were meant to attune participants to elements of their interactions that matter to the program, and the audio memo aspired to prompt the kind of reflective thinking the program believes is important for professional growth.

Though on the whole the open-ended responses on the logs and audio memos were coherent and thoughtful, questions about the value teachers placed on the exercise came up periodically in PLC sessions as a point of skepticism and were corroborated by the last-day-of-log survey items. This demonstrated how crucial it is to incentivize participation by making evaluative activities function as more than just data for "research" or for "the program." Otherwise, one runs the risk of poor participation or lackluster effort because it is viewed as just another box one has to check. This phenomenon is deeply tied to the concept of credibility discussed previously. Whereas I would argue I established a strong baseline credibility with *Change program team members*, I did not establish a parallel level of credibility of evaluation efforts with *Change program participants*. Attendance at program activities such as Partners in Practice established me as a familiar face among teachers so requests for log participation were coming from a known entity rather than from an impersonal researcher. At the February Partners in Practice seminar we made a point to bring back highlights from the first round of logs to the teachers. However, this was not sufficient to increase buy-in. And, as I explore in the next paragraph, when time-squeezed participants do not view the effort as "worth it" – due to a

combination of past experience, messaging around the purpose, and connection to skill-building – participation suffers (either in quantity or quality), and the credibility of the *data* is in subsequently brought in to question.

A challenge of collecting evaluative data in the context of a program like Change is its intensity. The program demands a lot of its participants, especially Fellows. They are full-time graduate students and full-time student teachers. They have coursework assignments, lesson planning obligations, and credentialing requirements that don't always overlap. They live and breathe the program for the first twelve months they are in it. Partner Teachers must also fulfill obligations well beyond those required of guiding teachers involved in traditional teacher preparation programs. Making additional claims on teachers' time, then, is a bigger ask than it may be in other programs that request service recipients do a survey or even a more time-consuming activity like an interview or focus group. Evaluation design is inevitably influenced by design of the program; a multipurpose approach merely takes this idea one step further by threading evaluation *into* program design when possible. If one's orientation is evaluation use, multipurpose tools could be a fruitful alternative to squeezing evaluation activities on top of activities geared specifically to program participant learning. That is, wherever possible, evaluation should support the realization of programmatic goals as much as they measure that realization. The less evaluation is an add-on for participants and staff members, the more useful it will be. Activities that serve more than one function in a program context make them both more valuable and more efficient, and thus more likely to continue being implemented and used. Some might argue that this confounds the point of evaluation – and if one is more of a methodological purist, this may be the case. There are undoubtedly methodological trade-offs in

this approach, and therefore it may be best suited to internal, formative, process, and DE purposes rather than to external, summative, and retrospective evaluation purposes.

Thinking more intentionally about evaluation use factors in teacher education may involve re-envisioning what evaluation tools look like. In the previous sections factors for use included goals-aligned design and instruments, resource allocation, team dynamics, and evaluator orientation. We can now add to that list the need for multipurpose, multifunctional tools. Whereas at a minimum, efforts should be made to conduct evaluative activities unobtrusively, a more proactive approach would look for opportunities for dual- or triple purpose data collection. Since evaluation activities can be a way for a program to announce and reinforce its equity stance and social justice orientation, it makes sense to situate a call for greater research on multipurpose evaluation strategies within the scant literature on evaluation as intervention (Patton, 1998). Evaluators should actively look for opportunities to collect data that function on both individual- and program- learning levels. The call to identify areas for synergy between individual and program learning activities is therefore a call for more multipurpose evaluation design.

### **Intersection of evaluation and teacher education: Shared approaches to learning**

Change emphasizes sociocultural theory (Vygotskiĭ, 1978) as the basis for equitable, transformative education practice rooted in understandings of the role community and interpersonal relationships play in establishing a nurturing learning environment. Related constructs such as situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) are as applicable to lifelong learners as they are to K-12 students and have been widely adopted as a framework for professional development. This outlook converges with evaluation theorists who emphasize dialogue and interaction as the basis for learning in evaluation (e.g., Cousins & Whitmore, 1998; King, 2008; Preskill, 2008). In Stake's approach to



research and evaluation, “interpretation and meaning emerge from social interactions between people looking together at observed patterns...in this regard [it] recalls and is consistent with the social adaptive process of coevolution and co-creation between the social innovator and the developmental evaluator” (Patton, 2011, p. 64). DE therefore finds resonance with other modes of investigation familiar to teachers and teacher educators. Whether it’s action research, critical inquiry (Rossman & Rallis, 2000), practitioner inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001) or descriptive inquiry (Charles, 2017), the common factor is a social process of knowledge generation in which researcher participation is acknowledged and encouraged. All come down to the basic idea that getting people in a room who are involved in a program to talk about program data is a process that can lead to meaningful change.

In the end, K-12 education, teacher preparation, research and evaluation are about *learning*; these fields would therefore be enhanced by greater integration and cross-pollination of group process approaches to their work. And yet despite Scriven’s contention that evaluation is a “transdiscipline” due to its applicability to other disciplines (2008), in practice evaluation is often a functional silo, separate from other branches of education research. The scholars and practitioners referenced above would also agree that reflection and knowledge co-construction is not an end in of itself, but rather a step towards social innovation and change. In their critique of teacher preparation research, Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) echo one of the dynamics with which the Change team itself struggled, namely, the lack of clear pathways connecting teacher learning to student learning. More joint efforts between responsive, facilitation-oriented evaluators and teacher preparation programs should be explored for the potential of transdisciplinary partnerships to address this need.

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

As a preservice teacher education entity, Change aspires to continuously strengthen its ability to prepare community teachers and school leaders who are empowered to be effective, critical agents in addressing the daunting challenges of educational access and equity. A DE mindset helped direct the collection of certain data others, which was then taken seriously by team members due to its relevance. The goal was not for the developmental process to be an isolated driver of change (that would be an unrealistic presumption), but rather for it to be *a part* of how the team thought about what they were doing and why they were doing it. Systematically collected data was used to strengthen existing understandings based on program experience and anecdotal evidence, which had the effect of clarifying, streamlining, and amplifying known issues. In the end, the PLC time devoted to data discussions constituted only a small part of what team members did on a day to day basis; a context-sensitive, DE approach includes an appreciation of that reality.

The dialogue in which team members engaged each other at PLC meetings grounded program aspirations in institutional and attitudinal realities, opening room to debate and wrestle with ideas about Change's theories of action and change (Chapters 5.1 and 5.2). The pursuit of authenticity in data, and by extension in the coaching model (Chapter 5.3), touched upon the challenges of making sense of data in a small program context and of making data collection instruments meaningful for program participants. Conceptual use flowing from the DE process can be traced to more concrete, instrumental outcomes as well. While by and large the PLC conversations did not alter individuals' understanding of equity-informed teaching and learning as the goal of the teaching partnership model, they did sharpen insight into what was *missing* that

needed to be more explicitly articulated in the model and conveyed to Partner Teachers and Fellows (Chapters 5.4 and 5.5).

The identification of gaps in the data reviewed during PLCs connected to challenges in adopting an equity stance already familiar to those around the table, such as the difficulty in having explicit conversations about equity in the context of student teaching, and a lack of connection between the recognition of inequity and the taking of action. Criticism of what the data *didn't* show created a forum to debate and resolve key tensions in developing the model, namely, what was the expectation of critical conversations (formal versus informal spaces), and where was the most effective place to intervene (site visits and Partners in Practice sessions); what was required in order for authentic conversations to occur (relational trust), and how could the coaching model better connect verbal engagement with equity issues to teaching practice that would disrupt inequitable systems (having partners co-construct an equity action).

Several factors emerged in this case study that were relevant to promoting and inhibiting the generative potential of team data-processing for program development purposes. These include a foundation of belief in the value of evaluation; a team culture of critical reflection and respectful engagement with each other around professional practice; and a proactive role for an embedded developmental evaluator who builds credibility through the cultivation of program knowledge and relationships and focuses on facilitating discussions that encourage participants to make connections between program data and program development. Challenges in DE practice include judging the difference between productive and unproductive struggles with data and finding ways to make evaluation tools serve a meaningful learning function for program participants. Finally, modes of group inquiry predicated on sociocultural learning theories

suggest that increased convergence of DE and education research is a project worthy of further experimentation and pursuit.

## Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Introductory statement. I really want your honest perspective on how you experienced the PLC discussion process, what takeaways you've had if any, and if there were aspects you didn't find helpful, why you felt that way and maybe what you would do differently. I'm not looking for affirmation of what we did this year in PLC. Please be honest.

### *Program/Partnership Understandings*

1. What is your role in Change?
  - a. How long have you been with the program?
  - b. What were you doing before?
  - c. What attracted you to this position?
2. \*How do you define success in your work? What makes you feel successful?
  - a. How do you measure it in terms of what you see with Fs, PTs, classrooms, etc.?
  - b. How do you know if something needs to be "fixed" or changed in the way you and/or the program approaches its work?
3. From your perspective, what is Change's goal/goals?
  - a. How well do you think the program is achieving these goals?
  - b. What kind of information would you point to in order to support your case? [probe for the counter – what is it still struggling with? How do you know?]
  - c. DIRECTORS ONLY: What kinds of information do you think various groups (government, school partners, CUSD) find most convincing? How is that different or similar to the information *you* find most convincing?

### *Research & evaluation climate and context*

4. DIRECTORS: What kind of activities do you do or participate in that you consider research or evaluation? Describe those activities. [probe for DOE reporting requirements, involvement with external evaluation]
  - a. What priority are these activities for the program?
  - b. To what extent do you feel these activities directly support your own work and the program? How?

ADVISORS: What kind of activities do you do or participate in that you consider research or evaluation? Describe those activities.

- a. Which of these activities do you feel supports your own work? How?
  - b. [If organic] Do you see a difference between research and evaluation? [Probe for positive or negative associations, contexts for evaluation]
  - c. In your experience, how much of a role does research and evaluation play in making decisions about the program? [probe for examples]
5. DIRECTORS: In your experience, how much of a role does research and evaluation play in program decision-making? [probe for examples]
    - a. [If organic] Do you see a difference between research and evaluation?
    - b. What kinds of data do you use to inform program improvement? Is this different from the types of data the external evaluator collects for its reports to the DOE?

ADVISORS: Have you read any of the evaluation and/or research documents that Change has produced? (e.g., external evaluation reports)

- c. If yes, which ones, and did you find them useful? Why or why not? [probe for relevance to work]

*Nature and extent of use*

6. How would you describe the purpose of the PLC meetings this year, in your own words?
7. Here is a reminder of the program data discussed at each meeting. [see document]  
Thinking back to these PLC conversations about program data specifically, what do you still remember?
8. As I've been reviewing the conversations, it's clear we spoke a lot about what teaching partnerships should look like and achieve.
  - a. What do you remember about those conversations?
  - b. To what extent did those conversations change or add your understandings of what Change is trying to accomplish? Please elaborate.
  - c. You have one perspective because you work primarily with the [Fellows/Partner Teachers/program team members]. To what extent did the data we discussed apply directly to your work?
9. The log was meant to be a catalyst to capture what equity looks like in this teaching partnership. In your opinion, how successful was it in this respect? Was there anything you wished the logs would have shown that they didn't?
10. Was there ever a time when program data (logs, audio memos IQA, quickwrites) came up in conversation with colleagues or informed a discussion outside the PLC context? Please elaborate.
11. I'd like to talk a bit about some changes being made this year to the program. For each of these, I'd like you to think about how much would you attribute these alterations to the PLC conversations and/or program data you were exposed to as part of that process? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "no influence at all" and 10 being "completely due to the PLC conversations." In other words, do you think you would have ended up there without the PLC space?
  - a. The addition of the action piece to the reciprocal learning partnership.
  - b. The planned structure of Partners in Practice
  - c. The way in which Partner Teacher and Fellow expectations and responsibilities are being described verbally and in the handbook.
  - d. Any other shifts or changes?
12. Do you feel the time and effort required to collect this data and discuss it as group is worth the benefits? Explain why/why not?
13. Are there areas of the program that you wish you knew more about but for whatever reason, are unable to obtain richer information on?
  - a. What kinds of information would you want to have?
  - b. How would you use that information?
14. How was the way the program looked at data this year different or similar to...
  - a. Your experience as a teacher/your experience in other organizations?

- b. Your previous experience with Change?

*Factors that inhibit/encourage use*

15. What makes (or what *would* make) research and evaluation more useful in informing and improving your practice as a [position]? For the program as a whole?
  - a. How closely does what we did that year embody those characteristics?
  - b. What would you do differently?
16. I always feel that sometimes you can have a great conversation but it's hard to retain and remember that information. What would make program data discussions more 'sticky' (e.g., sending out a summary, follow up conversations...)?
17. What are the challenges for using data for program improvement in a teacher education program like this? In teacher education in general?
18. DIRECTORS ONLY: Are there different policies, expectations, or incentives either at the accreditation or state level that you think would better support Change/teacher education programs' use of data?
19. DIRECTORS ONLY: As UTRs and teacher education continues to evolve, what advice might you give for new programs about how to evaluate their progress in a way that actually gets used?
20. Any closing thoughts or comments? Was there anything you thought I would ask that I didn't?

## Appendix B: Pilot Teaching Partnership Log Spring 2016

Q1 Were you at school with your mentor today?

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: Q4 If Q1 = No Q2 During class today I:*

	Not at all	1-25% of class time	26-50% of class time	51-75% of class time	76-100% of class time
Observed while my mentor taught.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taught while my mentor observed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-taught with my mentor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3 Not counting class time, I spent time **in-person** with my mentor today...(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- on the way to work
- during lunch
- during a planning period
- in a staff or faculty meeting
- in a meeting with a parent
- in a meeting with a student
- in between classes
- during an after school program or extracurricular activity (e.g., student group, sports team, yearbook)
- on the way home from work
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



Q4 **Other than in-person**, today I communicated with my mentor via (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- Email
  - Text message
  - Phone call
  - Cloud Services (e.g. Googledocs, Box, Dropbox, iCloud)
  - Social Media (e.g. Facebook, edmodo)
- 

Q5 Today my mentor and I discussed: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- Lesson planning
  - Curriculum content
  - Classroom management
  - An instructional practice or strategy
  - A particular student or group of students in our class
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If Q5 = Lesson planning*

Q5.1 Please describe the nature of your interaction around LESSON PLANNING (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- My mentor offered me advice or suggestions.
  - I asked my mentor for **their opinion**.
  - My mentor **asked me for my** opinion.
  - My mentor used** student assessment data to explain a decision to me.
  - I used** student assessment data to explain a decision to my mentor.
  - My mentor brought** my attention to something they observed in class.
  - I brought** my mentor's attention to something I observed in class.
  - I articulated** to my mentor how I thought students were understanding a concept.
  - My mentor articulated** to me how they thought students were understanding a concept.
  - I expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor asked me to walk them through my thought process.
  - We discussed a plan for overcoming a challenge.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
-

Display This Question:

If Q5 = Curriculum content

Q5.2 Please describe the nature of your interaction around CURRICULUM CONTENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- My mentor offered me advice or suggestions.
  - I asked my mentor for **their opinion**.
  - My mentor **asked me for my** opinion.
  - My mentor used** student assessment data to explain a decision to me.
  - I used** student assessment data to explain a decision to my mentor.
  - My mentor brought** my attention to something they observed in class.
  - I brought** my mentor's attention to something I observed in class.
  - I articulated** to my mentor how I thought students were understanding a concept.
  - My mentor** articulated to me how they thought students were understanding a concept.
  - I expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor asked me to walk them through my thought process.
  - We discussed a plan for overcoming a challenge.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
-

*Display This Question:*

*If Q5 = Classroom management*

Q5.3 Please describe the nature of your interaction around CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- My mentor offered me advice or suggestions.
  - I asked my mentor for **their opinion**.
  - My mentor **asked me for my** opinion.
  - My mentor used** student assessment data to explain a decision to me.
  - I used** student assessment data to explain a decision to my mentor.
  - My mentor brought** my attention to something they observed in class.
  - I brought** my mentor's attention to something I observed in class.
  - I articulated** to my mentor how I thought students were understanding a concept.
  - My mentor** articulated to me how they thought students were understanding a concept.
  - I expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor asked me to walk them through my thought process.
  - We discussed a plan for overcoming a challenge.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
-

*Display This Question:*

*If Q5 = An instructional practice or strategy*

Q5.4 Please describe the nature of your interaction around AN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE OR STRATEGY (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- My mentor offered me advice or suggestions.
  - I asked my mentor for **their opinion**.
  - My mentor **asked me for my** opinion.
  - My mentor used** student assessment data to explain a decision to me.
  - I used** student assessment data to explain a decision to my mentor.
  - My mentor brought** my attention to something they observed in class.
  - I brought** my mentor's attention to something I observed in class.
  - I articulated** to my mentor how I thought students were understanding a concept.
  - My mentor** articulated to me how they thought students were understanding a concept.
  - I expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor expressed** frustration.
  - My mentor asked me to walk them through my thought process.
  - We discussed a plan for overcoming a challenge.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
-

*Display This Question:*

*If Q5 = A particular student or group of students in our class*

Q5.5 Please describe the nature of your interaction around A PARTICULAR STUDENT OR GROUP OF STUDENTS IN OUR CLASS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- My mentor offered me advice or suggestions.
- I asked my mentor for **their opinion**.
- My mentor **asked me for my** opinion.
- My mentor used** student assessment data to explain a decision to me.
- I used** student assessment data to explain a decision to my mentor.
- My mentor brought** my attention to something they observed in class.
- I brought** my mentor's attention to something I observed in class.
- I articulated** to my mentor how I thought students were understanding a concept.
- My mentor** articulated to me how they thought students were understanding a concept.
- I expressed** frustration.
- My mentor expressed** frustration.
- My mentor asked me to walk them through my thought process.
- We discussed a plan for overcoming a challenge.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q6 Today my mentor and I talked about: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- the community we teach in
  - resources we have or don't have access to for our class
  - our beliefs about education
  - our personal identities in relationship to our students (positionality)
  - assumptions we have about certain students
  - our students' cultural heritage(s)
  - issues around race
  - issues around gender
  - issues around sexuality
  - issues around class
  - issues around authority and power
  - ableism
-

Q7 Aside from work-related things, today my mentor and I talked about (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, IF ANY)

- a personal issue **I am dealing with**
- a personal issue **they are dealing with**
- my family** (parents, kids, relatives, spouse, partner)
- their family** (parents, kids, relatives, spouse, partner)
- my** upcoming social plans
- their** upcoming social plans
- my experience** in Change
- their experience** in Change

Q8 I would characterize my interaction with my mentor today as:

	1	2	3	4	5	
One-sided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Collaborative
Disrespectful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Respectful
Uncomfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Comfortable

Q9 In an audio memo of no more than 2 minutes, please reflect on what your interactions with your mentor were like today.

**If you have an iPhone:**

1. Use the VOICE MEMO app to record your audio memo.
2. When you are finished, save the recording as "YOUR INITIALS DATE" (for example, TS 4-5-16).
3. Finally, hit the upload button ( ) and select mail. Please email the file to [EMAIL] with the subject line "Change Apprentice Audio Memo."

**If you have an android phone**

1. Use the SOUND RECORDER app to record your audio memo.
2. When you are finished, save the recording as "YOUR INITIALS DATE" (for example, TS 4-5-16).
3. Finally, hit the upload button ( ) and select mail. Please email the file to [EMAIL] with the subject line "Change Apprentice Audio Memo."

## Appendix C: Teaching Partnership Log 2016-2017

### Partner Teacher Form

Intro: This brief log is a tool to help you reflect on your experience, as well as to inform how the program supports Fellows and Partner Teachers. We encourage you to use this process to start conversations with your Fellow!

This is not an evaluation of you personally and will not have any effect on your participation in Change. Your name will only be used for the purpose of providing you with an individualized report, otherwise your responses will be anonymized.

---

Q1 Were you at school today?

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Were you at school today? = No*

---

Q1.1 Was your Fellow at school today?

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Was your Fellow at school today? = No*

---

Q2 I wrote in our reflection journal today.

- Yes
  - No
-

Q3a. Today my Fellow and I talked about (check all that apply or 'none of these')...  
(NOTE: These discussions did not have to take place in-person.)

- the community we teach in
- our beliefs about education
- our personal identities in relationship to our students
- our personal identities in relationship to each other
- assumptions we have about certain students
- our students' cultural heritage(s)
- none of these

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Today my Fellow and I talked about... = the community we teach in*

*Or Today my Fellow and I talked about... = our beliefs about education*

*Or Today my Fellow and I talked about... = our personal identities in relationship to our students*

*Or Today my Fellow and I talked about... = our personal identities in relationship to each other*

*Or Today my Fellow and I talked about... = assumptions we have about certain students*

*Or Today my Fellow and I talked about... = our students' cultural heritage(s)*

Q3b. Can you elaborate on the context and nature of your discussion about the topic(s) you indicated?  
(Please be specific. For example, if you selected "assumptions we have about certain students", please talk about what the assumption was.)

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Q4a. I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me (check all that apply or 'none of these'):

- issues around authority and power
- issues around race
- issues around gender
- issues around sexual orientation
- issues around class/socioeconomic status
- Issues around language
- ableism
- none of these

---

*Display This Question:*

*If I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me... = issues around authority and power*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me...= issues around race*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me...= issues around gender*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me...= issues around sexual orientation*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me .... = issues around class/socioeconomic status*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me... = issues around language*

*Or I experienced something today that touched upon the following for me... = ableism*

Q4b. Did you address this subject/any of these subjects you indicated with your Fellow?

*Note: These discussions did not have to take place in-person.*

- Yes
- No

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Did you address this subject/any of these subjects you indicated with your Fellow... = Yes*

Q4c. How did you address this subject/any of these subjects? Please be specific.

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*Display This Question:*

*If Did you address this subject/any of these subjects you indicated with your Fellow? ... = No*

Q4d. What was the main reason you decided not to address this subject/these subjects?

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Q5 Today (check all that apply or 'none of these')...

- My Fellow helped me think about my own thinking.
- I learned something new from my Fellow.
- My Fellow and I had different interpretations of something that happened in our class.
- none of these

Q6a. I would characterize my interaction with my Fellow today as...

	1	2	3	4	5	
One-sided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Collaborative

Q6b. I would characterize my interaction with my Fellow today as...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Uncomfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Comfortable

Q6c. I would characterize my interaction with my Fellow today as...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Guarded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Open

Q6d. I would characterize my interaction with my Fellow today as...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Disempowering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Empowering

<sup>17</sup>In an audio memo of no more than 2 minutes, please reflect on what your relationship with your Fellow was like this week.

**If you have an iPhone:** 1. Use the VOICE MEMO app to record your audio memo. 2. When you are finished, save the recording as "YOUR INITIALS DATE" (for example, TS 102416). 3. Finally, hit the upload button and select mail. Please email the file to [email] with the subject line "Change Partner Teacher Audio Memo."

**If you have an android phone:** 1. Use the SOUND RECORDER app to record your audio memo. 2. When you are finished, save the recording as "YOUR INITIALS DATE" (for example, TS 102416). 3. Finally, hit the upload button and select mail. Please email the file to [email] with the subject line "Change Partner Teacher Audio Memo."

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<sup>17</sup> Included every day in Round 1. Included only on Days 4 and 8 in Round 2.

## Appendix D: Teaching Partnership Log 2017-2018

### *Fellow Version*

Intro This brief log is a tool to help you reflect on your experience, as well as to inform how the program supports the development of reciprocal learning partnerships. We encourage you to use this process to start conversations with your Partner Teacher!

This is not an evaluation of you personally and will not have any effect on your participation in Change.

Q1 Were you at school today?

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Were you at school today? = No*

---

Q1.1 Was your Partner Teacher at school today?

- Yes
- No

*Skip To: End of Survey If Was your Partner Teacher at school today? = No*

---

Q2 Today my Partner Teacher and I talked about an assumption that one or both of us holds.

- Yes
- No

*Display This Question:*

*If Today my Partner Teacher and I talked about an assumption that one or both of us holds. = Yes*

Q2a. Please describe the assumption(s). What was the context in which this came up? How did you talk about it with your partner? What did you take away from the conversation?

---

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Today my Partner Teacher and I talked about an assumption that one or both of us holds.*

*= No*

Q2b. What was the *main* reason for this?

- I did not observe any assumptions playing out.
- I recognized an assumption that I/we/they seemed to be making, but we did not have time to discuss it.
- I recognized an assumption I/we/they seemed to be making, but I did not feel comfortable bringing it up.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*

*If What was the main reason for this? = I recognized an assumption that I/we/they seemed to be making, but we did not have time to discuss it.*

*Or What was the main reason for this? = I recognized an assumption I/we/they seemed to making, but I did not feel comfortable bringing it up.*

Q2b.1 Can you share the assumption(s) in question so we can better understand the topics that can be challenging for partners to discuss?

---

---

---

Q3 Today (check all that apply or 'none of these')...

- My Partner Teacher helped me think about my own thinking.
- I learned something new from my Partner Teacher
- My Partner Teacher and I had different interpretations of something that happened in our class.
- none of these

Q4a. I would characterize our teaching partnership today as...

	1	2	3	4	5	
One-sided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Reciprocal

Q4b In my interactions with my Partner Teacher today I was...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Guarded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Open

Q4c Overall, my interactions with my Partner Teacher today made me feel...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Disempowered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Empowered

Q5 This week my Partner Teacher and I interacted around the co-constructed equity action we discussed in Partners in Practice (this could relate to planning, implementation, adjusting, reflecting, etc.)

- Yes
- No

*Display This Question:*

*If This week my Partner Teacher and I interacted around the co-constructed equity action we discussed. = Yes*

Q5a Please describe the interaction. How do you feel about any discussion that occurred and/or steps that were taken towards realizing your equity action goal?

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If This week my Partner Teacher and I interacted around the co-constructed equity action we discussed... = No*

Q5b What were the main reasons your co-constructed equity action didn't come up? (check all that apply).

- We didn't have time.
- There wasn't anything related to our equity action that we could do this week.
- We haven't decided on an equity action.
- We already implemented our equity action before this week.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Individual Log Report Template

### *Partner Teacher Version*

**Focus Area(s): Identity and Positionality, Issues of Equity, Teaching and Learning**

\*= I was not at school that day.

\*\*= My Fellow was not at school that day.

Today my Fellow and I talked about...	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Total
<i>the community we teach in</i>									
<i>our beliefs about education</i>									
<i>our personal identities in relationship to our students</i>									
<i>our personal identities in relationship to each other</i>									
<i>assumptions we have about our students</i>									
<i>our students' cultural heritage(s)</i>									
<i>none of these</i>									

Day	Elaboration
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	



**Focus Area(s): Identity and Positionality, Issues of Equity, Teaching and Learning**

I experienced something today that touched upon the following subjects for me...	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Total
<i>issues around authority and power</i>									
<i>issues around race</i>									
<i>issues around gender</i>									
<i>issues around sexual orientation</i>									
<i>issues around class/socioeconomic status</i>									
<i>issues around language</i>									
<i>ableism</i>									
<i>none of these</i>									

\*= I was not at school that day.

\*\*= My Fellow was not at school that day.

Day	How did you address this subject/any of these subjects?	What was the main reason you decided not to address this subject/these subjects?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

**Focus Area(s): Reciprocity**

Today...	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Total
<b><i>My Fellow helped me think about my own thinking.</i></b>									
<b><i>I learned something new from my Fellow.</i></b>									
<b><i>My Fellow and I had different interpretations of something that happened in our class.</i></b>									
<b><i>None of these</i></b>									

\*= I was not at school that day.

\*\*= My Fellow was not at school that day.

I would characterize my interactions with my Fellow today as...***	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Average
<b><i>One-sided.....Collaborative</i></b>									
<b><i>Uncomfortable.....Comfortable</i></b>									
<b><i>Guarded.....Open</i></b>									
<b><i>Disempowering.....Empowering</i></b>									

\*= I was not at school that day.

\*\*= My Fellow was not at school that day.

\*\*\*=On a scale of 1-5, going from left to right.

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