

“IT’S LIKE PROFESSIONAL FOOD”: SUSTAINING EDUCATORS THROUGH
SERVICE-LEARNING

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Elisabeth Grace Fornaro
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Examining Committee Members:

Dr. Maia Cucchiara, Advisory Chair, Policy, Organization, and Leadership Studies
Dr. Wanda Brooks, Teaching and Learning
Dr. Novella Keith, Emeritus Faculty in Urban Education
Dr. Timothy Patterson, Teaching and Learning
Dr. Eddie Fergus, Policy, Organization, and Leadership Studies

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examined the assumptions and motivations that shape teachers' participation in a service-learning practice and community of practice and how their participation affects their professional practice and identity. Framed by Santoro's (2013) model of teacher integrity, defined as an educators' ability to teach in alignment with their commitments, it presents an understanding of challenges to participants' integrity, and how they mitigate those challenges. Heuristically, this project can be understood as the study of two components conducted using an ethnographic perspective over the course of 16 months: (1) the study of the community of practice and (2) the study of how its characteristics manifest in practice. It involved 100 hours of participant observation, 31 interviews, and the collection of artifact data. Data promote service-learning as a vital pedagogy by shedding light on its potential to sustain urban educators whose integrity is challenged by discourses, policies, and practices that emphasize competition and social efficiency rather than more holistic understandings of education as a civic and social good.

Findings show how and why urban educators' professional and personal commitments are intertwined with beliefs about social justice and democracy. Because of their work with student populations underprivileged and marginalized by systemic situations, meeting students' social and emotional needs, honoring student voice, and teaching citizenship skills were important to participants. Conditions in their urban schools— a lack of curricular autonomy; insufficient time and resources to meet students' needs; and deficient support systems— challenged participants commitments. As a result, participants were pushed to participate in service-learning and a service-learning

community of practice. In addition, several characteristics of the community of practice *pulled* participants to participate: a framework for integrating quality service-learning into school- or school district-mandated curriculum; pedagogical and emotional supports specifically needed by urban teachers; and recognition that countered discouragingly negative perceptions of urban teachers. These resources and supports helped urban teachers' fulfill their professional and personal commitments, validated their work, and sustained them in the profession.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my husband, Chris, and our children, Eleanor and Parker, who were with me every step of the way. I love you. Chris— your partnership, patience, and unconditional encouragement made this happen. Thank you for meeting my stress with calm and being an exceptional father. Eleanor and Parker— I hope that each school year you have teachers as inspired and dedicated to your holistic growth as those who participated in this study.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Dominant perceptions of the purpose of education have changed over time. Bruce and Pecore (2013) argue that in the past there was a major movement within public education to develop a critical, socially engaged intelligence appropriate to democracy. This understanding situates learning within social, community, or political contexts and is often rooted in progressive educational values that include education for democracy or social justice. Yet today, education is narrowed to acquiring skills for social efficiency, mobility, and global economic competition (Bruce & Pecore, 2013).

As a number of scholars and journalists have observed (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016a; Phillips, 2015; Santoro, 2011, 2017), the current policy context in the U.S. has left many teachers feeling disengaged and dissatisfied. While these conclusions are warranted, in totality they paint a dismal picture of the teaching profession. Meanwhile, there is a less examined and equally important point ignored in this conversation. While far too many teachers are drawn to leave teaching (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016), there are numerous teachers who stay and are successful teachers of urban students. Accordingly, it is important to explore the experiences of teachers who remain in the profession, what engages them, and how they stay satisfied professionally. This project focuses on how and why teachers in urban contexts use service-learning to stay engaged and satisfied, countering negative perceptions of urban teachers.

Service learning benefits *students* socially and academically, all while promoting their civic engagement (Celio, Durlak & Dymnicki, 2011; Newman, Dantzler & Coleman, 2015; Reed & Butler, 2015). Yet, the national spotlight on service-learning, which was especially strong in the 1990s and 2000s, as a way to increase civic

engagement (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Kahne & Westheimer, 1996; Kielsmeier, 2000) has faded as new understandings of the purpose of education and their related policies have gained traction. This dissertation reminds us of the importance of service-learning, positing it as a way to also engage *teachers* and highlighting its potential to mitigate attrition.

This project identifies motivating factors behind teachers' participation in Engaging Classrooms in Learning for Action (ECLA), a community of practice that supports urban teachers in implementing service-learning in their classrooms. It presents analysis of observation, interview, and artifact data over the course of 16 months. It asks what assumptions and motivations shape participation in ECLA and service-learning, and how participation affects professional identity. It underscores service-learning as a vital pedagogy by shedding light on its potential to (1) foreground other purposes of education, such as social justice and civic education, within the constraints of current educational policies and (2) engage and satisfy urban educators.

Framed using Santoro's (2013) model of teacher integrity, this dissertation provides a more nuanced understanding of urban educators' professional and personal commitments than is offered in existing literature. It shows how and why participants teaching integrity was intertwined with beliefs about social justice and democracy unique to educators in urban contexts working with student populations underprivileged and marginalized by systemic situations (Milner, 2008). It also identifies experiences, resources, and supports (both pedagogical and emotional) that helped urban teachers' fulfill their professional and personal commitments, validated their work, and sustained them in the profession.

Context

Largely, teaching is desirable because it is intrinsically— ethically, cognitively, or emotionally— satisfying. Yet, many teachers find that in today’s educational environment the intrinsic rewards of teaching are not easily accessible. Today, many teachers are faced with education reforms that challenge them and leave them feeling unsatisfied with their work (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Day, 2002; Dunn, 2015; Santoro, 2011, 2013; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011; van Ven, Slegers & van de Ven, 2005). Moreover, many educators teach in ways that conflict with their professional principles, many become uncomfortable with what is asked of them, and many leave the profession (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Santoro 2011, 2013; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011). Educational leadership, policymakers, schools of education, practitioners, and other stakeholders require an analysis of how teachers react to current educational policies and practices. This dissertation provides stakeholders with an understanding, generally overlooked in existing literature, of the reactions to reforms of those who *remain* in the profession— what motivates them, and how they stay satisfied professionally.

Today, education can be described as grounded in the argument that accountability to standards-based testing results in effective schools: “better test scores have come to be equated with what it means to be well educated, to work in more rewarding jobs, and ultimately, to contribute to a stronger economy” (Meier, 2009, p. 22). To meet these purposes, instruction is guided by “scientifically based” teaching strategies involving commercially produced curriculum and scripted lessons (Santoro, 2011). Academic learning measured by standardized tests is used to hold teachers accountable

for their performance (Sanger, 2012). Performances on quantitative measures of learning, or standardized tests, are perceived as the objective of education (Sanger, 2012). Thus, accountability and standardization have become the themes of current education agendas and teachers' instruction is expected to address standardized objectives.

Teachers' professional identities are being challenged because the role has grown increasingly deprofessionalized (Ball, 2003; Day, 2002). Consequences for teachers include threatening their sense of agency, encouraging them to comply to reforms uncritically, and challenging their professional identity (Day, 2002). "Teachers' concerns about the means and aims of education are constrained within the current pedagogical policy environment that demands fidelity and rule-following over democratic engagement with principles, values, and ideals about teaching" (Santoro, 2016, p. 269). Current standards and accountability-based reform agendas limit teachers' discretion. Moreover, standardization and accountability create boundaries that limit teachers' ability to teach in dynamic ways that foster creative thinking, intellectual, and emotional growth (Smith & Kovacs, 2011, p. 218). Teachers' success is defined by others, evaluated on their ability to implement prescriptive standards-based lessons, and measured by their students' performance on standardized tests. Therefore, teachers' professional identity is shaped and defined by outside factors, described by Downey (2015) as the contradictions, conflicts, and constraints of teachers' work.

Students and teachers in urban contexts are most impacted by standardization and accountability measures: "weighed down by conditions that middle-class Americans would find intolerable, by and large poor students in cities are also the victims of unsuccessful schools. Raising standards and increasing the use of high-stakes tests have

become common solutions to the problem” (Nieto, 2003, p. 2). Thus, social structures (i.e. under-funded schools or under-resourced neighborhoods) that hamper urban education contexts are often conflated with bad teaching and poor student performance on high stakes tests. This dissertation provides a more nuanced understanding of the consequences shifting conceptions of the purpose of education have for the profession by focusing on the impacts current reform agendas have on urban teachers’ professional identities. Specifically, it focuses on teachers in urban contexts who remain in teaching and are able to maintain their professional principles despite challenges to their professional identity.

This dissertation shows that teachers’ engagement in a service-learning community of practice is, in part, a response to shifting views of the purpose of education and consequences to the profession. Butin (2003) finds that in emphasizing real-world learning and reciprocity between schools and communities, service-learning can be a counterpoint to current educational contexts. He further argues that service-learning promotes an active pedagogy connecting theory and practice, schools and community, and the cognitive to the ethical. Similarly, Britt (2012) finds teachers’ choice to incorporate community service represents varying educational and democratic philosophies such as the student as learner, citizen, or social activist. Therefore, this dissertation demonstrates that the integration of service into standards-based curriculum facilitates a move towards repurposing education away from social efficiency and mobility towards broader democratic values. It provides an essential understanding of how service-learning helps urban teachers teach in ways that align more closely with personal and professional commitments to democratic values and social justice.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers' varying reactions to current reforms and teacher deprofessionalism are at the forefront of educational research (e.g. Ball, 2003; Day, 2002; Santoro 2011, 2013; Smith & Kovacs, 2011). Many studies explore teacher attrition as a result of reforms and challenges to their professionalism (e.g. Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011; Santoro, 2013). Teachers' professional identity is often at stake in current reforms, leading to personal, social, and moral concerns (van Ven, Slegers & van de Ven, 2005). Therefore, teachers' responses to current reform agendas and deprofessionalism can be framed as rational, as opposed to irrational or stemming from teacher deficiencies.

Educational research characterizes attrition and resistance to reforms as "good sense" (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995), "conscientious objection" (Santoro, 2013), and "courageous" (Dunn, 2015). For example, Crocco and Costigan (2007) study the narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy resulting from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which they link to recent high levels of teacher attrition. The teachers in their study, who were new teachers, found that the demands of teaching left them with "shrinking space" for classroom-based decision making, thus, they were unable to use their expertise (Crocco & Costigan, 2007, p. 521). Furthermore, the above teachers found themselves constantly negotiating competing demands of administrators and their own judgments as teachers, which thwarted their ability to focus on the needs of their students, forge meaningful relationships with students, and realize satisfaction from teaching (Crocco & Costigan, 2007). As illustrated by Crocco and Costigan (2007), the narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy can leave teachers unable to teach in meaningful ways.

Thus, attrition is a rational response to current reform agendas and deprofessionalization.

The work of Santoro (2013) and Santoro and Morehouse (2011) reframes the teacher attrition problem. Santoro and Morehouse (2011) propose that when teachers cannot procure the moral and ethical aspects of teaching, they quit the profession as “principled leavers,” a form of conscientious objection (Santoro, 2013; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011). Conscientious objectors leave teaching—which had provided them with satisfaction, purpose, and meaning—due to ethical and moral disagreements with pedagogical policy (Santoro, 2013). Santoro (2011) also focuses on the moral and ethical aspects of teaching. Instead of attributing teacher attrition to burnout (which implies a personal failing), she identifies demoralization, or an inability to find success because of constraints to the teaching profession, as the key factor. She further argues that the burnout discourse is part of a larger discourse placing the onus for various educational “failures” on teachers. In contrast, demoralization stems from an inability to access the moral rewards of teaching due to accountability measures.

Like Santoro, who reframes attrition as a thoughtful and rational response to shifting educational contexts, Achinstein and Ogawa (2006) illuminate cases of “principled resistance” on the part of new teachers. Principled resistance arises from deep commitments to professional principles, as opposed to psychological deficits. They describe principled resistance as overt or covert acts rejecting policies, programs, or other efforts to control teachers’ work. Similar to Santoro (2013), who asserts teacher integrity is influenced by a sense of accountability to the profession as a whole, Achinstein and Ogawa (2006) find that teachers’ professional principles are not idiosyncratic, but rooted in *common* conceptions of teaching and professionalism. The teachers in Achinstein and

Ogawa's (2006) study, in exercising their agency to resist reforms, ended up leaving their positions or the profession as a whole—they experienced such emotional costs as anger, sadness, depression and exhaustion. It is important to understand the ways in which teachers mitigate emotional costs associated with maintaining their professionalism and exercising agency in their classrooms.

The conversation on current reform agendas and a resulting loss of teacher professionalism offers many possible reactions to deprofessionalization such as demoralization, principled leaving, and principled resistance. Many teachers leave when they cannot access the moral rewards of teaching, when they have reached the limits of their resistance, or when they no longer see themselves as effective. Attrition is most problematic in urban school contexts, where teacher stability is needed the most (Nieto, 2003). Educational research and media reports describe teachers as disengaged, dissatisfied, deprofessionalized, and even degraded. While these descriptions are accurate, they generalize teachers and teaching as hopeless. Meanwhile, there is a less examined and equally important point ignored in this conversation. While far too many teachers leave the teaching profession for the above reasons, there are numerous teachers who remain and are successful teachers of students in urban school contexts. Thus, it is important to explore how teachers work to mitigate the contradictions, conflicts, and constraints illustrated in the studies above in order to remain in teaching. Nieto (2003) argues: “anger, then, is not always a negative emotion, especially if it is motivated by a deep caring for students, a hope for the future, and a vision of how it could be otherwise” (p. 74). I assert that participation in a service-learning community of practice and implementing a service-learning pedagogy serves as a productive response to

dissatisfaction and discouragement, allowing teachers to move towards a conception of their work that aligns more closely with their professional identity.

Theoretical Framework

My work is informed by scholarly literature on teacher identity that centers both the personal and the collective, or shared, ethical and emotional aspects of teachers' professional identity. Largely, existing literature reveals teacher professional identity as dynamic and shaped by the influence of internal factors, such as the self (i.e. one's values), and external factors, such as social structures (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Researchers' understandings of professional identity as contextualized and dynamic are rooted in an interpretivist approach to identity, which views the self and society as ongoing and interfacing constructions emerging out of the interactions required by daily life (Mead, 1932). As discussed below, my work is primarily informed by Santoro's (2013) model of teacher integrity and Wegner's (1998) conceptualization of communities of practice.

Teacher Integrity

To explore teachers' identity, I specifically draw on Santoro's (2013) model of teacher *integrity*. Santoro (2013) builds on the work of Campbell (2008), Lortie (1975), and Nias (1989; 1996). According to Campbell (2008), teachers' responsibility to students makes their interactions layered with moral aspects (Campbell, 2008). Santoro's (2013) contribution to the body of work on teachers' professional identity highlights not only the sense of self the teacher brings to their profession through interacting with students, but also the *prior* personal ethical and moral commitments they bring with them as they fulfill the role of teacher. Lortie (1975) and Nias (1989,1996) find that the

teacher's professional identity also involves a sense of commitment to the expectations of the craft of teaching. Santoro (2013) illuminates not only a commitment to the written and unwritten expectations of the teaching profession, but also a commitment to upholding the integrity of the field.

Santoro locates her work on teacher integrity within a body of work on identity and integrity (e.g. Buchmann, 1986; Campbell, 2008; Calhoun, 1995; Hansen, 1995; McFall, 1987, Palmer, 1997). Santoro (2013) draws from McFall (1987) to posit teaching as an "identity-conferring commitment." She also draws from work that finds the personal identity and professional integrity of a teacher to be intertwined (Byrnes, 2009; Palmer, 1997). In terms of identity, she understands the self as a marriage of interests and commitments (Santoro, 2013). Drawing on Dewey and Tufts (1932) and Walker (1997), Santoro writes: "what matters, in terms of integrity, is if there is a reasonable amount of congruence between one's self understood as interests and commitments and one's actions" (Santoro, 2013, p. 566). Integrity, then, is defined as an ability to act in alignment with one's interests and commitments (Santoro, 2013).

Santoro (2011, 2013, 2016) further draws on a body of work on the teaching profession that illuminates the moral and ethical (e.g. Campbell, 2008). While the distinction between morals and ethics in teaching is often blurry, Santoro (2011) defines the ethical and moral dimensions of teaching as follows:

In relation to the ethical, teachers might ask, 'how is what I am doing bettering the world or my self?' The moral dimension harnesses sanctioned and prohibited activities. For instance, teachers might wonder, 'Is this approach a good method for teaching my class given what I know about best practices?' (p. 2).

There is overlap between morals and ethics. Santoro (2011) exemplifies: “for instance, violating moral principles (engaging in practices that seem wrong to the practitioner) may affect one’s ethical life (the practitioner may sense a diminishment of his or her goodness as a teacher and a person)” (p. 2). Morals, then, are what one feels is right and ethics involve living up to one’s morals in their professional endeavors.

While framings of professional identity as a convergence of internal and external factors underscore many approaches to theorizing teacher professional identity, Santoro’s (2013) model of teacher *integrity* explores this convergence with attention to the ethical aspects of the teaching profession. Santoro (2013) uses her model to explore the decisions of teachers who leave the profession, arguing that teachers leave the field as “conscientious objectors” whose professional identity has been “corroded” by external factors—educational contexts that conflict with their personal integrity and the integrity of the teaching profession (p. 565).

Santoro’s (2013) understanding of teacher integrity is used in a body of work on the tensions that arise when teachers’ ethics are compromised. Her work is used to link policies or practices that teachers find to be miseducative to teachers’ moral and ethical values. For example, Margolis, Hodge, and Alexandrou (2014) draw on Santoro’s (2013) work in their contribution to a larger body of research on teacher resistance. They problematize teacher education research and teacher education programs that “hyperfocus” on resilience as opposed to resistance. They assert that teacher education should not prepare teachers for “the way schools are (through adapting to institutions),” but instead should prepare them for “the way schools should be (through transforming institutions)” (p. 392). They draw on Santoro (2011) who finds that such a focus can

“reinforce” “entrenched” and “miseducative” practices (p. 392). Finefter-Rosenbluh and Levison (2015) draw on Santoro (2013) in their discussion of the ethics of grade inflation to assert that grade inflation, in sacrificing academic principles, can diminish teachers’ integrity. Such legitimization of detrimental teaching practices places teachers at an impasse between their profession and their integrity (Santoro, 2013).

I use Santoro’s (2013) understanding of teacher integrity to unpack how participation in a service-learning community of practice serves to uphold teachers’ professional identity in current educational contexts, sustaining them in teaching. Service-learning integrates the academic and ethical aspects of teaching and learning (Butin, 2003). Furthermore, it illuminates education for social justice and civic education, (Britt, 2012). Therefore, understanding teachers’ identity through the lens of integrity facilitates a focus on teachers’ personal cognitive, ethical, and moral commitments. The teachers in this study implement service-learning by way of their participation in a service-learning community of practice. Communities of practice are often grounded in collective emotional, moral, and cognitive commitments (Poletta & Jasper, 2001). Santoro’s (2013) work is especially useful in understanding what assumptions motivate teachers’ participation in a service-learning community of practice because it helps to draw out teachers’ commitment to certain personal and professional values. Therefore, exploring the motivations behind teachers’ participation in this community of practice is best done through the lens of professional integrity because it highlights shared commitments and emotions, as well as the ethics of the profession as a whole.

Three Dimensions of Teacher Integrity

In this section I draw on Santoro's (2013) philosophical study and other work on teaching as an emotive, ethical, and collective profession to explain how I frame this study. According to Santoro (2013), professional integrity involves (1) personal integrity, or, a teacher answering to "her own sense of rectitude, goodness, and justice" and (2) the integrity of teaching, or, "that of the profession, the subject, and the community she serves" (p. 570). Santoro (2013) describes the interaction between personal, teaching, and professional integrity as follows: "Personal integrity contributes to the integrity of teaching. The integrity of teaching enhances personal integrity. The overlap results in a unique professional integrity" (Santoro, 2013, p. 564). Conversely, "corroded" professional integrity impacts personal integrity and the integrity of teaching (Santoro, 2013, p. 564).

Santoro's (2013) first dimension of teaching integrity, personal integrity, centers teachers' personal commitments—such as service to others, social justice, and democratic values, which are at the core of, and have been found to motivate, service-learning practice. Although Santoro (2013) herself does not connect her model of professional integrity to service-learning, by focusing on personal values, professional *integrity* best serves to analyze the motivations and assumptions that shape teachers' participation in service-learning, a practice that reinforces connections between education and ethics—a connection which is weakened in current educational contexts (Butin, 2003).

Santoro lists questions of personal integrity in relation to teaching as: "how does who I am as a person enhance who I am as a teacher?" and "is this the work I am called to do?" (p. 569). The significance of these questions to a teachers' identity is supported

by other work that examines personal identity drawn from one's "biography" and "singular constellation of experiences" (Owens, Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 2010, p. 479). For example, Nieto (2003) uses the term "autobiography" to describe the histories and morals that teachers bring to their teaching: their personal "experiences, identities, values, beliefs, attitudes, hangups, biases, wishes, dreams, and hopes" that manifest in their teaching (p. 24). I find that autobiography (versus biography) connotes a personal awareness of one's histories and morals and how they enhance or obstruct one's teaching. As a concrete example of the personal commitments that "find expression through teaching," Santoro (2013) lists serving others, political activism, and serving a greater good (Santoro, p. 569). Enacting the emotional and moral-ethical components important to one's personal identity— such as a teacher with a personal commitment to social justice selecting novels with and discussing themes of social justice— leads to personal integrity in the classroom.

Santoro's (2013) second dimension of teaching integrity, the integrity of teaching, highlights teachers' commitment not only to their personal craft, but also to that of their field. It involves how each teacher views him- or herself as "contributing to" or "diminishing" teaching as a craft (p. 573). In other words, it provides a space for exploring how teachers react when current educational contexts demand actions— pedagogical strategies, curriculum implementation, and/or student assessment—by teachers that do not just conflict with their personal values, but are antithetical to what they believe the teaching profession stands for. Santoro (2013) argues that the integrity of teaching goes beyond the position, classroom, or school. It "exceeds institutional bounds" (Santoro, 2013, p. 574). Santoro (2013) builds on work around teaching as a craft (Green,

1999), practice (Hogan, 2004; MacIntyre, 1984) and tradition (Hansen, 1995). Santoro (2013) describes teaching integrity as a “check on the institution of schools” in that “part of taking on the role of teaching is to uphold the integrity of teaching” (p. 574).

To offer a concrete example of teaching integrity: a teacher with a strong sense of social justice might feel their *personal* integrity is corroded by a literacy curriculum that limits students to reading short passages and answering multiple-choice questions—thus preventing her from teaching themes of justice present in many novels. Moreover, such a curriculum could also conflict with that teacher’s understanding of the integrity of *teaching* by reducing her ability to raise students’ awareness around social justice, which she sees as central to the purpose education. Personal integrity and the integrity of teaching may be rooted in the same theoretical assumptions. For example, a teacher who *personally* holds Freirean notions of social justice might then regard equipping the student to be an authentic agent of change as a key component of the integrity of *teaching*.

According to Santoro (2013), the third dimension of teacher integrity, professional integrity, involves “maintaining alignment between what one believes to be the responsibility of the role of the teacher and one’s actions in that role” (p. 570). Integrity involves a sense of wholeness or coherence, which is useful in understanding the dissonance that occurs when the practices required by education reforms and a teacher’s morals are not in alignment. Santoro (2016) finds that when the integrity of teaching is diminished, teachers often experience it in similar ways: challenges to their pedagogical, professional, and democratic standards.

Santoro (2013) writes: “the impingement of integrity often is accompanied by strong emotions” (p. 576). Other work affirms the emotions Santoro (2013) explores in relation to integrity and demoralization. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) found that love and care, surprise and joy, anger, sadness and fear, excitement and pleasure in students’ progress and achievements are among the most commonly cited emotions of teachers. Because of their emotional investments, teachers inevitably experience a range of negative emotions when their principles and related practices are challenged, or when their discretion is no longer trusted (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006). As will be discussed below, it is teachers’ shared emotions and understandings that connect their professional integrity to their participation in a community of practice.

Communities of Practice

While Santoro (2013, 2016) and Santoro and Moorehouse’s (2011) work explores emotions and understandings of integrity of several *individual* teachers, my work extends on this empirical research by exploring common commitments and emotions among teachers participating in a service-learning community of practice. When cognitive, moral, and emotional connections are shared, they constitute a collective identity (Poletta and Jasper, 2001). Shared personal commitments and constraints can lead to a sense of collectivity. Framing ECLA as a community of practice, defined below, aids my understanding of the extent to which participants have developed a collective “teacher” identity through participation in service-learning, what constitutes this shared identity, and what aspects of the community influence their participation.

A focus on emotions and communities adds to my understanding of why teachers participate in a service-learning based community of practice. In terms of teaching, Nias

(1996) asserts “teachers’ emotions, though individually experienced, are a matter of collective concern: they are occasioned by circumstances which can be identified, understood and so have the potential to be changed, and their consequences affect everyone involved in the educational process” (p. 294). Nieto (2003) argues that teaching is not a “private effort” and that teachers garner hope from their colleagues and working to improve their craft (p. 61). She further asserts that teaching is intellectual work, which requires “colleagues with whom they can talk and argue about and invent, discover, and weave their craft” (p. 90). Moreover, Achinstein and Ogwa (2006) assert that forming professional communities can provide teachers with space for inquiry, reflection, and even collective resistance to reforms. Teachers, motivated by shared feelings of anger, frustration, and hopelessness, may seek out spaces for activism and community (Stern & Brown, 2016).

Conceptualized broadly, communities involve shared activities, beliefs, values, and personal concerns (Brint, 2001). The term “professional learning community” is used widely in education. However, I choose to use the term “community of practice” to describe the organization under study. According to Keith (2015), professional learning communities and communities of practice are similar in that they understand learning as “socio-cultural and context-dependent” (p. 118). Keith asserts: “learning this way can help a group adapt general principles to the knowledge gathered in a setting or validate local knowledge” (p. 118). Professional learning communities are often understood as occurring within a *school*, and becoming the culture or norm for sharing the improvement of student learning within that organization (Hord, 2009). For example, Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, & Wallace (2005) define professional learning communities as

having “the capacity to promote and sustain the learning of all professionals in the school community with the collective purpose of enhancing student learning” (p. 145).

Furthermore, professional learning communities are often involved in collective inquiry about student data and collective curriculum development (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). The organization in this study does not fit these characteristics. Therefore, I use Wegner’s (1998) definition of communities of practice: communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact.

Communities of practice have distinct characteristics. First, membership in a community of practice assumes commitment to its area of shared interest—in this case, service-learning (Wegner, 1998). Members share a competence in their area of interest (i.e. service-learning) that distinguishes them from others (Wegner, 1998). They also value their collective competence and strive to learn from each other, even though few outside the group may value or recognize their expertise (Wegner, 1998). As previously stated, service-learning is not valued in performance-based understandings of education. Second, communities of practice provide each other with assets- in this case resources such as lesson plans or people (Wegner, 1998). Third, members of a community of practice are practitioners who develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, or ways of addressing recurring problems (Wegner, 1998). This breakdown will help me identify and explain the organizational factors that motivate teachers’ participation in ECLA as they relate to their professional integrity.

Purpose and Research Questions

This dissertation provides an in depth understanding of why teachers seek to incorporate opportunities for service-learning in their teaching and how this affects their teaching practice and teacher identity within current educational contexts. It explores teachers' participation in Engaging Classrooms in Learning for Action (ECLA), a community of practice that supports urban teachers in implementing service-learning in their classrooms. It explicates teachers' commitment to service-learning and to ECLA and their effects on teaching practice and identity. It asks: *What assumptions and motivations shape teachers' participation in a service-learning practice and community of practice and how does their participation affect their professional practice and identity?* It explores the following sub-questions:

- *To what extent is teachers' participation in service-learning and a service-learning community of practice influenced by school-level factors and systemic factors?*
- *To what extent is teachers' participation influenced by organizational factors?*
- *What are the inter-relationships between teachers' individual and professional identities in relation to service-learning?*

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review first provides an overview of how popular understandings of the purpose of education have shifted over time, with a focus on history, current understandings, and how they relate to teachers' identity. Second, it discusses teachers' identity using studies that view teachers' identity as contextualized by institutional, social, and historical factors and recognize that teachers' identity has an ethical, moral, and emotive component. In addition, it discusses literature that explores attrition as an effect of challenges to teachers' identity. Third, it provides a general overview of literature on service-learning and then focuses on a limited body of literature specifically on service-learning and teachers.

The Purpose of Education

This section first explores literature that details and analyzes how widely held understandings of the purpose of education have changed throughout United States history. Second, it focuses on literature critiquing current understandings of the purpose of education and resultant reforms, policies, and practices. Third, it discusses literature that relates current understandings of the purpose of education to teacher identity.

A History of Shifting Priorities

Labaree (1997) describes the history behind different purposes of education as “a story of shifting priorities” with different goals prominent at different points throughout history (p. 58). Historically, education for democratic purposes was the prominent goal during the common school era of the mid 1800s. The common schools movement had the goal of developing civic virtue. Common schools also espoused equality through

universal enrollment and shared educational experiences (Labaree, 1997). At this time, goals of social efficiency and mobility were subdued (Labaree, 1997).

A movement towards education for the purpose of social efficiency appeared in the late 1800s and early 1900s as education became more accessible and educational leaders dealt with how to educate an increasingly large and heterogeneous group of students (Labaree, 1997). Business, labor, and educational leaders fought to make curriculum more responsive to the needs of the job market, motivated by fear that schools would become socially irrelevant and economically counterproductive (Labaree, 1997). This movement shifted educational practice away from liberal studies and towards job skills (Labaree, 1997).

It is also important to note the progressive education movement, grounded in the work of John Dewey, which occurred during the early to mid 1900s. The progressive movement stressed the community as the center of learning and schools as democratic institutions (Bruce, 2013). Bruce (2013) argues that these values can be found today under the labels “civic engagement”, “community-based learning”, or “service learning” (p. 9). According to Labaree (1997) education for democratic purposes was also re-energized in the 1960s and 1970s as national movements for racial equality fostered efforts to provide socially inclusive education. Democratic goals were even included in *A Nation at Risk*, which focused on economic goals yet noted the importance of educational quality to a democratic society and fostering a common culture (Labaree, 1997).

However, Labaree (1997) argues that over time, commonality in schooling has shifted towards increasingly stratified systems that respond to goals of social efficiency and mobility. During the 1980s and 1990s the social efficiency argument for education

was widely touted in politics and was at the heart of *A Nation at Risk*, which spurred the movement to raise educational standards and reflected growing concern about economic competitiveness (Labaree, 1997). Beane (2013) finds differing purposes of education to be at the core of a struggle for American curriculum. This struggle operates in response to real or imagined crisis. Today, that “crisis” is global economic competition.

Current Educational Contexts

The recent move to focus education policy and reform on social efficiency and mobility, global economic competition, standards, and accountability can be traced to the publication of the federal report, “*A Nation at Risk*” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) along with the standards and testing mandates employed by the “No Child Left Behind Act” (2001). Labaree (2014) also cites the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), which compares educational performance internationally, as fostering competition in the global market. According to Labaree (2014) PISA and NCLB assessments, based on a growing cry for accountability, reduce the outcomes of schooling to academic learning and reduce academic learning to economically useful skills, bolstering our nation’s human capital. More current reforms include the Common Core State Standards, which serve to prepare youth for college and/or work, to meet labor force skills and to enhance the United States’ role in global economic competition. Beane (2013) argues that these reforms have left democratic goals estranged from the current purpose of education. As discussed below, the goal of education for democracy is to prepare all youth to be competent citizens (Labaree, 1997).

Beane (2013) grounds the Common Core standards in two perceived purposes of education: social efficiency and liberal studies. The social efficiency approach prepares

youth to function effectively in social and occupational roles by learning the information and skills necessary to fit into such roles. The purpose of education for social efficiency is to prepare youth to fulfill economic roles so that society benefits from a healthy economy (Labaree, 1997). Liberal studies finds that the purpose of school is to teach content and skills from the most important intellectual and cultural resources available, leaving youth inclined to live a more intellectual life and prepared for any path they might follow. Labaree (2014) offers an additional perceived purpose for education at the center of current reform initiatives, such as NCLB and PISA: social mobility. The social mobility approach views education as a commodity that prepares youth to compete for a social position (Labaree, 1997). Kliebard (2002) argues that in addition to taking on social efficiency perspectives, schools have increasingly become direct instruments of “social control” (p. 94).

Goals of social efficiency, mobility, and control undermine democratic purposes of education (Beane, 2013). Social efficiency and mobility perspectives do not account for other societal measures necessary to facilitate youth in going on to college, finishing college, and holding decently paid jobs in a safe and secure environment (Meier, 2009) or being engaged citizens in a democratic society. Deborah Meier (2009) argues that in schools we ought to learn the art of living together and the idea of a public interest for the common good. To this end, Beane (2013) argues that the fact that students are citizens sharing the roles and responsibilities for maintaining and improving society has been forgotten in current conversations about schools. He asserts that schools must foster the values and skills involved in democratic living: “respect for human dignity, equity, freedom, and social responsibility, as well as skills like critical thinking, problem solving,

collaborating, information and data gathering, reflecting, participatory planning, and the like” (p. 10). Furthermore, he calls for schools to facilitate students in studying, analyzing, and working with social and political issues as well as using the values and skills in their day-to-day classroom life to create a democratic community within schools.

The Purpose of Education and Teacher Identity

The debate over the purpose of education is reflected in perceptions of the role of the teacher and teacher identity. After reviewing existing literature on education reform and teacher identity, Day (2002) concludes two contrasting views of teachers’ professional identities emerge from education reforms. The first focuses on teachers who measure success through their ability to educate students to pass tests. This identification suggests a more instrumental and technical view of the profession. The second identity maintains a broader vision including responsibilities for the care of the cognitive, affective, social and societal aspects of education by professionals who exercise broad moral purposes in their work. Sachs (2001) also offers two teacher identities similar those described by Day (2002). First, an entrepreneurial identity, which she relates with teachers who demonstrate compliance to and measure their performance based on externally imposed policies. Second, she identifies an activist identity, which is driven by a belief in the importance of mobilizing teachers in the best interests of student learning. Teachers who take on Sachs’ activist identity strive to implement standards and processes which give students democratic experiences. In this study, attention to social and societal aspects of education, activism, and democratic experiences emerged as important to participants’ identity. Thus, I highlight literature on social justice and democratic education below.

There is overlap between certain tenets of education for social justice and democratic education, mainly, the preparation of students to participate in a democracy and equipping them for civic engagement. Nieto (2003) argues that to teach for democracy has multiple meanings:

It can mean teaching students a fuller, more complicated history; it can mean being more inclusive, making certain that silenced voices are included in the telling; it can mean building a democratic environment for learning; it can mean questioning stereotypes and labels; and it can mean teaching children, even the youngest among them, to question what they are learning. (p. 100).

Many of these pedagogical components are analogous with education for social justice. To present concise definitions: as stated above, the goal of education for democracy is to prepare all youth to be competent citizens (Labaree, 1997). For some, education for democracy is related to civic engagement or responsibility, which focuses more on “responsibility, civic duty, and an ethic of service” (Billig, 2017, p. 58). Social justice education conceptualizes the role of the teacher as challenging *inequality* to move towards a more democratic society (Freire, 1970). Thus, education for social justice and education for democracy can be conceptualized in related or in very different ways.

In democratic education, the curriculum engages students in authentic experiences that will equip them to participate in democratic living. Dewey (1916) asserts that schools should provide the foundational skills for students to participate in a democratic way of life, such as community engagement and civic participation. According to Dewey (1916), learning occurs through meaningful experience, communication, and problem solving. Pratte (1988) affirms that students don’t need direct civics lessons, but opportunities to practice civic behaviors. Billig (2017) describes civic-mindedness as an individual’s sense of identity as a citizen including their sense of responsibility, attachment, and

actions on behalf of their community. Wade (1997) recommends pedagogy and curriculum for civic education focus on: “(1) intellectual understanding, (2) skills for participation, (3) civic attitudes, and (4) direct participation in schools and communities” (p. 13). Yet, while we value democratic participation as a society, such as voting, our schools do little to prepare students to engage in democracy because our curriculum and pedagogy are “at odds” with democratic education (Nieto, 2003, p.98).

Today, the term social justice education encompasses a range of different practices and values such as multicultural education, critical pedagogy, and culturally responsive pedagogy (Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oyler, & Sonu, 2010; Dover, 2013). Mitchell (2008) offers critical service-learning pedagogy (discussed below), which has an explicit social justice aim that strives for social change, the redistribution of power, and authentic relationships between others. Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oyler, and Sonu (2010) specify teaching for social justice in the United States as:

(a) enact curricula that integrate multiple perspectives, question dominant Western narratives, and are inclusive of the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in North America; (b) support students to develop a critical consciousness of the injustices that characterize our society; and (c) scaffold opportunities for students to be active participants in a democracy, skilled in forms of civic engagement and deliberative discussion. (p. 2).

Teaching for social justice enables educators and students to address issues of inequity. Enriquez & Shulman-Kumin (2014) find that teachers work to frame their teaching around personal interests in social justice as well as their professional obligations. They find this to be a “complex” endeavor,” yet “necessary in a climate emphasizing testing and standardization” (p. 23). Dover (2013) finds that the constraints of a current climate of accountability make the integration of teachers’ social justice goals and curricular

mandates critical (p. 9). The practices of teaching for social justice challenge educational systems not “adequately serving large numbers of children, particularly poor children, children of color, and children with disabilities” (Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oylar, and Sonu, 2010, p. 2). Thus, the current educational climate makes teaching for social justice, which includes teaching democratic and civic participation, both difficult and vital at the same time.

Teacher Identity and Integrity

Numerous studies have contributed to the understanding of teachers’ individual identity and what it means to be a member of the larger profession. I first review studies that recognize that teachers’ professional identity has a personal component. Then I review work that also views teachers’ identity as contextualized by institutional, social and historical factors. In addition, I review studies that discuss the effects of constraints on identity in general, such as teacher attrition. These studies shed light on teacher identity, current educational contexts, and tensions between the two.

Educational researchers and theorists show that *internal* aspects, such as emotions and morals, shape teachers’ identity (Campbell, 2008; Nieto, 2003, 2009; Rex & Nelson, 2004; Sanger, 2012; Santoro, 2011, 2013). Identity can be viewed in relation to the individual self and in respect to the profession itself (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). It is in combining the personal and professional that the individual emotional aspects of the professional identity emerge as important (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006). Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons (2006) coin this interaction as the “unavoidable interrelationships between professional and personal identities” (p. 602). Day (2002) finds accounting for both professional and personal identities, including their emotional

and intellectual components, is necessary to understanding teacher professionalism, “it is through our subjective emotional world that we develop our personal constructs and meaning of our outer realities” (p. 685). Research highlights the interplay between emotions and teachers’ professional identity, but there is a lack of research that demonstrates how it manifests and how it functions collectively. This study demonstrates how shared emotions and commitments drive teachers to connect with a broader community of practice.

Studies show that teachers’ identity is also shaped by *external* factors. Research demonstrates that there is a mismatch between current education reforms and what many teachers value. This mismatch is most striking in schools in urban contexts that are more impacted by standardization, accountability measures, and a lack of resources than their suburban counterparts (Nieto, 2003; Kozol, 2012). For example, teaching measured as successful does not always align with what teachers believe to be good teaching. A teacher can produce “successful” test score gains using teaching methods that do not align with their professional principles (Santoro, 2011). It is important to examine tensions between teachers’ personal and professional identities and current reforms as well as teachers’ responses to these tensions.

For example Downey (2015) finds that the identity of urban teachers is contextualized, affected by work conditions, such as a lack of resources, and larger cultural narratives framing teachers (Downey, 2015). He also focuses on identity as shaped by external factors that he describes as the contradictions, conflicts, and constraints of teachers’ work and identity. Similarly, Jupp and Slattery (2012) list several *discursive contexts*-institutional, social, and historical narratives- that informed their

study on urban teachers' identity. Jupp and Slattery (2012) refer to historical inequalities and segregation in American schools, discourses on school failure, the reframing of educational discussions around standards and accountability, and racially charged discourses.

The notion of professional identities as contextualized by institutional, social, and historical factors is useful for gaining an understanding of teachers' professional identities reflective of how a teachers' identity is shaped both inside and outside the classroom. It is important to understand how, and also why, outside factors shape teachers' identity. Furthermore, it is important to understand how teachers react to external factors and the consequences they have on their identity. This study contributes to this understanding by exploring how contradictions, conflicts, and constraints to their profession impact teacher integrity (Downey, 2015). In addition, it shows that participation in a service learning practice and community of practice is attendant to current education contexts.

Teachers' emotions are also affected by external factors. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) relate negative emotions, such as "frustration and anger" to "goal incongruence" (p. 334) that occurs when external factors make it difficult for teachers to do good work (Nias, 1989). Negative emotions, in turn, negatively impact teachers' motivation (Sutton and Wheatley, 2003). Beauchamp and Thomas state that, "emotion may alter a teacher's identity in relation to the profession, but may also be altered by aspects of the profession (p. 180). Van Veen, Slegers, and van de Ven (2005) explore how a teacher's professional identity is at stake within current reform contexts through the lens of

emotions and self- or identity preservation. Their study illustrates that numerous aspects of personal and professional identity can be affected by reforms.

Similarly, Flores and Day (2006) find that due to their emotional investments, new teachers experience negative emotions when control of their principles and practices is contested. Second, they found that identities of new teachers were strongly personally embedded at the beginning of their teaching careers yet destabilized by negative school contexts and cultures, making their teaching more routine and less creative. There are unintended consequences as contexts play out in our complex social world. For example, teachers may feel negative emotions such as frustration or demoralization (Santoro, 2011; 2013) when their professional principles are challenged. The above studies illustrate that realities such as high-stakes testing are problematic in relation to teacher emotion and identity. However, it is also important to understand how teachers mitigate these consequences.

Attrition

As stated above, challenges to teachers' personal and professional identity have been found to result in demoralization, principled leaving, and principled resistance (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Santoro, 2011, 2013). Many teachers are drawn to leave the teaching profession or seek positions with fewer challenges to their professional identity. The teaching profession suffers from high teacher turnover split between attrition, defined as leaving the profession altogether, and migration, defined as seeking positions in other schools (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Moreover, Ingersoll, Merrill and Stuckey (2014) indicate that teacher retention has become less stable in recent years. They cite

that between 1988-89 and 2008-09, yearly attrition from the teaching profession as a whole increased by 41 percent.

Employee attrition is particularly problematic for schools: “employee turnover has especially serious consequences in workplaces that require extensive interaction among participants and that depend on commitment, continuity, and cohesion among employees. From this perspective, the high turnover of teachers in schools does not simply cause staffing problems but may also harm the school environment and student performance” (Ingersoll and Smith, 2003, p. 31). Santoro asserts that when experienced teachers who planned to spend their careers as educators leave, it should command attention from schools, districts, and policy makers. She further argues that policy makers and educational leaders need to attend to the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching when developing policy and, especially, in considering teacher attrition.

As previously stated, attrition is most problematic in schools in urban contexts where stability is needed most (Nieto, 2003). High-poverty, high-minority, urban, and rural public schools have the highest rates of turnover (Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014). Simon and Johnson (2013) find much of the research on teacher retention and high-poverty schools utilizes large, quantitative, survey-based datasets that highlight the elements of school context that are most likely to drive teachers out of these schools. They call for qualitative methods to gain more depth of understanding; this study fills that gap.

When it comes to attrition in high-poverty schools, it is known that administrative support, collegial relationships, and school culture are decisive factors but more research is needed to understand why and how these factors impact attrition (Simon & Johnson,

2013). Specifically, an inclusive environment characterized by respect and trust among colleagues, formal structures that promote collaboration, and the presence of a shared mission among teachers are known to support teachers' work (Simon & Johnson, 2013). Similarly, Flores and Day (2006) found that teachers who worked in collaborative cultures were more likely to develop and to demonstrate positive attitudes towards teaching, speaking to the importance of collective identity and communities of practice. The above conclusions emphasize the importance of understanding collective identity and communities of practice in mitigating attrition.

Research demonstrates that teachers' identity has an affective component. Furthermore, research illustrates that teachers' identity is contextualized by institutional, social, and historical factors. External factors also affect teachers' emotions, resulting in negative emotions when aspects of their identity are challenged. It is important to fully understand this process, its consequences, and how teachers react to challenges to their identity. There is myriad research connecting challenges to teachers' identity to attrition. Still, there are numerous teachers who remain and are successful teachers of urban students. Yet, there is a gap in the literature on challenges to teachers' professional identity and the literature on attrition that explores in-depth how and why urban teachers sustain themselves despite challenges to their identity. This study fills that gap by positing service-learning as a productive response to contextual factors that challenge teachers' personal and professional identity.

Service-Learning

There is ample literature on the characteristics of service-learning that make it a quality teaching practice and drive student outcomes (Harkavy, 2004). Yet, there is a

dearth of research on the extent to which service-learning benefits *teachers*. This section provides a general discussion of service-learning and its benefits to students. Then, it narrows its focus to a limited body of research on service-learning and teachers. I include relevant literature from higher education contexts because recent conversations on service-learning have focused on service-learning in higher education, as opposed to K-12; a gap which this study fills.

There is little consensus over a definition of service-learning, although definitions often describe service-learning as a teaching method that involves students performing community service with the purpose of curriculum-connected learning. Equally as important, quality service-learning involves meeting authentic community needs, student involvement in planning and implementing projects, and reflection (Billig, 2002; Britt, 2012; Wade, 2007). For example, Cipolle (2010) defines service-learning as:

A strategy in which students have leadership roles in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet real needs in the community. The service is integrated into the students' academic studies with structured time to research, reflect, discuss, and connect their experiences to their learning and their worldview. (p. 4).

Furco (1996) provides a comprehensive discussion of the definition of service-learning, breaking down the differences between service-learning and other forms of experiential education (i.e. community service, field programs, and internships). He characterizes service learning as a balance between service and learning:

Service-learning programs are distinguished from other approaches to experiential education by their intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring. (p. 12).

There is an important distinction between service-learning and community service, which are both approaches to experiential education. Furco (1996) defines community service as focusing on the service and its benefits to recipients: “the students receive some benefits by learning more about how their service makes a difference” (p. 4). Community service can frame urban and low-income communities of color in deficit ways (Haddix, 2015). The learning in service-learning fosters a mutually beneficial and empathetic relationship between students and recipients of service.

Furthermore, Chang (2015) highlights an important distinction in how service-learning should be defined in opposition to savior, missionary, or drive-by approaches where teachers and students “drop-in” to do a project and believe their actions help the community. Chang (2015) argues that these approaches are couched within market-based approaches to education where students and teachers are consumers, “where they can choose service-learning to acquire new skills and knowledge while being exposed to diverse contexts that are increasingly relevant in the *glocal* economy” (p. 30). Wade (2007) notes that service-learning projects can often ignore the root causes of the problem being addressed. Also, they can neglect to question why the need for service exists in the first place (Wade, 2007). Unlike quality service-learning, such approaches lack meaning for students, fail to meet an authentic community need, and do little to promote learning and/or reflection.

Parallels have been made between the characteristics of high quality service-learning and education for social justice (e.g. Wade, 2000, 2007; Mitchell, 2008). Wade (2007) offers ways in which principals of social justice education can be realized in service-learning practice to move towards social justice-oriented service-learning:

“inquiring about the root causes of societal problems and, in addition to serving individuals, attempting to influence those causes at a structural level” (p. 158). Still, Wade (2007) found that elementary school teachers’ service-learning projects with a social-justice orientation have lacked “in-depth consideration of the values, controversial nature, and root causes of the issues under study” (p. 164). Similarly, Mitchell (2008), whose work focuses on service-learning in higher education contexts, advances critical service-learning pedagogy, which connects service-learning to concerns of social justice. She finds that traditional service-learning “emphasizes service without attention to systems of inequality,” while critical service-learning, aims to “dismantle structures of injustice” (p. 50). Mitchell (2008) argues:

Without the exercise of care and consciousness, drawing attention to root causes of social problems, and involving students in actions and initiatives addressing root causes, service-learning may have no impact beyond students' good feelings. In fact, a service-learning experience that does not pay attention to those issues and concerns may involve students in the community in a way that perpetuates inequality and reinforces an "us-them" dichotomy. (p. 51).

Mitchell (2008) finds that critical service-learning departs from traditional service learning in three main ways: “working to redistribute power amongst all participants in the service-learning relationship, developing authentic relationships in the classroom and in the community, and working from a social change perspective” (p. 50). This study explores these issues in third through eighth grade contexts, detailing a practice that prioritizes authenticity, depth, and understanding the causes and intersectionality of social issues.

Research has found that quality service-learning benefits students in numerous ways. Service-learning promotes social and emotional development, academic

achievement, and engagement (Billig, 2000, 2002; Celio, Durlak & Dymnicki, 2011; Furco & Root, 2010; Newman, Dantzler & Coleman, 2015). Students have been found to gain self-confidence, self-efficacy, resilience, cultural sensitivity, social skills, and the ability to avoid risky behaviors (Billig, 2002; Celio, Durlak & Dymnicki, 2011). Furthermore, studies show that service-learning increases personal and social responsibility and positively impacts citizenship and civic responsibility (Billig, 2002; Newman, Dantzler & Coleman, 2015). Schools choose to participate in service-learning to help students become active community members, help students know and understand their community, and to meet real community needs and encourage altruism (Billig, 2002). Reed and Butler (2015) argue that service-learning can push back against rhetoric of urban students as likely to act out, have behavioral issues, and lack empathy. Service-learning can contribute to much needed positive conversation around urban education, where society almost always shares stories of crisis and dysfunction. However, students are just one piece of the puzzle. It is equally as important to understand what service-learning can do to push back against discourses about education and teachers.

Service-Learning and Teachers

Limited literature on teachers and service-learning suggests that teachers are motivated to participate in service-learning by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsically, service-learning challenges teachers by demanding new levels of involvement and shared responsibility (Kielsmeier, 2000). “Service-learning appeals to educators as a credible method of teaching because it addresses the need for students to achieve academically and personally in a project-based way that can be a terrific motivator” (Kielsmeier,

2000). Billig (2002) finds that individual interest influences teachers' implementation of service-learning.

Britt (2012) identifies three themes in teachers' personal reasoning for implementing service-learning. These themes contrast sharply with social efficiency and mobility and align more closely with education for democratic purposes and the skills for democratic living discussed above. Furthermore, they align with the second identities offered by Day (2002) and Sachs (2001), also discussed above. First, Britt (2012) finds teachers choose to implement service-learning as a way for students to learn by doing, influenced by the ideas of John Dewey and experiential education. Britt terms this a skill-set approach to service-learning where community service is an experience that allows students to practice and reflect on skills as they are used in the world. Second, teachers choose service learning because it strengthens civic values and citizenship. This approach to service-learning develops students as citizens in relation to their communities. Third, teachers choose service-learning to engage students in social justice. This approach has roots in critical pedagogy, social movements, and community organizing. In this approach students are encouraged as potential change agents addressing systemic causes for social inequity. Therefore, service-learning has the potential to re-align teachers' practice with purposes of education that are important to them. Little is known about the extent to which this occurs amidst the constraints of current education reforms.

Mintz and Abramovitz (2004) point to extrinsic factors as important to influencing teachers' service-learning implementation. They specifically refer to the importance of colleagues in recruitment and continued support of service-learning implementation. Other external factors found to influence the implementation of service

learning include framing service-learning as a reform strategy for increasing academic achievement, supportive administration, and sufficient resources (Billig, 2002). This study delineates school-level factors and characteristics of service-learning that relate to participants professional integrity, connecting extrinsic factors to intrinsic motivation to participate in service-learning.

Reed and Butler (2015) lay out some of the challenges teachers associate with service-learning, told from Reed's perspective as a teacher. In Reed and Butler's (2015) work Reed shares: "...the testing regimen of No Child Left Behind, which engendered feelings of anxiety, failure, and hopelessness, among staff members and students- did not allow time or resources in our test-driven school day for a feel good program like service-learning" (p. 58). In Reed and Butler (2015), Reed further lists concerns about convincing her principal, connecting service-learning to standards, funds, and student buy-in. As Reed states, the logistics of a service-learning program are challenging. Therefore, it is worth exploring what is behind teachers' commitment to service-learning.

Forrester (2005) describes certain components of the teacher's job as "non-work," those not valued in performance-driven education systems, and therefore carry no economic benefit. Although research has shown service-learning promotes students' personal and social responsibility, academic achievement, and engagement (Billig, 2002; Celio, Durlak & Dymnicki, 2011; Newman, Dantzler & Coleman, 2015) —specifically improving literacy performance, academic tenacity, and resilience (Akujobi & Simmons, 1997; Billig, 2002; Celio, Durlak & Dymnicki, 2011), it is not emphasized as a direct way to improve student performance on standards-based assessments. Therefore, it is

“devalued” or “invisible” on evaluations of teachers’ work (Forrester, 2005, p.272). This study explains why teachers still choose service-learning.

There is a gap in the literature on how service-learning affects teachers and the teaching profession, which this study fills. There are myriad benefits of service-learning to students such as academic and personal growth as well as positive impacts on citizenship. However, little is known about how service-learning benefits teachers and why they would choose to incorporate service-learning into their practice. I argue that service-learning also has implications for teachers, highlighting their role in cultivating civic engagement and social responsibility among students.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT

This chapter provides information on the organization where this study took place and the school district it serves. I have changed the name of the organization and removed the name of the school district and city so that individual participants cannot be identified using a combination of characteristics. I start with a description of the organization followed by a broad description of the School District and its service-learning initiative.

Engaging Classrooms in Learning for Action

The service-learning organization under study, Engaging Classrooms in Learning for Action (ECLA), is a non-profit organization that trains and supports teachers in implementing a student-voice centered service-learning pedagogy. In general, student voice refers to eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement. Interested teachers apply to ECLA to become part of the ECLA network of teachers. Accepted teachers are provided with professional development in implementing the ECLA service-learning "Framework" (discussed below) for two years. Training and professional development include one initial training, monthly trainings, inquiry groups, individual teacher support from ECLA staff, and support from the ECLA network of teachers. After the two-year professional development period, teachers are considered experienced network members and their involvement with the organization is based on their individual preferences, although many remain actively involved in the ECLA teacher network. All trainings and professional development (except for initial trainings) are open to experienced network members, including one-on-one staff support. Many

experienced network members are called on to lead training and professional development.

ECLA is composed of many “layers” of partnerships. First and foremost, they work directly with teachers in their classrooms. Each ECLA teacher is assigned a program manager, a staff member who provided individualized support with implementing the Framework through phone calls, e-mails, in-person meetings, and classroom visits. ECLA also fosters sustained partnerships with community organizations that do work on specific social issues and can assist classrooms with their service-learning projects through classroom visits or field trips. They call these organizations community partners. Community partners range from local animal shelters, organizations that provide mental health services to the community, or local politicians. In addition, ECLA has partnerships with donors that support their organization financially. In addition to staff, the organization has a board of directors and a teacher advisory board.

Throughout this analysis, ECLA is described as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). ECLA shares a common concern and passion for service learning, a practice they improve upon together in regular professional development sessions (Wegner, 1998). Although not all teachers join ECLA with service-learning experience, ECLA privileges the collective knowledge (Keith, 2015) of its participants by building on the practices they use in their classroom as well as their feedback. Thus, ECLA trainings and professional developments center teachers’ voices and experiences, providing ample time for sharing and reflection. In addition, ECLA often calls on their teachers to lead their trainings and professional developments.

Applying to ECLA involves a written application and an in person interview with two ECLA staff. Interviews are comfortable and conversational with opportunities for the candidate to discuss their teaching, learn more about the program, and ask ample questions. ECLA staff conduct interviews at the candidate's school. I observed ECLA staff and candidates all smiling while discussing their goals and challenges as educators, as if meeting with friends over coffee. ECLA staff reflects on the interview in writing using a standard form, which is used to guide their evaluation of applicants (Field Notes, 5-11).

Accepted teachers attend an initial training retreat that spans one weekend over the summer or an abbreviated one-day make-up training retreat. First and second year ECLA teachers are asked to attend monthly trainings from 4:30-6:00pm one Monday per month September through June (excluding December). Monthly trainings are also open to experienced network members. Monthly trainings are held at a central location in the city with free parking and dinner is provided. ECLA offers additional opportunities for professional development through inquiry groups, which facilitate teachers' research and reflection on their practice and/or focus on a specific educational topic. Furthermore, ECLA experienced network members are invited to events that expose them to educational partners throughout the city, such as the city zoo or local museums, and how to integrate them into the ECLA Framework.

ECLA celebrates their teachers and students through two yearly events. First, a semi-formal event with cocktails and appetizers is held in the fall for teachers, their guest, community partners, and financial partners. This event formally recognizes teachers, who attend free of charge. A second celebration is held in May as an opportunity for students

and teachers to share and celebrate their service-learning and service project. A common characteristic of a community of practice is the value placed on their members' work, even if not recognized by outsiders (Wegner, 1998). ECLA provides recognition for teachers' service-learning work through these celebratory events, and also through social media, that is not otherwise given to teachers (i.e. from principals, the school district, or other administrators).

The ECLA Framework

The ECLA Framework is a five-stage process that guides teachers and their students through student-voice led service-learning. It is not meant to be a curriculum; instead, each stage is integrated into the school- or district-mandated curriculum. The Framework includes five specific stages that unfold throughout the course of one school year:

1. The first stage elicits student voice through classroom community building activities that recognize students' gifts and talents followed by reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of students' community (defined as school, neighborhood, city, etc.). By the end of the first stage students have identified a broad social issue for their service-learning, often through a vote.
2. The second stage involves using resources such as experiential knowledge, research, and community partners to identify causes and effects of the previously identified issue. By the end of the second stage, students have identified one cause or effect of their chosen issue they would like to address through their service project.

3. The third stage involves using resources to learn specifically about the cause or effect students have previously identified. By the end of the third stage students have decided how they can address their cause or effect through service.
4. The fourth stage involves students planning and conducting the service they decided on in stage three.
5. The fifth stage involves students evaluating, or reflecting on, their efforts and celebrating their work.

Identifying an Issue

ECLA teachers and students participate in several activities that lead to identifying an issue for their service-learning project. These activities are based on students' opinions and choices about their community, broadly defined. This prevents problematizing students' community, provides students with agency, and makes the service and learning authentic. The process of identifying an issue begins with students researching, observing, and compiling a working list of strengths and weaknesses in their community through: news sources; internet research; surveys and interviews with family, neighbors, peers, and other community members; community walks; and other brainstorming activities. ECLA provides teachers with several lesson plans, such as a community walk where students and teachers walk through their neighborhood, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and come together to reflect on and discuss what they found.

As a class, students compile an exhaustive list of strengths and weaknesses in their community. Students narrow their exhaustive list down to one broad issue based

on its relevance for their community, student interest, community partner access, learning opportunities, and service opportunities. Students often decide through votes, class debates, persuasive writing, using a rubric, or linking several issues together under a larger umbrella issue. For example, stress, drug use, and depression could be linked together under the umbrella issue of mental health.

After a broad issue is identified students spend a considerable amount of time researching the root causes and effects of that issue using news sources, non-fiction, Internet research, and community partner visits. Students brainstorm questions that will direct their research. ECLA provides graphic organizers for students to record their questions and knowledge about an issue as well as to document the causes and effects of the issue that they have learned. For example, ECLA provides a poster-sized graphic organizer that asks: what do we know; what do we want to know; how do we learn more; and what did we learn in relation to the identified issue. ECLA also identifies community partners that can help students learn about the causes and effects of an issue in depth and guide students in identifying a cause or effect that provides appropriate service opportunities.

Students then select one cause or effect they would like to address through service. In some cases, one cause or effect emerges as the obvious choice for the class based on student interest. Often, students decide through votes, class debates, persuasive writing, or are interested in a service project suggested by a community partner. As a class, students study the chosen cause or effect in depth and conduct meaningful service to address it.

List of Terms Relevant to ECLA

The following terms relevant to ECLA are referred to frequently throughout the remainder of this dissertation. They are listed here for easy reference:

- Community partner: community organizations that do work on specific social issues and can assist classrooms with their service-learning projects through classroom visits or field trips.
- Program manager: a staff member assigned to each teacher who provides individualized support with implementing the Framework through phone calls, e-mails, in-person meetings, and classroom visits.
- Experienced network members: ECLA teachers who have been involved in the network for more than the initial two-year professional development period. ECLA holds events specifically for experienced network members that expose them to new community partners, strategies, and opportunities.
- Initial training: accepted teachers' first training held over one weekend during the summer. Teachers receive a physical copy of the ECLA Framework and are trained in its implementation. There is also a make-up initial training held for one day during the summer.
- Monthly trainings: professional development sessions that focus on the different stages of the ECLA Framework.
- Inquiry groups: optional small groups that meet regularly for teachers to seek out advice and resources around self-chosen professional development topics relevant to their unique experiences.

- Framework: a five-stage process that guides teachers and their students through student-voice led service-learning. It is not meant to be a curriculum; instead, each stage is integrated into the mandated curriculum.
- Student voice: eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement. ECLA's Framework is guided by student voice.

The School District

At the time of the study, ECLA teachers represented 50 schools in their local school district and four charter schools. ECLA and the School District under study are located in an “urban intensive” context: “in these cities, the infrastructure and large numbers of people can make it difficult to provide necessary and adequate resources to the large number of people who need them” (Milner, 2012, p. 559). Thus, the term “urban” is used in this dissertation to contextualize the School District and schools where study participants work. According to their website, the School District is one of the largest in the nation, enrolling approximately 200,000 students in approximately 350 schools grades K-12. 100% of students in the district are listed as “economically disadvantaged” (see Table 2 for more information on the economically disadvantaged classification). As a whole, the District does not score well on standardized tests. In fact, according to public data, in the 2016-17 school year only approximately 20% of students scored proficient or advanced on the Mathematics state standardized test and approximately 30% on the English Language Arts state standardized test (administered to grades 4-8).

ECLA's relationship with the School District is through each individual teacher they work with, although each teacher's principal has to sign a memorandum of understanding. As one ECLA staff member explained:

We work with the teacher. A teacher applies to work with us. Then the work sort of comes, for me usually, for a district school specifically, on the backend to build the relationship with the principal of the school.... I will do my best to set up a meeting with the principal of the school. If they haven't heard about ECLA, I'll set up a meeting with them, I'll talk about what we do, and I'll talk about the kind of support that we bring to the teacher. The principal signs the memorandum of understanding.

Because ECLA's relationship is with the teacher, as opposed to the school or the District as a whole, administrators are not involved beyond giving teachers permission to participate. However, teachers might need to obtain additional administrative permission to go on a field trip or have a guest speaker come to their classroom. One ECLA staff member explained that they rarely hit any barriers from school or District administration:

Most of the time teachers hear about the work and want to do the work, and sometimes the administrator is enthusiastic about that and supportive of that. And often the administrator is just fine and could care less as long as it doesn't cost them anything, because it doesn't cost them anything.

While ECLA works with teachers employed by the School District, their affiliation with the District itself is primarily through the teacher and their influence with the District is in the benefits they provide each teacher and their students.

Service-Learning in the School District

In June of 1998, the School District became the first in the nation to make service-learning part of its academic requirements for promotion and graduation. As was noted in a 2000 article in a professional magazine focused on K-12 education:

The school district has taken bold steps to become the first public school system in the country to engage all students, grades K-12, in meaningful service-learning

activities that are directly connected to the district's academic standards and learning goals. (Citation removed).

The then Superintendent of the District pushed for a service-learning requirement because he personally believed that service-learning would improve students' citizenship and leadership skills as well as contribute to instructional reform and student learning (citation removed). The School District's Board of Education voted to make service-learning a central component of its promotion and graduation requirements, with all students required to produce a citizenship project to be promoted to grades five, nine, and to graduate (citation removed). The projects were assessed with a rubric requiring an essential question, active research and investigation, academic rigor and reflection, a real-world community connection, and applied problem solving in addressing an authentic school or community issue (citation removed).

The intention was for service-learning to be implemented as way to teach academic skills. However, implementing the plan required funding and other supports for implementation, which would hamper its success. The then Director of Service-learning for the School District explained:

[service-learning] is really a teaching strategy in which students are engaged in real-world problem-solving of community needs, by combining service and academics...It develops students' sense of their connection to their community and provides a relevant frame and context to do reading, math, and history. (Citation removed).

Implementing the service-learning requirement as described involved providing professional development for more than 6,000 educators, developing partnerships with more than 2,500 community-based agencies, and developing an evaluation and

assessment system (citation removed). The necessary support and funding was not attainable.

While the service-learning requirement has remained, it has lost touch with its roots and intentions. In 2005, the major local newspaper described the School District's service-learning program as divorced from learning. The wife of the Mayor at that time was quoted in that paper as saying, "I'm hearing from students who say that service learning is neither service nor learning... schools are devaluing something that is supposed to be there for a purpose" (citation removed). At the time of this study, the District still required service-learning to be promoted to the aforementioned grades. Yet, one participant explained that service-learning needed "reviving" at her school even though it is required by the District. She expressed that service-learning had become conflated with school-wide events that aren't "service-oriented." Another participant expressed that the service-learning requirement was lacking direction and became an afterthought at her school:

I think we're required to do some type of community service or service-learning project anyway but nobody ever gives you any direction with it. So, the grades are usually, its not graded its...um...n for not started, i for in progress, and then c for completed. So, what we had been doing is 'all right lets do a fundraiser thing.' Some last minute nonsense that we kind of threw together and then called it our service-learning project.

She described the service-learning that occurred at her school as thrown together and nonsense, illustrating that it had lost its significance over time.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

Overview

This study employed ethnographic methods to garner an in-depth understanding of a service-learning community of practice and the experiences of its participants. It involved the collection of observation, interview, and artifact data over the course of 16 months. Data analysis was an iterative process involving “open” and “focused” coding (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2005). Coding involved a deductive and inductive approach; it was a manifestation of my theoretical framework while leaving room for other categories that emerged from the data (Smagorinsky, 2008).

Ethnography

This study uses ethnographic tools (i.e. observation, field notes, and interviews) (Green & Bloome, 2004) to facilitate an understanding of the physical, social, and cultural contexts experienced by teacher participants and the “meaning” that they attribute to their social world (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010, p. 2). Throughout this project I take an ethnographic perspective, a focused approach guided by theories of culture, grounded in knowledge derived from the field of education—what Green and Bloome (2004) describe as *ethnography in education*.

An ethnographic perspective is grounded in the interpretivist understanding that truth, knowledge, or meanings can be varied and multiple; just as this study is grounded in the theoretical assumption that identity is dynamic and contextual. Interpretivism views the social world as interpreted and constructed by its participants through the interaction—not literal or static (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). In turn, ethnographic methods rest on the assumption that research is not an objective process conducted by the

outside observer. Rather, research must involve observation through the direct experience of the people. Interpretivist research is useful in that it focuses on individuals, interactions, and identities. Drawing from an ethnographic perspective and related methods facilitates “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) of social worlds. It focuses on the meanings created and sustained through the interactions of ECLA participants and how this relates to their interpretation of their identities. I define ECLA as a community of practice, which provides a framework for describing the interactions, social constructions, and meanings of the group that factor in teachers’ identities (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). Approaching this project using Santoro’s (2013) model of professional integrity draws out the personal and shared aspects of teachers’ identity constructed and reinforced through their participation in ECLA.

Overall, this project explores the assumptions and motivations that shape teachers’ participation in a service-learning community of practice (ECLA). It answers the following research question, previously stated in Chapter 1: *What assumptions and motivations shape teachers’ participation in a service-learning practice and community of practice and how does their participation affect their professional practice and identity?* Additionally, It will explore the following sub-questions, also repeated from Chapter 1:

- *To what extent is teachers’ participation in service-learning and a service-learning community of practice influenced by school-level factors and systemic factors?*
- *To what extent is teachers’ participation influenced by organizational factors?*

- *What are the inter-relationships between teachers' individual and professional identities in relation to service-learning?*

Heuristically, this project can be understood as the study of two components both essential to answer its research questions: (1) the study of the community of practice and (2) the study of how characteristics of the community of practice manifest in its teachers' classrooms. Although presented separately to outline the connections between my research questions, theoretical framework, and methodological choices, there is constant interplay between the two parts. The first component of this project, the study of the ECLA community of practice, involved 16 months of participant observation at events and interviews with its participants (data collection and analysis are fully detailed below). The aforementioned ethnographic tools serve to answer the overarching research question guiding this project. Moreover, they were selected to allow for a focused examination of concepts probed in this study's sub questions (fully listed above): (1) the extent to which teachers' participation is influenced by organizational factors found in this community of practice and (2) an exploration of the inter-relationships between teachers' individual and professional identities.

The second component of this project involved observation of ECLA teachers implementing service-learning in their classrooms over the course of one school year as well as initial and follow-up interviews with these teachers (data collection and analysis are fully detailed below). This component complements the first, accounting for the interplay between the community of practice, the learning that takes place among its members, and the actualities of implementing what is learned. Participant observation in the community of practice would provide only a partial picture, with the implementation

of service-learning providing a complete picture of teachers' experiences. Moreover, these ethnographic tools address the following research sub questions (fully listed above): (1) the extent to which teachers' participation in ECLA is influenced by school-level and systemic factors (2) an exploration of the inter-relationships between teachers' individual and professional identities. Again, because the two components are contingent and in constant interaction—service-learning pedagogy is learned in the community of practice, implemented in the classroom, and successively discussed in the community of practice—there is no absolute distinction between the research questions that ended up being answered by each methodological component.

Interviews

All 31 interviews conducted throughout the course of the study were in depth, described by Hesse-Beber and Leavy (2006) as: “a particular kind of conversation between the researcher and the interviewee that requires active asking and listening. The process is a meaning-making endeavor embarked on as a partnership” (p. 94). All protocols were designed as a conversation that built rapport and then guided the interviewee in thorough reflection on their experiences with ECLA and service-learning. Uniform protocols were used to provide consistency across the participant groups described below. Although conversational (i.e. comfortable, equal, and informal), I only contributed to the conversation through posing questions and actively listening (Hesse-Beber & Leavy, 2006). Further details on interviews with specific participant groups are given below.

Observation and Field Notes

Throughout the course of this study I alternated between observer and participant observer. I participated in many ECLA events and classroom activities—making mental notes or jottings to be recorded later—and switched to a more detached observer role when my participation was not appropriate—allowing for open note taking (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). I switched to the role of detached observer during student and teacher discussions, taking notes on my laptop. All participants were aware of my role and research. Students were told that I was observing their teacher to learn more about service-learning and were provided the opportunity to ask questions. I did not have permission from the School District to conduct research with students.

Observations and field notes focused on *process*: “consistent with our interactionist perspective, asking *how* also focuses the ethnographer’s attention on the social and interactional processes through which members construct, maintain, and alter their social worlds” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). Taking an ethnographic approach to observation involves immersion— an “inside” understanding of “how people lead their lives, how they carry out their daily rounds of activities, what they find meaningful, and how they do so” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, p. 3). Throughout the course of this study, my “inside” understanding was informed by 100 hours of observation and participant observation at ECLA events and in ECLA classrooms (detailed fully below).

Moreover, prior to being an educational researcher I was an educator who participated in ECLA for four years. My prior experience with ECLA enabled me to readily achieve the “deeper immersion” sought by an ethnographer (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). I had prior knowledge of ECLA’s shared repertoire (Wegner, 1998) and

lived experience as an ECLA educator. My prior experience with ECLA allowed me a greater understanding of its pedagogy, processes, and history. I possess an even deeper contextual understanding of the organization and its service-learning pedagogy than the typical observer and participant-observer. I have not bracketed this knowledge and set it aside, but instead use it to better understand relationships, behaviors and activities, and cultures as well as to inform my research design.

Participants and Data Collection

ECLA served as my gatekeeper: “controlling access to a community, organization, group of people, or source of information” (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010, p. 10). I met with an ECLA staff member in person to discuss the details of my study in depth. I obtained a written site agreement from ECLA’s director, which allowed me to act as a participant observer at all ECLA events. During the 2016-2017 school year that I observed, ECLA consisted of seven staff members including an executive director, operations administrator (office manager), two Associate Program Directors (supporting experienced network members, professional development, and community partners) and three Program Managers (supporting ECLA teachers). ECLA was composed of 93 teacher members teaching grades 3-8 in local public and charter schools. Participants in this study included several categories of people who participate in ECLA: ECLA staff, inactive ECLA teachers, active ECLA teachers (including Experienced Network Members), and ECLA community partners. The category of active ECLA teachers was further divided into three groups: (A) teachers that were observed throughout my fieldwork, (B) teachers that participated in interviews and observations of their teaching

throughout one school year, and (C) teachers that participated in only interviews. The composition of each group and participant selection from each group is detailed below.

ECLA Events: Participant Observation

Throughout the course of this 16-month study I attended a variety of ECLA events in order to gain an understanding of the community of practice for a total of 40 hours of participant observation. I was a participant observer at all regular ECLA events including: seven monthly *In-Service*, two *Alumni Events*, the *Make Up Summer Retreat*, *The Soiree*, and the *Shout Out*. In addition, I was a participant observer in one class session of a summer class held at a local university. This class topic was: “building a curriculum that inspires student voice, engages students in social justice thinking and action, and revitalizes a classroom helping it become one of invested learners” (e-mail communication) and it was taught by an ECLA teacher. Also, I observed an interview between two ECLA staff and a potential ECLA participant. ECLA staff and active teacher participants were present at the above ECLA events (see Table 1 below for a list of events and observation hours).

Table 1

Participant Observation at ECLA Events

| <u>Event</u> | <u>Hours</u> | <u>ECLA Participants</u> |
|--|--------------|--|
| University Class on Service Learning | 3 | 1 Experienced Network Member |
| Experienced Network Members Event at the Zoo | 8 | Experienced Network Members and Staff |
| Make-Up Summer Retreat | 8 | New ECLA Teachers and Staff |
| Soiree | 3 | Active Teachers, Staff, Community Partners, and Donors |
| October In-Service | 1.5 | All teachers and Staff |
| November In-Service | 1.5 | Active Teachers and Staff |

Table 1 Continued

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| January In-Service | 1.5 | Active Teachers and Staff |
| Experienced Network Members Event at the Museum | 3 | Experienced Network Members and Staff |
| February In-Service | 1.5 | Active Teachers and Staff |
| March In-Service | 1.5 | Active Teachers and Staff |
| April In-Service | 1.5 | Teachers and Staff |
| Shout Out | 2.5 | Active Teachers, Staff, Community Partners, Donors, and Students |
| June In-Service | 1.5 | Active Teachers and Staff |
| Interview | 2 | 1 Prospective Teacher and 2 Staff |
| Total Hours | 40 | |

As touched on above, I alternated between making mental notes or making jottings in a small notebook and taking open field notes on my laptop. When ECLA events required interaction between participants, such as small group conversations, I actively participated and my field notes took the form of jottings. When appropriate, such as one-on-one conversations or socializing over refreshments, I took mental notes. During larger group activities where it was appropriate to take notes I acted as a detached observer and took open field notes on my laptop. When possible, such as when an ECLA staff member was giving an explanation or direction, I strove to capture participant language. All components of my field notes (i.e. mental notes, jottings, and open notes) were then combined to create a comprehensive picture of how events took place. I collected artifacts, such as meeting agendas and any materials used (i.e. graphic organizers and event evaluations) at all events.

ECLA Staff: Interview Participants

In addition to being present during my participant observation at the events listed above, all ECLA staff members were contacted in person and/or by e-mail to request their participation in one one-on-one interview lasting approximately one hour. All interviews used the same semi-structured protocol and were recorded (see Appendix A). All seven ECLA staff agreed to participate in these interviews. The purpose of staff interviews was to gain a general understanding of the history, purpose, and mission of the organization; to obtain an overview of the organization's process and Framework; to gain a more thorough understanding of the support provided to teachers; and to better understand ECLA's relationship with the school district, school leadership, and community partners.

Inactive ECLA Teachers: Focus Group and Interview Participants

ECLA provided me with a list of 23 teachers who fit three criteria. (1) They had previously participated in ECLA by attending events and conducting service-learning and service projects. (2) They no longer participated in ECLA but were still teaching grades three through eight in School District schools (charter or public). Also, (3) ECLA still had their active contact information. I contacted all 23 teachers via e-mail asking for their participation in a focus group lasting two hours. This focus group served two purposes. First, ECLA received an anonymized transcription of the focus group discussion. I helped them code the focus group data for their own evaluative purposes: to better understand why these teachers are no longer active in the network and their prior experiences with ECLA. Second, for the purposes of this project, the focus group provided me with negative data. While this project largely explores the assumptions and motivations behind

teachers' participation in ECLA, this negative data provides insight into why teachers ended their participation in this community of practice.

A focus group encouraged participants to share both positive and negative experiences with ECLA by creating a “comfortable, permissive environment” (Krueger & Casey, 2000) facilitated by what participants had in common: they chose to no longer participate in ECLA. This “commonality,” only available in a focus group, helped to create a space free of “judgment” or “disapproval” (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

Furthermore, I strove to protect participants' anonymity by using pseudonyms and not providing participant characteristics (such as age, grade-level, subject, or school information) that would enable ECLA to identify them.

Because these specific participants were no longer involved with ECLA, ECLA provided an incentive for participation in the focus group in the form of a small gift card. In addition, ECLA provided dinner at the focus group. Four teachers agreed to participate in the focus group (Allison, Lana, Caroline, and Harriet). The focus group was conducted with a structured protocol and was recorded (see Appendix B). Five teachers expressed interest in participating but could not attend the focus group (Joanne, Nina, Kelsey, Krissy, and Diane). I arranged one-on-one interviews with these teachers and provided an incentive in the form of a small gift card for their participation. The same structured protocol was used during these interviews to provide consistency and these interviews were also recorded.

Active ECLA Teachers: Classroom Observation and Interview Participants

The second group of active ECLA teacher participants (identified above as group B) was composed of teachers who participated in interviews and observations of their

teaching throughout one school year. I worked closely with ECLA to identify these participants. ECLA provided me with a list of 60 teachers members that met the following criteria: (1) they were actively involved in ECLA in that they attended ECLA events and conducted service-learning and service-projects and (2) they had been in ECLA for at least two years. I chose to observe the classrooms of teachers who had been in ECLA for two or more years so my presence did not overwhelm a teacher implementing service-learning for the first time and also to ensure the teachers I worked with were familiar with the community of practice. The list included teachers' names, schools, and grade.

I met with an ECLA staff member who identified teachers who were or had recently been involved in particular projects for ECLA (i.e. a special partnership with the local zoo or a special partnership with the local animal welfare society). I eliminated these teachers from my pool so my additional presence did not burden them and so that my data reflected their experiences with ECLA and service-learning, as opposed to their experience with their particular project. The same ECLA staff member also identified teachers who were experiencing career or life changes, such as a recent change in schools, transitioning to an administrative role, or pregnancy. I eliminated these teachers from my pool so as not to overwhelm them and to prevent other factors from interfering with data. This left me with a sample of 26 teachers.

Using public data from the School District on the percentage of "Economically Disadvantaged" students at each school, I identified participants from schools with a variation of poverty levels (See Table 2 for more information on the economically disadvantaged classification). Research links teachers' working conditions and

experiences to poverty levels in schools (Kozol, 2012; Milner, 2012, 2015). Therefore, a variation in poverty levels would likely ensure my sample represented varied working conditions and experiences. To choose between teachers with schools that had similar poverty levels I selected teachers that would ensure a representation of grades 3 through 8 (the grades ECLA services). This left me with a sample of 13 teachers, who I contacted via e-mail. Eight teachers agreed to participate in interviews and observations of their teaching throughout one school year (see Table 2 below).

Table 2

| <i>Active ECLA Teachers Interviews and Classroom Observations Participants</i> | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Name | Grade | Economically Disadvantaged Students ^{ab} |
| Elisha | 5 (Honors Program) | 100.00% |
| Jane | 7 (English) | 100.00% |
| Mary | 4 (Bilingual Education) | 100.00% |
| Sabrina | 3 | 100.00% |
| Charlie | 4 | 98.60% |
| Jessie | 8 (English) | 83.83 % |
| Maggie | 4 | 77.80% |
| John | 6 | 69.10% |

^aData from the 2016 School Year

^bAs per the school district website, the reported Community Eligibility Provision Economically Disadvantaged rates represent the percentage of students identified for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program multiplied by a USDA-defined factor of 1.6, and are capped at 100%. Additional information may be found on the USDA website: (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision#main-content>)

Initial interviews were conducted with the above eight teachers to garner an understanding of their teaching history; educational philosophy; commitment to the organization; how service-learning is implemented in their classroom; past experiences with the organization; their intention, plans and curriculum for the school year; and the school context/environment for the current school year. The initial interviews were one one-on-one interviews lasting approximately one hour. All interviews used the same semi-structured protocol and were recorded (see Appendix C).

Following the initial interviews, I communicated with each participant via e-mail to schedule observations based on when they would be conducting service-learning in their classrooms with the goal of observing each teacher at a minimum of four points throughout the school year. Observing at least four lessons where service-learning was implemented allowed me to experience the service-learning process as it developed throughout the school year. This also allowed me to observe different stages in the ECLA service-learning framework. Observations lasted for the duration of the lesson or activity ranging from 45-minute lessons to one activity that occurred throughout the course of the entire school day. I observed each teacher implement service-learning in their classroom between five and seven times for a total of 60 hours (see Table 3 below). After observations, final interviews were conducted in order to provide clarification or delve deeper into teachers' experiences with the community of practice and service-learning. The final interviews were one one-on-one interviews lasting less than one hour. All interviews used the same semi-structured protocol and were recorded (see Appendix D). However, each participant was asked two to five unique questions generated after a preliminary reading of their initial interviews and field note data.

Table 3

Active ECLA Teachers Classroom Observations

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Number of Observations</u> | <u>Dates</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Elisha | 6 | 10/26/2016 - 3/27/2017 |
| Jane | 6 | 11/23/2016 - 3/30/2017 |
| Mary | 7 | 11/15/2016 - 4/25/2017 |
| Sabrina | 5 | 12/06/2016 - 6/02/2017 |
| Charlie | 5 | 10/28/2016 - 5/3/2017 |
| Jessie | 7 | 12/08/2016 - 6/1/2017 |
| Maggie | 7 | 10/11/2016 - 6/5/2017 |
| John | 6 | 11/15/2016 - 5/3/2017 |

At each observation I acted as an observer or participant observer. As discussed above, my role changed depending on the structure of the classroom lesson or activity. For example, there were instances where I worked with a specific group, accompanied the class on a community walk, or served as an additional resource (i.e. help with conducting research; clarifying spelling; or help understanding text) for students as they worked on group projects. During these times I made mental notes or took jottings. There were other observations where I did not participate in any way. For example, when a teacher was providing direct instruction, when a community partner was leading a lesson or activity, or when students were involved in a discussion and a teacher acted as the facilitator. During these times I was able to take open field notes on my laptop. I made it a point to stop taking notes, closing my laptop and putting it to the side, when student discussions revealed personal or sensitive information. Because this project focuses specifically on teachers' experiences and due to the consent I obtained from my University and the School District Institutional Review Boards, notes were only taken on students when necessary to provide context for a teachers' words or actions.

Active ECLA Teachers: Interview Participants

The third group of active ECLA teacher participants (identified above as group C) was composed of teachers that participated in only interviews. These teachers were identified in two ways. First, five teachers from the classroom observation and interview participants (group B) sample detailed above expressed interest in the project but declined to participate in observations (i.e. too much of a time commitment). These five teachers were asked if they were interested in participating in interviews and agreed to participate in interviews. Second, two teachers were asked informally after conversation

at ECLA events if they would be interested in participating in interviews. After they expressed interest, they were asked formally via e-mail and agreed to participate. A total of five teachers participated in in-depth one-on-one interviews lasting approximately one hour (see Table 4 below). All interviews used the same semi-structured protocol used for the initial interviews with teachers participating in interviews and classroom observations (see Appendix E). These interviews served to garner an understanding of their teaching history; educational philosophy; commitment to the organization; service-learning in the classroom; and past experiences with the organization.

Table 4

Active ECLA Teacher: Interview Participants

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Grade</u> | <u>Economically Disadvantaged Students^{ab}</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| Jill | 3 (ESL) | 100.00% |
| Patricia | 5 (Special Education) | 100.00% |
| Amanda | 3 | 90.60% |
| Juan | 7 and 8 (Literacy) | 81.20% |
| Anne-Marie | 5 | 76.88% |

^aData from the 2016 School Year

^bAs per the school district website, the reported Community Eligibility Provision Economically Disadvantaged rates represent the percentage of students identified for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program multiplied by a USDA-defined factor of 1.6, and are capped at 100%. Additional information may be found on the USDA website: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision#main-content>

ECLA Community Partners

Community partners are local individuals or organizations that do work in or specialize in specific social issues, for example animal welfare, homelessness, or drug abuse. Community partners visit ECLA classrooms and/or host ECLA classrooms to provide information on their work and social issue. Partnerships between ECLA classrooms and community partners can be either a one-time visit or an ongoing partnership. Classrooms can work with several community partners throughout various

stages of the ECLA framework. Many ECLA classrooms invite community partners to help them learn about and decide between several social issues established in the first stage of the framework. Other ECLA classrooms invite community partners after they have decided on one social issue in order to help them identify causes and effects. ECLA staff played an integral role in identifying community partners for classrooms and scheduling classroom visits, which is one of the supports offered to ECLA teachers.

Throughout the course of my classroom observations I was able to observe seven community partners work with teachers and their classrooms. I worked with ECLA to identify community partners from this pool of seven to interview that (1) had ongoing relationships with ECLA, meaning that they were familiar with the organization, their framework, and their teacher members. I also worked with ECLA to identify community partners that (2) they were comfortable with me asking for interviews. ECLA has a pool of community partners who they rely on to work with classrooms who are interested in the social issue pertaining to that organization. Therefore, they call on some community partners frequently. On the other hand, at times ECLA needs to find new community partners if a class chooses a unique or first time social issue. ECLA may be working with certain community partners for the first time and establishing a new relationship. I chose to use ECLA as my gatekeeper for community partner interviews to respect their relationship with their community partners—not to overburden a seasoned community partner or strain a brand new relationship by contacting them for an interview. I identified two of the seven community partners to invite to participate in an interview via e-mail and one agreed. Interviewing a community partner who I observed partnering with an ECLA classroom provided me with a full picture of the role of community partners in the

classroom and their relationship with ECLA teachers. ECLA recommended I contact a community partner who presented in a classroom I was observing, although I was not able to observe the presentation. I contacted this community partner via e-mail and they agreed to participate in the study. Both interviews were in depth one-on-one interviews using the same semi-structured protocol and were recorded (see Appendix F).

Limitations

Ethnography is invaluable in this case as it provides a deep understanding of issues that likely occur for many teachers, “cultural theories generated by one ethnography provide the basis for hypotheses, hunches, observed patterns, or interpretations to be explored and developed in other, similar settings or even in the same setting over time” (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010, p. 12). These understandings can then be further developed. Ethnography provides a way to understand education reform as those it is intended to serve experience it. It provides an understanding of why and how reforms are, or are not, effective. Therefore, ethnographic research is an essential form of inquiry on its own, or, that can be “triangulated” with other methods to play a role in scientific inquiry. Similar studies of other service-learning initiatives are necessary to provide comparison and to increase generalizability. A quantitative study and/or a survey of all 93 teacher participants could be used to triangulate data from this study.

In addition, I pulled from a sample of teachers who already participated in the organization. These teachers chose to apply to this program and their participation implies their interest in service-learning and their positive feelings about this pedagogy in their classroom. The prior dispositions of the teachers that I sampled from led to their participation in this service-learning organization. Their prior dispositions, interest in

service-learning, and positive feelings about service learning could lead to bias in the study. To address this bias I will attend to the voices of the nine participants who no longer actively participate in ECLA and include cases where active participants serve as negative data.

I came to participate in service-learning and ECLA through an advertisement for a grant put out by the School District that provided curriculum and materials for what the District described as “character education.” After an interview for the grant, a District representative suggested I apply to ECLA in addition to using the curriculum and materials supplied through the grant. I had prior personal experiences with community service as a K-12 student, which led me to believe in the importance of service. As an educational researcher, I am still reflecting on what assumptions and motivations shaped my participation with ECLA. If I could return to my initial years of teaching I would reflect more on my participation in ECLA and service-learning and capture my thoughts. Although I now understand the importance of reflection, as a new teacher my priorities were strictly pragmatic. Focused on fulfilling the workaday expectations of my role as teacher, I feel I was motivated by the curricular and material resources ECLA offered.

Yet, my personal experiences with ECLA did not motivate the questions that drove this study. I came to my research question after studying ECLA’s relationship with their teachers through a course on community partnerships. It was at this point that I realized how committed participants were to the organization and implementing service-learning and wondered what motivated their commitment. I had a wholly positive experience with ECLA and service-learning. Thus, I frequently reflected on and strove to limit the bias resulting from my positive experience with, and hopes for, this organization

and the field of service-learning. Researcher bias resulting from experiences that influence the collection and analysis of data cannot be eliminated (Lichtman, 2010). However, I strove to reduce bias in several ways. First, approaching my field notes as a record of *process* and *how* events and activities took place helped me avoid imposing my experiential understanding of *why*—or the meaning behind—participant actions. Second, I grounded my findings in participant voice to ensure that they represent their assumptions and motivations, as opposed to representing myself. Third, I used follow-up interviews with participants (See Chapter 4: Methods) to member check my findings before my third and final stage of data analysis. Fourth, as discussed above, I conducted interviews with teachers who no longer participate in ECLA. Furthermore, my prior experiences as a teacher have led to biased assumptions about teaching in urban contexts. For example, if a participants' experiences matched mine it was easy to accept them as a universal truth, so I strove to make my conclusions based on the experiences of multiple participants and connect them to other literature on urban education.

Data Analysis

Throughout the project I took both a deductive and inductive approach to coding meaning that coding was a “manifestation” of my theoretical approach while also leaving room for other categories that emerged from the data (Smagorinsky, 2008). Smagorinsky (2008) writes about coding as a manifestation of theory: “in this conception, coding manifests what theory would say about data and makes the researcher’s theoretical perspective on the data corpus explicit, without precluding other ways of looking at it” (p. 399). I use the terms open coding and focused coding (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2005) to describe my coding as an iterative process resulting in concepts or themes (Creswell,

2012; Lichtman, 2013). Open coding refers to reading data to identify any concepts or themes that emerge. Focused coding refers to reading the data to identify predetermined concepts or themes. I coded all data using Dedoose software.

Data analysis occurred in three phases beginning early on in the data collection process. The first phase was an analysis of the transcribed interviews and focus group with *inactive* ECLA teachers. This analysis occurred during the initial stages of my data collection (November 2016). I coded this data collaboratively with two ECLA staff members. Each of us coded the data separately using open coding and kept memos on our coding choices. We then came together to discuss and reach agreement on a final codebook for focused coding of the inactive ECLA teachers interview and focus group transcripts. The codebook consisted of 54 final codes—10 parent codes and 44 child codes (see Appendix G). I coded the data using focused coding in Dedoose software, which structures their coding process using parent (or first tier) and child (or second tier) codes. For example, one parent code was “professional benefits” and the related child codes included: “curriculum connections,” “resources,” “network of teachers,” and “Framework activities.” For the purposes of my project, I did not consider these codes and coded data “final.” I left the codes and coded data in Dedoose to be expanded upon and revise in future iterations of coding during subsequent phases data analysis.

I worked with ECLA staff to report the results of our data analysis for their purposes. To inform this project, I kept a memo on these results to document the preliminary findings of this phase of data analysis. Concepts that emerged from the data include the importance of quality professional development and professional treatment offered by ECLA. While Santoro’s (2013) model of teacher integrity centers the moral

and ethical aspects of professional identity, the importance of the aforementioned concepts illustrated that there are tangible factors that impact professional identity that cannot be ignored. However, later data analysis revealed that tangible factors were intertwined with intangible factors. For example, professional treatment resulted in professional satisfaction. Preliminary findings also included that participants valued and perceived a relationship between real world learning, or authenticity, and student engagement. Along these lines, data also indicated overlap between the benefits participants perceived students to gain from their participation in ECLA and benefits to themselves as professionals. Finally, negative data illustrated that time constraints and conflicting academic pressures caused ECLA teachers to no longer participate in the organization. Yet, they identified incorporating student voice (eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement) as a lasting benefit of their participation in ECLA.

The second phase of data analysis occurred after initial interviews and eight months of observation of active ECLA teachers in their classrooms (see Active ECLA Teachers: Classroom Observation and Interview Participants section above). This phase of data analysis was done with the purpose of informing follow-up interviews with these participants so that they could serve as a form of member checking (May 2017). Using Dedoose, I analyzed each participant's initial interview and field notes from their classroom observations. I used the codes established in the first phase of data analysis as appropriate and also created additional codes through open coding. This resulted in a working codebook of 80 final codes— 43 parent and 37 child (see Appendix H). Parent codes included: “community building,” “like-minded people,” and “respect for teacher as

expert.” Linked parent and child codes included the parent code “push,” which identified school and systemic factors that drove participants to look for support outside their school district, and the following child codes: “lack of resources,” “scale of district,” “lack of respect,” “lack of curricular autonomy,” “emphasis on testing,” and “bureaucracy.” Again, I left these codes and coded data in Dedoose to be expanded upon and revised as more data was collected.

Throughout this phase of data analysis I kept memos to (1) inform a uniform protocol for all follow up interviews and (2) inform two to five individualized questions asked at the end of the uniform portion of my follow-up protocol. Concepts that emerged as important included characteristics of the ECLA Framework embedded throughout school- or district-mandated curriculum such as instruction that was authentic and relevant to students, was student-driven, and incorporated student voice. Support for teaching in the aforementioned ways was integral to teaching integrity.

The final phase of data analysis involved open coding and focused coding of all data. First, I coded the remaining data that had not yet been coded in the first and second phases described above (field notes from participant observation of ECLA events; transcripts of interviews with ECLA staff, community partners, and active ECLA teachers—referred to as group C). To code this data I used the codes developed in the first two phases of data analysis and added any codes that emerged through open coding. Using the Dedoose analysis tools, I identified repetitive codes or codes that overlapped and merged them; deleted codes that were not backed by multiple data sources or sufficient data; and created parent and child codes. This process resulted in a codebook of 52 final codes—8 parent and 44 child (see Appendix I). At this stage parent codes

included “pull factors,” “push factors,” “personal integrity,” “teaching integrity,” and “professional integrity.” Using focused coding I re-coded all data. To determine the themes and concepts presented in this dissertation, I used Dedoose analysis tools to identify salient concepts and/or themes based on the number of times they occurred in the data.

CHAPTER 5: PUSHED TO ECLA

Introduction

The current educational context presents a number of challenges to teacher professional identity. Participants experienced a lack of curricular autonomy, resources, and support in their schools. The aforementioned factors challenged teachers' professional identity, which is shaped by internal and external factors (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Here, I narrow my analysis of teachers' professional identity to focus on professional *integrity*, which highlights the juxtaposition between external factors that teachers find to be miseducative and their ethical values. Integrity involves a sense of coherence, which contrasts the dissonance that occurs when practices required by education reforms and a teacher's morals do not align. When teachers cannot teach in ways that align with their integrity, the resulting ethical dilemmas can lead to negative emotions and teacher attrition (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Santoro, 2013).

This chapter starts with an understanding of participants' notions of *professional integrity* (their ability to teach in alignment with their commitments). I delineate inter-relationships between professional integrity, *personal integrity* (personal commitments), and *teaching integrity* (commitments to the craft). I show participants' teacher integrity was informed by two specific themes in their personal integrity: a personal commitment to social justice and a personal commitment to democratic values. Literature on teachers' moral disagreements with policies and working conditions in urban school contexts posits that they challenge their professional and personal commitments. Still, this understanding is incomplete, as it does not define what these commitments are. By demonstrating how professional integrity was intertwined with beliefs about social justice and democracy, I

clarify how it can be corroded or supported. In all, Part 1 illuminates what teaching with integrity meant for participants, laying the groundwork for a discussion of affronts to their integrity that pushed them to join ECLA.

The second part of this chapter presents school-level factors that affected teachers' professional lives and pushed participants to join ECLA. Focusing on the realities of the daily lives of teachers in urban school contexts, I detail how participants felt constrained and frustrated by a lack of curricular autonomy. I illustrate these assertions with a case study of one participant, Jane. Next, I illuminate teachers' experiences with lacking resources and support: an inability to address students' social, emotional, and academic needs and deficient materials and support systems. Again, I illustrate these assertions in a case study of one participant, Charlie. The "push factors" I describe in Part 2 challenge and frustrate teachers, pushing them to seek ways to maintain their professional integrity. Thus, I show that teachers are pushed to join ECLA because it helps them teach in ways that reflect their personal and professional commitments.

Part 1: Professional Integrity

This section highlights inter-relationships between participants' personal, teaching, and professional integrity. Two major themes that emerged in participants' personal integrity are presented below: personal commitments to (1) social justice and (2) democratic values. These personal commitments informed participants' teaching and professional integrity, driving them to meet students social and emotional needs, equip students with citizenship skills, and honor students' opinions, ideas, and choices in their instruction. Although aspects of an individual's identity are always inter-related, and despite overlap in social justice and democracy as it applies to education, these two

themes are presented separately to highlight distinct differences in the way ECLA teachers understood them.

Theme 1: A Personal Commitment to Social Justice

Participants saw putting their students' social and emotional needs on par with their academic needs as important to teaching with meaning and purpose. While meeting students' needs is important for many teachers, participants specifically related these themes to social justice. ECLA teachers felt students' social and emotional needs had to be met in order to facilitate an effective learning environment:

If you take the poverty, drug abuse, violence, and police activity in the neighborhood, you have students who come to school with all of this extra stuff. It's not like they can leave it at home and then they're totally fine when they get to school. (Kelsey).

The “extra stuff” Kelsey spoke to—students' social and emotional needs—interferes with learning and causes students to struggle academically, or “flounder” (Maggie). As Jessie explained: “[students] come to class hungry—or whatever it is. You have to deal with that child's hunger before you can teach them active and passive voice.” Students whose lives are affected by systemic social issues such as poverty and violence are often dependent on their schools to provide them with support. The need for student support services is amplified in urban school districts, where higher numbers of students come from lower socio-economic backgrounds than their suburban counterparts. Yet, insufficient funding in urban school districts prevents services, such as counseling and health, from being adequately administered. As all participants noted, a lack of supports caused unaddressed social and emotional needs to interfere with learning in their schools. This is not the case in most suburban school districts where needs are less and there is

ample funding to pay for services. Thus, participants viewed an inability to meet their students' social and emotional needs as conflicting with their commitment to social justice—a fair distribution of wealth, opportunity, and privilege.

Participants also saw incorporating student voice (students' ideas, opinions, and choices) as important to teaching because they wanted to provide students with equal access to the privilege and skills, or cultural capital, which they identified their students' suburban counterparts as entitled to. Mary explained that her students are not typically taught to self-advocate and it is her responsibility to foster this skill: “teach them how to advocate for themselves in a way that I think kids in [the neighboring suburban school district] are taught constantly.” Mary has observed a contrast in the cultural capital cultivated in her students, all classified as economically disadvantaged (see Table 2) and Hispanic/Latino (according to public School District data), and the cultural capital cultivated in the neighboring suburban school district. Thus, she stressed teaching her students' to advocate for themselves to equip them with equal cultural capital to that of students in the neighboring suburban school district, which is a highly-resourced school district and composed mostly of White students and students from higher socio-economic backgrounds (according to public data from that School District).

Participants emphasized a responsibility to incorporate student voice grounded in their commitment to social justice and, particularly, a belief in empowering groups marginalized by systemic situations. For instance, it was important for Amanda to teach her students that their experiences have equipped them with knowledge and opinions worth sharing: “it's important for me to teach kids how to address the issues in a community that concern them and to know that they have a voice. Even though they're

kids they can still speak up and be empowered by knowledge.” The ideas, opinions, and experiential knowledge of students, particularly students of lower socio-economic status and students of color, are generally undervalued by society. In contrast, participants felt it was important to elevate their students’ ideas, opinions, and experiential knowledge in the classroom to give students experience leveraging their voice.

Participants also saw a connection between incorporating students’ experiences into their classrooms because their culture is often under-valued by larger society. For example, Mary felt it was important to uplift the cultural capital, or cultural wealth, that her students bring to the classroom:

I believe in social justice. I believe in, as a teacher, exploring your own biases and racial attitudes coming into the classroom. I had to do a lot of that work because I've taught in so many different environments. I try to be conscious of ways in which my classroom is not putting kids on an equal footing, celebrating their home lives, or allowing their home culture to be celebrated.

Mary viewed the omission of her students’ experiences and culture as unjust because it does not allow for culturally relevant instruction, meaning that learning is not made relevant to students’ own experiences; this can impede engagement and learning. Mary, as a White female teaching students classified by the School District as Hispanic or Latino (according to Public School District data), also reflected on her own biases and racial attitudes, suggesting that she recognized that her life experiences and biases impact who she is as a teacher. She wanted to ensure that her students’ culture was equally valued. Thus, student voice was an issue of social justice for many participants because they felt it important that their students’ ideas, choices, and opinions were equally regarded.

Theme 2: A Personal Commitment to Democratic Values

Participants emphasized the importance of critical and ethical thinking, which they understood as vital skills for citizenship. For example, Jill's goal was to teach kids how to think and engage: "they're going to find difficult ideas, they're going to try to understand difficult ideas, and how can I give them the tools to do that?" It is important to Jill that her students are prepared to think critically about complex issues they will encounter as citizens. It was also important to participants that their students are equipped to speak out about issues important to them. Another ECLA teacher stated: "It all goes back to how [the student] can be productively heard in the world" (Field Notes, 8-3 experienced network member event). Participants viewed contributing to social dialogue around important issues as an important aspect of citizenship. As will be discussed at the end of section, this highlights that student voice was an issue of social justice for some participants and a democratic value for others.

Participants were committed to preparing students to think in critical ways about topics they will encounter as they contribute to society, not just as workers, but also as citizens. "Not only can they do math and do they know how simple circuits work...but are they citizens of the world? Do they understand what's going on? Are they willing to listen to lots of different opinions" (Charlie)? This reflects an understanding of the purpose of education that includes democratic goals—preparing youth to be competent citizens, as opposed to an understanding that focuses on social mobility and global competition.

Although participants saw students as current citizens, they also wanted to prepare them for the future by developing their autonomous understanding of society: "they'll be

the ones who need to take up the brunt of running our society and making it what it should be. As such, they need to be informed. They need to understand that we live in a democratic society” (Juan). Juan’s conception of his students making society “what it should be” implies that students have a moral and ethical understanding of society. Similarly, John believed that teaching students to think critically and deeply about complex issues in their community developed their *own* idea of what is right and wrong in their community:

We don't want to necessarily push personal morals or personal ethics on kids. I think teaching can create a space where those things can be discussed. Where we can talk about: what do we think is right? What do we think would be the good, the right, thing to do here, and have those kinds of conversations. Help kids build their own morals, their own ethics of care, or whatever it may be. We can certainly show them our own understanding of the world, what we think is important, but I think having them develop that is much more appropriate and valuable.

As John noted, participants did not want to impose their personal values on students, but to provide students with experiences and to create spaces where values can be discussed and built.

The importance of preparing future citizens stemmed from participants’ personal commitments to democratic values. For example, Juan described himself as an “idealist,” “someone who cares about what’s going on in our world.” Joanne described herself as “very conscious about community issues” and felt part of being a good example for her students was getting them involved in the community too. Participants described their commitment to citizenship as shared throughout ECLA. Sabrina described herself, and other ECLA teachers, as “opinionated” about social issues. Amanda described a shared “passion to make a difference.” Juan described ECLA teachers as “involved” and Charlie

described them as invested in their city. Participants were also engaged in politics, especially in education-related political issues. For example, I ran into one teacher at a political march in the center of the city. Many participants were involved in their teachers' collective bargaining union, which lists its focus as quality education, where others were involved in a separate caucus in the union with a social justice orientation.

Results thus far highlight common commitments and morals among ECLA members: commitments to social justice and to democratic values. Despite overlaps between education for social justice and education for democracy (See Chapter 2: Review of the Literature for a discussion of these two concepts), participants in this study referred to their commitments to social justice and commitments to democratic values separately. For example, some participants referred to eliciting students' ideas, choices, and opinions in order to prepare them to leverage themselves, enable them to employ dominant cultural capital, and elevate their cultural wealth in ways equal to that of their suburban counterparts. Enabling educators and students to address issues of inequity reflects a commitment to social justice. Other participants strove to elicit students' ideas, choices, and opinions to prepare them for civic and democratic participation. There is a distinction between personal responsibility, participatory, and justice oriented understandings of citizenship (Mitchell, 2008; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Mitchell (2008) describes this distinction in relation to service-learning as emphasizing "more traditional citizenship goals" or "social justice outcomes" (p. 50).

For instance, Jill stated that social justice is the main reason she is a teacher, while Amanda was concerned with making a difference, helping, and giving back. While some participants, such as Jill, were committed to addressing, and preparing students to

address, issues of social equality and citizenship, others were committed to being and preparing responsible citizens. Thus, I explored a commitment to social justice and a commitment to democratic living separately, as not all participants expressed personal commitments to either or both. Jill affirmed that not every teacher in ECLA was as focused on social justice:

I know within ECLA, there seems to be a split between people who are very dedicated to kids, but less political or maybe their politics are just not as in line with mine, more liberal and more conservative...I can think of this one person who's probably more politically conservative than I am. Our overlap in ECLA is probably not social justice. I can see this person is a super hard worker, very dedicated to the kids, very into doing a [service-learning] project, does a great job with it, and seems like a great teacher. The overlap is an interest in kids and finding innovative ways to motivate kids to learn and engage academically.

While participants shared personal commitments to social justice, democratic values, or select aspects of the two, Jill's quote also indicates that participants shared a commitment to students they viewed as above and beyond what is required by their role as a teacher (this will be discussed further in Chapter 6). While participants described ECLA teachers as sharing commitments to social justice, education for democracy, and an exceptional commitment to their students, not all participants, or ECLA teachers in general, can be described as possessing all three.

Part 2: Affronts to Integrity

This section will present realities of participants' daily lives in urban school contexts that challenge their professional integrity. These affronts to participants' professional integrity push them to participate in ECLA. First, this section shows that a lack of curricular autonomy constrains participants' ability to teach in ways that are important to them, causing frustration. It presents a case study of Jane, which exemplifies

how professional discretion is limited by discussing her dissatisfaction with her mandated literacy curriculum. Second, this section shows that insufficient resources and support systems rendered participants unable to meet students' needs and left them feeling discouraged. It presents a case study of Charlie, whose personal integrity is particularly impacted by a lack of resources and support.

Push Factor 1: Lacking Curricular Autonomy

In many schools, an emphasis on improving standardized test scores led to what participants saw as an overly controlled curriculum in many of their own schools or schools across the District. Teachers were frustrated with a lack of curricular autonomy: “[state standardized tests] are BS, benchmarks are BS, most of the assessment is BS... The BS. Really, I have to put up an objective the kid can't read? I have to teach from this textbook that doesn't provide enough practice and is completely standard based and not helpful” (Jill)? Jill referred to state standardized tests and School District-wide standardized tests. She described curricular mandates resulting from an over emphasis on testing as senseless because they did not address student needs.

Teachers saw a lack of curricular autonomy as particularly problematic in schools where students' test scores were poor: “I know that the more difficulty you're having as a school, the more scripted things become, which leaves less time for more authentic connections...” (Charlie). According to Charlie, the poorer a school performed on standardized tests, the less time they were allowed for authentic learning. Although all participants were provided with the School District-mandated curriculum and materials for their grade, participants' individual schools provided them with varying levels of curricular autonomy, related to their performance on standardized tests. To illustrate,

Maggie felt fortunate to teach at a school that, as a whole, performed well on standardized tests because it allowed her more autonomy compared to others:

As long as I'm getting my testing results, my principals have always allowed me to do ECLA or teach in an authentic way. I don't think that is the case at a lot of schools in [this city]...if I was teaching out of a Basal reader every day, I think that would be a lot more problematic for me.

Because she teaches at a school that does well on standardized tests, Maggie is afforded more autonomy to make her own curricular choices, as opposed to strictly adhering to the School District curriculum. She compares this to other schools in the District that use Basal readers, which would be problematic for her because she feels they lead to inauthentic instruction. Thus, unlike other participants, a lack of curricular autonomy is not a source of frustration for Maggie (discussed more in Chapter 6: Pulled to ECLA). However, she is still troubled by an emphasis on testing and curricular control across her School District, as well as a lack of resources and support. In contrast, Mary, whose school does not score well, had a different experience:

My school has had a huge focus on improving test scores, especially reading scores. Our focus is always: what are we reading; how are kids reading; what do we do to improve reading? Other more fun stuff, things like science and social studies, have really been on the back burner.

Mary has found it difficult to balance “mandates from the principal versus what you think is actually best for your students.” She finds the expectations of student growth and testing “at any cost” to be “hard to manage” (Mary). Mary explained that the entire month of April was dedicated to state standardized testing. Like other participants, during standardized testing she did ECLA activities in the afternoons because they were more authentic and contrasted the demands of testing on both students and teachers. On the other hand, some teachers put their ECLA projects on hold during state standardized

testing and one noted that behavior was at an “all time low” during these tests, illustrating the affect they have on students emotionally (e-mail communications). Test preparation also had a negative effect on teachers’ emotions: “I think sometimes, especially around [state standardized test] time, you personally just feel so useless, like you're going to work every day to just do some lame test stuff and you don't feel productive” (Jane). Teaching to the state standardized test required Jane to do rote test preparation every day. This made her feel personally useless and professionally unproductive.

Participants linked overly controlled instruction with low expectations of students. John found a scripted curriculum involved “low expectations” of students’ prior and experiential knowledge and criticized “... this idea that the kids need a scripted curriculum. They need this and they're missing that.” He described this approach as “not drawing on all the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding kids already have...when kids are fountains of knowledge and understanding.” As discussed above, for many teachers, incorporating students’ knowledge and opinions was a social justice issue in terms of equally uplifting students’ cultural wealth and providing them with the skills associated with dominant cultural capital.

ECLA teachers were also frustrated by the low expectations prevalent in many schools, seeing it as evidence of the deficit perceptions with which many view low-income students of color. Anne-Marie felt that mandated curriculum not “pushing” or “challenging” students was a result of a fear on the part of policy-makers, administrators, and other educators that students from “difficult” environments “can’t handle it.” She stated, rolling her eyes: “so we're just gonna give them the bare minimum, and if they can do that, that's good” (Anne-Marie). Anne-Marie’s sarcasm illustrated the negative

emotions she felt towards the rudimentary curriculum often offered in many schools. Instead, she would like to see a curriculum that challenges students to think deeply and critically about issues relevant to their lives.

Similarly, Charlie connected low expectations and a scripted curriculum to the urban context of the School District. However, he saw them as a response to the challenges students face outside of school:

It's just the fact that there are kids with a lot of needs in this urban environment. Much of the time when things get more difficult, things, at least academically, get more prescribed...That's not always meeting [students] social needs. Unfortunately a lot of that comes first before you can ever tap into the academic needs. (Charlie).

Charlie found that a prescribed curriculum is a reaction to students' social and emotional needs. At the same time, he concluded that a prescribed curriculum is not effective in meeting students' needs. Students' social and emotional needs are not prevented from interfering with learning by providing adequate support systems. Instead, policy-makers, administrators, and other educators attempt to force learning on students through regimented curriculum, which is inauthentic, disengaging, and neglects social and emotional learning.

As touched on above, teachers also saw a hyper-focus on testing as emotionally harmful to students. To illustrate, a teacher shared at the March monthly training that her third grade class chose to study ways to combat stress because they felt anxious about having to take state standardized tests for the first time. To support emotional health, her class made an ABC book about combating stress to distribute to other classes in their school, did yoga with a community partner, and raised money to buy their peers stress balls (Field Notes, March monthly training; Facebook page). Meeting students' emotional

needs was important to all participants. Although testing caused negative emotions for students, this teacher was able to counter them through service-learning. As will be discussed further in Chapter 6, which focuses on why participants were pulled to ECLA, ECLA afforded this teacher the curricular autonomy to meet their students' emotional needs despite an over-emphasis on tests.

According to participants, overly-structured curriculum was academically problematic because it had the potential to disengage students. Anne-Marie reported that curriculum is "becoming more structured," which limited students' creativity and disengaged them: "creativity from the students is lessening because we expect them to analyze text, analyze nonfiction, and be able to compare and contrast. If you're not allowing the authentic, more real world activities and projects incorporated into that structure...you might lose interest in students, so that's the challenge for me." A hyper-structured curriculum pushed participants to find creative ways to embed authentic and engaging activities throughout their curriculum to the extent to which the level of curricular autonomy at their school allowed.

An emphasis on standardized testing was also expressed as problematic by teachers because it de-valued students' prior knowledge:

Education, as a country right now, I don't know if we're heading in a good direction, or the right direction. The [state standardized test], No Child Left Behind, Every Student Succeeds, or something like that, so much of what they know wouldn't show up on one of those places necessarily. So, service learning gives students a chance to exhibit and show their knowledge in other areas, in other ways. (John).

John is speaking directly to national education policies that result in yearly state standardized tests. He believed these tests, imposed as they are from on high, do not do

justice to students' strengths and knowledge. For John, it is essential to hear what students have to bring to the classroom. Thus, John turned to service-learning as a way to incorporate students' prior knowledge.

Case Study: Curricular Struggles

Jane has been teaching for six years and participating in ECLA for two. She taught seventh grade literacy at a charter middle school. This was Jane's sixth year at the school and, as one of the more tenured teachers in the building, she felt comfortable in her role and navigated her classroom and school with confidence and ease. Jane is a 29 year old White female. Her school served a neighborhood in the city that struggled with poverty and related issues; at the time of the study, 100 percent of the school's students were classified as economically disadvantaged (see Table 2). The majority of students at her school were classified by the School district as Hispanic or Latino (according to public School District data).

Jane's school used to be a public school but was turned over to a charter management organization due to low performance on standardized tests and an unsafe school climate. The school continues to underperform on standardized tests although its climate has improved. Thus, Jane was impacted by a lack of curricular autonomy. For example, she was given a prescribed literacy curriculum and was expected to show evidence of teaching strategies for taking the state standardized test.

Jane's school is housed in a large, old, and factory-like building in need of renovations. It is cared for, but still looks run down. Throughout my observations, Jane's classroom felt consistently calm despite my hearing several disruptions coming from the hallways. Jane always appeared relaxed, sitting on a classroom desk or walking around

the classroom while teaching. She displayed both a sense of authority and a sense of humor with her students. Her students sat in groups of four and her instruction alternated between moments where students were silently listening or reading and moments when they were engaged in group conversation. The back corner of her room had a rug and two bookshelves filled with short texts that comprise her school-mandated literacy curriculum. Teacher-made posters with standardized test taking strategies were hung on the walls.

Jane has been mandated to teach six different literacy curricula in six years. At the time of this study she found her current mandated curriculum especially difficult to teach because it was “irrelevant” to her students. It involved students reading short texts written by the curriculum publisher that Jane felt were “random” and “confusing.” She could not figure out how to use it in a way that felt “authentic.” Jane reported teaching the mandated curriculum was “stressful” for her and her colleagues. Teaching a curriculum, “that tells you exactly what to do every day,” did not align with the way she wanted to teach and made teaching more difficult:

The people who make this curriculum would say, ‘you can change things.’ They told us that all the time. We’re like, ‘well, why are you making it, then?’ You’ve now made something that you’re telling me I can change whenever I want, and now I’m just doing my own thing anyways. Going through the stress of trying to fit my own thing into your thing, and it just adds extra work that no one needs to do. I went to grad school for teaching...I know how to make a unit. I think that kind of stuff makes the job harder than it has to be, even though the intention is for it to be easier. But it’s not easy to teach someone else’s stuff, especially when it’s a generic, made for everybody, thing that you’re supposed to teach individual students.

Jane’s curriculum limited her professional discretion, expertise, and ability to individualize her instruction. Therefore, Jane has moved away from teaching the required

curriculum, using her professional expertise to design her own lessons, despite administrative mandates.

Jane's teaching philosophy emphasized providing opportunities for immediate and long-term success, which included meeting the needs of her students, ranging from middle school students' need for movement and activity to helping students understand their place in the world, both now and in the future:

... In places where your students are from an area that is so disenfranchised, you can't go to work and just be like, 'oh, okay, taught math today, going home.' You have to really think about what they're going to be doing in 10 years and are you helping that? I think teaching is one of the most moral and ethical professions. You have to do things well...Not have to, but you should be doing certain things every day to show the kids that they are a person in the world, not just someone that everyone forgot about.

Jane views teaching as “moral,” “ethical,” and “political” work (Jane). She feels it is especially important to meet students' social and emotional needs in the under-resourced neighborhood where she worked. However, doing so was a challenge because her required curriculum did not account for individual student needs. As with other ECLA teachers, Jane's teaching is fueled by a personal commitment to social justice. This commitment is especially important to her because she teaches in a disenfranchised neighborhood.

Citizenship skills and student voice were also important to Jane: “I try to teach in a way that they [students] feel like they can say things themselves. That pull that they can have beliefs, but also that they are part of the whole and that it's much bigger than their neighborhood.” However, citizenship skills and student voice were not a focus of her school-mandated curriculum. Thus, Jane was pushed to ECLA as a way to incorporate them into her teaching:

I do [ECLA] because I think the point of being a teacher is to help students become productive, positive members of their communities and ECLA is a great way to do that and I don't think that our school curriculums always focus on that. I wanted to do ECLA to find a way to put it in my classroom.

For Jane, the purpose of teaching is to prepare students to contribute to their communities in productive and positive ways. This aligns with the goal of education for democracy: to prepare students to be competent citizens. To incorporate citizenship skills, Jane used social issues her students expressed interest in as a platform to teach academic skills. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, the ECLA Framework helped participants do this. For example, Jane used articles on animal abuse and homelessness to teach skills for analyzing non-fiction (Field Notes, 1-18). Jane based students' academic learning on social issues they chose to learn about because they are relevant to their lives. She was pushed to do this because she felt her mandated curriculum was irrelevant.

Jane felt her students "resisted" the school-mandated curriculum: "a lot of times we're just reading this poem and reading this book, and [students are] asking me if there's a movie after, and that's it." Thus, Jane reported she needed to plan very structured lessons in order to keep students on task. In contrast, she gave her students much less structure when doing ECLA-related activities because she didn't receive any resistance (Field Notes, 1-18). Jane shared:

... I feel like they were having the most genuine conversations and it wasn't a struggle to get them to talk, I didn't have to give out tickets for everyone who answered, I didn't have to bribe them with points, candy, and stuff. They just wanted to discuss things. Those discussions are where they're learning stuff, and that's what they're going to remember. That's how I felt. Like during that time we're actually getting something done. We are having a conversation about something real. They're conversing on their own. They are not being forced. That doesn't happen all the time in a classroom.

Jane felt her school-mandated curriculum was inauthentic. Thus, she was pushed to find a way to embed student voice—students’ choice of a social issue that is relevant to them—into teaching the necessary standards to increase its authenticity.

Push Factor 2: Insufficient Resources and Support

Insufficient resources were a reality of the daily professional lives of ECLA teachers whose schools were insufficiently funded and under-resourced. For example, Jane had to cancel one of my observations because she did not have the paper to copy the article and graphic organizer students needed for her planned lesson. She explained this to me by e-mail in a matter-of-fact manner, as if not having enough supplies was routine. Similarly, Mary reported the effects of a lack of funding on her school building:

... as inadequate as the resources are in our schools and how, as much as I think this is a travesty every day that my students go to a school where the walls are literally crumbling, teaching and what they learn about in our classroom, can still make a difference to them and can still be an empowering experience for them.

Mary describes her school as one where the walls are literally crumbling—something I also observed to be true and, like Mary, saw as a symbol of the overall scarcity of resources. While she finds it to be a travesty, the learning that can still occur in her classroom provides her some encouragement.

Many ECLA teachers were involved politically or with organizations that worked to improve the financial plight of the School District. For example, John hung a sign in his room that he had worn around his neck at a recent political march reading, “schools are not for sale” (Field Notes, 2-10). Like all teachers in this study, teachers at Elisha’s school were impacted by a lack of funding coupled with a community that is unable to support the school financially (100 percent of the students at Elisha’s school are

classified as “Economically Disadvantaged”; see Table 2). As Elisha explained, teachers at her school used Donorschoose.com to ask for donations online to cover classroom supplies:

There's a different allocation of funding going through schools, areas, and pockets of [this city]. You don't have a lot of money coming from the community. It's hard. And we don't have a lot of money coming from the district. We have to reach out to funding on our own, which we do. A lot of our teachers do Donors [Choose] to get stuff in the building and in our classrooms. So, we're doing all this extra stuff to try and get funding to just get supplies for our classroom.

Advocating for sufficient school funding and securing basic classroom supplies takes up teachers' time that could be focused on students and instructional planning.

Along with a lack of materials, insufficient time was also a hurdle for teachers in terms of fitting in instruction that aligns with their professional integrity, planning, and even teaching the basic mandated curriculum. This not only negatively impacted teachers professionally but also personally, as it caused significant frustration. For instance, Joanne shook her head in dismay as she stressed the amount of preparation time she had lost covering other teacher absences at her school. Furthermore, Joanne did not have access to materials. Both made planning and implementing lessons difficult:

There are a few difficulties. One is the lack of prep time. I just yesterday had my 66th coverage. So that's 66 times 45 minutes, so that's a lot of time to lose... The substitute system that they used this year did not provide substitutes and I don't even know if there are enough substitutes out there because we're not getting them. Another thing is materials. You know we have to purchase our own paper. There's no materials.

Across the board, participants tied a lack of time and materials to a lack of school funding. For Joanne, this manifested in her having to act as a substitute teacher and seek out materials.

Jill argued that funding was allocated based on “misguided priorities”: “just the belt tightening, and then we have plenty of money for new textbooks, but we don't have money for actual books.” This reflects the fact that prescribed, commercially made, curriculum is prioritized over other ways of teaching. Jill was also angry that the school so often did not provide her what she needed: “frustrating, dumb, things. I need another desk. I'm not getting it.” One teacher expressed their exasperation with their school, raising their hands in the air and reporting: “there's major leadership gaps, terrible communication, resources that are very unevenly distributed, and kids needs that are not met because there's not a plan.” A lack of time and resources impacted teachers in terms of preventing them from teaching with integrity, but it also impacted them personally, conflicting with their personal commitments, such as social justice, and resulting in negative emotions.

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, ECLA teachers shared a belief that students' social and emotional growth was just as important as their academic growth. Although teachers across the nation struggle with insufficient resources and supports, the situation is even more extreme in urban school contexts. ECLA teachers, who mostly taught in under-resourced schools with a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students, required more support than they were getting to meet students' needs. Sabrina explained that when students have been through trauma, additional support is necessary: “having, besides yourself, someone else that specializes in it [trauma] that can help them through it and help you through it. Sometimes you don't know exactly what to do when you have so many other kids and so many different

issues....” This support is undoubtedly necessary for the student but it is also necessary for teachers to feel they can meet students’ needs and feel good about doing their job.

Class size also emerged as a significant barrier to reaching students’ needs and building community within the classroom. The number of students in Maggie’s class left her feeling like she could not give her students the individualized attention they needed:

I had too many kids and this was a smaller year, I had 28... I'd prepare for an hour before school and I'd leave with a stack of papers every day. Every single minute of my day is either planning, working with kids, or figuring out social and emotional things that kids are going through. So that's always the most difficult part of my job, I think, every year. Trying to fit it all in and feel like I'm not dropping the ball with a student...that kind of thing is really, really frustrating, when you feel like...these kids need more.

Together, time and class size prevented Maggie from providing for her students academically, socially, and emotionally. Like Joanne and Jill, Maggie became tense and emphatic—using the words “difficult” and “frustrating” to express the negative emotions that arise when she cannot teach with integrity.

Participants shared negative emotions resulting from their inability to meet student needs. Mary described meeting students’ needs, in combination with other factors, as “emotionally exhausting” and “discouraging”:

You're emotionally exhausted by the end of the day when you've met with students, especially students who need a lot of love, from 8:30 until 3:09. You're tired inside in a deep way...I think that, combined with the general under funding of education and with all of the stresses of testing and common core, all that combines to be discouraging. Stuff like ECLA helps you shake out of that and focus on parts of the job that you enjoy.

Mary’s feelings of exhaustion and discouragement pushed her to find ways to mitigate negative emotions. Participants reported educators throughout the district also shared

feelings of discouragement. Elisha, who is the teachers' union building representative at her school, reported that teachers across the School District are overwhelmed:

...learning from other building [representatives]...It's a lot expected from the teacher and teachers seem very overwhelmed. Paper work, curriculum standards...data is a big push right now. Regular education teachers are being pushed to do a lot of work. Special education teachers are overloaded with the amount of kids that they're supporting.

However, not all district teachers were pushed to find ways to mitigate negative feelings—either quitting or remaining discouraged. As discussed below, Anne-Marie described a sense of burn out among District teachers and Charlie reported high teacher turnover. What is unique about the participants in this study is that their negative emotions pushed them to look outside of the District for professional support and satisfaction.

In addition to feeling unsupported in meeting student needs, participants expressed they did not feel supported as professionals. Jill reported that support is rare in many schools in the School District: “if they come in your classroom, and something's wrong, you're just going to get in trouble for it. Nobody's going to help you fix it....” Jill found it rare for someone from the District to take an active role in helping you improve your teaching. Many participants expressed that support from the District devalued them as professionals. Thus, participants, such as Krissy, reported looking elsewhere for professional support and value:

In [this city], I don't feel like they respect us as professionals. I think they kind of group everybody under the same umbrella and that's not right at times. Because I feel like I'm very qualified. And so, I have to step outside of the District to some degree to get validated as a professional and to pursue other things and get training elsewhere. Like ECLA, to feel like oh, okay, I'm important. Or, I'm necessary and I'm valued.

Krissy found support from the District was too generic and therefore did not recognize her professional expertise. She felt associated with colleagues who are not as qualified and wanted differentiated opportunities to grow as a professional based on where she is, not where they are. Furthermore, she wanted to receive respect based on her high qualifications, not based on pervasive negative perceptions of teachers.

Many ECLA teachers cited that under-valuing the teaching profession was a national problem. For example, Patricia felt that the press had colored the teaching profession as “public enemy number one.” In contrast to this negative perception, Caroline described teachers as dedicated both professionally and personally. Her voice wavered and her eyes narrowed as she almost shouted:

Not just here in [this city], but in general. We’ve become the enemy. Everybody telling us how awful it [the teaching profession] is. How awful we are. We’re ruining kids and this and that. Here’s how many committed people? And we’re doing everything—I mean heart and soul, tears and sweat—everything. How many times have you cried after hearing ‘my student went to crisis for this or that.’ And then to read in the newspaper, ‘oh, teachers greedy, want this that and that’ ... (Caroline).

Caroline felt teachers are misrepresented in the media. Her choice of phrases such as “awful,” “enemy,” and “ruining kids,” demonstrated that the media’s depiction of teachers affronts her emotionally, impacting her professional integrity.

A lack of resources, support in meeting student needs, and support as professionals challenged participants and pushed them to look outside of the school district to validate their professional integrity. Although Anne-Marie identified a sense of “burnout” among many teachers, she felt ECLA teachers were able to keep motivated:

... Sometimes teachers are a bit burnt out, and so they’ll do kind of the bare minimum sometimes, not all teachers, it’s like maybe 50/50. You have those teachers that are still going, that are still trekking. And that’s why you have some

teachers who are ECLA, or other professional organizations, because they branch off to feel like they're supported.

In order to find the sense of support they need, participants were pushed to ECLA, which filled “holes” in what the School District can provide in terms of “materials” and “help” (Jane). Too many students, responsibilities, and not enough adult staff to support student and teacher needs prevented teachers from teaching in ways that lived up to their professional and personal commitments. In light of these realities, participants felt ECLA teachers have the shared identity of still “trekking” because they have found sources of support. This identity is compared to others who are “burnt out” and do the bare minimum.

Case study: Affronts to Personal Integrity

Charlie has been at his school for the 12 years he has been teaching. He has been an ECLA teacher for five years. He currently teaches fourth grade. Charlie is a 43 year old Caucasian male. The majority of students at Charlie’s school are classified by the School District as African American or Black (according to public School District data). Almost all students at Charlie’s school are categorized as economically disadvantaged (see Table 2). The school is a small K-4 neighborhood school with only two classes in each grade. It is located on a clean, tree-lined block with. It is a small, well-kept building with lots of murals and a big play yard lined with trees. I accompanied Charlie’s class on a community walk where they identified positive and negative characteristics of their neighborhood. We left from the school and walked through several blocks of large Victorian-style homes on clean, tree-lined streets. Blocks then changed to smaller row homes and vacant, littered, lots.

Charlie's experiences in his school and as an urban educator were unique: "I teach here, I live in the neighborhood, and both my children have gone here." Furthermore, his wife also worked in the School District and his children still attended School District schools. Therefore, he was particularly committed to his school and the larger District. He was passionately involved in issues of education across the city. Charlie's school does relatively well on state standardized tests, affording Charlie more curricular autonomy. Charlie's concerns over a lack of curricular autonomy reflected his awareness of how his colleagues and students at other schools were impacted by curriculum control. As discussed below, one of Charlie's major concerns was a lack of resources across the School District to support students and teachers.

Charlie has a commitment to service and civic engagement that stemmed from his personal commitments and experiences. In particular, he was shaped by his family's dedication to helping others. Charlie's father was a social worker: "I kind of grew up in this model of we help other people. That's what we do...." Charlie's service and engagement was motivated by an ingrained commitment to help others. It traditionally revolved around education and his school:

I have worn every hat known to man at this school and done everything, whether it's been as a teacher or as a parent or as both or as a community member, in terms of budget issues, in terms of speaking in front of [the appointed school board], in terms of any of the events that would happen at school. I guess if you call that community service then yes, my wife and I do a lot of that revolving around education in general.

Because Charlie is a teacher, parent, and resident in the School District, his commitment to helping others' is realized in local public education.

In the paragraph above, Charlie spoke to budget issues, which, as a teacher and parent in the School District, have impacted many facets of his life. Therefore, Charlie is civically engaged with issues of education, such as school funding: “I have, and even with my family...I've spoken at [appointed school board] meetings, been outside of every rally and made signs....” Charlie is involved with school funding for personal and professional reasons. Personally, Charlie is negatively impacted by the lack of support and value teachers receive as professionals in the School District. He sees a lack of respect for teachers as a global issue:

The fact that I guess, globally, teachers don't seem to be well respected as a whole group. It's an easy job. It's a fallback job. It's how you get all kinds of time off...We are here in front of all of your children, basically the entire next generation, for maybe more time than they're with their parents. This is an important job, a big job, and it doesn't seem like it is. It's not earning people enough money. It's not as important. That seems to be a big global piece.

Charlie believes insufficient pay reflects a lack of investment in teachers. This lack of value is reflected in the fact that at the time of this study teachers in the District had not had a contract in three years or pay raise in four, which participants found to be demoralizing.

Furthermore, Charlie explained that both he and his wife have dealt with a lack of resources in the School District that prevented students from getting their needs met: “...being in a city that is so poor, they need more. The lack of resources in terms of counselors, in terms of whole teams, to help lift up children, that's not here.” Charlie specifies resources to support students’ social and emotional health (i.e. counselors and student support teams) are not available:

There are so many kids who could use that extra help, who have seen trauma. Like I said, with our gun violence project last year, the amount of kids that have

directly seen trauma in terms of gun violence alone, that requires extra people, that requires extra services, that requires a whole lot that is not here in [this city].

Charlie struggles personally with the ways in which insufficient funds impacted students:

“...these are my children's counterparts, possibly for the rest of their lives here in the city, and they're not getting what they need. That's the very difficult part for me.” Like other participants, Charlie described the emotions that result from realities of his daily life as an educator in an under-funded district as “difficult.” Thus, insufficient resources are an affront to Charlie’s personal integrity, conflicting with the ethical understanding that has developed from his identity as a parent and resulting in negative emotions.

Conclusion

This chapter first presented an understanding of teachers’ professional integrity (their ability to teach in alignment with their commitments), which is informed by their personal commitments and professional commitments. Broadly, participants expressed commitments to social justice and democratic values. Specifically, they strove to meet the social and emotional needs of their students and incorporate student voice and citizenship skills in their instruction. An understanding of teachers’ integrity was necessary to explore how aspects of participants’ daily lives as professionals in urban school contexts challenged their commitments. While research highlighting teachers’ personal commitments is not new, what *is* unique is that for ECLA teachers, these commitments are challenged by the realities of their daily lives as educators in urban contexts and they are consequently pushed to ECLA as an avenue for maintaining their professional integrity. The second part of this chapter presents the school level factors that pushed

participants to look outside of their schools and school district for professional satisfaction.

Personal commitments to social justice informed participants' teaching. This manifested in participants striving to meet the social and emotional needs of their students. Teaching for social justice can challenge educational systems that do not adequately serve children (Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oylar, & Sonu, 2010). Participants described serving a population that is underserved in a city that is under-resourced, which connected their call to teach to issues of social justice. Participants saw the role of the teacher as challenging inequality. Due to frequent exposure to social and emotional issues faced by students in urban school contexts (Milner, 2008; 2012), meeting students' needs was an especially important aspect of participants' integrity. Social and emotional issues cause students to be school dependent: reliant on teachers or other school personnel for support (Delpit, 2012; Milner, 2012). This study offers an understanding of how that reality relates to teacher integrity. Literature on social justice education asserts that the current educational climate emphasizing testing, standardization, and accountability makes teaching for social justice critical (Enriquez & Shulman-Kumin, 2014; Dover, 2013). This study finds that the current educational climate specifically manifests in insufficient staff support, large class sizes, and curricular restrictions, which conflicted with teachers' ability to meet their students' social and emotional needs. Teachers felt the weight of their role because meeting students' social and emotional needs was necessary to provide equal educational opportunities

For participants, another component of their commitment to social justice involved providing students with opportunities to share their ideas, opinions, and choices.

Participants felt their students were lacking opportunities to develop the cultural capital held by dominant classes (middle or upper) (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). Providing opportunities for students to share, listening to students, and valuing and building on their prior knowledge, was an important aspect of teaching integrity because it prepared students to leverage themselves or self-advocate in ways cultivated in their suburban counterparts.

Quiroz (2011) asserts that in order for voice to be empowering it must be heard, not simply spoken. Dominant discourse in the United States privileges White and upper socioeconomic status identities (Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2017). Thus, the voices of students in participants' schools—student populations who were mostly economically disadvantaged and students of color—were not privileged and heard. Fine (1991) describes the formal and informal ways in which the school controls student voice as “silencing” (p. 33) and argues that silencing “shapes low-income public schools more intimately than relatively privileged ones” (p. 34). The participants in this study strove to incorporate the ideas, opinions, and choices of their students, which can reflect a commitment to education for social justice and a move away from education as a form social control (Kliebard, 2002). Participants also felt it was important to provide students with opportunities to share their ideas, opinions, and choices as practice for civic and democratic participation, which reflects their personal commitments to democratic values.

Participants also spoke of the importance of uplifting the cultural capital their students bring to the classroom by engaging students in their own education, and celebrating students' home lives and cultures in the classroom. This aspect of teaching

integrity is analogous with multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy, although research has also found that teachers include instruction that reflects students' personal and cultural identities in their definitions of teaching for social justice (Dover, 2013, p. 7). While each urban school is unique, students in urban school districts, which overall have a population with higher percentages of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and students of color, often do not possess the signals, actions, behaviors, or preferences of upper and middle classes. Therefore, their behaviors are de-valued. Teachers did "work" to evaluate their personal integrity, such as their experiences and related biases, to ensure they uplifted their students' cultural wealth in their classrooms and fostered a sense of cultural pride in their students (Yosso, 2005). Teaching integrity involved incorporating student voice to recognize students' cultural capital in the classroom.

A lack of curricular autonomy made it difficult for teachers to meet students' social and emotional needs, to incorporate their ideas, opinions and choices, and also to teach citizenship skills. Today, the goal of education reform is to bolster the nation's ability to compete in a global marketplace and to foster social mobility. Recent education measures (i.e. A Nation at Risk report, No Child Left Behind Act, Common Core Standards) have de-emphasized other, social and democratic, goals (Beane, 2013; Bruce & Pecore, 2013; Labaree, 2014). Participants also connected a lack of school funding and resources in their schools to factory understandings of education that value purchasing textbooks over other materials and supplies. Because teachers are only expected to deliver prescribed or scripted curriculum, they are not professionally valued, which was reflected in understaffed schools and under-supported teachers. Participants also felt

inadequately supported, under-valued, and negatively portrayed as professionals, which was demoralizing.

This chapter has shown that participants were *pushed* to look outside of the District for professional support and satisfaction by school-level factors (i.e. a lack of curricular autonomy, inadequate resources, and deficient support structures) that affected their daily lives as professionals. It detailed how these push factors challenged participants' professional integrity. The next chapter will detail how ECLA mitigated push factors—pulling participants to join ECLA.

CHAPTER 6: PULLED TO ECLA

Introduction

All of the participants in my study were involved with ECLA, a service-learning organization. What factors were responsible for participants' commitment to this program and especially to projects that took significant time, energy, and other resources and could be seen as distractions from the "mandated" curriculum? This chapter explores participants' meaning-making around this issue. It builds on an understanding of participants' professional integrity and affronts to their integrity that "push" them to ECLA, established in Chapter 5. This chapter will show the characteristics that "pulled" participants to the organization. As we know from Chapter 5, a lack of curricular autonomy, resources, and support prevented participants from teaching in ways that align with their professional integrity. As a result, participants were pushed to look outside of their schools and school district to mitigate affronts to their professional integrity. At the same time, participants were also pulled to participate in ECLA because of the resources and support it offers.

To understand teachers' motivations to participate in ECLA, I draw on Wegner's (1998) definition of communities of practice: groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact. I use Wegner's (1998) conceptualization of a community of practice to identify and explain the organizational factors that motivate teachers' participation in ECLA, especially as they relate to professional integrity. Due to their training and experience, ECLA's members shared a competence with service-learning in urban schools that distinguishes them from others. ECLA drew from this knowledge, valuing what Wegner (1998) describes as

collective competence. Communities of practice provide each other with *assets*—in this case resources such as community partners, lesson plans, or opportunities (Wegner, 1998). They develop a *shared repertoire* by sharing experiences, tools, or ways of addressing reoccurring problems (Wegner, 1998). Participants pulled from their shared repertoire to teach in ways that align with their professional integrity.

Several organizational characteristics drew participants to dedicate their time to learning and implementing ECLA’s service-learning Framework (described in Chapter 3: Context and described below). The first part of this chapter discusses specific characteristics of the ECLA Framework that created space for citizenship skills, critical thinking, student voice, and engagement. It focuses on how the Framework helped participants teach citizenship skills and create opportunities for students to share their ideas, opinions, and questions. It illustrates this process with two case studies: Maggie and John. While Part 1 focuses on ECLA’s Framework, Part 2 focuses on pedagogical and emotional resources and supports that pulled participants to ECLA. It demonstrates this process using two case studies: Elisha and Jessie. Pedagogical and emotional resources and support helped participants implement ECLA’s Framework and/or impacted other areas of their daily lives as professionals in urban schools.

Part 1: ECLA’s Framework

ECLA’s Framework is a five-stage process that unfolds throughout the course of one school year (see Chapter 3: Context for an overview of the five stages). It is laid out in a notebook provided to ECLA teachers during their initial training. Teachers are provided subsequent training on implementing the Framework throughout the school year. It guides teachers through student-led service-learning. It is not meant to be a

curriculum; instead, each stage is integrated into teachers' already mandated curriculum (see Chapter 3: Context for a description of the Framework). My analysis of ECLA's Framework demonstrates how it created space for participants to teach citizenship skills together with their school- or district- mandated curriculum. It presents a case study of Maggie, who was successful at weaving service-learning with a focus on critical thinking, throughout her entire curriculum. In addition, my analysis also illustrates how the Framework helps teachers effectively incorporate student voice. It presents a case study of John that illustrates how the Framework scaffolds building a safe space for students to share their experiences, opinions, and ideas.

Pull 1: Citizenship skills

Participants found standard school-required curriculum did not focus on teaching citizenship skills and honoring student voice, yet ECLA provided a sanctioned and supported way to incorporate both into mandated curriculum. As an example of citizenship skills development, Mary's students surveyed their school during math class to determine which social issue resonated the most with their peers: homeless pets or gun violence. Determining which issue impacted their school community the most led into a class debate, which students prepared for by composing persuasive speeches in literacy class. After debating, students voted as to which issue the class should choose. After narrowing down to the social issue of dogfighting, Mary's class organized a protest of dogfighting on National Dogfighting day, gave informational presentations on dog fighting to their peers, and raised funds for the SPCA. As another example, in literacy class, Charlie had his students write letters to local stores asking for donations of healthy food for a classroom "restaurant" where students served healthy meals to their families.

Surveying the community, debate, voting, protest, information sharing, fundraising, and letter writing are all citizenship skills that teachers incorporated into their school- or district-required curriculum using the ECLA Framework, which motivated their participation in ECLA.

Participants nested critical thinking under citizenship skills—understanding it as a vital skill for active citizenship—and found the Framework promoted critical thinking. Participants emphasized the importance of teaching critical thinking in the current political climate, where citizens were exposed to countless sources of information through the Internet and social media. The 2016 Presidential election, which highlighted the prominence of inaccurate news sources, was fresh in the minds of students and teachers at the time of this study. Maggie emphasized that ECLA helped her teach her students to identify credible sources, opinion, and fact:

I want my kids to be citizens of the world. I think specifically now in our political landscape, it's really important to be a critical thinker. Such a big part of ECLA, for example, is research, right? So, we spend a whole quarter on what's a credible source, what's not, and how can I discern someone's opinion versus fact?

Teaching her students to be active citizens was important to Maggie. She tied an ability to think critically to her students' ability to be citizens. Thus, Maggie was drawn to ECLA because their Framework helped her teach critical thinking skills as part of the research process.

As an example of how ECLA's Framework incorporated critical thinking into required curriculum, Jill used her service-learning project as a way to explore the topic of myth versus fact. Jill's class chose immigration as their social issue and brainstormed a list of myths surrounding immigrants (i.e. immigrants move to America to take advantage

of social services). They then did research to dispel the myths with facts. For teachers like Jill, teaching critical thinking skills was an important part of participants' understanding of what it means to be a teacher. For instance, at the teacher celebration held in the fall (see Chapter 3: Context for an overview of the teacher celebration event) one teacher shared: "your job as a teacher is to guide your students in how to ask critical questions" (Field Notes, 9-28). By creating space for critical thinking, the ECLA Framework made room for participants to teach skills that were important to them not normally available within their required school curriculum.

ECLA's Framework also encouraged students to think critically about the intersectionality of social issues. Jane's class chose animal abuse as their social issue and her program manager found her an article on the relationship between animal abuse and other kinds of violence. To link it to her required curriculum, Jane used the article as a text to teach her students strategies for annotating non-fiction. All the while, students were annotating facts, figures, and connections related to links between dog fighting and other crimes (i.e. gun violence and physical abuse) (Field Notes, 1-15).

As another example, in a classroom visit with another ECLA teacher, a community partner led a research project about the challenging and complicated nature of the topic animal cruelty. Each student took a survey that contained questions such as: do you think that it is animal cruelty when a person can't afford pet food? The project further involved students creating a budget for a low income family trying to provide food for their family and pet. Students engaged deeply with the topic— discussing difficult choices, what had to be sacrificed, and how families had to rationalize decisions. Teachers asked probing questions and elicited opinions to help students unpack social

issues. The conversation went where students took it and teachers grew increasingly excited the more their students talked. This contrasted with lessons based only on the required curriculum, without incorporation of the ECLA Framework or service-learning, where opportunities for students to talk were much more structured and teachers seemed less engaged. Thus, in researching, discussing, and debating the multifaceted nature of social issues, students became engaged with the intersectional nature of issues.

Participants were drawn to ECLA because they appreciated engaging their students through higher-level thinking not available in their mandated curriculum.

Case Study: Thinking Critically About Gender

Maggie, a 33 year old Caucasian female, has been teaching for six years and involved in ECLA for three. She teaches fourth grade at a diverse, mid-sized, K-8 school in Center City. Her school performs relatively well on State standardized tests, affording her relatively more curricular autonomy than her colleagues at lower performing schools. Maggie used her autonomy to incorporate the ECLA Framework and her students' chosen social issue throughout all areas of her instruction. With the ECLA Framework guiding her instruction, she felt able to teach in ways that were important to her. Initially interested in a general lack of respect for others they observed throughout society, Maggie's students chose to focus their service-learning on gender equality.

Maggie has a large class, but brings them together for a daily morning meeting to create a sense of community. She wrote a grant to get flexible seating in her classroom, so students were often sitting on exercise balls or reading lying down on yoga mats. Maggie exuded calm and, despite the fact that it was crowded, her classroom also felt tranquil. Maggie frequently implemented classroom centers where each small group of

students was engaged in an activity related to their service-learning issue that also addressed a required academic skill. During one literacy lesson I observed, student groups engaged in several different learning centers: researching independently on lap tops; reading and analyzing non-fiction articles; completing webquests on their social issue; and working together to analyze, reflect, and write about gender roles on popular TV shows (Field Notes, 11-21).

Maggie believed teaching literacy skills through her students' chosen social issue made content more "authentic" and therefore more engaging. For instance, during the aforementioned literacy lesson a student became passionate about the content of his nonfiction article, exclaiming "this is horrible" out loud and banging his fist on his desk (Field Notes, 11-21). Maggie looked at the student but did not react to the outburst; instead, she continued teaching her small group lesson as if passionate reactions about social problems were the norm in her class. In contrast to her district-mandated curriculum, Maggie used the ECLA Framework to frequently incorporate content that activated students' sense of justice or fairness. Thus, students often displayed strong feelings about the information she used to teach standards or academic skills.

Maggie successfully wove the ECLA framework throughout her instruction. She reported that merging ECLA with her curriculum was her favorite part of her job because it was different every year: "what I'm teaching is changing, how I'm teaching, everything is... I really make ECLA part of my curriculum. So, it really changes the curriculum every year." In addition to keeping her engaged, the ECLA framework helped Maggie reach all of her students while equipping them with citizenship skills: "it really helps me individualize education for *all* of my kids. It's incredibly engaging. It's the most

transformative part of my kids' year— becoming critical thinkers and citizens of the world. I get all of that from my service-learning project.” As noted previously, teaching critical thinking was important to Maggie, especially due to social media and the political climate at that time.

Maggie used students’ chosen issue, gender equality, to engage students in learning required skills. For example, students learned essential vocabulary such as the pre-fix “trans” (Field Notes, 3-3) and explored gender expectations in their novel, *Bridge to Terabithia* (Field Notes, 3-28). As Maggie explained, the pervasiveness of their chosen social issue throughout the curriculum increased student interest: “when you're really studying an issue, and then interacting with people who are involved with the issue, you become more passionate or more empathetic about something than just doing a one day or one week thing.” In contrast to “service” (i.e. community service or one-off service-learning events), Maggie found ECLA’s service-learning framework increased students’ responsiveness to the issue and engagement in their learning.

ECLA’s Framework involved students analyzing the causes and effects of their social issue from a variety of perspectives and lived experiences. As an example, students were asked to watch their favorite TV show using a “gender lens.” The class had a lively discussion of how they knew certain products were marketed towards boys or girls. One student enthusiastically shared their perception that a toy ad was targeted towards girls because the toys had long eyelashes. They noted that: the boys’ ones are gross and the girls’ ones are pretty, while rolling their eyes. The class then unpacked what messages about gender were sent to viewers (Field Notes, 3-3). Students composed letters to toy companies critiquing an ad and urging gender-neutral advertising. Through letter-writing,

students activated their critical thinking and citizenship skills and shared their opinions with corporations. Participants were motivated to participate in ECLA because it provided opportunities for their students to participate in activism not available in mandated curriculum.

By studying gender equality in depth, Maggie felt her students became engrossed in learning around the issue. Maggie reported her students began to see the world through a “gender lens”:

I think that there was a real transformation in how my kids see the world. They really look at the world through a gender lens now. Every day they are coming in with—whether they're being critical of advertisements, or of something someone said in the recess yard—this paradigm shift of seeing the world through gender. It was amazing. The novels we were reading in class, they would look at through a gender lens and be like, "wow, this is a really traditional role for a woman in this book"... That really crossed all levels of readers—my ESOL kids, or my higher-level readers, everybody.

The depth of study encouraged by ECLA’s framework engaged all of Maggie’s students. Maggie found her students’ engagement gratifying: “it was so rewarding. At the end of school, I always have the kids fill out a reflection of the year, things they're going to take away.... Every single person put ECLA, that they feel like they can be agents of change in gender equality.” Maggie’s participation in ECLA facilitated her teaching with integrity by actualizing ways for her to engage *all* of her students, promote critical thinking, and foster other citizenship skills she valued: “it's such a powerful way to teach kids all of the things that I value, whether it is empathy or being a critical thinker. And feeling like they can really make a difference....” ECLA helped Maggie express her personal commitments through her teaching. Seeing her students’ growth throughout the school year was rewarding. Teaching around her students’ social issue kept Maggie

engaged because it changed her curriculum every year. In all, the ability to teach with integrity kept Maggie professionally satisfied.

Pull 2: Student Voice

As an organization, ECLA emphasized that projects should promote students' autonomy and help them develop their voice—or ability to speak up about things that matter to them. This felt extremely important to the teachers in this study. All participants reported that students were more engaged when learning about a topic they chose: “it gives them the chance to make decisions about what they want to learn and it makes them more engaged in the lessons because it is their idea” (Sabrina). Based on student voice, ECLA's Framework facilitated students identifying a problem in their community in the “Identifying the Issue” stage (see Chapter 2: Context for a description of Framework stages). Choosing their service-learning topic bases the learning and the service on students' voice, engaging them in the process. In general, student voice refers to eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement.

In addition to increasing engagement, participants felt that ECLA's Framework provided a way for students to experience themselves having a voice as citizens. Mary thought it important for students to experience having power to choose something that bothers them about their community and change it:

[ECLA] celebrates students helping themselves and making a change for themselves in their community. That's a really good experience to have at a young age, the idea that [students] could actually identify a problem and do something about it, which will hopefully lead them to be more engaged citizens as they go on. Whether they run for office, become a block captain, or do neighborhood cleanups, I think it's really great for them to see themselves having power that early on.

Mary's statement represents her personal commitments to social justice and active citizenship. Mary values her students becoming engaged citizens in the future. As an educator working in an urban context, the majority of her students are from a population marginalized by systemic situations, whose voice is not always valued, limiting their power in their community. Also, they are often on the receiving end of service. So, providing service to their community allows them to experience a different power dynamic where they are leveraging their voice.

ECLA teachers spend a significant amount of time in the beginning of the school year building community in their classrooms, which allowed them to feel comfortable delving into complicated, and sometimes uncomfortable, topics with students. As one teacher shared: "sometimes you expect [students] to engage in that conversation immediately, [but] it takes some time" (Field Notes, October monthly training). Community building is scaffolded for teachers in the ECLA Framework "Value my Voice" section and modeled at initial and monthly trainings (see Chapter 3: Context for an overview of trainings). At trainings, ECLA teachers participated in community building as if they were students, preparing them to facilitate these activities in their classrooms. For example, the make-up initial training began with an ECLA staff member taking pictures of participants with a Polaroid camera to be taped on "ID plaques," a template that includes a place for a picture and space prompting a lists of: my favorite TV shows, movies, books, or stories; things I care about; words that describe me; and things I am good at. Teachers shared their ID Plaques, discussing commonalities and laughing amicably with colleagues about their quirky traits. The room was markedly more comfortable and friendly after retreat participants shared about themselves. Retreat

participants were quicker to ask questions, less hesitant to share ideas, and more active in small group discussions. An ECLA staff member concluded: we start here, by sharing basic things such as books and TV, with students because it's a great "entrée" to talk about the more difficult things.

Basic community building activities set the stage for students and teachers to talk about difficult issues. Anne-Marie reported that prior to her involvement in ECLA, she wanted to discuss challenging topics with students but did not know how: "I used to want to be able to discuss gay rights or abortion with kids, but I didn't know how. I was like, 'I give up.... This is too hard.' I'm actually confident now to tackle those kinds of issues." After ECLA training, Anne-Marie was more comfortable "digging deeper" into challenging social issues with students (Anne-Marie). The ECLA framework built community and laid a foundation that helped teachers and students feel comfortable voicing opinions and questions about complex social issues and areas of citizenship.

Case study: Valuing Student Voice

John, a 32 year old White male, has been teaching for 12 years and in ECLA for five. He teaches sixth grade literacy, social studies, science, and math in a School District middle school. His school serves one neighborhood and its student population is well-off compared to other schools in the city. At the time of the study his school was in its first year of operation, so there was no data from state standardized tests or public data available about the school's student population.

John's school was bright, with large windows spanning the side of his classroom. John's classroom walls were covered with student posters about a variety of topics they had independently selected, researched, and analyzed. His classroom tables and chairs

were on wheels and he often directed students to sit in different configurations—circles, small groups, and at their school-provided laptops—to complete collaborative projects. A closer look at John’s teaching shows how ECLA materials helped teachers successfully teach students to think and speak for themselves. John made use of stages the ECLA process outlines— Value your Voice, Open the Issue, and Identify your Objective (the first three stages of the ECLA Framework; see Chapter 3: Context for a description of all five stages).

Value your Voice. In the initial Value your Voice stage of his service-learning project, John used ECLA activities to guide students in deciding on a broad issue for their service-learning. For example, he used a “Photo Reflection,” where students described what they saw in each photo and identified any social issue they thought the photo represented (Field Notes, 11-15). By describing what they saw, students practiced discussing social issues in a neutral way. This set the stage for more passionate discussions of problems in their community by refining conversation skills around difficult topics.

As per the Framework, John elicited students’ ideas, opinions, and decisions in every stage of the service-learning process. To choose an issue for their service-learning project, John’s students gave persuasive presentations. During presentations, John prompted the student audience to share connections to or experiences with the presentation topic. Students asked their peers questions, such as “why did you choose this topic,” and connected issues together, such as animal abuse to mental health. It was clear that presentations were important to students. They consulted anxiously in their groups before presentations began, recited practiced lines, or read off note cards. Students even

invited their parents to watch. Parents widened their eyes, pleasantly surprised, as students discussed complex topics with ease (Field Notes, 12-13). Through a vote, students were given the ultimate choice of which issue to study and chose drug addiction. Through incorporating students' ideas and opinions, John reported students became more engaged: "seeing kids take time to put together presentations about issues they care about; take time to learn about the topic in-depth; want to learn how to be change-makers; and hear from guest speakers, really creates investment in the curriculum." The ability to make choices immersed students in their acquisition of citizenship skills.

John felt establishing a classroom community where students can talk comfortably about social issues promoted student involvement. He specifically valued the relationships that ECLA's community building activities promoted: "it's definitely helped to have relationships with [students] established already, which allows them to be more vulnerable. It allows them to say what they're afraid of, say what they want to see different, and creates a safe space for them to share." ECLA helped John foster an environment where students felt comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions about complex issues. Student opinions on social issues were heard and valued.

Developing a safe space for sharing also helped John get to know his students and their needs better, which impacted him emotionally. By building community, ECLA's Framework supported participants in identifying students' needs and provided space for issues that burdened students to be addressed. John described how his prior years' project on gun-violence affected him emotionally:

When all the students shared last year on gun violence, I broke down in tears and cried. It wasn't because I ever lost anyone to gun violence, and I shared that with them. It saddened me to see so many ten year olds were affected by this issue and

to see that it's going on in [their] lives and [they're] hurting because of a result of that. So that was definitely showing me how powerful an issue it is in the communities where these kids are living. How violence ridden they are and how they can be living in fear and not knowing if they'll see their Uncle again or their Grandfather again.

The gravity of students' social and emotional needs impacted John emotionally. Still, John valued space for sharing because the ability to address gun violence alongside students left John feeling encouraged. For example, John and his students travelled to the state capitol to visit senators and representatives to encourage them to support legislation that would make background checks mandatory for all gun sales. John and his students were able to leverage their voice on an issue that negatively impacted them. While an inability to meet student needs can cause teachers to become emotionally drained, ECLA facilitated a safe space for teachers and students to address these issues, leaving participants feeling optimistic. Furthermore, as discussed below, support from ECLA staff and teachers familiar with urban environments helped participants feel like they weren't left to face emotionally difficult situations on their own.

Open the Issue. ECLA supported John in helping students think analytically about topics that matter to them. Once the students had chosen their issue, drug addiction in this case, John used the Open the Issue stage (the second stage of the ECLA Framework; see Chapter 3: Context) to help students explore causes and effects of their issue and select one they would like to address through service. For example, John delved into the causes and effects of drug addiction using a non-fiction article about heroin addiction. At the same time, he reinforced skills necessary for state standardized tests, such as determining the meaning of unknown words and understanding the central idea and overall structure of informational text. All the while, students gained an understanding of the causes and

effects of addiction. For instance, after the class determined the meaning of the word “withdrawal” using context clues from the article, John asked: “is that a cause or an effect of drug addiction?” Students debated his question, noting how withdrawal was an effect, but also caused addicts a physical need to use the drug again, furthering their addiction (Field Notes, 1-9). John’s lesson was peppered with student questions about the topic and students shook their raised hands in the air impatient to be called on to identify causes and effects of addiction, which demonstrated their engagement and eagerness to share their ideas and dissect the topic.

Identify your Objective. ECLA provided support to study students’ chosen topic in depth. John’s class dug more deeply into the topic of drug addiction in stage three of the ECLA Framework by hearing from a community partner whose son was a recovering heroin addict and who worked with addicts for several years. Community partners are local individuals or organizations involved with specific social issues. They visit and/or host ECLA classrooms to provide information on their work and social issue (see Chapter 3: Context for more information on community partners). This visitor personalized drug addiction for students and exposed them to the intersectionality of the issue—such as overlaps between homelessness, crime, and disease. Students were silent, did not take their eyes off the speaker, and frowned or furrowed their eyebrows as she spoke—demonstrating respect for the gravity of the social issue. John elicited students’ opinions, feelings, and questions. He prompted students to share: “what are you feeling when you are learning about addiction?” At the end of the presentation, there was a line of students waiting to ask the community partner remaining questions. Students’ questions and

thoughts were informed by prior research and experiential knowledge. It was clear they were engrossed in the topic.

ECLA provided community partners equipped to give students options for meaningful service projects—projects that meet a real community need. John’s students worked in groups to present proposals for service projects and determined their project based on a vote. Students voted to make care bags for heroin addicts for a local organization to distribute. During the community partner visit students learned what heroin addicts realistically needed in a care bag. For example, that heroin addicts are drawn to sugary foods, so including Pop Tarts and Gatorade in the care bags ensured that they to eat and hydrate. Students also included personal notes and information on treatment options. John felt that the depth with which students learned about drugs led them to think critically about how drugs affect their community. John described this learning as “powerful” and felt that the more students who go through the ECLA program, the more “impact” their combined voices will have:

Teachers who do [ECLA] in their classroom and students who experience [ECLA] leave their classrooms changed. They leave thinking about the world differently. I have no doubt that the kids in this class think very differently about drugs, people who are addicted, and people who use drugs, than they did before they had this experience this year. That's changing our city in very exciting ways...

The changes John witnessed in his students, such as thinking about social issues critically and from varied perspectives, were fostered by their input into the project and resultant engagement in their service-learning. This left John feeling professionally accomplished—he had made a difference in his students. Furthermore, John also

experienced personal growth alongside his students. ECLA provided positive emotions, such as excitement, leaving him more satisfied.

Part Two: Resources and support

In Chapter 5, I explained that a lack of resources and support prevented teachers from teaching in alignment with their professional integrity. In particular, participants faced limited instructional time, planning time, basic materials, and support to meet students' needs and feel validated as professionals. These insufficiencies caused participants to feel frustrated and discouraged. By contrast, ECLA offered resources and support that allowed participants to teach the way they believed they should.

This current section presents the resources and support that attracted participants to ECLA and how they impacted participants emotionally. First, I show that ECLA offered pedagogical support that made implementation of the Framework and made teachers feel good about their jobs. First, ECLA provided resources that helped teachers organize and prepare service-learning lessons. This support left teachers' feeling more confident in their delivery of service-learning. Second, individualized pedagogical supports were provided, which helped participants navigate the ECLA Framework. This one-on-one support left participants feeling less overwhelmed by stages of the service-learning process. Third, ECLA facilitated a space where teachers could support each other with pedagogy, which led to professional growth and satisfaction. I illustrate this support with a case study of Elisha, who, in addition to receiving resources and support from ECLA, spent a lot of time contributing to their collective repertoire.

Second, I show that ECLA provided teachers' emotional support that mitigated negative feelings, led to participants feeling recognized and validated for their work,

engaged them in their work, and sustained their commitments to the profession. Finally, it provides a case study of Jessie, which highlights how ECLA's pedagogical and emotional support re-engaged her in teaching after she grew so discouraged by her inability to connect with her students that she almost quit.

Pull 3: Pedagogical Supports

Participants reported that resources provided from ECLA staff made service-learning, an extra commitment on top of school district mandates, doable by helping teachers organize and prepare lessons. This had the added emotional effect of increasing participants' confidence in their teaching:

It definitely helps take a load off in some ways. You know you need resources, but you don't have time to find them or you don't know where to find them and it's going to take [a long time]. When you have people who are able to give you a list of things or turn you to a website that you can look at, it makes doing something else that you wouldn't necessarily be doing in your classroom a lot less overwhelming. It actually makes it something that you look forward to doing because you're prepared and organized for it. You actually feel confident about it instead of like you're running around with your head cut off. (Jane).

Jane normally felt frantic due to having to scramble to find materials or make last minute changes. For example, as stated in Chapter 5, she once had to scratch and replace a lesson at the last minute because she could not find paper to make the necessary copies. In contrast, ECLA made it feasible to incorporate the Framework into mandated curriculum by providing resources such as informational texts, related graphic organizers, and classroom supplies. As a result of ECLA's support, participants found they could spend more time preparing and organizing better lessons. As a result, they felt more confident in their lesson delivery.

As an example of how ECLA provided the resources referenced in the previous paragraph, the November In-Service was dedicated to showing teachers online databases they could use to find resources on their own, such as news articles on students reading levels or information on specific social issues. ECLA paid for accounts and provided teachers log-in information when databases were not free because they knew teachers did not have to funding to do so (Field Notes, November In-service). ECLA also provided resources through program managers, a staff member assigned to each teacher who provided individualized support with implementing the Framework through phone calls, e-mails, in-person meetings, and classroom visits. Program managers gave participants resources tailored to the social issue they were talking about with their class or classroom supplies needed to complete specific lessons.

Participants reported benefiting from one-on-one support from their program managers that helped them get through each stage of the Framework. Support helped participants work through stages where they were feeling stuck. For example, I observed Jane's program manager listen intently to where Jane was feeling stuck—"how do we get them to that point [choosing a service project] without telling them exactly what to do" (Jane)—and then suggest several solutions for Jane to choose. This gave Jane the opportunity to talk through her issue, provided her with ideas, and helped her move forward. This support made the service-learning process less daunting.

As another example, John's program manager helped him handle an emotional class discussion on their chosen social issue, gun violence. As discussed previously in John's case study, hearing students' share their experiences related to gun violence

brought him to tears. John explained that his program manager was present for the discussion and provided support:

I literally turned to her and I was like, 'I don't know what to do. This is more than I banked on, more than I can handle.' She was right there ready to say 'All right, you can do this. Think about this, deal with this, and that's what we can do...' Always having that shoulder to lean on to say 'I'm stuck right now, I need this, or I need that.'

Support from John's program manager helped guide him through a part of the service-learning process where he felt overwhelmed. This support kept him encouraged despite negative emotions resulting from his students' personal struggles that could lead to feelings of discouragement.

Although a great deal of pedagogical support came directly from ECLA staff, ECLA also created opportunities for teachers to support one another. Staff often asked teachers to present strategies or resources at trainings. Furthermore, monthly trainings began with teachers sharing in pairs or small groups about what stage of the Framework they were in as well as any successes, challenges, or questions. Staff mostly facilitated trainings, drawing on the collective competence of teachers. In addition to providing opportunities to support one another at trainings, ECLA offered inquiry groups, which provided participants with a space to share goals, advice, and resources:

I'm also part of this little inquiry group of ECLA teachers where we meet once a month and talk about not only what's going on in our ECLA projects, but we all have this inquiry question we create the beginning. So mine, for example, was how can I make the student voice more a part of my classroom, and how do I get the kids who are quiet to really have a voice in the classroom. So, this is all something I'm doing with other ECLA teachers...we're sharing our goals and getting advice and resources.

Inquiry groups allowed teachers to seek out advice and resources around self-chosen professional development topics relevant to their unique experiences. When staff

provided opportunities for teachers to talk to one another at trainings and other gatherings, teachers developed a shared repertoire: “you're networking with other teachers, then [you] can really just learn and grow—sharing information and discussing things and talking about problems or things that work really well” (Amanda). As discussed below, developing a shared repertoire furthered professional connection and satisfaction.

Case study: A Reciprocal Relationship

Elisha, a 34 year old White female, taught at a large, diverse, K-5 school. Her school has not performed well on state standardized tests. As discussed earlier, all of the students at Elisha's school are classified as economically disadvantaged (see Table 2). Elisha had a unique experience with ECLA and service-learning because she taught a supplemental honors program that did not have a required curriculum. Therefore, she followed ECLA's framework as her full curriculum. While all ECLA teachers shared a passion for service-learning, Elisha was able to focus on her service-learning practice daily, without competing curricular mandates.

It is important to note that despite Elisha's exceptional curricular autonomy, she was still often frustrated by conditions at her school. Time was a major factor that impacted Elisha's ability to teach the way she believed she should. Elisha was often pulled to cover the classes of absent colleagues. In May she had to permanently cancel honors program classes due to needing to cover for other teachers. When she notified me of this cancellation via e-mail, she described it as “bad news” and wrote that it made her sad.

Cancelling the honors program impacted Elisha professionally and personally. It prevented her from meeting her students' academic needs: the supplemental enrichment they were identified as needing. Furthermore, she had used the ECLA Framework to build relationships with her students, discuss social issues, and identify potential areas for service projects. At each of my observations, Elisha's classroom grew more and more covered with student work that represented their progress on their service-learning project. For example, one wall was wallpapered with student-made drawings of things that make them happy. In addition, brainstormed lists of social issues and potential service projects hung from her ceiling on clothes line. Students' service-learning was cut off in the middle of the project. Elisha felt and shared her students' disappointment. Furthermore, her role as an honors program teacher was invalidated as it was cancelled so she could serve as a substitute for other teachers.

Even though she was no longer implementing the ECLA framework in her teaching, Elisha continued attending monthly in-service and events because they informed her interest in service-learning and urban education, providing professional growth. She also had her students attend the celebration event in May, at which they presented their service-learning work to ECLA classes and other ECLA stakeholders. Even though her students were unable to complete their service, Elisha was proud of the learning that occurred around their social issue.

Elisha was motivated to participate in ECLA for tangible and intangible reasons. Like other participants, she benefited from the support of ECLA's program managers:

[My Program Manager] came in a lot the past two years, and she was always free for me to e-mail, so if I knew what my topics were...I could send them to her, e-mail her, and she was working vigorously on getting people in my room. Every

grade had at least one or more community partners come in and speak to them and work with them through their projects. It has been great for the kids to get more people in and learn from them. They're really responsive to that.

Furthermore, Elisha reported that students benefited from having community partners in the classroom, learned from them, and responded to their presentations. Because her program manager did the legwork involved in classroom visits they were an easy way for Elisha to increase student engagement.

Participation in ECLA also kept Elisha engaged in the profession: "it keeps me motivated, and it keeps me eager to keep pushing myself and doing more." Because the ECLA framework was Elisha's entire curriculum, she could not enter into her school year with a set plan. She needed to find resources, community partners, and create relevant lessons based on student decisions. Elisha found the process kept her "open and innovative":

This isn't something where I can plan ahead and have it all prepared, and I'm that type of person in real life and in teacher life. I think it's kind of cool to see this process unfold, and that's how it's touched me personally, too. I might not plan as much out, see how something unfolds, and give it more room to grow.

Because the ECLA framework is guided by students' interests, it is an open-ended process. Watching students lead the process impacted Elisha personally by motivating her to give up some control. Her personal and professional growth made Elisha "want to continue" teaching.

Although ECLA relied on the collective competence of all of its members, Elisha is an example of a teacher who consistently contributed to the shared repertoire, even after her classes were cancelled. For example, Elisha presented with ECLA at a local university on how service-learning encourages dialogue about creating a better city. She

received validation for her work on ECLA's Facebook page: "special thanks to ECLA teacher [Elisha] for presenting with us about the amazing ways she works with her 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade scholars." Elisha also presented at the November monthly training, which focused on facilitating students to select one social issue to focus on for the remainder of the year. ECLA staff introduced Elisha as an "expert" on teaching persuasive writing using social issues:

It is an excellent time to teach your students: what does it mean to write a persuasive essay? How do we construct one? We can take this time to teach the academic skill of creating a persuasive essay...I have a really good person who does a great job of this in her classroom and will do a better job of showing you than I will. (Field Notes, November monthly training).

Elisha dedicated a lot of time to attending and supporting ECLA events. Her investment in the community of practice was rewarded by recognition and, more importantly to Elisha, by fostering her own professional and personal growth, keeping her engaged and satisfied.

Pull 4: Emotional Supports

ECLA kept participants connected and engaged despite discouraging aspects of their daily lives as professionals in urban school contexts. In contrast to aspects of the School District that wore him out, Charlie found ECLA refreshing and motivating:

It's not an easy job, working in a big school district, particularly in an urban area. It's lots of mandates, lots of turnover, and lots of different things that wear me out. [ECLA] is something that is refreshing, something I can feel much more connected to. If I can feel more connected to it, then it makes me happy to come into work every day. It makes me happy to think about the times while I'm reading the newspaper...and I'm scouring for all kinds of ideas. It keeps me motivated.

Charlie expressed that he connected with ECLA more than other parts of his job. Aspects of ECLA made him happy, such as finding resources on his students' chosen social issue

in the newspaper, and this kept him engaged in a school district where many quit. Negative feelings are inevitable due to affronts to teachers' professional integrity and the work that goes into mitigating those affronts. ECLA provided emotional support that kept participants motivated: "you know you're gonna have bad days. So those are the days where I'm very lucky that I have people that are like-minded individuals...that we're able to have that support system...that helps with continuing and not giving up" (Anne-Marie). Connections with a support system of like-minded individuals helped participants deal with negative feelings. Thus, instead of becoming discouraged, participants stayed professionally engaged.

Participants felt more connected and engaged as professionals due to their participation in ECLA, which made them personally happier. Jill affirmed this overlap between personal and professional identity: "overall, [ECLA] makes me excited about teaching...I think in a lot of ways it bridges a gap between what's important to me personally, my personal values in teaching, and the daily practice of teaching." Jill's involvement in ECLA made her feel excited about her professional life, which impacted her personally. In general, support and resources provided by ECLA— both tangible and intangible—facilitated teachers in "feeling better" about their job (Jane).

Participants reported that ECLA provided them validation for their work. First, participants' administrators recognized ECLA as a valid and worthwhile program: "They're happy to see it... [ECLA] gives you a good framework so that when someone comes in and you are doing it, they're happy with what you're doing. It's not just a random conversation about animals" (Jane). Participants reported that their administration supported their service-learning lessons because the ECLA framework

was merged with the school- or district-required mandated curriculum in a structured way. For instance, Mary is not worried if administration observes her service-learning lessons because they are connected to the mandated curriculum:

Whenever I'm worried about doing an ECLA project like, "oh, what if someone walks in?" I think, "well, what are we doing?" We're analyzing articles. We're finding the main idea. We're forming opinions. We're doing all these things that are still standard skills so you can make that connection.

Although service-learning activities do not use the materials that accompany their mandated curriculum, participants are still able to teach mandated skills. Because it teaches mandated skills, administrators view it as a valid use of class time.

Participants also appreciated getting recognized for their work, seeing it as a welcome contrast with the often negative portrayal of teachers in the media. For example, Sabrina was recognized for a service-learning project with her third graders around not texting and driving that involved a visit from a State Senator. Her work was featured on ECLA's Twitter and Facebook pages and in a local newspaper. Furthermore, Sabrina's service-learning work garnered her recognition from her administration: "last year my class got so much attention in the school for what they did. It looks good for the school and it looks good for the students that they were able to do something like this."

Recognition not only provided Sabrina with professional affirmation, but also benefitted her school and students, which, because of the urban context of their neighborhood, are often described using deficit narratives. These narratives place blame on teachers, students, and urban communities for failing schools as opposed to critiquing structural inequalities that leave urban schools void of resources and devalue their assets. In contrast to focusing on the negative realities of urban schools, ECLA provided attention

for teachers' and students' positive work, which is not normally the focus of their schools, district, or society.

ECLA teachers were also drawn to participate in a community of teachers they viewed as having exceptional commitment to their students. Denise described ECLA as having a “whole different culture” where teachers are “willing to go above and beyond” and “more willing to support each other.” Similarly, John found that ECLA teachers “care deeply” about their students and, thus, the work they did in their classroom. ECLA teachers defined themselves as having a commitment to their students, specifically to their social and emotional growth, that is not common in their profession.

Moreover, ECLA teachers viewed themselves as having a commitment to teach students more than required content. For instance, Jill creased her brow in concentration when she spoke about what is important to ECLA teachers: “that's what's important to them, developing their kids as people and thinkers. I could care less about the core curriculum, could care less. Can they read, write, think, that's all I care about.” Jill felt “pride” as an educator to belong to a group of “like minded people who actually want to talk about teaching.” Similarly, Maggie found that ECLA teachers “share that willingness and passion to go beyond just teaching content to really teaching the whole child.” Participants understood themselves as belonging to a unique community of educators driven by a commitment to develop their students as individuals academically, socially, and emotionally. Participants distinguished themselves as willing to go above and beyond what is mandated of them to incorporate instruction that fully develops students.

Case Study: Staying Engaged

Jessie, a 50 year old White female, teaches eighth grade English at a charter middle school located in center city. Jessie has been teaching for 15 years and has participated in ECLA for over ten. Her school serves students citywide, the majority of which are classified as economically disadvantaged (see Table 1). The student population at Jessie's school is classified by the School District as majority Black or African American (according to public School District Data). Jessie's school has not performed well on state standardized tests and Jessie felt pressure to teach to the test.

Like many participants, teaching in an urban context was an important aspect of Jessie's professional identity and was connected to her commitment to issues of social justice such as educational equality:

I serve this population for a reason, because they're underserved and there's educational inequality in our city and our society at large. This is my way of helping to do something about that. So I feel like I'm less of a teacher than an activist at times.

For example, providing students marginalized by systemic situations opportunities to advocate for themselves was important to Jessie who felt it was difficult for them to leverage themselves within society: "what I try to do every day is help students function in a world and give them the tools to function in a world where they struggle to have a voice." Teaching students to think critically about issues that affect them as citizens was also important to Jessie. ECLA's pedagogical support enabled her to incorporate citizenship skills and critical thinking into her curriculum.

ECLA helped her create a unit, or thematic project, in her class entitled "My Voice Stops Violence," which involved students learning about gun violence, hearing

from community partners about experiences with or affects of gun violence, and composing and sharing narratives related to gun violence. This unit concluded with students telling their stories about gun violence and making them public (Field Notes, 12-8). The first day I observed Jessie's teaching, her students began the unit by watching a documentary on a group that interrupts instances of violence in a community and provides immediate mediation. Jessie directed students to watch the documentary and note the way characters were "dealing with their world and making it better" (Field Notes, 12-8). Thus, she asked her students to consider questions of ethics. When students noted a "mis-relationship between police and citizens" in the film, Jessie asked if this "contrasts or confirms what you know in your world" (Field Notes, 12-8). She prompted students to think critically about issues that affect them as citizens. All the while, Jessie asked students to infer the "mood or tone the filmmaker is trying to get across" (Field Notes, 12-8), an academic question presented along side questions of ethics and critical thinking about social issues.

Although Jessie's "My Voice Stops Violence" service-learning project facilitated her incorporation of student voice, social issues, and critical and ethical thinking, Jessie still felt tension between the mandated standardized content and her own beliefs about what students should learn. She felt "conflicted": "I think the different pulls of testing, meaningful wording, standards, eligible content, and, you know, all these things that don't always come together. That's stressful. When there are different priorities that don't go on the same path." ECLA supported her in mitigating this stress because she could just choose to use ECLA's framework to teach mandated content. Jessie reported a contrast in students' interest-level before and after her participation in ECLA:

[ECLA] honestly give[s] my teaching a purpose that it normally couldn't have without the project. I'd have to say before I started doing the projects, it felt like tubing curriculum down children's throats who had no interest in it whatsoever. I really saw what that's like trying to impose values that they didn't believe in. So, they were completely heels dug in and wanting nothing to do with, say, Anne Frank...they need to see how it's relevant to their personal lives.

Jessie felt that teaching only the mandated curriculum required forcing inauthentic content and values on her students. Inauthentic content and values disengaged her students. This left her feeling like her work was without purpose.

In fact, Jessie shared that before participating in ECLA, her students didn't "connect" to what she was required to teach them. She cried when she explained that during her first year teaching she walked out of class and was ready to quit: "I was like, 'I can't do it. I cannot do this. I can't. I can't get through to them.'" At this point, her principal suggested she try ECLA: "I was like, 'we're not doing anything anyways, we may as well try this.'" Jessie was so discouraged by her inability to connect with her students that she disengaged from teaching.

Jessie found that changing her delivery of content by making it more authentic allowed her to reach her students and gave her teaching purpose. Delivering mandated content through service-learning re-connected her teaching to her students: "I saw through service-learning that they could really get this connection that they needed to figure out. How to navigate their world and be a part of something that matters to them and matters to the bigger world." ECLA helped Jessie embed meaningful content into the mandated curriculum. It engaged her students and, in turn, kept her engaged in teaching. Furthermore, it has sustained her commitment to teach students more than required curriculum.

Conclusion

Several characteristics *pulled* participants to ECLA and service-learning. ECLA provided a sanctioned and supported approach to fitting student voice and citizenship skills into mandated curriculum in an engaging way. The tangible resources and support ECLA provided enabled teachers to more easily incorporate the above aspects into their teaching, which aligned participants' instruction with their professional integrity and provided them professional satisfaction. Furthermore, ECLA's framework, resources, and support offered intangible benefits such as professional growth and engagement. There is ample research on the extent to which quality service-learning increases engagement for students (e.g. Billing, 2002; Celio, Durlak, and Dymnicki, 2011; Richards et al, 2013; Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier & Benson, 2006; Seitsinger, 2005). This study contributes to a body of research on the benefits of service-learning by illustrating that service-learning professionally engages teachers as well.

ECLA prepared teachers to engage students in difficult conversations about complex topics, which was extremely important to participants. It trained teachers on how to build community in their classrooms, which laid the foundation for students to express themselves when thinking critically about social issues in their community. Participants expressed that before their participation in ECLA, they did not know how to have these discussions. By scaffolding teachers' incorporation of students' opinions and choices about issues that matter to them, ECLA enabled teachers to be successful in this area. While it is known that student voice increases engagement (Morgan & Streub, 2001; Quiroz, 2001), my findings illuminate its importance to teachers' professional integrity. Student voice is one of many ways to increase student engagement. This study

elevates it as a vital pedagogical tool because it also keeps teachers professionally engaged.

This study identifies characteristics of service-learning that are important to teachers. Literature on service-learning often focuses on student learning outcomes (Harkavy, 2004). By discerning what teachers experienced to be the benefits of service-learning, this study adds a different, and often ignored, perspective to our understanding of what makes a service-learning program “quality.” In addition to simply emphasizing citizenship skills and critical thinking, doing so with *depth*, attention to the *intersectionality* of social issues, and opportunities for *interactions* with others that increase students’ empathy were important to participants. Schools have often emphasized such topics as moral education, civics, and citizenship (Hope, 2012; Llewellyn, Cook & Molina, 2010). Many schools have also embraced service-learning pedagogies, which can include elements of civics and citizenship (Billig, 2000; Britt, 2012). However, service-learning programs are more often than not “drive-by” where teachers and students “drop-in” to do a project and believe their actions help the community, when this might not be the case (Chang, 2015). Thus, these projects lack depth, authenticity, and empathy. In contrast, ECLA’s Framework emphasizes authentic and meaningful service. As Dewey (1916) asserts, learning occurs through *meaningful* experience. Thus, in addition to emphasizing citizenship skills and critical thinking, doing so with depth, attention to the intersectionality of social issues, and opportunities for interactions with others that increased empathy was important to participants.

Because the ECLA framework is meant to be embedded into mandated curriculum it allows for service-learning to address required standards. Although

participants did mention the service components of their projects, often characterizing it as “powerful,” data demonstrated that the learning that occurred before the service was most important to participants. This aligns with what Sigmon (1994) terms “service-LEARNING,” where the learning is primary and the service outcomes are secondary. Because the ECLA Framework prioritizes learning academic skills through social issues, participants reported their administration sanctioned the program. Reed and Butler (2015) found that connecting service-learning to standards and convincing their administration to allow service-learning were two major challenges to its implementation. ECLA’s framework addresses these challenges.

Current understandings of the purpose of education emphasize social efficiency, mobility, and global economic competition. They leave little room for learning situated within social, community, or political contexts. Milner (2014) asserts, “scripted and prescribed” curriculum “robs students from engaging in other disciplines that may allow students to develop creativity and build skills in other areas” (p. 744). Integrating service-learning within mandated curriculum is a way to bring other purposes of education back to light and satisfy educators who value purposes such as education for social justice and civic education. Although many define service-learning as having an equal focus on service and learning (Furco, 1996), centering the learning in service-learning creates more space for this approach in urban schools constrained prescribed curriculum.

ECLA’s support and resources were vital to their participants’ ability to implement the Framework. Teachers benefitted from tangible resources, ongoing face-to-face training, and collegial support to implement service-learning effectively. This support should not be blanket, but targeted to meet urban teachers’ needs—such as

supporting students socially and emotionally; providing resources that save planning time; and alleviating a lack of classroom supplies. All participants reported that staff support valued their professional expertise, defined as: "...discretion to employ repertoires of instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of diverse students, hold high expectations for themselves and students, foster learning communities among students, and participate in self-critical communities of practice" (Achinstein & Ogwa, 2006). By respecting teachers' professional experience and discretion, ECLA offered intangible benefits to teachers such as professional growth, engagement, and validation. Existing literature concludes that service-learning positively challenges teachers (Kielsmeier, 2000). This study indicates that because it is based on students' choices, the open-ended nature of ECLA's Framework motivated participants and broke the monotony associated with their mandated curriculum. Teachers utilized their creativity and knowledge to plan lessons that reflected students' ideas and choices about their service-learning project.

ECLA also provided teachers and students positive recognition they do not normally receive. This affirms Reed and Butler's (2015) assertion that service-learning can push back against negative rhetoric around urban students as likely to have behavioral issues and lack empathy. This study shows that service-learning can contribute much needed positive conversation around urban education as a whole, including teachers. This source of validation was important to participants who felt their professional choices were not valued by their schools, district, or on a societal level. Participants reported being perceived as the enemy, greedy, and not committed to students. Yet, as a number of scholars and journalists have observed (i.e. Ingersoll,

Merrill & May, 2016a; Phillips, 2015; Santoro, 2011), it is often the current policy context in the U.S. that has teachers feeling disengaged, dissatisfied, and demoralized, as opposed to teachers' deficiency.

Teacher dissatisfaction and attrition is problematic (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016), yet the participants in this study represent a group of teachers able to stay engaged in the profession. Chapter 5 illustrates affronts to professional integrity experienced by participants. Unlike recent studies that demonstrate the ways in which challenges to teachers' integrity lead to attrition (e.g. Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011), this study demonstrates that teachers can and do look outside their schools and school district for ways to mitigate challenges. This chapter describes the qualities of ECLA, such as a Framework that provides curricular autonomy; targeted resources; and collegial support, that made it an appealing way stay professionally satisfied and engaged.

Along with shared personal commitments (i.e. social justice and democratic values), participants also shared feelings of frustration and discouragement over aspects of their daily lives as professionals in urban schools. While these emotions are in no way unique to ECLA teachers, what is unique is that they turned to a service-learning community of practice to mitigate feelings of frustration, which kept them professionally satisfied and engaged. In addition to ECLA's Framework, resources, and support, participants were drawn specifically to ECLA because they distinguished their support as coming from educators who share an exceptional commitment to their students and their social and emotional development. This study suggests that opportunities for supported,

quality, service-learning can mitigate challenges to teachers' professional integrity, keeping educators satisfied and engaged.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Summary

How do we sustain educators whose integrity is challenged by discourses, policies, and practices that emphasize competition and social efficiency rather than more holistic understandings of education as a civic and social good? The current education context has left many teachers feeling disengaged, dissatisfied, and demoralized (Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016; Santoro, 2011, 2017). Service-learning can be an important counterpoint (Butin, 2003). Thus, this study posits service-learning as a strategy to keep teachers professionally engaged and satisfied.

This dissertation first presented an understanding of participants' professional integrity defined as their ability to teach in alignment with their commitments (Santoro, 2013). Results show that social justice and active citizenship were personally important to participants and informed participants' professional integrity. Specifically, citizenship skills, student voice, and meeting students' social and emotional needs were important to participants. Results offer an understanding of professional integrity unique to urban educators who work with students who are under-privileged and marginalized by systemic situations (Milner, 2008); students who often depend on schools to meet their social and emotional needs and whose voices are not generally heard in society. Thus, for these teachers, teaching with integrity was intertwined with educational equality and civic education. Existing literature on urban teachers' affective responses to reforms connects professional dissatisfaction to an inability to fulfill personal commitments. My work has identified what those commitments are and how they manifest in teaching practice so that urban teachers can be better supported in honoring them.

Research highlighting challenges to teachers' personal commitments is not new. What *is* unique is that for ECLA teachers, these commitments are challenged by realities of their daily lives as educators in urban contexts and they are consequently *pushed* to ECLA and service-learning as avenues for maintaining professional integrity. Results show why and how teachers stay engaged in the profession despite challenges. They add to existing literature that generally focuses on how challenges drive teachers in urban contexts to wrestle with the decision to leave the profession by focusing on teachers who remain.

Second, this dissertation presented an understanding of how issues that affect teachers' daily lives as professionals influenced participation in ECLA and service-learning. Educators cannot always teach with integrity due to the realities of working in urban contexts. Participants' were challenged by systemic and school-level factors: a lack of curricular discretion; insufficient time and resources to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs; and deficient support systems. These inadequacies are amplified in urban schools, which are inadequately funded. The aforementioned systemic and school-level factors limited participants' ability to meet their students' social and emotional needs, incorporate student voice, and teach citizenship skills, which was a source of frustration for participants. Participants also felt inadequately supported, undervalued, and negatively portrayed as professionals, which was discouraging.

Third, this study presented an understanding of how teachers' participation in ECLA was influenced by organizational factors. Several characteristics *pulled* participants to ECLA and service-learning. ECLA provided training and support to incorporate student voice and citizenship skills into mandated curriculum. Participants

accentuated the importance of integrating service-learning into curriculum because they could still teach required skills, which secured them administrative support, but in a way that felt authentic to them. In addition to emphasizing citizenship skills and critical thinking, doing so with depth, attention to the intersectionality of social issues, and opportunities for interactions with others that increased empathy was important to participants. This study also illustrated how educators can move beyond traditional service-learning practices towards social justice oriented practices to fulfill their personal commitments to social justice. Furthermore, the open-ended, student-driven nature of ECLA's service-learning process broke the monotony associated with mandated curriculum. Teachers engaged their creativity and expertise to plan lessons that reflected students' ideas and choices about their service-learning. Furthermore, ECLA's framework, resources, and support offered pedagogical and emotional supports such as professional validation and engagement.

Participants shared personal commitments to social justice and democratic values, which manifested in a desire to meet students' social and emotional needs, teach citizenship skills, and incorporate student voice. These commitments were challenged by the realities of their daily lives as educators in urban contexts and they were consequently pushed to ECLA as an avenue for maintaining their professional integrity. My exploration of factors that pulled educators to ECLA also identified common commitments and emotions. Common emotions that emerged were frustration and discouragement, which is in no way unique to ECLA teachers. What is unique is that ECLA teachers turned to a service-learning community of practice to mitigate feelings of frustration, which kept them professionally satisfied and engaged. Participants were also

drawn to ECLA because they understood it as a community with exceptional commitment to students, willing to go beyond what is required by their role, and a commitment to support students' social and emotional development.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Ethnography involves in-depth contextualized understanding; therefore, data collection cannot be stretched too "thin." In other words, developing such a deep understanding is not possible in a study that encompasses numerous teachers, schools, or service-learning organizations. While ethnography is valuable because it provides a deep understanding that can be further developed, similar studies of other service-learning initiatives are necessary to provide comparison and to further develop my arguments that demonstrate the potential of integrating service-learning into mandated curriculum to engage and satisfy teachers.

The participants in this study self-selected into ECLA, which reflects a prior disposition towards service-learning and participation in a community of practice. As discussed in the Context section above, the school district that ECLA serves has a service-learning requirement for certain grades. This provides two unique groups of teachers and/or students who can participate in future studies, providing opportunity for comparison.

This study demonstrated that service-learning is one way to keep urban teachers professionally satisfied. However, the participants in this study participated in service-learning at their discretion. Thus, this study raises questions about the extent to which service-learning benefits those who were required to implement it, and how this compares to teachers who implement service-learning at their own discretion. A study

could be implemented across the district to capture the experiences of those required to implement service-learning and those who opt-in to ECLA. Such a study could also provide interesting data on the extent to which participation in a community of practice impacts service-learning practice.

This study identified characteristics of service-learning that actualized teachers' professional integrity. By discerning what teachers experienced to be the benefits of service-learning, as opposed to only focusing on student learning outcomes, it added a different, and often ignored, perspective to our understanding of what constitutes quality service-learning. Future studies could explore how service-learning is practiced in the classrooms of ECLA teachers and their counterparts required to do service-learning. More information on what makes service-learning practice effective from the teachers' perspective will create a more complete picture of what constitutes quality service-learning. These studies could use the same groups discussed in the preceding paragraphs for comparative purposes or to widen the population of teachers whose perspectives are represented.

In the introduction to this dissertation I suggest that participation in service-learning and a service-learning community of practice is, in part, a response to current educational contexts. Results show that participation is motivated by discouragement and dissatisfaction due to discourses, policies, and practices in urban contexts that challenge assumptions about social justice and democratic values. Participation is also motivated by characteristics of the community of practice that mitigate such negative feelings. It would be interesting to discern if teachers in educational contexts where they may not be as motivated by problematic discourses, policies, and practices (i.e. suburban or private

schools) would feel the need to commit to this program and especially to service-learning projects that take significant time, energy, and other resources. In other words, would teachers participate if their assumptions about social justice, democratic values, or other personal commitments were not challenged? Therefore, studying the assumptions and motivations that shape teachers' participation in discretionary service-learning programs in other contexts (i.e. private or suburban schools) is worthwhile.

Participants in this study felt it was important to uplift their students' prior experiences, experiential knowledge, and cultural wealth in the classroom. Some participants described doing personal "work," such as exploring personal biases and racial attitudes, involved in this process. Milner (2007) finds that successful teachers in urban contexts work to know themselves culturally, linguistically, gendered, racially, economically, and socially in relation to others. Ladson Billings (1994) and Gay (2000) find that successful teachers in urban contexts approach teaching in ways that are culturally relevant and responsive. It is important to explore this "work" in more depth.

The majority of participants in this study identified themselves as White/Caucasian females or males working in schools classified by the School District as having mostly Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or Asian populations (according to public School District data). The role of teachers' race, ethnic, gender, and other identities was not the focus of this study, but is an important factor in how teacher identity gets constructed and in teachers' choices. In relation to service-learning, Mitchell (2008) recognizes that the concept of "service" is "steeped in issues of identity and privilege which must be wrestled with for students to be effective in their service work" (p. 55). The same is true of teachers who join, and also guide, their students in service,

authentic classroom and community relationships, and equitable classroom and community partnerships.

Future studies could explore the role of teachers' race, ethnic, and gender identity in their service-learning related choices and the work teachers' do to reflect on their bias and privilege in relation to their classroom and community relationships. Questions could include how teachers describe the aforementioned "work" and how using a Framework based on student voice and scaffolding community building influences such work. Also, research could examine the way in which the ECLA Framework, or other service-learning practices, facilitates teaching in ways that are culturally relevant and responsive. In addition, a future study could explore the role of race, ethnic, gender, and other identities in forming authentic relationships with students and community partners from different social backgrounds through the service-learning process and the extent to which these collaborations are fair, equitable, and just.

An examination of ECLA using a critical service-learning framework is also warranted. Critical service-learning pedagogy focuses on the access to power experienced by students, teachers, and community members (Mitchell, 2008). Literature on critical service-learning pedagogy is mostly based on higher education contexts (Mitchell, 2007; 2008). More recent research on critical service-learning pedagogy or service-learning with a social justice orientation in K-12 contexts, especially at the elementary and middle-school levels, is needed (e.g. Butin, 2007; Wade, 2007).

Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

Research

There is ample research on the benefits of quality service-learning for students (e.g. Billig, 2002; Celio, Durlak, and Dymnicki, 2011; Richards et al, 2013; Scales, Roehlkepartain, Neal, Kielsmeier & Benson, 2006; Seitsinger, 2005). Still, service-learning is generally under-valued. Bruce and Pecore (2013) find that there was once a major movement in public education to develop a critical socially engaged intelligence appropriate to Democracy. In the city where this study took place, calls for civic education and service in schools spurred the School District's leadership in a national service-learning movement that peaked in the 1990s and 2000s (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Kahne & Westheimer, 1996; Kielsmeier, 2000). Currently, civic education and service-learning have been pushed to the side, replaced with a fixation on raising standardized test scores. This dissertation reminds us of the importance of K-12 service-learning practice, and K-12 service-learning research, positing service-learning as a way to also engage teachers and highlighting its potential to mitigate attrition. Harkavy (2004) asserts that research on service-learning should broaden its focus from student-outcomes and acceptance among educational disciplines to how it can be a means to larger "educational and societal ends" (p. 5). Milner (2014) argues that in light of an emphasis on predetermined, narrowed, and scripted curricula prevalent in urban school contexts: "not only should we be concerned about students, but there are also lots of reasons to worry about the field of teaching as well as teachers" (p. 5). This study illustrates that service-learning can sustain teaching as desirable because it is intrinsically (ethically, cognitively, or emotionally) satisfying in a time when the intrinsic rewards of teaching are not easily

accessible and many teachers report dissatisfaction (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006; Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Day, 2002; Dunn, 2015; Santoro, 2011, 2013; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011; van Ven, Slegers & van de Ven, 2005).

Research on how teachers respond to education reforms often focuses on attrition (e.g. Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995; Santoro, 2011, 2013; Santoro & Morehouse, 2011). While it is important to understand why teachers leave, it is equally as important to understand why and how they stay. Research has shown that the current focus on accountability creates particular challenges to teachers' professional identities, which can lead to personal, social, and moral concerns (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; van Ven, Slegers & an de Ven, 2005). Removing challenges to teachers' professional identity requires a shift over time in the priorities society places on education (Labaree, 1997). Yet, this study demonstrates that teachers can and are mitigating challenges to their professional identity now, within the constraints of current educational contexts. This study contributes to a body of research on teachers' reactions to education reforms by providing stakeholders with a thorough understanding of teachers who remain in the profession, what influences them, and how they stay engaged.

Theory

Limited literature on current educational contexts and urban teachers' *integrity* primarily focuses on how challenges to morals and working conditions cause teachers to make the difficult decision to leave the profession (Santoro, 2011; 2013, Dunn, 2015). My work contributes to this body of work in two ways. First, it offers an understanding of how teachers in urban contexts preserve their integrity. Santoro (2013) argues that teachers leave the field as "conscientious objectors" whose professional identity has been

“corroded” by external factors—educational contexts that conflict with their personal integrity and the integrity of the teaching profession (p. 565). Guided by Santoro’s framework, I do not fault conscientious objectors for leaving or assert that they were remiss in not finding a solution to their inability to uphold their professional integrity. As Dunn (2015) concludes in her study of urban teachers’ decisions to stay or leave, it takes courage to admit your dissatisfaction and/or inability to be successful with your craft. It also takes courage to leave a career you are invested in (i.e. in financial and emotional ways). Instead, I offer quality and well-supported service-learning as one way to support teacher integrity and satisfaction in a time where teacher attrition is a growing concern. My work advances Santoro’s (2013) model of professional integrity by applying it to teachers who remain professionally satisfied in urban school contexts. Santoro (2013) recounts her participants’ experiences in high-poverty schools that challenged who they were as a teacher and person. These experiences compromised their professional integrity, which: “had a corrosive influence on their personal integrity and the integrity of teaching” (p. 577). My work develops Santoro’s (2013) model of professional integrity by applying it in reverse. I identify teachers’ experiences that *fulfill* their professional and personal commitments, *fortifying* their professional integrity.

This dissertation also provides a deeper understanding of how the role of teacher carries added meaning and purpose for teachers in urban school contexts (Santoro, 2013). As stated above, existing literature focuses on teachers’ moral disagreements with policies and working conditions such as mandates to teach prescriptive curriculum (Santoro, 2016) and testing (Dunn, 2015; Santoro, 2011). For example, Dunn (2015) found urban teachers who struggled with the decision to stay or leave doubted the “moral

compass” of policy-makers (p. 95). While other work posits that policies and working conditions challenge urban teachers’ professional and personal commitments, this dissertation digs deeper by identifying what these commitments are so that they can be supported. I highlight how for the urban teachers in my study, teaching integrity was intertwined with beliefs about social justice and democracy. This study also illustrates how educators can move beyond traditional service-learning to fulfill their personal commitments to social justice. It details how service-learning practice in a K-12 context can be oriented towards social justice versus more traditional views of citizenship by prioritizing authenticity, depth, and understanding the root causes and intersectionality of social issues (Mitchell, 2008; Wade, 2007).

While all teachers experience challenges to their professional integrity (Santoro, 2013), for teachers in urban school contexts these challenges are coupled with teaching a population that is underserved in a city that is under-resourced. For example, participants felt they were the point person for meeting their students’ social and emotional needs. Incorporating student voice was also important to participants because they work with a population marginalized by systemic situations, students whose voices are not generally heard in society. Participants also felt responsible for providing students opportunities to develop cultural capital held by dominant (middle or upper) social classes (Lamont & Lareau, 1988), so they can leverage themselves in their communities. These realities connected their call to teach in urban contexts to issues of social justice and democracy.

Practice

This study contributes to a body of literature on supporting service-learning practice by delineating supports required for teachers in urban contexts to implement

service-learning effectively and shedding light on what characteristics of service-learning make it successful in urban school contexts. Mintz and Abramovitz (2004) highlight the importance of extrinsic factors, such as the importance of colleagues in recruitment and mentoring, in teachers' decisions to implement service-learning. They call for extrinsic factors, not just intrinsic motivation, to be considered in future research. This dissertation confirms the importance of colleagues in recruitment to and mentoring of service-learning practice. It further offers other extrinsic factors that participants valued, that are applicable to all teaching contexts, including instructional support, such as lesson plans, graphic organizers, and related training and support. Most importantly, this dissertation highlights extrinsic factors that specifically motivate *urban* teachers' participation in service-learning.

Findings indicate that in order to effectively implement service-learning in under-resourced schools, extrinsic supports need to be targeted to meet needs specific to educators in urban contexts. While Mintz and Abramovitz (2004) found that mentoring from colleagues motivates service-learning practice, these data add that support from a group of educators who experience similar situations made participants feel they were not navigating their urban school contexts alone. While this type of support is available to teachers within their schools, participants appreciated that ECLA provided a wider support group and/or were not able to find a supportive group of colleagues inside their school. In addition to mentoring and support from colleagues, participants found one-on-one pedagogical support from staff (including individualized lesson materials, guest speakers, and classroom supplies) was vital to their ability to implement service-learning in light of their insufficient planning time and resources. Without support from ECLA

colleagues and staff, who understand the realities of their daily lives as professionals in urban school contexts and provide for their needs, participants would not have been able to effectively implement service-learning.

Participants were also motivated by the recognition that their participation in service-learning produced. Participants appreciated that their work was recognized by ECLA on social media and that their administrators spoke positively about their service-learning projects. Moreover, four participants noted their service-learning projects were featured in local newspapers. Participants felt the recognition they received for their service-learning work looked good for their schools and students. Validation was important to participants who felt personally under-valued by their schools, district, or on a societal level. For example, participants reported being perceived as the enemy, greedy, and not committed to students. They also reported their profession being disrespected as a “fallback job” or a career you choose because it provides more time off. Yet, as a number of scholars and journalists have observed (e.g. Ingersoll, Merrill & May, 2016; Phillips, 2015; Santoro, 2011, 2017), it is often the current policy context in the U.S. that has teachers feeling disengaged, dissatisfied, and demoralized, as opposed to lacking commitment, greed, laziness, or other personal deficiencies.

As a whole, urban education is often described using deficit narratives that place blame on teachers, students, and communities for failing schools as opposed to critiquing structural inequalities that leave schools void of resources and devalue their assets (Weiner, 2003). Milner (2008) describes a general assumption that “if it’s urban, than it’s bad” (p. 1574)! Reed and Butler (2015) assert that service-learning can push back against negative rhetoric around *students* in urban school contexts by providing them: “... an

opportunity to flip the script by not only being the recipients of service, but also the givers of authentic service through real and valuable learning...” (p. 56). This study shows that service-learning can contribute much needed positive conversation around urban education as a whole, including *teachers*. Milner (2008), in documenting counter-narratives of urban educators and communities, asserts: “there are committed, confident, and competent teachers from different ethnic backgrounds who care about their students and their success in urban schools” (p. 1595). He calls for: “more attention to the counter-narratives available in urban schools across the country” (p. 1595). As Milner (2008) argues, there are negative aspects of urban school contexts that need attention, which this study presents. However, there are also many positive aspects to education in urban contexts, which this study elevates. This study illustrates that service-learning can serve as an important counter to pervasive negativity about urban education by promoting and sustaining committed teachers.

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APPENDIX A
ECLA STAFF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. I'd like to start by learning a little more about the organization. Can you tell me about the history of ECLA?
2. What is ECLA's mission?
3. Describe ECLA's partnership with community organizations.
 - Why do you feel these organizations choose to work with ECLA?
 - Are there specific organizations that have sustained relationships with ECLA? Why do you feel they are committed to ECLA?
4. Tell me about Need In Deed's relationship with corporate sponsors.
 - Why do you feel these sponsors choose to work with ECLA?
5. How many and what types of schools does ECLA work with?
6. Describe your partnerships (relationships) with local schools.
7. Now lets talk about the ECLA Framework. How does ECLA conceptualize Service-learning?
8. Describe ECLA's Framework.
 - To what extent is student voice a part of your approach to service-learning?
 - In what ways is this framework implemented in the classroom of ECLA teachers?
9. Describe the ECLA network.
10. Now I'd like to learn more about ECLA's teachers. How are teachers supported by ECLA?
 - What does it mean to be a first and second year member versus an extended network member or alumni?
11. To what extent has teachers' participation changed throughout the history of the organization?
12. To what extent do teachers follow through with their participation in ECLA?
13. How many teachers would you describe as very active or very committed to ECLA? What do you feel is behind this commitment?

14. I'd like to talk a little bit more about teachers' participation in ECLA. Describe the application process.

- Why do you feel teachers choose to participate in this network?

15. What do you want teachers to get out of participating in the network? More broadly, what does the ECLA organization want teachers to get out of participating in the network?

16. What is your perception of what teachers get out of participating in the network?

17. What, if anything, do you feel teachers get out of service-learning? How does this result relate to ECLA's unique framework?

APPENDIX B
INACTIVE ECLA TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Let's begin by hearing how you become involved with ECLA, and why did you choose to do so.
 - How did you hear about Need in Deed?
 - What aspects of the organization appealed to you? What aspects did you identify with?

2. The next few questions are about your experience with ECLA. Describe the impact of the service learning process/pedagogy on your teaching?
 - In what ways have you continued to use the Framework strategies into your teaching?
 - In what ways have you incorporated service learning into your teaching?

3. Describe your experience with the ECLA teacher network.
 - To what extent did you/do you use the network? Attend events? Access other teachers?

4. Describe your experience with training and support from ECLA staff.
 - What benefits did you experience through trainings and/or interactions with ECLA staff?
 - What challenges did you experience during trainings and/or interactions with ECLA staff?

5. Now we're going to talk about your current experience with ECLA. Describe your current interaction and relationship with ECLA.
 - What opportunities have there been for ongoing participation in the network?
 - Have you heard from ECLA since completing your training?

6. What factors have influenced whether or not you participate in ECLA events?
 - For example: teaching setting, personal circumstances, changes in the district, lack of communication from ECLA

7. Now let's talk about your experience as a teacher more broadly. What problems or challenges do you face now as an educator in [this city]?

8. In what ways could you imagine ECLA helping you in your current role/setting?

9. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with ECLA?

APPENDIX C
ACTIVE ECLA TEACHERS: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW
PARTICIPANTS INITIAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Lets begin by hearing how you became involved with ECLA and why you chose to do so.
 - Did you do service-learning before you applied to ECLA?
 - What aspects of the organization appealed to you?
 - What aspects of the organization did you identify with?
 - How long have you been a part of ECLA?

2. In what ways have you incorporated service-learning into your teaching?
 - What ECLA projects have you done in the past?
 - Were these projects meaningful or important to you? If so, how?
 - What does service-learning look like in your classroom?

3. Describe your experience with training and support from ECLA staff.
 - In what ways does ECLA support you?
 - In what ways does ECLA support you in implementing their framework?
 - To what extent does this support impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does this support impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does this support impact you personally?

4. In what ways do you use the ECLA Framework strategies in your teaching?

5. Describe your experiences with the ECLA teacher network.
 - To what extent do you use the network?
 - To what extent do you attend In-service? Events? Access other teachers?
 - To what extent does the network impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does the network impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does the network impact you personally?

6. Describe the commitment that ECLA requires.

7. Why do you participate in ECLA?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact you personally?

8. Do you identify with ECLA as an organization? If so, in what way?

9. What, if anything, do you have in common with other ECLA network members?

10. Is your participation in ECLA important to you? If so, why?

11. Tell me about your school.

- Describe the professional climate at your school. Does it reflect the broader climate in education?
- Are there other ECLA teachers at your school? If yes, does this benefit you? In what ways?
- Is your school supportive of service-learning and ECLA?

12. Describe the impact of the service-learning process or pedagogy on your teaching this school year.

13. Describe your teaching philosophy and professional principles.

14. What aspects of the teaching profession do you enjoy? Find difficult?

15. And now let's talk about your experience as a teacher more broadly. What problems or challenges do you face now as an educator?

16. If you don't mind, I'd like to finish up with some demographic information.

- What is your age? What race and gender do you consider yourself? How long have you been teaching?

APPENDIX D
ACTIVE ECLA TEACHERS: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW
PARTICIPANTS FINAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What do you feel are the most important components of good teaching?
2. Does the teaching and learning in your classroom change when you are doing service-learning related activities as opposed to the mandated curriculum? In what ways?
3. To what extent has service learning served to keep you engaged in teaching?
4. Can you tell me about any challenges or problems this year as an educator?
5. Describe any aspects of the profession that conflict with your understanding of good teaching?
6. To what extent does service-learning assist you in resisting policies, programs, or other aspects of the profession that conflict with your understanding of good teaching?
 - Do you feel service-learning can be a counterpoint to current educational contexts? In what ways?
7. Are there other professional communities you could be involved in that promote student engagement? If yes, why do you choose ECLA?
8. Is it important to you that your students have experience serving others? If yes, why?
9. To what extent do you bring any personal, moral, or ethical commitments to the classroom? Do these manifest in your teaching?
10. To what extent is teaching a moral and ethical profession?
 - In what ways are you able to access its moral or ethical aspects?
11. To what extent is teaching an emotional profession? In what way is this true for you?
12. To what extent do ECLA teachers have shared commitments, understandings, or emotions?
13. To what extent does ECLA help meet students' needs in terms of resources?
14. To what extent does ECLA help meet your needs as an urban teacher?
15. In what way is ECLA connected or related to the larger education landscape and other teacher networks in [this city]?

APPENDIX E
ACTIVE ECLA TEACHERS: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS PROTOCOL

1. Lets begin by hearing how you became involved with ECLA and why you chose to do so.
 - Did you do service-learning before you applied to ECLA?
 - What aspects of the organization appealed to you?
 - What aspects of the organization did you identify with?
 - How long have you been a part of ECLA?
2. In what ways have you incorporated service-learning into your teaching?
 - What ECLA projects have you done in the past?
 - Were these projects meaningful or important to you? If so, how?
 - What does service-learning look like in your classroom?
3. Describe your experience with training and support from ECLA staff.
 - In what ways does ECLA support you?
 - In what ways does ECLA support you in implementing their framework?
 - To what extent does this support impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does this support impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does this support impact you personally?
4. In what ways do you use the ECLA Framework strategies in your teaching?
5. Describe your experiences with the ECLA teacher network.
 - To what extent do you use the network?
 - To what extent do you attend In-service? Events? Access other teachers?
 - To what extent does the network impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does the network impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does the network impact you personally?
6. Describe the commitment that ECLA requires.
7. Why do you participate in ECLA?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact your teaching practice?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact you as a professional?
 - To what extent does ECLA impact you personally?
8. Do you identify with ECLA as an organization? If so, in what way?
9. What, if anything, do you have in common with other ECLA network members?
10. Is your participation in ECLA important to you? If so, why?

11. Tell me about your school.

- Describe the professional climate at your school. Does it reflect the broader climate in education?
- Are there other ECLA teachers at your school? If yes, does this benefit you? In what ways?
- Is your school supportive of service-learning and ECLA?

12. Describe the impact of the service-learning process or pedagogy on your teaching this school year.

13. Describe your teaching philosophy and professional principles.

14. What aspects of the teaching profession do you enjoy? Find difficult?

15. And now let's talk about your experience as a teacher more broadly. What problems or challenges do you face now as an educator?

16. If you don't mind, I'd like to finish up with some demographic information.

- What is your age? What race and gender do you consider yourself? How long have you been teaching?

APPENDIX F
ECLA COMMUNITY PARTNERS INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Tell me about your organization
2. How long have you been working with ECLA?
3. Do you work with any other service-learning or community service organizations?
4. Why do you choose to work with ECLA?
 - Describe your partnership with ECLA.
5. What have been your experiences with service-learning?
 - What projects have you partnered with ECLA classrooms to complete in the past?
 - Describe your experiences working with ECLA classrooms and teachers.
6. Why do you feel teachers participate in ECLA?
7. What do you feel teachers get out of implementing ECLA's approach to service-learning?

APPENDIX G
PHASE 1 CODEBOOK

- Desire to continue

- Reason for lack of participation
 - Perception of a limit
 - Family issues
 - Other interests/opportunities
 - Distance (geographic)
 - Time
 - Conflicting academic pressures (i.e. testing requirements, common core, lack of external value)
 - Support from staff dropped off

- Awareness of ongoing opportunities
 - Current awareness of events (i.e. Alumni events, Shout Out, Soiree)
 - Awareness of ongoing availability of ECLA staff
 - Survey
 - Requests to share as Experienced Network Members
 - Fundraising
 - General e-mail
 - Personal e-mail
 - Inquiry Group

- Criticism

- Broader challenges for educators

- Suggestions for future directions

- Recruitment (which avenue worked)
 - Flyer
 - Colleagues
 - Principal
 - E-mail
 - Staff presentation

- Professional benefits
 - Community engagement
 - Improve school culture

- Improve classroom culture (i.e. building community, classroom management)
- Guest speakers (community partners)
- Field trips
- Curriculum connections
- Staff support
- ECLA sponsored events (i.e. Shout Out, Soiree)
- Resources
- Framework embedded into curriculum
- Training/professional development (i.e. Monthly In-Service, Retreat)
- Network of teachers
- Valued as a professional (i.e. teacher-friendly, trust in teachers)
- Framework for quality service-learning
- Source of professional pride

- Student benefits
 - Real world learning (i.e. authenticity, complexity)
 - Student voice (student driven)
 - Student engagement (students as experts)
 - Framework activities

- Continued impact
 - Community building
 - Student voice
 - Recruitment
 - Social issues
 - Asset orientation

APPENDIX H
PHASE 2 CODEBOOK

- Reason for a lack of participation
 - Perception of a limit
 - Family issues
 - Other interests/opportunities
 - Distance (geographic)
 - Time
 - Conflicting academic pressures (i.e. testing requirements, common core, lack of external value)
 - Support from staff dropped off
- Criticism
- Authenticity (based on the students' experiences or true to the spirit of the students)
- Recognition
- Engaged in education issues (i.e. local education networks, activism)
- Community building (Valuing your Voice stage)
- Relevance (to students' lives or community)
- Student voice (eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement)
- Engaging for teacher (keeps work refreshing or interesting)
- Assets
- Like-minded people
- Community of practice
- Teacher as learner
- Understanding student misconceptions
- Respect for teacher as expert

- Quality training/professional development
- Support
- Philosophy
 - Learning process
 - Interdisciplinary
 - Project-based
 - Community-based
 - Student voice
 - Problem solvers/self-directed (students)
- Push
 - Lack of resources
 - Scale of district (i.e. one-size-fits-all trainings, instruction, not meeting teachers where they are)
 - Lack of respect
 - Lack of curricular autonomy/options for students
 - Emphasis on testing
 - Bureaucracy
- Student transformation
- Quality Service-learning
- Part of drive to stay in teaching
- Serve students
- Collaboration
- Personal integrity
- Curricular resources
- Teaching integrity
- Student engagement
- Democratic experience
- Critical thinking
- Research

- Desire to continue
- Broader challenges for educators
- Suggestions for future directions
- Source of professional pride
- Student-driven (The process being unpredictable and control not in teachers' hands)
- Improve classroom culture (i.e. building community, classroom management)
- Improve school culture
- Network
- Resources
- Framework for quality service-learning
- Sponsored events
- Embedded into curriculum
- Training/professional development
- Community engagement
- Valued as a professional (i.e. teacher friendly, trust in teachers)
- Citizenship skills
- Experiences for students (Opportunity for students to have experiences)
- Awareness of ongoing opportunities
 - Current awareness of events (i.e. alumni events, Shout Out, Soiree)
 - Awareness of the availability of ECLA staff
 - Survey
 - Requests to share as Experienced Network Members

- Fundraising
- General e-mail
- Personal e-mail
- Inquiry Group

- Continued impact
 - Community building
 - Student voice
 - Recruitment
 - Social issues
 - Asset orientation

- Recruitment
 - Flyer
 - Colleagues
 - Principal
 - E-mail
 - Staff presentation

APPENDIX I
PHASE 3 (FINAL) CODEBOOK

- Community of practice
- Reason for lack of participation
 - Perception of a limit
 - Other interests/opportunities
 - Distance (geographic)
 - Conflicting academic pressures (i.e. testing requirements, common core, lack of external value)
 - Support dropped off
 - Family/personal issues
 - Time/level of commitment
- Criticism
- Pull Factors (characteristics of ECLA that motivate teachers to participate)
 - Framework for quality service-learning
 - Student voice
 - Authenticity (based in the students' experiences or true to the spirit of the students)
 - Critical thinking
 - Community building
 - Student engagement
 - Training/professional development (i.e. Monthly In-Service, Retreat, etc.)
 - Collaboration
 - Citizenship/social topics (facilitates addressing citizenship and social issues in their curriculum)
 - Student growth (growth of the whole child such as: opportunities for students to have experiences and social/emotional growth)
 - Resources (materials and curricular resources)
 - Like-minded people (who think about education in similar ways)
 - ECLA staff support
 - Validation
 - Community assets (i.e. guest speakers, connections with local organizations, opportunities)
 - Framework is embedded into curriculum

- Personal Integrity (the personal interests and commitments a teacher brings to the profession)
 - Personal growth
 - Moral, ethical, and emotional work
 - Autobiography (personal experiences that contribute to who one is as a teacher)
 - Teachers' own commitment to civic engagement and/or social justice

- Push factors (systemic or school-level factors that problematize teachers' integrity)
 - Lack of resources/support in school and/or district
 - Scale of district and bureaucracy (i.e. one-size-fits-all trainings and instruction, not meeting teachers where they are)
 - Lack of curricular autonomy/options for students (i.e. standardized curriculum, teaching towards standardized testing, basal readers, etc.)
 - Lack of respect for teachers as professionals

- Teaching integrity (i.e. what the profession stands for, what it means to be a teacher)
 - Addressing different ways of learning
 - Collaboration with other educators
 - Citizenship skills (teaching students to contribute to and make change in the community)
 - Critical thinking (i.e. asking difficult questions, exploring many sides of an issue, inquiry, process, etc.)
 - Student voice (eliciting students' ideas, opinions, and choices in the classroom to increase engagement)
 - Exceptional commitment to teaching/students
 - Teaching the whole child (i.e. social, emotional, and academic education)

- Professional integrity (the ability to teach in alignment with one's interests and commitments—both personal commitments and commitments to the field of teaching. Maintaining alignment between what one believes to be the responsibility of the role of the teacher and one's actions in that role)
 - Professional growth (improving practice through processes such as reflection and inquiry)
 - Engaged in education issues/networks (i.e. mention of other education networks, activism related to education, etc.)

- Staying engaged through using creativity and skills (i.e. keeps things refreshing, interesting, etc. for the teacher; taps teachers' creativity; drives teacher to remain in the profession)
- Source of professional pride
- Respect as an expert/professional
- Fosters an asset orientation towards teaching students