IT'S ALL ABOUT HOW YOU FRAME IT:
A SENSEMAKING PERSPECTIVE ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL COACH ROLE

A Capstone Project

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Doctor of Education

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by

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APPROVAL OF THE CAPSTONE

This capstone, *It's all about how you frame it: A sensemaking perspective on the instructional coach role*, has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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_____ Date

DEDICATION

This capstone project is dedicated to my third grade students at Halley Elementary. Thank you for always reminding me that we all bring something to the table.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have completed this project without the support of many individuals, some of whom I would like to thank here.

To the participants in Caldwell, thank you for allowing me to learn about the work you are doing in your division. Your dedication to your teachers and students has been inspiring, and this project would not exist without you.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE PAGE

Executive Summary

In an effort to improve students outcomes in U.S. schools, many educational policies have turned their attention to professional learning for teachers. Many of these policies have introduced support for coaching initiatives. Coaching is broadly defined as a form of job-embedded professional development aimed at helping teachers improve the quality of their instruction. Initial evidence suggests coaching may support teacher learning and transfer of knowledge to classroom practice. However, there is no standardized approach to coaching, and, consequently, coaching practices vary across schools. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, because there is no statewide coaching program, local school divisions are responsible for training and support individuals who take on coaching responsibilities.

Purpose

To support these efforts, the annual Curry Leadership Academy – a three-day professional development workshop offered by the University of Virginia – provides training and support for individual taking on coaching responsibilities. The purpose of this study was to explore how instructional coaches and their colleagues in one participating school division conceptualized the instructional coach role.

Methodology

This study was structured as a mixed-methods investigation. A survey was administered to Curry Leadership Academy participants to assess the perceptions of the utility of the academy immediately following its conclusion. Follow-up interviews were conducted with academy participants from Caldwell, which recently adopted the Jim Knight instructional coaching model. Snowball sampling was used to identify additional interview participants who did not attend the academy.

Findings

Findings based on survey and interview data are presented in this capstone. The four findings from this case study are as following;

1. Earning buy-in from teachers was a gradual process. Several factors – consistency in personnel, the structure of the coaching program, and individual characteristics of coaches – influenced the degree to which teachers engaged in coaching work.
2. Administrators were central to the way coaching was conceptualized and enacted in schools. Coaches and principals worked collaboratively to determine priorities, though ultimately principals set the instructional vision for the school. In years prior, several administrators in Caldwell treated their coaches as an extension of the administration, thus blurring the line between coaching and evaluation.
3. Coaches had to balance demands from division leaders, school leaders, and individual teachers. Coaches felt overwhelmed by these competing priorities and did not have enough time to meet all of their coaching goals.
4. Division support facilitated coaching work in schools. This support took the form of monthly coach meetings, on-site visits from division specialists, and resources to support the implementation of new curricula. Division leaders also reinforced messages about coaching during on-site visits with principals.

Conclusions and Implications

Based on the findings, I have made several recommendations to Caldwell:

1. Help instructional coaches understand their roles as intermediaries.
2. Provide joint training for building leaders and instructional coaches.
3. Ensure coaching remains voluntary for teachers.

These findings may also have implications for the training and support provided to coaches and their colleagues. For this reason, I have also made several recommendations to the Curry Leadership Academy:

1. Increase opportunities for collaborative planning and problem solving among academy participants.
2. Offer breakout sessions differentiated by role (i.e., central office administrator, principal, instructional coach)
3. Facilitate ongoing opportunities for learning after the conclusion of the academy.
4. Conduct yearly evaluations to identify local needs and align the academy curriculum.

Chapter One

Introduction

How to improve the quality of teachers in U.S. schools remains a frequent topic of debate in educational policy. Research has demonstrated that teacher effectiveness as measured by student academic achievement varies widely (e.g., Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Rockoff, 2004; Rowan, Correnti, & Miller, 2002) and that teachers improve at different rates (Atteberry, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). A growing body of evidence also suggests teacher quality is an important contributor to student achievement (e.g., Blazar & Kraft, 2015; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigor, 2007; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). Specifically, the quality of teachers' instruction has been linked to student achievement outcomes (e.g., Allen et al., 2013; Gamoran, Porter, Smithson, & White, 1997; Wenglinsky, 2002; Westbury, 1993). Over the last twenty years, many policies have targeted teacher learning and development, which have been identified as necessary to improve instructional quality (Desimone, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Thompson & Zeuli, 1999; Wenglinsky, 2000). A concurrent push for more rigorous academic standards and increased accountability for student learning has required many teachers to transform how they teach (Cohen & Hill, 2001; Sebring et al., 2006; Stein & Coburn, 2007; Thompson & Zeuli, 1999). In an effort to increase the quality of instruction, many policies have introduced support for coaching initiatives (Matsumura & Wang, 2014). Race to the Top funds have been awarded to states that develop plans to improve teacher effectiveness through initiatives that include coaching (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Funding through No Child Left Behind ([NCLB]; 2001) and the more recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) can be allocated to the development of instructional coaches. As a result, a significant

investment in coaching initiatives has been made in school divisions across the country (Borman & Feger, 2006; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009).

Many educators consider coaching to be one of the more promising approaches to improving the quality of instruction (Knight, 2007). Definitions of *coaching* vary, but coaching is broadly defined as a form of job-embedded professional development aimed at helping teachers improve their instruction through activities such as guided data analysis, classroom observations, and post-observation feedback (Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Shanklin, 2006). Several studies have demonstrated that coaching can be an effective strategy for facilitating the transfer of newly acquired skills to teachers' classroom practice (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Showers & Joyce, 1996). In addition, coaching is aligned with many characteristics of high-quality professional development. For years, researchers and practitioners have questioned the value of "one shot" workshops to facilitate teacher learning (Whitehurst, 2002). Current professional development programs are rarely tailored to the individual needs or goals of teachers. In their report on the implementation of No Child Left Behind, Birman and colleagues (2009) found fewer than half of teachers reported professional development aligned with their professional goals. Less than one third of teachers were able to choose their professional development and reported lower levels of satisfaction than teachers who could choose (Boston Consulting Group, 2014). Professional development that is sustained over time, engages them as active learners, and is relevant to teachers' individual needs has been linked to increases in teachers' self-reported knowledge and skills (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Garet, Porter, Desmione, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). As a professional development tool, coaching can be tailored to teachers' individual strengths and needs, is typically grounded in the curricula they are teaching, and allows teachers to direct the course of their learning.

Coaching has been linked to increases in student academic achievement (e.g., Biancarosa, Bryk, & Dexter, 2010; Campbell & Malkus, 2011; Elish-Piper, 2011; Marsh et al., 2008) and the quality of teachers' instruction (e.g., Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009). However, the implementation of coaching initiatives has not been without its challenges. The demand to bring innovations to scale quickly is common in educational reform (Thompson & Zeuli, 1999), and the coaching movement is no exception. Many coaching reforms have endured what Michael Fullan (1982) has termed the "ready, fire, aim" approach: they were brought to scale quickly before sufficient attention could be paid to their implementation. Research on implementation has demonstrated there is a wide variability in how coaching reforms are enacted within schools. These variations have been attributed to a lack of clarity surrounding the goals and responsibilities of coaches (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & LaMahieu, 2015; Coburn & Russell, 2008), modifications made by local administrators (Stein & Coburn, 2007), and coaches' lack of preparation to enact the facilitation skills associated with coaching (Gallucci, DeVoogt Van Lare, Yoon, & Boatright, 2010). School-based administrators and instructional coaches are often left on their own to make sense of state and division policy messages and to make decisions about how to carry out the day-to-day work of coaching teachers (Bryk et al., 2015; Gallucci, et al., 2010).

A significant financial and human investment in coaching initiatives has been made in recent years (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Given the rapid increase of coaching initiatives and subsequent variation in their implementation, it is imperative to understand how coaches interpret division and school policy and conceptualize their roles and responsibilities. In this descriptive mixed-methods study, I propose to examine how instructional coaches and their colleagues in one Virginia school division conceptualize the coaching role. Information gained

from this inquiry will be used to make recommendations to support the work of instructional coaches in elementary schools.

Definition of Terms

Professional development refers to a range of activities that aim to change teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices to improve student outcomes. High-quality professional development is aligned to school goals, engages teachers as active learners, and creates opportunities for authentic learning (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001).

Coaching is a central focus of this proposed study. Definitions of coaching vary, and in education, authors often describe coaching roles as complex and ambiguous (Coggins, Stoddard, & Cutler, 2003; Gallucci et al., 2010; Showers, 1985). The purpose of coaching varies based on division policies, local needs and variation in implementation. When the goal is instructional improvement, coaching is often used to facilitate teacher learning and encourage the use of new practices (Killion, 2008; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Coaching activities might include sharing resources, collecting data, providing feedback, guiding teachers in data analysis, and facilitating reflective conversations (Killion & Harrison, 2006; Knight, 2009).

Four types of coaching appear most frequently in the literature: peer coaching, cognitive coaching, literacy coaching, and instructional coaching (Cornett & Knight, 2009). These models are summarized below.

- **Peer coaching** is a collaborative process in which teachers work together to share ideas, reflect on practice, build skills, and solve problems (Robbins, 1991). Peers engage in activities such as studying new instructional approaches, modeling and observing lessons, and providing feedback (Joyce & Showers, 1982).

- **Cognitive coaching** aims to develop self-directed individuals through the use of structures that support teachers' own planning, reflection, and problem solving. The coach facilitates teachers' exploration of the thinking behind their practices. The goal of cognitive coaching is to build teachers' capacity to self-monitor, self-analyze, and self-evaluate (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Coaches work to build rapport with teachers and employ strategies such as paraphrasing, probing for specificity, and inquiry to mediate thinking (Ellison & Hayes, 2009).
- **Instructional coaching** is a partnership model in which coaches help teachers incorporate research-based strategies into their classroom instruction (Knight, 2009). Instructional coaches are often engaged in activities such as identifying appropriate strategies for teacher learning, modeling high-quality teaching, gathering classroom data, and engaging teachers in reflective conversations about their practice (Knight, 2006). Instructional coaches typically function in non-supervisory roles, which distinguishes them from other instructional leaders (Taylor, 2008).
- **Literacy coaching** is a type of instructional coaching focused on teaching and learning pertaining to literacy (Toll, 2009). Literacy coaching has received significant attention due to its inclusion in the federal guides for Reading First, a mandate under NCLB (2001). In the review of literature for this study, literacy coaching - along with other content-specific coaching - will be subsumed under the broader category of instructional coaching.

Every model of coaching highlights different goals and strategies for coaches' work. The Curry Leadership Academy facilitators The curriculum of the Curry Leadership Academy does not represent one model of coaching but rather represents a broad range of strategies

foundational to the work of coaching across programs, models, and roles. The facilitators selected the following practices to feature in the curriculum:

- **Building and maintaining trusting relationships:** Coaches use verbal and nonverbal strategies to build rapport and trust with teachers (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Trust supports the development of cohesive and cooperative relationships, facilitates communication among individuals, and is a necessary component of transformational conversations (Baier, 1994; Glaser, 2014; Goldring & Rallis, 1993). Trusting relationships require benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).
- **Observing and analyzing practice:** Coaches work with teachers to identify opportunities for data collection. Coaches provide descriptive, non-judgmental feedback, inviting teachers to reflect on their practice and engage in collaborative problem solving (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Observation cycles may include pre-conferences, observations, and written or oral feedback (Knight, 2007).
- **Applying listening and questioning strategies to facilitate coaching conversations:** Effective coaches build rapport with teachers by employing a range of listening and questioning strategies (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Coaches mediate teachers' thinking by structuring coaching conversations including opportunities to pose questions, share data, and facilitate reflection.

Coaching in Schools

In this era of rigorous academic standards and high-stakes accountability, there is continued pressure to improve the quality of instruction in schools. Many educators look to professional development as a way to meet this aim. Research suggests that high-quality

professional development attends to adult learning theory, engages teachers as active learners, is sustained over time, and is situated in authentic contexts (Garet et al., 2001; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). However, current efforts often fail to improve the quality of instruction (Pianta, 2011), and many teachers and administrators feel professional development does not meet its intended goals (Boston Consulting Group, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Wei et al., 2009). Much of the professional development in place is delivered in the form of one-shot workshops that contain little follow up and fail to build on teachers' expertise (Knight, 2007; Whitehurst, 2002). Professional development is rarely tailored to individual teachers' needs. In Birman and colleagues' (2009) report on the implementation of *No Child Left Behind*, only 38% of teachers reported professional development was consistent with their goals. In addition, current teacher evaluation systems provide little information to teachers about areas for growth, and when feedback is given, it is rarely accompanied by professional supports (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009).

The process of improving teachers' instruction is complex and requires a significant investment to help teachers alter their habits and routines (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Fullan, 1982; Guskey, 2002). Teaching is complex work; teachers must juggle multiple competing goals from moment to moment. Professional learning must support teachers in development of "adaptive expertise," which facilitates the transfer of learning to new contexts (Hatano & Inagaki, 1986). Proponents of coaching argue it has the potential to facilitate teacher learning and transfer. Coaching offers individualized, authentic support for professional learning that aligns with the characteristics of high-quality professional development (Knight, 2009). Several studies (Cantrell & Hughes, 2008; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009) have demonstrated

associations between coaching initiatives and improvement in teaching practices, though research in this area is still developing.

The push to increase instructional quality has led to an increase in school-based coaching programs in the United States (Borman & Feger, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). These programs can take many forms. Many center on the use of instructional coaches, who often take a partnership approach to working with teachers. Typical coaching behaviors include modeling specific strategies, observing and providing feedback, providing support to teachers, and working alongside school-based administration to develop and communicate instructional visions (Gallucci et al., 2010; Knight, 2007). Coaches may work with teachers in a particular content area or across a range of departments and grade levels. Some coaches are site-based, while others work with teachers in several schools. Coaches are typically expected to possess content knowledge, strong interpersonal skills, and an understanding of division reform goals (Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Despite the increase in instructional coaching programs, empirical studies to determine whether these programs can improve teacher quality and student outcomes have yielded mixed results (Brown, Stroh, Fouts, & Baker, 2005). Several studies have demonstrated that instructional coaching can support teacher learning and encourage collaborative, reflective practice (Camburn, 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). In addition, coaching has been linked to changes in teachers' practices and gains in student achievement (Biancarosa et al., 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Knight & Cornett, 2008; Lockwood, McCombs, & Marsh, 2010). However, other studies have demonstrated contradictory findings (Garet et al., 2008; Mandeville & Rivers, 1991), which – coupled with variability in coaching programs – emphasize the need to understand the processes involved with the implementation of coaching programs. In addition,

there is a need for more research on the contextual factors that support coaching programs, including school infrastructure, broader teacher support systems, and allocation of resources (Bryk et al., 2015).

Instructional coaches also face challenges that may influence their enactment of the role. Research suggests coaches vary greatly in how they view and enact their role (Bean, Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, & Zigmond, 2010) and that effective coaches must fulfill multiple roles within the school (Shanklin, 2006; Toll, 2009; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Coaches' responsibilities may also vary based on teacher and school needs at different times throughout the year. In some schools, coaches' primary work focuses on collaborating with teachers to improve their practice. However, in many schools, coaches are responsible for administrative tasks, assessment coordination, and direct work with students (Bean et al., 2010; Matsumura, Sartoris, Bickel, & Garnier, 2009). These additional responsibilities can interfere with the time coaches have to work with teachers (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Firestone & Martinez, 2007; Mangin, 2008). The way teachers engage with coaching is also influenced by principals' approach to working with coaches (Matsumura et al., 2009) and principals' willingness to share leadership responsibilities with the staff (Matsumura, Garnier, & Resnick, 2010).

In some contexts, coaches also function as mediators between division-level policy and classroom instruction (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Hubbard, Mehan, & Stein, 2006; Swinnerton, 2007). This role can be particularly challenging for coaches who themselves may be learning new content and pedagogy while becoming familiar with divisions' reform efforts (Gallucci et al., 2010; Marsh, McCombs, & Martorell, 2010). Coaches also have to balance the competing pressures of supporting teacher learning while encouraging teachers to work toward aligning their practices with those espoused by the division (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Knight, 2007;

Knight & Nieuwerburg, 2012). As a result, the role of instructional coach can be complex and ambiguous, and there is significant variability in how this role is enacted in schools. Instructional coaches must also coordinate their efforts with those of school principals, who themselves play an instructional leadership role in support of teacher learning.

The Development of a Coaching Academy

In the interest of creating avenues to improve instructional quality, school divisions in Virginia have taken on a range of instructional coaching initiatives. Although VDOE (2015) allocates Title II funding for coaching initiatives, there are no state-wide guidelines for designing and implementing coaching programs in schools. As often happens with widespread educational reforms (Elmore, 2000), division leaders are responsible for designing all aspects of their coaching programs, including recruitment, training, and allocation of responsibilities. This is one of many reforms taken on by local school divisions, who have been tasked with large-scale system-wide improvement in recent years (Hightower, Knapp, Marsh, & McLaughlin, 2002; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Stein & Coburn, 2007). The implementation of coaching initiatives and transformation of instructional practice requires considerable time and resources (Thompson & Zeuli, 1999). The demands of this reform - coupled with the lack of statewide guidance - have led to significant variability in the structure and quality of coaching programs across the commonwealth, with many school divisions still lacking job-embedded coaching (VDOE, 2015).

In 2013, the Statewide K-12 Education Advisory Council, a partnership between K-12 school divisions and the University of Virginia, identified a need for professional development in light of the lack of "formal program of study available to help [coaches] gain expertise in the process of coaching" (Curry School of Education, personal communication, 2015, p. 1). School division leaders recognized that although coaches have worked as highly qualified teachers and

specialists, many needed targeted training in coaching skills. With input from the advisory council, the University of Virginia developed a coaching academy that addressed topics such as building and maintaining relationships, providing feedback, and scaffolding instructional improvement for adult learners.

During 2015-16, the academy facilitators organized the curriculum around fundamental skills and concepts applicable across different coaching models. These core skills included building and maintaining trusting relationships, observing and analyzing practice, and applying listening and questioning strategies to facilitate coaching conversations. The academy facilitators recruited a wide range of participants whose positions called for coaching skills, including administrators, central office representatives, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders. Participants represented 31 school divisions, two independent schools, two universities, and one community organization.

Follow-up Evaluation

As a follow-up to the academy, I sought to investigate how instructional coaches and their colleagues make sense of policies related to instructional coaching. An understanding of stakeholders' sensemaking around the instructional coach role will help identify how division and school policy, as well as organizational and contextual factors, interact to influence coaches' work. This investigation represented a *glass-box* evaluation of a coaching program. Often program evaluations focus solely on outcomes, leaving stakeholders in the dark as to underlying process. These *black box* evaluations fail to consider how an intervention interacts with contextual factors that may influence its success (Killion, 2008). In contrast, glass-box evaluations work from an ecological systems perspective; they recognize the situated nature of programs and examine programs within a broader environment (Love, 2004).

Conceptual Framework

Schools are dynamic environments with shifting priorities, expectations, and limitations. To situate individuals' conceptualizations of their roles within this context, I have developed a conceptual framework to guide this study. To develop the framework, I have drawn on sensemaking theory, which provides a lens for examining how individuals in coaching roles have adapted, adopted, combined, or ignored messages related to their roles, how they conceptualize their roles, and how their conceptualizations shape their coaching practices. Research on cognition has demonstrated that people construct meaning based on their interpretations, which are filtered through their prior knowledge and experience (Weick, 1995). In the context of education, studies have shown an individual's understanding of a reform - as well as the context in which the reform is implemented - influences that individual's implementation of that reform (Coburn, 2004; 2005; Cohen, 1990; Cohen & Hill, 2001; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002b; Spillane & Zeuli, 1999). Preexisting practices and understandings will lead individuals to selectively attend to various aspects of a program or policy, and this acts as a filter for how they translate messages into action (Coburn, 2001). In addition, professional and organizational contexts can influence the way individuals make meaning (Spillane, 1998; Yanow, 1996). The underlying assumption of sensemaking theory is that individuals act on the basis of what has meaning for them (Blumer, 1969; Porac, Thomas, & Baden-Fuller, 1989; Spillane et al., 2002a; Spillane et al., 2002b). This study seeks to understand how participants make sense of coaching initiatives as they consider their role within the school and their coaching responsibilities.

These theories are integrated with relevant literature to form the conceptual framework that will guide the evaluation. Figure 1 presents a visual model of this framework. The purpose of the framework is to contextualize individuals' conceptualization of their role, which is the

focus of this investigation. Coaching is situated work, and although the facilitators do not have direct access to the contexts in which participants enact coaching practices, they need to understand how participants think about their work. An understanding of instructional coaches' perceived roles and responsibilities, as well as affordances and constraints of their positions, will enable the facilitators to better align the content of the leadership academy to meet participant needs.

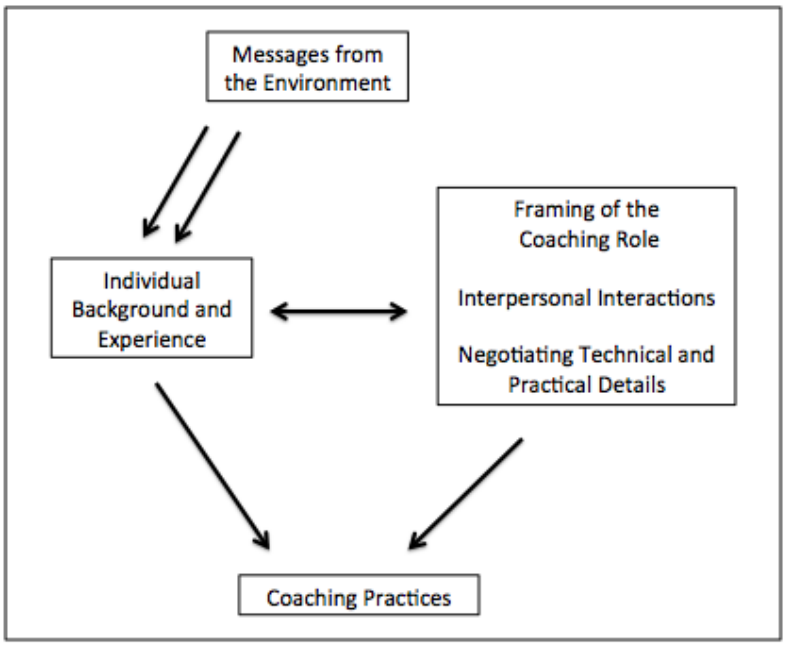

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for capstone project (adapted from Coburn, 2001).

Coaches and their colleagues receive messages from the environment that relate to instructional coaching. These messages come from many places, such as the state, the school division, and other professional networks. Sensemaking is a social process (Weick, 1995). Therefore, it is important to situate coaches' work within the organizational contexts in which they operate. At the school level, research has shown that school leaders play a large role in how coaches' time and responsibilities are allocated (e.g., Matsumura et al., 2009, 2010). Division policy may also influence how individuals make sense of their coaching role and enact coaching

strategies. The way in which division policies position coaches can influence the coaching role (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Norton, 2001). School leaders also mediate division policy by making decisions about the allocation of coaches' time and resources (Coburn & Russell, 2008), as well as how principals engage with coaches and teachers.

Individuals also bring their own understandings about and experiences with coaching that influence how they make sense of messages from the environment. In particular, coaches have a range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that may influence how they understand their role (Coggins et al., 2003; Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007; Gallucci et al., 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2002). In addition, there is no standard coaching model, leading to variations in how these coaches are trained and supported (Borman & Feger, 2006; Poglinco et al., 2003).

A sensemaking lens is predicated on the assumption that individuals respond based on individual interpretations. I posit that role conceptualization informs the way in which coaches enact their coaching roles. At the same time, the organizational context can inform how these individuals conceptualize their roles. Results from several studies suggest that supportive organizational conditions are associated with the effectiveness of reform initiatives such as coaching and leadership (see Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). For example, lack of time is a commonly cited barrier to effective coaching practice (Marsh et al., 2008; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003). However, our understanding of what conditions are conducive to effective coaching practices is limited (Bryk et al., 2015).

Using this framework as a guide, this study considered:

- How coaches and their colleagues understand the role of the instructional coach;
- What stakeholders perceive to be constraints and affordances with regard to the enactment of coaching responsibilities; and

- What kinds of resources, support, and professional development these stakeholders perceive they need given those responsibilities.

Significance of Study

The purpose of the current study was to investigate how instructional coaches and their colleagues made sense of policies related to instructional coaching. This information was used to make recommendations to support coaching work within Caldwell, a local K-12 school division. In addition to facilitating programmatic improvement for Caldwell, information gained from this study will add to the body of knowledge on structures and processes that support instructional coaching in elementary schools. In chapter 2, I provide an in-depth review of the literature that guided the design of this study.

Research Questions

The following questions guide this capstone:

1. How do instructional coaches and their colleagues make sense of messages related to the roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches in elementary schools?

    1a. How do stakeholders' background experiences influence how they make sense of the coaching role?

    1b. What, if any, contextual factors influence how stakeholders make sense of the coaching role?

2. Given the analysis of how coaching is conceptualized, what recommendations can be made to support the work of instructional coaches in Caldwell School Division?

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Pressure to improve teacher quality has led many states and local school divisions to look for alternative forms of professional development for teachers. Many of these education agencies have turned to coaching - a job-embedded form of professional development - as a method of supporting teacher learning (Borman & Feger, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). The growth of coaching programs, coupled with shifting expectations for educational leaders, has created a need to understand the ways in which coaching is conceptualized and enacted within schools. The proposed study aims to provide insight into the roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches in one local school division who participated in the Curry Leadership Academy. This chapter begins with a discussion of literature exploring how instructional coaches conceptualize their role and allocate their time. Next, I review literature investigating factors shown to influence coaching processes in elementary schools. Elementary schools have been chosen as a focus for this investigation because the majority (74%) of instructional coaches at the Curry Leadership Academy reported working in elementary schools. In the division under investigation in this study, coaching is concentrated in the elementary schools, while secondary schools shared coaches based on content area needs.

In an effort to gather relevant scholarly literature on instructional coaching in elementary schools, I first conducted a search for these terms in EBSCO education databases, Google Scholar, and Libra, the University of Virginia's scholarly repository. I reviewed the abstracts to determine which articles might be relevant to this analysis. I then examined the reference lists of the selected articles to identify others that were not found through the initial search. All articles selected for review met the following criteria: (a) published between 2000 and 2016; (b) featured

data from the United States; (c) came from peer reviewed journals or policy briefs; (d) included data about instructional coaches in elementary schools.

Empirical literature on coaching (e.g., Bean et al., 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Matsumura et al., 2009) often focuses on literacy coaching at the elementary level due to its inclusion in recent federal education initiatives (NCLB, 2001). Literacy coaching is a type of instructional coaching that focuses on teaching and learning specific to literacy (Toll, 2009). For this literature review, literacy and other content-specific forms of coaching have been included as a type of instructional coaching. Literature has been selected to consider relevance over thoroughness (Maxwell, 2013).

The Roles and Responsibilities of Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches are often considered responsible for providing job-embedded professional development to support teachers in improving their practice (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012). Despite the widespread adoption of coaching, there is no standard model for instructional coaching. Some coaching programs are derived from broader initiatives, such as Reading First or America's Choice, while others are locally derived (Taylor, 2008). Coaches are often intentionally framed as filling multi-faceted and flexible roles that can be adapted to local needs (Kowel & Steiner, 2007). The body of empirical research on coaching is still growing, and there is limited research that describes and contextualizes the role of coaches across a range of settings (Taylor, 2008).

The rapid expansion of coaching programs has also led to a disjointed collection of policies related to the role of instructional coaches (Coburn & Russell, 2008). Coaching orientations are often categorized by the focus of the coaching role, such as data-oriented, student-oriented, managerial, or teacher-focused orientations (Deussen et al., 2007). Other

researchers (Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Walpole & Blarney, 2008) have characterized coaches as capacity builders who support broader systematic educational reform at the school and division level. Some coaching initiatives adhere to a specific framework, such as peer coaching, cognitive coaching, content-specific coaching, or instructional coaching (e.g., Costa & Garmston, 2016; Joyce & Showers, 1982; Knight, 2009; Toll, 2009). Some coaches hold full-time positions within a single building, some work with teachers in multiple buildings, and some conduct coaching work in addition to other teaching or administrative responsibilities. Differences across these models are often not disaggregated in the literature, making it difficult to draw wholesale conclusions about the efficacy of coaching. Coaches take on a range of responsibilities, such as collaborating with teachers to plan for instruction (Costa & Garmston, 2016), supporting teachers as they implement new curricula (Poglinco et al., 2003) or refine their skills (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001), observing teachers and providing feedback (Toll, 2009), and guiding data analysis (Marsh et al., 2010; Walpole & McKenna, 2004).

Research on coaching has suggested that how coaches conceptualize their role is often different than how they actually spend their time. Several of these studies have looked specifically at Reading First coaches. Duessen and colleagues (2007) used a mixed-method design to analyze survey and interview data from literacy coaches and K-3 teachers in 203 schools across Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming. Survey items asked about coaches' background, experience, and time spent on various tasks. This information was used to cluster coaches into five categories: data-oriented, student-oriented, managerial, teacher-oriented with individual teachers, and teacher-oriented with groups of teachers. Interviews with a subset of coaches and teachers provided more detailed descriptions of each category.

Deussen and colleagues (2007) concluded that how coaches enacted their role was more complex than anticipated. Many coaches indicated that their roles were vaguely defined when the program was first implemented, though these roles became more clear during the second year of implementation. The researchers found large differences in how coaches allocated their time and described the focus of their work. Across categories, coaches were asked to spend 60-80% of their time working directly with teachers, but in reality, they spent - on average - 28% of their time doing so. Coaches spent a quarter of their time on data-related tasks, including administering assessments and analyzing data. The rest of their time was spent in meetings, administering student interventions, and documenting evidence of student progress. Some coaches felt the lack of time spent working with teachers was due to external demands placed on them by the school, school division, and state, while others indicated they felt unqualified to engage in teacher-oriented coaching activities.

Bean and colleagues (2010) built on this work with a qualitative study of 20 Reading First coaches in Pennsylvania. They explored how coaches spent their time using a retrospective design in which interviewers discussed how coaches spent the previous 24 hours five times over a 2-3 week period. Teacher survey data (n = 264) and student achievement data supplemented interview data.

Only 10 of the coaches interviewed felt the responsibilities of their positions were clearly defined (Bean et al., 2010). Most participants identified their primary focus as helping classroom teachers improve student achievement by using data to inform instruction planning. They saw themselves as teacher resources who could pull together materials and bring together instructional specialists to support student learning. Conversations between teachers and coaches typically centered on data and how teachers could use it to modify instruction to better meet

students' needs. Some coaches used modeling to show teachers new instructional strategies, and eleven of the 20 coaches interviewed spent time teaching in target teachers' classrooms. However, coaches did not engage in traditional observation cycles, nor was there an emphasis on promoting teacher reflection and professional growth.

Coaches spent the remainder of their time doing administrative work, attending meetings, and administering assessments (Bean et al., 2010). Twelve coaches stated that management tasks took time away from actual coaching work, and teacher surveys indicated that teachers had more negative perceptions of coaches who spent more time on such tasks. It is important to highlight that the figures presented in this study represent averages, and coaches' allocation of time varied greatly. In addition, these data were collected over a three-week period, reflecting only a snapshot in time. Coaching responsibilities may shift throughout the course of the school year, an issue not explored in this study.

Bean and colleague's (2010) study echoed Duessen and colleagues' (2007) findings that the reality of coaching varies greatly across individuals and often diverges from how it is portrayed in the literature. Coaching is often perceived as a professional development tool for teachers, and the literature is replete with descriptions of highly-skilled coaches working alongside less-skilled teachers to refine instructional practice. However, coaches are often used to handle administrative tasks and work directly with students.

Although these Reading First studies provide helpful insights into the complexity of coaching, these schools do not necessarily represent typical settings. Reading First schools tend to have high rates of poverty and a history of low performance in reading (Gamse, Jacob, Horst, Boulay, & Unlu, 2008). Their participation in the literacy program provided them with support structures, funding, and requirements that are not often present in locally developed programs.

For example, in Deussen and colleagues' (2007) study, several states required coaching to compile detailed documentation of their activities - record keeping requirements that may have been more demanding than those of a non-Reading First coach. Bean et al. (2010) noted that some coaches were required to implement professional development that added a monitoring and evaluation component to their role. These researchers have also suggested that the emphasis placed on student achievement over teacher learning may be due to external requirements to submit student test data as a measure of program effectiveness.

Even so, findings from these studies echo those from other studies not specific to Reading First. Roller (2006) analyzed data from a 2005 survey administered by the International Reading Association to 1,053 reading coaches and reading professionals, 86% of whom reported working in elementary schools. Although more than half of respondents indicated that their work focused on supporting teachers or teachers and students, coaches reported spending, on average, only two to four hours per week observing, modeling lessons, and conferencing with teachers. The generalizability of these findings is limited by a low return rate of 13.2%.

Coggins and colleagues (2003) investigated the role of coaches working in the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative, a non-profit organization supporting local educators and schools in responding to student achievement gaps. They conducted case studies that included interviews with and observations of seven coaches over a four-month period. They supplemented these data with a survey of 45 coaches working with local elementary, middle, and high schools. Coaches engaged in a range of tasks, such as working with groups of teachers, supporting data analysis to inform planning, and gathering materials and resources. Coaches reported that although they recognized direct work with teachers to be the crux of their coaching work, administrative tasks often interfered with time they could spend coaching teachers. The researchers found a weak

correlation (r = .11) between what coaches thought they should be doing and the actual activities they reported doing. The coaches included in this analysis represented a combination of full-time coaches and coaches who maintained some teaching responsibilities. The researchers did find variation in the allocation of time based on the full-time or part-time status of coaches. In addition, the authors noted that coaches were placed in intentionally flexible roles to give them greater adaptability to local needs, which may contribute to the variability in how coaches allocated their time.

Campbell and Malkus (2011) have suggested that the potential benefits of coaching may not yet be realized due to the limitations on coaches' time. In a three-year randomized control study, the researchers found a relationship between the introduction of knowledgeable coaches to a school and increases in student achievement scores by the end of three years. During the study, coaches' tracked their activities through a personal digital assistant. These data showed coaches, on average, spent more than twice as much time completing administrative tasks, attending meetings, and working directly with students. Were coaches given more time to coach, the authors contend, student achievement may have increased even more.

In summary, research suggests that how coaches allocate their time is highly variable. Many coaches report disconnects between what they think their role should be and how they actually enact their roles. The next section will describe factors that have been shown to influence how instructional coaches conceptualize and enact their roles.

Factors That Influence Instructional Coaching Practices

Coaching programs have scaled up quickly, but studies about the effectiveness of instructional coaching have yielded conflicting results. Some have attributed these mixed findings to problems of implementation, a common challenge of large-scale reforms

(McLaughlin, 1990). In other cases, division- and school-level contextual factors have been shown to influence coaches' practices. Research is also limited on the conditions that support instructional coaching programs (Bryk et al., 2015). This review will provide an overview of literature related to factors shown to influence the enactment of instructional coaching.

Division Policy

Research on instructional coaching has also converged on the finding that coaches face inherent conflicts between expectations of classroom teachers, school-level administrators, and division-level administrators. Coaches are often used as a lever to promote both individual and systematic reform (Mangin & Dunmore, 2015) and, therefore, must balance the competing demands of policy and practice. This can be difficult for coaches who must strike a balance between collaborating with teachers and encouraging teachers to make changes that align with school- and division-level goals (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Knight & Nieuwerburg, 2012; Mangin & Dunsmore, 2015; Obara & Sloan, 2009; Otaiba, Hosp, Smartt, & Dole, 2008; Toll, 2006). Competing initiatives within a division can create confusing messages that limit coaches' time to meet with teachers and the expertise they are able to provide (Coburn & Russell, 2008). Coaches may also find themselves operating in reform climates powered by test-based accountability mandates that run counter to the goals of coaching programs that target instructional quality (Biancarosa et al., 2010; Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook, 2013), which can influence how coaching initiatives are received (Mangin, 2009).

In order to fulfill their varied responsibilities, coaches must work to manage multiple dimensions of their role: supporting teacher learning while encouraging teachers to align their practices with those espoused by the division (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012). The work of instructional coaches can require them to ask teachers to reconsider their existing beliefs and

pedagogical approaches, which can lead to interpersonal tension between coaches and teachers (Huguet, Marsh, & Farrell, 2014; Mangin, 2009; Marsh et al., 2010). This task can be particularly challenging for coaches who themselves may be learning new content, pedagogical approaches, and strategies for implementing division policy (Gallucci et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2010; Obara & Sloan, 2009). How coaches navigate these tensions may depend on how division leaders position coaches and conceptualize the coaching role as a lever for reform efforts (Norton, 2001). Additional research is needed to understand the ways in which coaches navigate these competing pressures (Coburn & Woulfin, 2012).

State educational agencies may also directly influence how coaches allocate their time within schools. In their study of the Reading First initiative, Duessen and colleagues (2007) found a relationship between the activities in which a coach engaged and the state in which a coach worked. In some states, coaches were expected to spend more than half their time working with teachers, while in others, coaches were expected to focus on tasks related to using data for instructional improvement.

School Leadership

The scale and complexity of the public school system in the United States has created a system of "loose coupling" that creates distance between division administrators and classroom teachers (Elmore, 2000). A tradition of autonomy has allowed individual teachers to manage the day-to-day workings of the classroom. Meanwhile, division leaders make decisions that influence the structure of schools. In this system, it often falls on school principals to function as intermediaries between the division and teachers. Principals' beliefs and experiences, the contexts in which they work, and the teachers with whom they interact can influence how school principals make sense of and respond to division policies (Spillane et al., 2002). This creates an

effect by which division initiatives are filtered through school leaders, which can lead to variations in the implementation of policies.

Principals can also play a role in how coaches are positioned within the school. Coaches often serve as an intermediary between the principal and the teachers, shifting between a managerial stance to a facilitative stance in which they must build consensus among teachers (Coggins et al., 2003). Principals can increase teachers' participation in coaching activities by encouraging teachers to work with coaches, endorsing coaches as sources of expertise (Matsumura et al., 2009), and helping to mediate school politics (Huguet et al., 2014). In addition, teachers may be more likely to participate in instructional initiatives when principals are open and collaborative (Smylie, 1992) and demonstrate a willingness to share leadership responsibilities with teachers and coaches (Matsumura et al., 2009; Matsumura et al., 2010).

Principals may also have a direct influence on how coaches engage in their work and are perceived by teachers. Principals vary in their understanding and conceptualization of the coaching role (e.g., Camburn, Kimball, & Lowenhaupt, 2008; Matsumura et al., 2009), as well as the knowledge and skills coaches need to perform their job effectively (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Mangin, 2007). In some schools, coaches' primary work is centered on directly working with teachers to improve their practice. However, in many schools, coaches are expected to take on administrative responsibilities, coordinate assessments, and work directly with students (Bean et al., 2010; Duessen et al., 2007). These additional tasks often limit the amount of time coaches can observe in classrooms and conference with teachers (Bean et al., 2010; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Coggins et al., 2003; Mangin, 2008; Marsh et al., 2008; Matsumura et al., 2009; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Poglinco et al., 2003).

Individual Preparation

When coaches enter their roles, they can be perceived as established experts, but although coaches may be highly effective teachers, the coaching role requires additional knowledge and skill that are not requisite for the teaching role (Gallucci et al., 2010). This can cause coaches to feel unprepared for certain activities associated with the coaching role. The Curry Leadership Academy was developed out of an identified need for training for instructional coaches in the region.

Duessen and colleagues (2007) found that Reading First coaches across states had teaching experience but often had little prior coaching experience. The coaches in Bean and colleagues' (2010) study indicated they had strong content and pedagogical knowledge and were prepared to support teachers with instruction. However, they felt less comfortable with issues of school climate, administrative work, and strategies for working with adult learners. Five of the 20 coaches indicated that the latter was the most challenging aspect of their work.

Coaches often describe particular facilitative activities - such as guiding conversations about teachers' practice - as challenging (Neufeld & Roper, 2002). Several researchers have used a case study approach to investigate the specific difficulties coaches experience. In their case study of the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative, Coggins and colleagues (2003) found coaches tended to focus their work on areas for which they felt qualified while avoiding activities for which they did not. For example, one coach felt unprepared to lead teachers in data analysis and, therefore, did not do so. As part of a larger study of a division's literacy coaching initiative, Lowenhaupt, McKinney, and Reeves (2014) investigated the daily work of coaches within a subset of schools from the study. Through interviews and observations, the researchers ascertained that coaches found it difficult to build professional relationships with teachers and develop a culture receptive to coaching. In particular, coaches were unsure how to navigate the

tension between the expectation that they serve as instructional leaders without any real authority.

In a case study of two literacy coaches, Gibson (2005) found that the coaches' understanding of the role shifted throughout the year. As the coaches reflected on their work, they learned to navigate tensions between their own agendas and those of the teachers, working with teachers with varying levels of readiness for coaching, and identifying strategies for building self-reflective habits in teachers. The author concluded that the shift from teacher to coach required a set of understandings that moved beyond content and pedagogical knowledge. Collectively, these studies have pointed to the importance of ongoing professional learning for instructional coaches, though research in this area is limited (Gallucci et al., 2010; Poglinco et al., 2003).

Conclusion

A review of literature about how instructional coaches conceptualize their roles and allocate their time has led to the following key points, which are represented in the conceptual framework that guides this program evaluation (figure 1).

- How instructional coaches allocate their time is highly variable. Many instructional coaches report disconnects between what they perceive their role should be and how they actually enact their roles (Bean et al., 2010; Blarney et al., 2009; Coggins et al., 2003; Duessen et al., 2007; Roller, 2006).
- Instructional coaches can function as intermediaries, tasked with negotiating tensions between division policies and teacher needs (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Coburn & Woulfin, 2012; Mangin & Dunsmore, 2015).

- Instructional coaches may not always feel prepared to enact coaching practices, specifically those targeted toward facilitating professional growth for teachers (Bean et al., 2010; Coggins et al., 2003; Gallucci et al., 2010; Lowenhaupt et al., 2014).

This study aimed to capture the ways in which instructional coaches and their colleagues in Caldwell made sense of their coaching role. Information gained from this investigation will inform Caldwell instructional leaders as they continue to implement the Knight coaching model. Although this study did not seek to explain how contextual factors influence coaches' enactment of their roles from an organizational perspective, it will lay the foundation for future investigations that may explore these issues.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore how instructional coaches and participants in the Curry Leadership Academy conceptualize their roles as coaches. The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. How do instructional coaches and their colleagues make sense of messages related to the roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches in elementary schools?

    1a. How do stakeholders' background experiences influence how they make sense of the coaching role?

    1b. What, if any, contextual factors influence how stakeholders make sense of the coaching role?

2. Given the analysis of how coaching is conceptualized, what recommendations can be made to support the work of instructional coaches in Caldwell School Division?

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (Pluye & Hong, 2014). Qualitative interview data was used to expand on findings from a survey administered following the academy. Because I sought to describe participants' perspectives, this study was descriptive in nature. The central focus was on local findings to support the work of local school divisions, so this study drew on a pragmatic paradigm.

Pragmatism has received increased attention in the literature in recent years. In some ways, it is a departure from traditional approaches that frame research on the basis of ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Morgan, 2014). The pragmatic approach is often traced back to Dewey's (1925/2008) claims about the nature of human experience. He argued that our understanding is limited by the constraints of the natural world as well as our personal

interpretations of our experiences. Thus, both post-positivist and constructivist orientations provide potentially relevant modes of inquiry. Pragmatists are not committed to any one system or philosophy. Instead, they place the research problem at the center of inquiry and examine the *what* and *how* of the problem (Creswell, 2014).

Mixed methods research often draws on this approach because it allows researchers to select data collection and analysis methods most likely to provide insight into the central problem. For this reason, a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was chosen for this study. Survey data captured the perspectives of the full sample of study participants. These data served as a launch point for the second phase of the study. Interviews then allowed for a more in-depth analysis of participant views within the selected sub-groups.

Pragmatists place an emphasis on practice, action, and local context. Theory is generated out of scientific inquiry, but it is not at the center of the work. Given the purpose of this program evaluation to inform programmatic improvement in a specific context, this evaluation centered on local practice. Pragmatism shares with interpretivism a belief that individuals make meaning of the world around them (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The survey and interview tools were designed to capture participants' perspectives about the Curry Leadership Academy and their own roles as coaches. Table 1 summarizes my paradigm, research approach, and methodology.

Table 1

Overview of Methodological Approach

Paradigm	Pragmatism (Morgan, 2014)		
Research methodology	Sequential explanatory mixed methods (Creswell, 2014) Case study (Yin, 2013)		
Unit of analysis	Participants of the Curry Leadership Academy and their colleagues		
Methods	Research question	Data collection	Data analysis
	How do instructional coaches and their colleagues make sense of messages related to the roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches in elementary schools? • How do stakeholders' background experiences influence how they make sense of the coaching role? • What, if any, contextual factors influence how stakeholders make sense of the coaching role?	Interviews	Thematic analysis
	Given the analysis of how coaching is conceptualized, what recommendations can be made to support the work of instructional coaches in Caldwell School Division?	Interviews	Thematic analysis

Research Context

The Curry Leadership academy is a three-day professional development workshop aimed at helping instructional leaders refine their coaching skills. During the 2015-16 year, the academy facilitators organized the academy around foundational coaching practices: building and maintaining trusting relationships, observing and analyzing practice, and applying listening and questioning strategies to facilitate coaching conversations. Figure 2 presents the logic model for the academy. The proximal goals of the academy are to increase participants' feelings of

preparedness for coaching and to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to coaching practices.

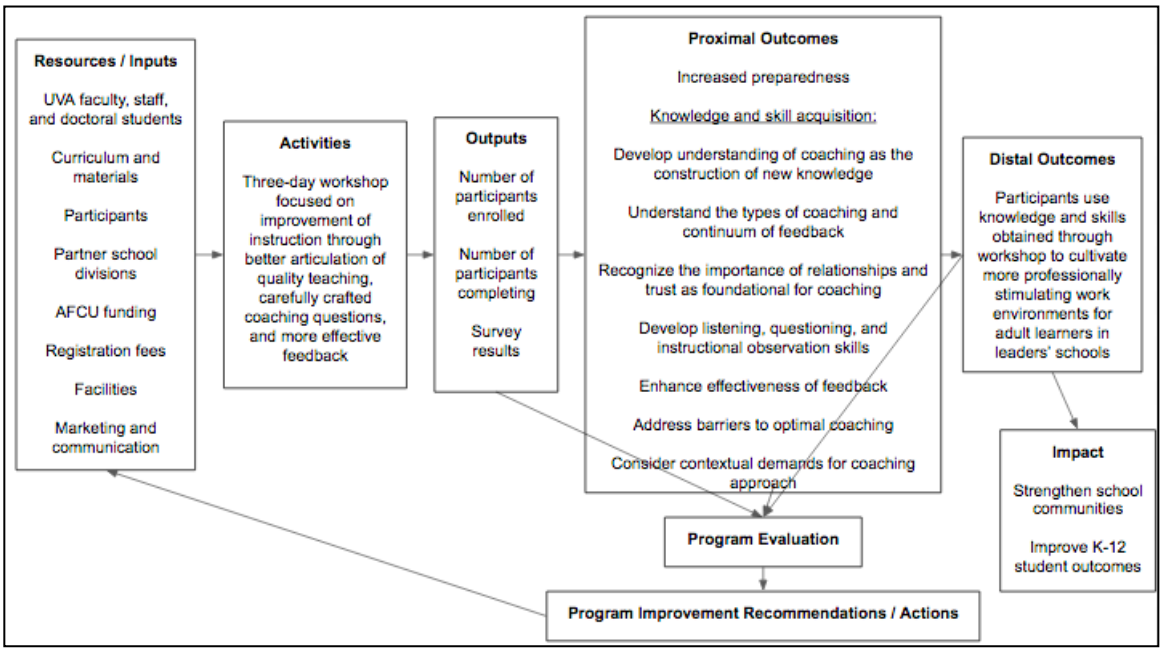

Figure 2. Curry Leadership Academy logic model

The academy was offered at two locations: the University of Virginia Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church and the Curry School of Education in Charlottesville, Virginia. 156 participants attended the two academies: 56 in Northern Virginia and 100 in Charlottesville. Participants included principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders, university supervisors, and mentor teachers. Thirty-two participants identified their role as "other" when registering for the academy. Most of these participants work in the instructional support division of the central office in their school divisions. The participants were also given a choice to identify the grade levels with which they most frequently work. Half of the participants selected PreK-5 when registering for the academy, while the remainder chose between middle and high school. Thirty-one participants, many of whom reported working in central office, did

not specify a grade level when registering. Descriptive statistics for the participants in the academy can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for All Academy Participants

	Northern Virginia (n = 56)	Charlottesville (n = 102)	Both Locations (n = 158)
Institution			
PK-12 Public School Division	92.9%	95.1%	94.3%
Independent School	5.4%	1.0%	2.5%
Institution of Higher Education	0.0%	2.0%	1.3%
Other	1.8%	2.0%	1.9%
Role			
Principal	25.0%	16.7%	19.6%
Assistant Principal	10.7%	16.7%	14.6%
Instructional Coach	23.2%	26.5%	25.3%
Mentor Teacher	3.6%	0.0%	1.3%
University Supervisor	14.3%	0.0%	5.1%
Teacher Leader	10.7%	16.7%	14.6%
Other	12.5%	23.5%	19.6%
Level			
PK-5	46.4%	52.0%	50.0%
Grades 5-8	19.6%	10.8%	13.9%
Grades 9-12	23.2%	19.6%	20.9%
Other	10.7%	17.6%	15.2%

Note. This information was self-reported by participants when they registered for the academy.

Data Sources

Multiple sources of data were used for triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Miles et al., 2014). Throughout the data collection process, I created analytic memos to capture ideas, patterns, and questions that emerge and will carry into the data analysis process.

Phase I: Post-Academy Survey

Informed consent. IRB approval was received for the administration of the survey. A copy of the IRB protocol and approval letter can be found in Appendix C. After the conclusion of the academy, each participant was sent an email with an invitation to participate in the survey. The email explained the purpose of the evaluation, that participation was voluntary, and that by

accessing the survey link and completing the survey, they were consenting to participate. All participants have been assigned an ID variable, and identifying information was removed from the survey prior to data analysis. ID variables have been stored in different files from those with any personally identifying information.

Participant recruitment. To encourage participation in the post-academy survey, the survey was announced during the final day of the academy. An invitation email that included a link to the survey was sent to all participants within 48 hours of the end of the academy. A copy of the recruitment email can be found in Appendix A. Three follow-up emails were sent to participants who had not completed the survey. The final response rate was 59%.

Participant sampling. All academy participants were invited to participate in the post-academy survey. Participants included administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers from Virginia K-12 school divisions and institutions of higher education.

Survey. Following the academy, a survey was administered to assess participants' reactions to the academy and initial impressions of their learning (Guskey, 2000). To establish content validity, the survey was developed in consultation with experts in the field of educational leadership, who provided feedback on the types of questions, content, wording, and layout of the survey. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix E. Due to time constraints before distribution, this survey was not piloted, which is a limitation of this study.

The first section of the survey asked participants to evaluate the relevance and utility of the academy content, as well as their perceptions of the degree to which the academy prepared them to enact specific coaching strategies. Items were presented on a Likert scale and included questions such as, "The issues explored were relevant to my leadership role" and "Please rate the usefulness of each topic: Structuring the coaching conversation." For some items, participants

were asked to select either strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. For other items, participants were asked to rate the usefulness of a topic or resource, selecting either not useful at all, not very useful, somewhat useful, or very useful.

The second section of the survey asked participants to evaluate the utility of particular materials and activities included in the academy, as well as the overall structure of the workshop. Items were presented on a Likert scale and included questions such as, "Opportunities to network and learn from colleagues were supported" and "Please rate of the usefulness of each activity: Practicing coaching conversations."

The third section of the survey asked participants to evaluate the logistical aspects of the academy, including registration and facilities. Items were presented on a Likert scale and included questions such as, "The registration process was easy to complete" and "The facilities were conducive to learning." One open-ended item invited participants to share any additional feedback they had about academy logistics.

The fourth section of the survey included Likert-type and open-ended items that asked for participants' overall impressions of the academy. Sample questions included, "How did this workshop support your professional learning?" and "What skills have you developed or refined through this training? Please describe which activities and resources facilitated the development of those skills."

Participants were also asked to report demographic data and their position within their organization. At the end of the survey, participants were asked if they were interested in participating in a follow-up conversation regarding their impressions of the academy. This list supported recruitment efforts for the second phase of the study.

Phase II: Follow-up Interviews

Informed consent. An IRB modification was approved for the interview phase of the study. A copy of the IRB modification can be found in Appendix D. Each division, school, and participant was given a pseudonym, which was used in all notes, written documents, and published materials.

Participant recruitment. For the second phase of the study, potential participants were contacted through email. A copy of the recruitment email can be found in Appendix B. It was made clear that no negative consequences would occur if they declined to participate. Nine potential participants did not respond to email and, therefore, were contacted by phone. These nine individuals did not agree to participate in the study. Participants were not compensated for their participation in the study.

Participant sampling. For the second phase of the study, three school divisions were selected: Caldwell,[1] Meridian, and Rockland. These divisions were among those considered due to their relatively high participation in the Curry Leadership Academy: 12 participants were from Caldwell, 12 were from Meridian, and 18 were from Rockland. Only one other division had this level of participation with 15 academy participants. This division was not selected for this study to avoid a conflict of interest. This year, many of the academy participants from that division are working for the teacher education program in which I teach.

After recruiting several participants in three school divisions, I was asked not to continue recruiting in Meridian and Rockland because division leaders felt coaches and their colleagues were too overwhelmed with work. For this reason, I focused my research on the one division, Caldwell, in which I was able to recruit eight interview participants. I selected Caldwell for this study due to its high participation (n = 12) in the Curry Leadership Academy and its recent transition to an instructional coaching model. In previous years, as part of the Reading First

[1] All names of school divisions, schools, and participants are pseudonyms.

initiative, Caldwell had received funding to hire a literacy coach in each elementary school. In 2010, new division leadership replaced the literacy coaching program with an instructional coaching program based on Jim Knight's (2007) coaching model.

Caldwell is an urban school division serving fewer than 10,000 students. Nearly half of all students are Hispanic and are identified as English Language Learners when they enter the division. More than 70% of students in the division are eligible for free and reduced meals. Only three fourths of the schools in the division hold full accreditation, and approximately half of the division's teachers hold masters degrees. The number of standard and advanced diplomas Caldwell awards, as well as the number of graduates enrolling in institutions of higher education, is slightly below the state average.[2]

Within each school division, instructional coaches and principals who attended the academy and whose work focuses on elementary schools were invited to participate in the study. Participants who spend more of their time working with secondary schools were excluded from this study. As discussed in the literature review, instructional coaches included general coaches and content-specific coaches. Participants self-identified their position when registering for the Curry Leadership Academy and provided information about their roles during workshop activities. For this study, instructional coaches included content-specific coaches whose stated responsibility is to provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development to teachers. Content-specific coaches whose stated role is only to provide intervention services to students were excluded from the study.

Snowball sampling (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) was used to identify additional participants for the study. During each interview, I asked participants to suggest others who

[2] Division data obtained from public school quality profiles (VDOE, 2016).

might be well positioned to discuss this issue. I then recruited these individuals to participate in an interview. A complete list of interview participants can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

Interview Participants

Division	Name	Gender	Role	Attendance at Curry Leadership Academy
Caldwell	Bill	Male	Executive Director of Elementary Education	Attended
Caldwell	Laura	Female	Principal of Edgemont Elementary School	Attended
Caldwell	Tory	Female	Instructional Coach at Edgemont Elementary School	Did not attend
Caldwell	D'Anna	Female	Principal of Woodland Hills Elementary School	Attended
Caldwell	Cally	Female	Principal of Fox Hollow Elementary School	Attended
Caldwell	Kara	Female	Instructional Coach at Fox Hollow Elementary School	Did not attend
Caldwell	Ellen	Female	Principal of Highlands Elementary School	Attended
Caldwell	Sharon	Female	Instructional Coach at Highlands Elementary School	Attended
Meridian	Kat	Female	Instructional Coach at Longfellow Elementary School	Attended
Meridian	Leigh	Female	Instructional Coach at Fairview Elementary Schools	Attended
Rockland	Helena	Female	Instructional Specialist for Elementary Schools	Attended
Rockland	Rosalyn	Female	School Improvement Specialist	Attended

Interviews. Each participant in the second phase of the study participated in one interview. Interviews took place during January and February of the 2016-17 school year in order to capture participants' perspectives several months after the conclusion of the academy. Interviews were conducted through video conferencing software and by phone. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were audio recorded and sent to Rev Transcription for a verbatim transcription. The use of a semi-structured interview protocol ensured the same lines of

inquiry were pursued with each participant while simultaneously allowing the researcher to explore issues in more depth as they emerged in the interview (Patton, 2002). Closed-ended questions were supplemented with open-ended questions to allow for detailed description in participants' responses. The interview protocols can be found in Appendix F.

Two versions of the interview protocol were developed: one for coaches and one for other key informants, such as administrators and teachers. In both protocols, interview questions aimed to capture participants' perspectives on the role of the coach, contextual factors influencing the work of coaches, and the alignment of the leadership academy with their local needs. The literature suggests contextual factors have an influence on how instructional coaches conceptualize their role and allocate their time, highlighting the need to explore these issues in the local context.

Document review. I also reviewed publically available school, division, and state documents to gain insight into contextual factors that may inform participants' beliefs and self-reported practices. These resources included websites for each school, vision and mission statements for each division, and the state standards for high-quality professional development.

Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously as part of an iterative process (Miles et al., 2014). A quantitative analysis of the survey results will investigate differences across groups. I summarized the data for all participants as well as sub-groups of participants using descriptive statistics. I determined sub-groups based on where participants attended the academy and how they self-identified their roles. I then performed chi-square analyses on Likert-type items to determine differences across subgroups determined by individual role. The

quantitative findings only served as a point of departure for the second phase of the study and will not be featured in the presentation of findings below.

After each interview, I began generating analytic memos to summarize the interview and capture initial impressions, ideas, and emergent patterns. I analyzed the transcriptions using NVivo 9.2 (QSR International, 2011) to support the coding process. Prior to data analysis, I created structural codes based on the interview protocols to categorize the data by major topics addressed in the interview. These structural codes and their corresponding questions can be found in Appendix G. After each interview was transcribed, I applied these structural codes during a preliminary read-through of the transcription. By using these codes to organize interview excerpts, I was more easily able to examine data related to the same topics.

I then developed content codes grounded in the literature to guide the thematic analysis of the data. These initial codes included "purpose" and "time allocation" to identify references to how individuals understand and claim to enact the coaching role. Several codes targeted references to factors that can influence the coaching role: "administrators," "individual characteristics," "division-level factors," and "school-level factors."

In a thematic analysis, the researcher focuses on identifying and describing implicit and explicit themes in the data (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2011). I began by engaging in a preliminary read of open-ended survey items to generate descriptions of each code. As I coded interview transcriptions, I added three additional codes – "building relationships," "observing practice," and "coaching conversations" – to represent the foundational coaching skills that are central to the Curry Leadership Academy. The content codebook and a sample of the coding scheme as applied to a section of an interview can be found in Appendix H and Appendix I, respectively.

Because this is a multi-site case study, I conducted these analyses within and across cases. I first examined each division to gain a deep understanding of the perspectives of individual participants and contextual factors that may have informed those perspectives. I then looked across divisions to build abstraction across the three cases (Yin, 2013). I looked for patterns, relationships, and discrepancies (Gibson & Brown, 2009) to generate themes that integrated the codes and to identify areas missing from the analysis. I then reviewed each theme and identified data to support and refute each theme. This analysis allowed me to expand on the meaning of each theme and identify potential disconfirming evidence. I continually revisited the data until it was clear no new themes were emerging. Throughout the data analysis process, I continued developing the analytic memos begun during the data collection process to summarize ideas, questions, and emergent themes from the data analysis.

Evaluative Criteria

I used Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria to guide the analysis and presentation of findings.

Credibility

Establishing credibility involves taking steps to ensure the accuracy or believability of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I enhanced credibility by triangulating data sources, engaging in member checking, using peer debriefing, and considering rival explanation (Yin, 2013).

Data source triangulation. Triangulation of sources is intended to confirm the correct interpretations have been made (Creswell, 2014). In this capstone, I present findings from the second phase of this study. For this reason, I relied primarily on interview data to generate my findings. I also reviewed division documents to support triangulation for the first set of research

questions. I also triangulated sources by interviewing multiple individuals to examine and compare the perspectives of individuals within and across schools and school divisions.

Member checking. Member checking invites participants to review notes and drafts to check them for accuracy and plausibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). At the end of each interview, I summarized key themes and asked participants if their perspectives had been captured accurately. This gave participants an opportunity to confirm whether interpretations of the data accurately described their statements (Janesick, 2000; Miles et al., 2014), which supported descriptive validity (Maxwell, 2013). During these exchanges, participants sometimes clarified my interpretation of key points, which are documented in the interview transcription.

Peer debriefing and rival explanations. Given the anticipated variability in responses, it was particularly important to look for alternative explanations in the data. I tracked disconfirming evidence through the analytic memos generated during data collection and analysis. To document my interpretations of, judgments of, and potential biases toward the findings, I kept a reflexive journal will made entries during data collection and analysis. On multiple occasions, I used peer debriefing to identify any points that were over- or underemphasized, general errors in the data, or potential biases in the interpretation. For this process, my peers included fellow students in the Curriculum and Instruction doctoral program, two faculty members with experience studying K-12 leadership, and a former instructional coach from another school division.

Transferability

Transferability involves providing sufficient description to help readers make judgments about the possibility of transferring findings to another context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To enhance transferability, I reported findings using thick description when possible, balancing the

need for detail with the importance of ensuring confidentiality for the study participants and their school divisions.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the degree to which findings are consistent with the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throughout the study, I maintained detailed notes that would allow an external observer to trace key research decisions and follow evidence to the final study conclusions (Yin, 2013).

Confirmability

Confirmability addresses the key issues that findings should represent the phenomenon under study and not the beliefs or biases of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As discussed above, I worked toward confirmability by maintaining a detailed chain of evidence, triangulating sources, and using member checking. By using a reflexive journal, I reflected on my methodological decisions and interpretations of the data throughout the study.

Researcher as Instrument

I came to this study as a third year doctoral student in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Prior to attending the University of Virginia, I worked as an elementary school teacher for five years in a mid-size elementary school in Fairfax County, Virginia. While teaching, I mentored individual teachers, ran the school's site-based mentoring program, and worked as a coach for novice third grade teachers in the Great Beginnings Teacher Induction Program. These past three years, as part of my doctoral program, I have worked with the Teacher Education office to support the fieldwork and general methods coursework of two cohorts of pre-service teacher candidates. I have also supported university supervisors, mentor teachers, and teacher induction coordinators in their work with novice teachers. This lens helped

me understand coaching issues and their relationship with teacher learning. I came to this project with a belief that coaching was an important reform tool to support capacity building for teachers. The use of a reflexive journal was critical in keeping this assumption at the forefront of my thinking as I interpreted the data.

This past summer, I participated in the development and facilitation of this year's Curry Leadership Academy. My role in the academy helped me to develop relationships with participants and deepen my understanding of their work as coaches. However, my close relationship with the academy influenced my belief that the academy is a valuable project for supporting principal and coach learning. Peer debriefing and member checking were valuable tools for minimizing the influence of this belief on my interpretation of the data.

Chapter Four

Findings

In this chapter, I will present findings from the survey data as well as interviews with eight participants in Caldwell. Caldwell was a small urban school division serving fewer than 10,000 students at the time of this study. Between 1996 and 2016, the percentage of students in need of English language services grew from fewer than 10% to more than 50%. These students represented 50 different counties, and many of them were immigrants to the United States. Nearly two thirds of the total student population qualified for free and reduced meals. At the time of the study, Caldwell had five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school, six of which were fully accredited. During the 2015-16 school year, the percentage of students earning standard and advanced diplomas was slightly below the state average, as was the percentage of graduates who enrolled in institutions of higher education.

Survey Results

Seven academy participants from Caldwell responded to the post-academy survey. Three of those individuals were principals, two were central office administrators, and two were school-based instructional coaches. Items were scored on one of two Likert scales. For some items, participants were asked to select either strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. For other items, participants were asked to rate the usefulness of a topic or resource, selecting either not useful at all, not very useful, somewhat useful, or very useful.

Participants valued the opportunity to engage with colleagues during the Curry Leadership Academy. All seven respondents selected “agree” (n = 3) or “strongly agree” (n = 4) when asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “Opportunities to network and learn from colleagues were supported.” In the open-ended

questions, when asked which activities and resources were most influential to their thinking, both instructional coaches described the importance of having time to work with their principals to make clear the distinction between administrator and coach roles going into the school year. In one coach's response, she explained, "My principal and I have new ideas for launching a new year of coaching opportunities, and she better understands my role and hers. The magic happened as [we] participated together in all the activities and had opportunities to debrief each afternoon." One of the principals echoed this sentiment, noting that it was the first coaching workshop she had been able to attend with her instructional coach. When asked which activities and resources facilitated the development of new skills, she responded, "Having time to talk with my instructional coach (who also attended the training) about the information presented really helped! It allowed us to start thinking about what we want to do during this school year to strengthen our coaching program and how we can use the coach more effectively."

Participants varied in the degree to which they felt the academy supported their learning. Both central office administrators selected "strongly agree" when presented with the items, "My understanding of topics related to leadership and coaching was enhanced by the workshop" and "I learned strategies that I can apply to my work." In the open-ended responses, one of these administrators remarked that the academy gave him "a clear picture of the role of coach." In contrast, all three principals selected "agree" in response to those two items. One principal, when asked what improvements she would suggest, remarked, "This workshop was geared more for schools that haven't worked with coaches at all or are relatively new to the coaching process. For a school system that has worked with coaches for many years, many of the activities were ones that we already had experience with." She suggested differentiated sessions targeted toward

audiences with different levels of experience with coaching. The instructional coaches were split on the items; both selected "agree" for one item and "strongly agree" for the other."

Individual participants' survey results can be found in Table 4 in Appendix J. I selected the survey items presented here based on their relevance to the topic under investigation.

Interview Participants

The interview participants in Caldwell included one central office representative (Bill), four elementary school principals, and three instructional coaches. Figure 3 provides an overview of the structure of elementary education in the division and the role of each interview participant in this study. The Director of Elementary Education, Bill, oversaw the five elementary schools in Caldwell. Each school had one principal, one assistant principal, and one instructional coach. All of the elementary schools in Caldwell were schoolwide Title I schools serving approximately 500 students.

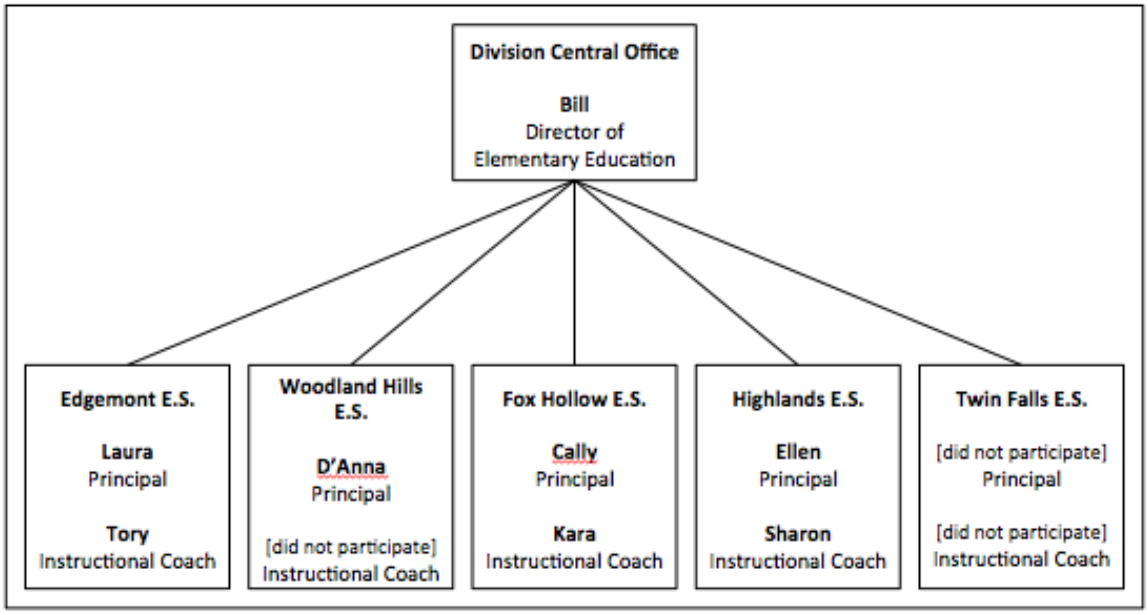

Figure 3. The structure of elementary education in Caldwell

As the Director of Elementary Education, Bill's primary responsibility was to provide support to administrators and coaches in each of the elementary schools. Early in his career, Bill

worked for eight years as a primary grades teacher in another Virginia school division. After earning a master's degree in administration, he took an assistant principal job in a small school division within an hour's drive of Caldwell. Three years later, he became a principal in that same division. After two years, he transferred to Caldwell, working five years as the principal at Fox Hollow Elementary school before moving to central office. At the time of this study, Bill was in his third year as the Director of Elementary Education.

Laura was the principal at Edgemont Elementary School. Her background was in high school foreign language education, where she taught for almost 10 years. After earning her master's degree in administration, she became an assistant principal at a middle school in the same small division where Bill was an administrator. Over the last 18 years, she moved between assistant principal and principal roles at several middle and elementary schools. The year of this study was her first year in Caldwell.

In contrast, Laura's instructional coach, Tory, had been in Caldwell for 25 years, her entire career in education. She spent the first 12 years of her career teaching primary grades. At that point, there had been an influx of English Language Learners to the region, and Caldwell created classrooms specifically designed to support Level 1 and Level 2 language learners before they transitioned into general education classrooms. Tory taught for several years in one of these classrooms before becoming a full-time resource teacher for English language learners. When the instructional coaching program began in Caldwell, Tory became Edgemont's first instructional coach and had been in that role for five years at the time of this study.

D'Anna was the principal of Woodland Hills Elementary School. Prior to joining Caldwell, D'Anna taught primary grades for eight years, the last two of which were spent in the division where both Bill and Laura were administrators. When she left the classroom, D'Anna

was hired in an instructional coaching position. As a coach, she split her time between two elementary schools, neither of which had an assistant principal due to their small size. Two years later, D'Anna transferred to Caldwell and became an elementary assistant principal before being pulled into central office to work on the development of the instructional coaching program. Once the program was in place, D'Anna returned to school leadership as the principal of Woodland Hills Elementary School. D'Anna's instructional coach initially agreed to participate in this study but scheduling conflicts led her to withdraw her participation.

Cally became the principal at Fox Hollow Elementary school when Bill moved to his position in central office. Cally, who held a background in special education, worked in Caldwell her entire career. She began as an assistant in the intellectual disabilities program before earning her master's degree and teaching high school students with emotional disabilities. After seven years of teaching, she became the director of the alternative high school program, where she worked for nearly three years. Cally then earned her certification in administration and became the assistant principal at Fox Hollow the year that the Caldwell coaching program was implemented. At the time of this study, Cally was in her third year as principal.

Kara, Cally's instructional coach, began her career as an upper elementary teacher in another school division in Virginia. Nine years later, she transferred to Fox Hollow in Caldwell, where she taught for three years. When the coaching program began, Bill sought to recruit a teacher from within the school, and Kara applied for the position. Like Tory, Kara had been in her coaching role for five years.

Ellen, the principal at Highlands Elementary School, began her career as a middle school teacher in another school division in Virginia. When she moved to Caldwell, she became a middle school principal for four years before transferring to Highlands, where she worked as the

assistant principal for four years. The year of this study was her first as the principal of Highlands.

Sharon, Ellen's coach, spent her entire career at Highlands Elementary School. For five years, she taught upper elementary grades while serving on various committees with the division leadership team. After five years, she applied to be the instructional coach at her school and had been in that role for three years at the time of this study.

The individuals on leadership team at Twin Falls Elementary School were new to their positions at the time of this study and, therefore, declined to participate.

In the remainder of the chapter, I will provide a history of the coaching program in Caldwell and situate this program in a broader policy context. I will then present four themes that emerged from the data.

The Development of a Coaching Model in Caldwell

In recent years, many school divisions in Virginia responded to the demand to improve instructional quality by investing in coaching initiatives. At the time of this study, there were no state-wide guidelines for designing and implementing coaching programs, but divisions were eligible to apply for Title II funding to support this work. Divisions leaders were, therefore, responsible for designing all aspects of their coaching programs, and implementation was staggered across the commonwealth. In Virginia – as in many other states – coaching initiatives were just one element of a larger system of reform initiatives put into place in the accountability era.

Looking for ways to improve instructional quality, division leaders in Caldwell pursued the development of a new coaching model. In 2010, Caldwell hired a new division superintendent who set forth to establish an instructional coaching program. D'Anna, an assistant

principal at the time, was brought into central office as a literacy coordinator and was tasked with building the coaching program. D'Anna and her colleagues visited with division leaders in several neighboring school divisions, including the division in which she, Bill, and Laura used to work. D'Anna's goal was to learn how other divisions structured their coaching program and which, if any, specific coaching models they were using. D'Anna then invited school-based and division-level administrators in Caldwell to review the information and discuss how they wanted to structure their program. In her previous division, D'Anna felt that principals varied greatly in how they used their coaches. She explained, "I really wanted us to come together as the administrative team [in Caldwell] and decide what that coaching model would look like and be true to it" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 7). She described how they came to the decision to use the model that is currently in place:

> "We looked at all of the different kind of types of coaching out there with Jim Knight, cognitive coaching, and just kind of went through and studied each type, and then decided on what we wanted our coaching program to resemble, or what we wanted it to look like. We all kind of felt like Jim Knight's approach was what we ... We loved the principles that he set forth. We really bought into that, so that's the model that we decided to use here in Caldwell" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 3).

In Knight's (2007) model, instructional coaches provided intensive, individualized support to teachers to facilitate instructional growth. Coaching work was characterized as a partnership between coaches and teachers. This partnership was grounded in seven key principles:

- **Equality:** Coaches and teachers were equal partners who valued each other's beliefs and ideas. Listening for understanding was critical to developing mutual trust and respect.

- **Choice:** Teachers were given choice when setting coaching goals and deciding what practices they wanted to implement in their classrooms.
- **Voice:** Teachers were given a voice and were encouraged to direct the course of coaching conversations. Coaches did not enter into the partnership intending to make teachers think a certain way.
- **Dialogue:** Coaches and teachers engaged in two-way dialogues involving co-thinking and co-decision making.
- **Reflection:** Coaches facilitated self-reflection for teachers rather than directing teachers how to think. Teachers were free to accept or reject ideas.
- **Praxis:** Teachers engaged in praxis and were given opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills they learned to their actual teaching work.
- **Reciprocity:** Both the coach and the teacher learned from the coaching relationship.

Knight (2007) recommended several specific coaching practices: recruiting teachers, modeling, observing, and exploring data. These practices were intended to create opportunities for coaches to build relationships with their teachers, to help teachers understand research-based practices, and to support teachers in implementing and reflecting on new ideas. Knight also emphasized the importance of protecting coaching relationships and ensuring they remained non-evaluative.

The following year, D'Anna supported the launch of the coaching program. The division hired one coach for every elementary school, as well as math and ESL coaches who split time between the middle and high schools. D'Anna and her colleagues communicated the structure and goal of this coaching model to principals across the division. "We've all been to coaching training," explained Ellen, the principal of Highlands Elementary School, "so we all know kind

of the intent and purpose of having instructional coaches, what we are trying to do and what we are trying to accomplish" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 4). After that year ended, D'Anna moved back into school leadership position as the principal of Woodland Hills Elementary.

The development of the Caldwell coaching program came on the heels of a national push to improve the quality of K-12 instruction. In the previous two decades, federal policies created more funding opportunities to support coaching initiatives. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act listed coaching as one of several strategies to be used in supporting the development of beginning teachers. In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education introduced the Race to the Top program, which allowed states to apply for funding to support reform initiatives. One of the four reform areas of emphasis was "recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining high quality teachers and principals" (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, p. 2). States requesting funding were encouraged to include a proposal for professional development that featured coaching as a strategy to support the development of all teachers, not just beginning teachers. The more recent Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) continued this support for the allocation of funding to support instructional coaching initiatives. These policies put pressure on division leaders to utilize coaches to support teacher learning. As policies in support of coaching expanded, many state and local education agencies in Virginia, including Caldwell School Division, made a significant investment in coaching programs.

Given the level of investment required to run an instructional coaching program, principals and coaches in Caldwell felt pressure from division leaders to justify keeping the instructional coach position. Coaches did not work with students and, therefore, diverted resources toward an indirect approach to supporting student learning. D'Anna explained the

pressure she faced as a principal when it came time to make a case for keeping the coach to the superintendent:

> "He's always wanting to know: What kind of impact are coaches really having? Is this position really worth it? Just this year I had to, when I met with him, just kind of pull together all the research I could, plus our anecdotal evidence of the impact that coaching is having on our staff to be able to prove that it's a very important position" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 4).

All four principals cited anecdotal notes from classroom walkthroughs as their primary evidence of the coaches' impact on teachers and students. They claimed to see changes in teachers' practices and gains in student achievement, though they were not able to validate these claims.

Participants consistently identified the budget as a driver for these conversations. Ellen explained that because instructional coaches did not provide direct service to students, principals struggled to quantify their value. "It's kind of one of those gray areas," she explained. "I think we definitely get a lot of support from our division, but because it is something not mandated to have, there's always that fear in the back of your mind that you're going to lose your coach" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 8).

At the division level, Bill felt a similar pressure. As the Director of Elementary Education, Bill was responsible for supporting elementary principals and their staff. During budget season, he was often asked how he knew his coaches were making a difference in their respective schools. He described his struggle to respond to this question:

> "That's elusive. It's hard to quantify that because there's so many factors that go on, that impact what happens in a classroom and the result – that's that challenge in my role to my superintendent is, 'This is a good investment because. Here's how I know it's a good

> investment.' If I look just in my elementary schools next year, I've got six full-time teaching positions that, to someone looking from the outside, we're paying them but they're not teaching. They're not teaching students. They're not in front of 18 kids all day long. Tell me how is this a good investment? That's the question I get" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 11).

Bill considered the coaches to be providers of ongoing, personalized professional development for teachers. Targeted professional development, he argued, helped principals move teachers forward in meeting school goals, which ultimately supported division initiatives. Bill expressed his concern with the budget discussion:

> "Don't see them as extra because my gosh, if we didn't have them, the question would be, what would we see if we took them away? I don't think the impact would be immediate but I think we'd see an impact over a couple of years. I think we would see a dip in performance. We've got challenging stuff to take care of and I think our coaches, they work hard" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 11).

For similar reasons, principals agreed on the importance of maintaining the coaching program. D'Anna described a yearly conversation she had with the human resources director, who asked what positions D'Anna would cut if necessary:

> "Basically, I listed like three different positions, and he said, 'Not one of those was your coach.' I said, 'No. That's going to be one of the last people I'm going to cut if I can.' I think that's the way all of the elementary principals feel... Honestly, we would slide backwards if we didn't have a coach in the building, thinking about PD and just moving forward with our instructional practices" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 4).

The other principals echoed the importance of keeping the coach to fulfill a gap in teacher support that administrators could not always provide. Cally, the principal of Fox Hollow Elementary School, explained:

> "I think that's the key piece is it allows teachers to say, 'I really need support in this area.' For us as administrators, the role that it's playing is huge because, unfortunately, a lot of my time is chewed up with discipline. That's a challenge because I may be saying, 'I want to get into a classroom,' and then I have something that happens and I can't get into that classroom at that time. That piece is taken away for our instructional coach. That provides that opportunity for when teachers need that support that it's given" (interview, 2/6/17, p. 3).

Because of the continued pressure to justify keeping the coach role, principals and coaches felt it important to learn strategies for measuring a coach's effectiveness. Tory also viewed such strategies as useful for learning more about effective coaching practices:

> "I think that understanding our impact as coaches is actually really important to have the data that backs you to say, 'This is how you make an impact. This is where you want to look and say at the end of the year, did this change? How did it change? How do we look at data for coaching?' I think actually it's an area that I'm not particularly strong in. I think I would benefit greatly from something like that, because I think it's necessary in any of the arenas in education for us to be able to say, 'No, I did have an impact. This is why I believe this is making a difference.' Not just 'I believe it's making a difference,' but 'Here's my data to show you'" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 9).

Those same coaches and principals suggested it would be beneficial to share strategies with coaches, principals, and division leaders from other school divisions so they could more accurately measure the impact of coaches on teaching practices and, ultimately, student learning.

Emergent Themes

Given the degree to which participants in Caldwell valued the role of the coach, I sought to understand how they conceptualized this role. Several themes emerged from the data:

- Earning buy-in from teachers was a gradual process.
- Administrators were central to how coaching was conceptualized and enacted.
- Coaches had to balance competing demands from division leaders, school leaders, and teachers.
- Division support facilitated coaching work in schools.

Theme 1: Earning Buy-In from Teachers was a Gradual Process

When coaching was first implemented in Caldwell, administrators took on the responsibility of introducing the new position to their staff. Participants wanted to communicate to teachers that the coach was someone who could provide individualized, non-evaluative support for their professional learning. In these introductions, the administrators' goal was to help teachers understand how to access the coach and what to expect when working with her. All participants felt the manner in which instructional coaching was first framed for staff played a large role in how teachers perceived and utilized the coach. Unfortunately, the introduction of the coach position was not immediately successful in Caldwell. Cally described the difficult transition she faced when she and Bill, the principal at that time, introduced the position at their school:

> "When I got here, [coaching] was a new process. I don't think teachers quite understood what the role was and 'how are you going to help me.' That took time, and it took time to build the trust that, 'Okay, even though you're saying you're not an evaluator, I'm still having to open up to you about my weaknesses and what I'm not sure I'm doing well at.' There was that struggle, I think, in the beginning. I think, if anything, if you could go back and redo as we move forward, it's really defining what that position is and helping people understand the importance of it" (interview, 2/6/17, p. 6).

Cally saw a shift in the division over the next few years as more people came to recognize the value of the coaching position. At the same time, she believed others still did not understand the purpose of having a coach in each school and did not agree it was an important position to keep. She believed this lack of understanding had, in part, contributed to questions about whether to keep the coaching positions.

Ellen told a similar story as she described the impact the introduction of the coach had on teachers' willingness to engage in coaching work:

> "I think one thing that's really key is how the administrators present the role of the coach, I think that's really important. I think teachers didn't really have a clear understanding – when we first started with instructional coaching – with exactly what the role of the coach was. They kind of saw the coach as a quasi-administrative role, so even though the coach tried to really build this relationship, as hard as she tried, some teachers just weren't going to work with her because of the perception that they had of how that principal was using her" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 5).

In Ellen's school, teachers expressed concern that the coach would come into their classrooms and provide directive feedback, essentially prescribing what teachers should do. Over time,

however, more teachers came to understand role of the coach as a non-evaluative, peer support and, therefore, were more willing to work with her. Ellen emphasized this was gradual process for many teachers in her school as it was across the division.

Teachers' prior experiences with coaching. Participants suggested teachers' prior experience with coaching likely influenced how those teachers perceived and worked with the instructional coach. Before Caldwell leaders developed a coaching program based on Knight's (2007) model, the division received funding through Reading First, a program developed as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. With this funding, the division hired literacy coaches to support research-based reading instruction. Bill explained the difficulty this caused when he, in his principal role, attempted to implement the Knight model. During Bill's first year as principal of Fox Hollow, the instructional coach was a literacy coach held over from the time of the Reading First grant. Bill felt this coach had a directive approach that did not align with his vision for the new coaching program:

> "Under Reading First, the literacy coach didn't really serve as a coach, in my view. They were more a compliance officer, if you will. That's a little bit strong but not really because they were there to make sure teachers did exactly what was in the series and that this was done and this was done. Again, they were making sure that we were following a pretty scripted form" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4).

Although Bill's coach had been reclassified as an "instructional coach," she was a trained reading specialist with experience coaching under the Reading First model. Bill described the disconnect he saw between her background, his expectations for the role, and teachers' expectations for the role:

> "She really struggled with coaching somebody rather than going in and just telling them what they needed to do differently. My idea of what I wanted for a coach didn't match up with her background and her training and her experience, which had impacted, then, all of the teachers in that school because they heard the word reading coach, and they expected a coach to come in and tell them exactly what to do, tell them what's wrong. So when we brought in the idea of an instructional coach, with the idea that, 'No, that coach is gonna come in and work with you in the areas that you guys work together to identify. She's not gonna tell you what you're doing wrong. She's gonna ask lots of questions. She's there to be able to come in and model,' it was a big mindset shift" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4).

Like Ellen, Bill saw teachers' willingness to work with the coach as something that increased gradually. Teachers' lack of comfort with the coach prompted Bill to hire a different coach from within his staff the following year.

This misconception persisted in Caldwell at the time of this study. Coaches described the challenges they faced in helping teachers understand how the coach role was distinct from an evaluative, administrative role. Before Sharon became the instructional coach at Highlands Elementary School, the school had two different coaches over two years. The first coach had a literacy background and, after a year, became the reading coordinator in the division's central office. This coach had also worked as a literacy coach under the Reading First grant and took a very directive approach to working with teachers. The next coach had her administrative endorsement and took on administrative tasks in addition to her coaching responsibilities. After a year, she took an administrative position in another school. When Sharon took the position, she

felt teachers were concerned she was in their classrooms to evaluate them. Sharon attributed teachers' misconceptions to experiences they had with these other coaches:

> "I'm not the expert, and I always make sure that people understand that we're here to learn together, but some people have the perception, based on their own experiences, that the coach is the expert. Like I should know all the literacy assessment dates and random things based on their experiences that they may have had with like a Title 1 literacy coach or something" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 10).

In many schools, as a result of the experiences teachers brought with them, administrators and coaches found themselves not only framing the coaching role for staff but attempting to re-frame the role and shift teachers' mindset. This process was met with varying degrees of success within and across schools.

Ongoing communication about the coach role. Principals and coaches routinely reminded teachers of the purpose of and expectations around the coaching role. Laura explained how she communicated her vision to her teachers:

> "Every single time I was in front of the faculty, I had an opportunity to talk about [the coaching role]. It was maybe even not more than a minute, but I was constantly reiterating this is my role, these are our focuses, this is what we've determined as a staff are important to us and we're going to get better at this year, and by the way, the coach is here to help you with that. She is here to help you get better in those areas. You guys know where you are, what your strengths and weaknesses are with these areas. It's your job to – she's here to differentiate and come in and work with you on where you are. That's the beauty of having this person in our building. It didn't have to be a lot and it

> wasn't lecture format, it was simply constant reminders of who, of her role, and why she's here, and how they can utilize her for support" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6).

Laura explained how these explicit reminders helped shape the staff's collective understanding of the role:

> "I found that I better understood the partnership and the roles the more I talked about it, shared it with the staff, everybody. She understood her role better as a coach the more I stood up and talked about it, and so I think just everybody – it avoids kind of people morphing it into something else, the more it's being communicated, I think, and talked about" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6).

However, explicit reminders were only one strategy participants used to engage teachers in thinking about coaching. Coaches highlighted the importance of finding entry points to work with each individual teacher. Because participants believed coaching needed to be personalized to each teacher, they valued letting teachers be active agents in defining the coaching work. To make this happen, coaches spent a significant portion of their time building relationships with teachers, a process they identified as the heart of coaching.

When discussing what the coaching role meant for her, Tory explained how she positioned the teacher at the center of her work:

> "I think it's necessary to have an understanding of the basics of coaching. What does it look like? What should it entail? What are the priorities? How do you move? What information do you need? Those things are very important. I would never deny them, but as much as those are important, there's also that arch. It's about listening. To get it started, it's all about listening. It's about listening. It's about getting to know a teacher" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 8).

Before coaches could work with teachers on instruction, they needed to take the time to understand each teachers' approach, needs, and learning preferences. Taking time to listen to their teachers allowed the coaches to approach each coaching relationship differently. As a result, coaching looked different for each coaching pair, and the specific nature of their work together could change throughout the year. Sharon explained how this informed her understanding of her role:

> "Overall I see my role as meeting the teachers where they're at but building that relationship where they're comfortable to seek me for whatever it is there goal is instructionally – anything to do with student achievement, whether that be classroom management, whether it be interpreting an assessment result, whether it be developing a plan for struggling learners in their classroom. It really is very open-ended and very fluid because just even tracking my coaching work with teachers this year, trying to evaluate my work with them and measure effectiveness of my work with them, it varies based on their goals" (interview, 2/3/17, pp. 3-4).

In this way, teachers became co-creators of each coaching plan and informed how coaches thought about and monitored the quality of their own work.

Kara described several ways she adjusted her approach based on the teachers with whom she was working. As she gained experience, she learned that her communication style – which tended to be direct – did not work for all of her teachers. "The ability to know people and read people and know what the appropriate response is" is a skill she continued to develop (interview, 2/7/17, p. 5). She then used what she knew about her teachers to inform her decisions about sharing information with the staff:

> "It forces me to think, 'Okay, so how am I going to bring this back to the teachers? And at what point is it appropriate?' Because something that I've learned about that seems very appropriate or something that I feel like they need to know, they might not be ready for or feeling like that's appropriate at the time. So to kind of pause my own thinking and my own vision and make sure I'm trying to match the vision of the people, the teachers, who are really living it and breathing it" (interview, 2/7/17, pp. 5-6).

All three coaches made changes to their coaching practices as they learned more about the teachers in their schools.

The relationships built between teachers and coaches were also beneficial for facilitating communication between administrators and teachers. Because coaches were non-evaluative and took the time to listen to and get to know teachers, they were able to build trust in ways that evaluative administrators sometimes could not. Laura explained how this trust helped Tory communicate messages from the administration to the staff:

> "[Tory's] really good at, 'Hey, by the way, I know Laura really is wanting you guys to be...' She just has a great way about doing it that's very unoffensive and stuff. A lot of people go to her, I mean they all, especially this is a unique year for me and her working together, again, because being new, they're all like, 'What does Julie want us to do about this?' She's kind of their go-to, and that's the reason I'm like just communicating so much to her" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

These new avenues for communication went both ways. Teachers also shared information with Tory, who was then able to deliver it to Laura, who explained:

> "Actually [Tory and I have] laughed a couple times here in the last month because it has never failed that either she's come to me this year to kind of say, 'Hey, just want to let

> you know, some people are feeling this, duh, duh, duh,' kind of gives me a heads-up, or I go to her and go, 'I just want you know, this is a decision I've made.' It never fails that within like a day of each of us sharing stuff, someone's come to us and so we kind of feel like we have an in and can be like, 'Okay I can actually talk to this person about this and I have some information,' like we never want to, either of us, be like caught off guard or, you know what I mean. That's been cool" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

In this way, the coach functioned as an intermediary between the administration and the teachers. The non-evaluative relationships Tory built with teachers made them feel more comfortable, which facilitated the transfer of information. Cally agreed with the importance of this coaching function, explaining, "I would not be as great as an administrator without her, just because of the relationship that we have, the relationship that she's built with the teachers, the trust that she's built with the teachers" (interview, 2/6/17, p. 4).

Factors that increased buy-in. Participants identified several factors that facilitated trust building and teacher buy-in. Below I will describe the most consistently discussed factors: consistency in personnel, the structure of the coaching program within each school, and individual characteristics of the coach.

***Consistency in personnel*.** When teachers were familiar with the coach, they were more willing to engage in coaching work. Several participants discussed the specific benefits of recruiting a coach from within the school. In these cases, trust was already established between the coach and many of the teachers. Where there was less familiarity with certain teachers, those who did know the coach were able to vouch for that individual. When Kara became an instructional coach, she had already taught in that building for several years. Bill, her principal at the time, felt recruiting a strong teacher from within his school facilitated the relationship

building process. “She was well respected in the building,” he explained. “She was viewed as a team player. She was successful in the classroom and people knew that. I think that made that a little bit easier to make that shift” (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4). He believed a new coach could have built the same relationships but that the process would have taken longer:

> “We went very quickly in that situation, through that building-relationship stage, because they already knew Kara. They knew about her. They knew she was no-nonsense. Again, she was a colleague. She wasn't an administrator that I had brought in that nobody really knew” (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4).

D’Anna’s first coach in Caldwell was also a former teacher in the building. D’Anna agreed this transition made it easy for the coach to build relationships with teachers. It also gave the coach greater credibility with the staff:

> “We have a very diverse population. We're about 90% free and reduced, 60% LEP. With that, sometimes there's this perception from staff that ‘if you haven't worked in a setting like this, what can you really teach me?’ You know what I mean? ‘If you're coming from a school where 40% free and reduced and maybe 15 LEP students in your school, what can you really help me with, if you haven't experienced this?’ I think her coming in from working within the school gave her a lot of credibility, so people were more open to working with her” (interview, 1/24/17, p. 4).

Once a coach was in place, participants also found it beneficial to keep the same coach across multiple years. Ellen’s coach Sharon had been in her position for nearly three years at the time of this study. Ellen believed this allowed Sharon to build strong relationships with teachers, thus improving the quality of her coaching:

> "[The coach] doesn't need to spend as much time on the other things, like being with administrators to talk about what it is we need to do. I think we have a really great working relationship, and she just kind of knows that we know what she needs to do and she takes it and she runs with it, that what she needs to do. It's gotten a lot better in terms of how she utilizes her time. The teachers have gotten more comfortable with her as well and see her role as something beneficial. We have a lot of teachers that are seeking her out this year that have never worked with her in past years. That's why I think we're in better shape this year than past years" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 5).

Sharon felt she benefitted from having several years to refine her understanding of her role. She identified the current year – her third as a coach – as her best year so far:

> "I think my first year I struggled with [knowing my role] because, again, that understanding of, okay, it's not 'everyone should use this strategy this way' or 'I can't believe...' It's not a matter of that, looking through that lens. It's a matter of seeing what that teacher needs, where that teacher's at, and working within there to push them. Hopefully, knowing where I want someone to be or knowing where I would want to be is not where – for the teachers, it has to be slow. I've made many mistakes, I can honestly say. I shot for the stars when I should have took [sic] little baby steps with some teachers" (interview, 2/3/17, pp. 4-5).

Sharon described how making these mistakes clarified for her what the coach role should or should not be. After these years of experience, she defined the purpose of coaching to be:

> "Stepping outside of the classroom and being able to recognize that coaching is not how I would do it in the classroom compared to what's being done. That was like my first 'aha' moment: 'Okay, take a step back and really reflect on what it is you're working with

the teacher on compared to just your experience in the classroom'" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4).

The structure of the coaching program. The way coaching was structured at each school was also influential in teachers' willingness to work with the coach. Participants agreed coaching was most effective when it was voluntary for teachers. Requiring a teacher to work with the coach would have sent the message that being coached was a consequence rather than an opportunity for professional development. Cally explained the importance of the voluntary nature of the program for building the relationship between the coach and the teacher:

> "[Coaching] is voluntary. There are situations where, if I see a teacher who's struggling during our evaluation process and I discuss that, 'This is an area that your developing in or you need improvement in. One of the resources that we have is the instructional coach. She can help you in this area.' Now, granted, they can choose not to work with her when I've had that conversation. The reason that is is because you don't want that person to be looked at in a negative light. If I say, 'You have to work with the instructional coach,' that doesn't build that relationship with that coach with that teacher. It's been mandated. It's something I have to do that I'm going to do for compliance, and it's not going to be the same thing as if the person seeks it out" (interview, 2/6/17, p. 4).

The coaches echoed this sentiment, emphasizing that teachers were more resistant to coaching when they felt it was imposed on them rather than a choice. Kara described how she saw the coach role fitting into the larger picture of teacher evaluation:

> "I think the biggest thing is letting coaching truly be a choice for people. And does that become more of a controlled choice? Sure. If a teacher's really struggling and put on an improvement plan, then yes, we can be offered as, 'Here's something you might want to

> try or that I think you should try.' But letting that teacher have that choice and autonomy in working with us is the best way to help a coaching program be successful because we're not crammed down people's throats like, 'You have to work with the coach'" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 8).

Although there were instances in which coaching was required of teachers, Kara found it easier to build trust with teachers when they were given a sense of autonomy in entering into the coaching relationship.

In her school, D'Anna found that even though she presented coaching as a voluntary activity, teachers typically choose the coach over other professional development options. Like Kara, D'Anna described coaching as one of a series of choices teachers had as part of the larger teacher evaluation system:

> "If ever a teacher is rated as, needs improvement, or developing in certain areas, I always talk with them. I like to give options, because I don't ever want to tell someone they have to work with the coach. That's just killing it from the beginning. I always say, 'Hey. You've got three options. We need to see some improvement in this area. Do you want me to get some resources together, some books or some articles that you can read and then determine how you want to implement what you've learned? Do you want me to look into finding conferences or workshops that you can attend that are going to focus on this aspect that we're trying to improve. Or, we have our coach. You could work with our coach.' Every single time, everyone's always said they want to work with the coach" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 5).

When teachers chose to work with the coach, D'Anna's and her assistant principal allowed several coaching cycles to take place before they followed up with the teacher. The

administrators then conducted another observation, which provided D'Anna with anecdotal evidence as to the effectiveness of the coach:

> "[The teachers] go developing to proficient, or from needs improvement to developing. Sometimes from needs improvement to proficient. To me, that right there is proof that the coaching model really works. We are able to see the coach partner with the teacher, implement, reflect on strategies that they're using, and it have an impact with the students that you can observe" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 5).

Principals and coaches emphasized that even when coaching was offered in response to an administrative observation, it was critical to maintain the division between the non-evaluative coach and evaluative administrators. A clear division made teachers more willing to reveal their weaknesses and identify areas for growth. D'Anna described how she handled this issue when meeting with her coach:

> "Everything is kept confidential, so I've never asked specifically, 'Who are you working with, and what are you working on?' It's more a discussion in just general terms, really broad. She may share a scenario and be like, 'Okay. I'm having a situation. Can we brainstorm and talk about, maybe, what I can do in this situation?' That's a lot of what it is, too, is just being that support and that sounding board. Again, no names are connected because it's really important that the staff never think that she's coming to me and sharing exactly what they're working on or what people are concerned about, or what problems they're having in the classroom" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 6).

Tory and Sharon emphasized how critical it was to maintain confidentiality to ensure she could build and maintain trusting relationships with teachers. Sharon explained how she kept information out of her weekly meetings with the administrative team:

> "[Ellen, assistant principal, and I] meet, I would say, definitely weekly to discuss kind of where we're going, reflect on where teams are at in terms of the PLC process, and just kind of general and types of work I'm doing. Very general, of course. Not specific. Not 'eyes on the classroom' conversations. You know what I mean? There's not the same kind of conversation" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7).

In contrast, although she agreed confidentiality was important, Kara described a circumstance in which she would have considered sharing information with her administrators:

> "I meet pretty closely with both of my administrators, and we talk about general, global issues that we see within the school. We don't talk about individual teachers, necessarily, unless those teachers have been offered my support and my coaching as part of an improvement plan where they can choose to work with me as one of the strategies" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 3).

In those cases, Kara would provide general updates to the administrative team as a follow up to the initial administrative evaluation. Overall, however, participants agreed it would negatively impact coaches' ability to build trust and develop relationships if such information were shared. By keeping information confidential, coaches reinforced the concept of the coach as a non-evaluative peer.

Individual characteristics of coaches. In drawing a line between the non-evaluative coach and the evaluative administrator, two participants – Ellen and Laura – expressed concern about working with coaches who have their administrator certification. According to these principals, individuals trained to fulfill administrative roles sometimes conflated the responsibilities of being a coach with those of being an administrator. Laura spoke about the

difficulty she faced when trying to implement Knight's (2007) coaching model with one such coach:

> "I began a partnership with her where I really tried to – we met weekly. It became sort of a relationship where I felt like I had to help her understand the role better, but she was so embedded in operating that way. You know, of kind of making sure she's helped all the teachers and gave them what they needed. You know, kind of did some coaching things well, but did a lot of things that are more administrative, and that was her goal, right? She had her administrative degree and wanted to be an administrator, and so that was impacting her in that role" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 3).

After that year, the coach took a job as an assistant principal in another school division. In an effort to avoid a similar situation the following year, Laura requested a coach with a background in staff development, which she received. She contrasted her experience of working with this coach, Roslyn, who did not have immediate aspirations to become a school-based administrator:

> "She totally gets the coaching model. She did not want to be an administrator, did not want to be involved in any of that craziness, and it was just so great to transition the staff to understanding what her role was and how – what her purpose of being there to support them. We would, any chance I got, any time I was in front of the faculty, I would talk about the partnership and I would say – I would remind the staff of our school goals and our instructional goals. Then I would say, 'Don't forget, that's why we have Roslyn. She's here to help you grow in those areas, so if you want to plan what that looks like in your class, or you want someone to come in and give you feedback and team teach with you or model for you... We'll be the ones coming in and doing the evaluating, but before we do

> that, you have a coach to kind of help you as you grow in that area'" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 4).

The clearer division in roles made it easier for the staff to understand how Laura intended for the coach to be used. Roslyn's work focused on professional development, and she engaged teachers as co-authors in their individual coaching plans and whole group staff development. Administrative tasks, such as evaluating teachers and managing schools logistics, were left to Laura, who explained that ultimately, "That coach has to be the right fit, I feel like. They have to be in it for the right reasons too" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6).

Ellen had a similar experience working with two different coaches at Highlands Elementary School. The first coach had her administrative endorsement and frequently offered to fill in for the administrators when issues arose throughout the school. At times, her willingness to take on these extra responsibilities took time away from her coaching work, and teachers viewed her as an extension of the administrative team. The following year, Ellen was assigned a coach who did not have her administrative endorsement. She described the difference she saw in how teachers perceived the coach:

> "I think people kind of see the difference in a coach and another person on the administrative team. Although they know we talk to the coach all the time, so there is a lot of collaboration between the coach and myself and the assistant principal, but collaboration about, like I said, professional development, problematic things that account for the entire school, and not necessarily specific things for each teacher. Some of that is what was happening in the past and I think the teachers feel more comfortable going to the coach and working with the coach because they understand the coach is not

being used to comment or provide feedback on the teachers' performance" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 6).

Both Ellen and Laura noticed changes in teachers' willingness to engage with the coach when the coaches' primary focus was teacher learning.

Summary. When coaching was introduced in Caldwell, the reception was mixed. Many teachers were resistant to working with coaches, which participants attributed to prior experiences working with coaches hired under the Reading First initiative. The Knight (2007) model of coaching represented a shift from more directive, compliance-oriented coaching to a more facilitative, partnership approach. Principals and coaches felt ongoing communication about the coach role was necessary to reinforce the notion that coaches were non-evaluative. Principals explicitly reinforced the role, which coaches took the time to build relationships with teachers and let them drive the content of their work together. A range of factors – consistency in personnel, the structure of the coaching program, and individual characteristics of coaches – influenced the degree to which teachers engaged in coaching work.

Theme 2: Administrators Were Central to how Coaching was Conceptualized and Enacted

Principals were influential in how coaches thought about and enacted their roles. Although division leaders put parameters on how principals should use their coaches, principals were given autonomy in how they negotiated details of the coaching role in their individual schools. Laura identified several factors she felt might inform how the role was shaped, such as a principal's needs and preference, the strengths and interests of the coach, and preexisting relationships with teachers. All four principals felt they were given the freedom to use professional judgment in making decisions about coaching.

At the same time, the principals acknowledged there were guidelines to ensure coaches were not used to fill other needs, such as providing intervention services directly to students. Cally summarized the importance of adhering to those guidelines while making decisions about how to use the coach:

> "I think it's been, in my opinion, a positive that the division has allowed us as administrators to look at what that role looks like. They've set guidelines in the parameters in the sense of this instructional coach is here to support what your needs are, and you define those needs. Now, it has definitely been, I feel, conveyed that this instructional coach, this is her job. You're not to pull the instructional coach to cover for a substitute and do those types of things. You have to have fidelity to what that position is, in my opinion, for it to come to fruition the way it has. If you're not using that position effectively, then it just becomes an extra set of hands" (interview, 2/6/17, p. 5).

Principals did not make decisions about the coaches' work on their own. All participants described decision making as a collaborative process between the coach and the administrative team. They used weekly meetings as a strategy for ensuring ongoing communication to establish coaching priorities and monitor progress toward shared goals. D'Anna described what that meeting looked like for her team:

> "Usually, [the coach] drives the agenda. Every week she'll kind of put together an agenda and send it to me and say, 'Okay. Here are the things I'd like to discuss when we meet.' Sometimes our discussions revolve around data. If we just completed a benchmark assessment, then we'll get together and look at that benchmark data together and determine what questions we want to ask that are going to drive the meeting when we come together to talk. Other times, it's looking at our school goals and deciding: Where

are we with meeting our school goals? What other things do we need to put into place, as far as looking at our PLCs and maybe how our PLC is going?" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 6). D'Anna and her coach also planned what they wanted to discuss with each grade level's team leader. Based on student achievement data, the principal and coach recommended specific activities, such as analyzing student work samples or mapping the curriculum, to help each team move forward in their instruction.

The other principals' meetings with their coaches were similar and included activities such as analyzing assessment data, planning for professional development, and identifying areas where the school could use more resources and information. Because coaches were able to spend more time in classrooms, principals relied on them to bring teachers' needs and perspectives to the forefront.

Collaboration between coaches and principals. Participants described the relationship between the administrators and the coach as fairly collaborative. They emphasized the importance of coaches and principals working together to clarify the parameters of the coaching role. As Laura explained, "It starts with the coach and the AP and principal really understanding the role and being very clear on how is this partnership going to work and how are our roles somewhat similar and where are they very different?" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 5).

Coaches felt they were given a voice when planning for how they would allocate their time. Tory explained what this process looked like for her during the five years she had been coaching:

> "I would say from the very beginning, it's always been a collaboration. This is the second principal I've worked with since the five years of coaching. Neither of the principals have ever looked at me and said, 'This is your allocation.' It's always been a discussion of

> ‘Okay, what's happening? Where are we along our spectrum for where we want to be? What are we seeing as concerns?’ We would sit and talk. I would say, ‘Okay, here's what I see in my...’ I've set up with my administrators, I meet with them weekly, so that we're in close contact” (interview, 2/7/17, p. 4).

Tory explained that by meeting with her administration consistently, there are few surprises in what she is asked to her. She is kept apprised of situations so that she can participate in joint problem solving. As a result, she has control over her role, which has “never felt like it was a directive” (interview, 2/7/17, p. 4).

All three coaches felt their administrators allowed them to focus on working with teachers, which they considered to be true coaching work. As Kara explained:

> “I feel that I am truly doing the job as it's intended to be. There are no requirements placed on me that impede my coaching work. For example, I don't ever have bus duty. So if I were scheduled for something like that, that would take away from my time that I have available to meet with teachers. So I feel like here at Fox Hollow, we have been very true to the coaching role and my administrators are – have an understanding of ‘what does it mean for me to be working with teachers’ and how precious that time is to be able to meet the needs of our building. I honestly don't feel like there are very many contextual factors that are holding me back from doing my job. I feel very good in the role that I'm in” (interview, 2/7/17, pp. 6-7).

Sharon and Tory a similar sense of support in being allowed to focus on coaching work. Principals rarely asked them to engage in administrative tasks that would take them away from directly supporting teachers.

Coaches were not, however, given total autonomy over how they allocated their time. Tory explained how she and her principal, Laura developed a shared understanding of the role. Because Tory's coach, Laura, was new to the school this year, she reached out to begin meeting with her during the summer "to get to know one another, so that we had a relationship of trust" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 4). Tory felt this trust facilitated their ability to collaborate and co-develop priorities for her work. At times, however, Laura asked Tory to shift her priorities based on what Laura felt was most important. Tory described what these conversations looked like:

> "They trust me. I think that's the biggest piece, they trust. I trust them. We share in the vision. We share in the mission that we want. It doesn't mean that they might not say to me, if I said, 'Okay, I really think I need to be in second grade – I'm just giving this as an example – I need to be more in second grade. We have this new writing program we're trying to infuse into the classrooms. I'm not seeing it happening yet.' In that discussion, they might say, 'I understand what you're saying, Tory. I appreciate that, but I'm more concerned right now about math in fourth grade.' Again, I'm making it up. It's not that I get to come in and just – it really is a together discussion" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 4).

Even when asked by their principals to focus on certain tasks, coaches felt they were given a voice to discuss where the most immediate needs were.

Distinguishing the coach from the administrator. In Knight's (2007) coaching model, coaches were intentionally distanced from tasks that would put them in a position to evaluate teachers. Participants in this study emphasized the importance of framing coaches as non-evaluative and drawing a clear distinction between the type of support the and the administrators would provide. According to Ellen, this distinction was necessary to "make sure that people see the coach as a support for them and not as another administrator" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 5). She

described the benefits of having a coach who was more of a peer and a collaborator. Teachers were more willing to reveal their weaknesses and to identify areas of need "without feeling like their job is being called into question," as Ellen put it (interview, 2/1/17, p. 3).

Several participants described experiences they had coaching under administrators with differing perspectives as to the degree to which coaching should overlap with administrative work. Prior to becoming a principal, D'Anna worked as an instructional coach in two different buildings under two different administrators. She described her experience working with a principal who had herself been a coach, explaining, "The way she utilized me was more of a true coach in the building" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 2). That principal followed the Knight (2007) model of coaching and presented D'Anna as a non-evaluative collaborator for teachers. D'Anna felt the program was very effective because many teachers were eager to work with her. She then described her experience in the other building:

> "[The principal] wanted to utilize me more as an administrator. That was kind of difficult to work with because that's not what I wanted to be. I wanted to be a coach... I don't think the principal really understood what the program was and how I should be used. There was a lot more resistance to working with me. A lot more skepticism, like, 'Why are you wanting to work with me? Is something wrong with my instructional practice? The principal says I'm doing great.' It was very different. That was interesting for me, to be able to see how big of an impact the administration's support of the program could be for the coach in the building" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 2).

Like Ellen, D'Anna saw a difference in teachers' willingness to work her, in part due to the way the role was framed for staff. She found it challenging to find entry points to invite and engage teachers, who seemed skeptical of her relationship with the administration.

Sharon described a similar experience coaching under two different principals in Caldwell. Sharon was the coach at Highlands Elementary School before Ellen became the principal, so she coached under Ellen's predecessor. Of the previous principal, Sharon said:

> "He's more of a managerial leader, not necessarily an instructional leader. The way he guided the two previous coaches in their roles, and initially me, was more kind of in an evaluative sense, I guess, because there would be questions asked about teacher's performance and things like that that kind of crossed those trust lines with teachers. As much as we had always spoken, there were mentions of things or just the way he portrayed me to the staff, or portrayed the previous coaches, that led to that: 'You're just eyes in the classroom. His eyes in the classroom.' I had a couple of teachers tell me like they thought when I had a sticky note and a notepad that I'm writing down what they're doing wrong. I don't know the experiences they have with previous coaches, but I would say I would have to bring it back to the administrative support and how the administration communicated the coach's role to the staff" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6).

Sharon contrasted this experience with her current work with Ellen, whom she described as having a more instructional leadership style. "We also have our new assistant principal," she explained, "and she has a very growth-oriented, instructional background, comes from the classroom, so she also supports the kind of coaching model that we're striving for" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7). Because the administrators valued the coach's role in teacher learning, they gave Sharon the flexibility to prioritize her work with teachers over other obligations, such as meetings and paperwork, that arose. Sharon felt more supported by her current administration because the focus of her work was on collaborating with and supporting teachers rather than serving as an extension of the administration.

Participants highlighted several reasons why it was important to ensure coaching remained distinct from administration and evaluation. For example, Kara, Cally's instructional coach at Fox Hollow Elementary School, described how her non-evaluative perspective enabled her to build stronger relationships with her teachers:

> "It's the perfect position because I feel like I'm able to really help people with what it is that they decide is an area they want help in or support in, and I don't have to evaluate at all. So it's a really honest and real relationship with teachers because it can flop, and it's okay because I do lessons and they flop. And that gives me, you know, a great way to connect with teachers that, you know, I am not in any way, shape, or form, an expert on anything. I go to a lot of trainings, I'm in a lot of classrooms, I see things that teachers are doing, and I try to bring that all together and help the greater good. But I'm a teacher like everybody else" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 3).

Bill shared this belief that it was crucial to ensure coaches were not in a position to evaluate teachers. He described what this meant for him as the evaluative administrator at his school:

> "Ninety-nine percent of the time, teachers always wanted to work with the instructional coach [over me] because even though I might have been serving in a coaching type of a role, I was still their evaluator. I was still their administrator. I didn't like that about my role as principal. I wished I could have been a coach, but I got it. I understood it because I knew teachers wanted to understand that that coach in that classroom was not evaluating them, wasn't passing judgment on them, was that partner in the classroom, that their sole purpose was to help them get better at what they were doing in that room" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 3).

Bill emphasized the value of distancing the coach from the administrative team when it came to working with teachers. This distance allowed for trust to build between coaches and their teachers, who would be more willing to work with the coach if they felt their conversations were confidential.

Summary. Principals were central to how coaches thought about and enacted their roles. Although division leaders gave principals guidance about instructional coaching, they held autonomy over the details of the coaching role, including priorities and scheduling. Principals and coaches met weekly to discuss instruction and assessment, which they used to set priorities for the coaches' work. Participants described this as a collaborative process between the coach and the administration. However, several participants provided examples from years prior in which administrators treated their coaches as an extension of the administration, thus blurring the line between coaching and evaluation.

Theme 3: Coaches had to Balance Competing Demands from Division leaders, School Leaders, and Teachers

Coaches were viewed as individuals who could support reform initiatives while providing individualized professional development to teachers. As a result, coaches were asked to balance a range of priorities when making decisions about how to allocate their time. In the next three sections, I will describe three influences on coaching priorities in their schools: division priorities, school priorities, and teacher needs. I will then present the difficulty coaches felt in trying to meet these competing demands.

Division priorities. Principals and coaches frequently received messages from the division, which they discussed at their weekly meetings. Some of these messages came from Bill

and were specifically tied to the role of the instructional coach. Sharon provided this example of a conversation she had after her principal, Ellen, met with Bill:

> "For example, my administrator had just met with our director of elementary instruction and she was going over her goals with him and so through that conversation, she was coming back having discussion with me on how that impacted her discussion of use of me and where we're at and what's going on here" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7).

Ellen's conversation with Bill prompted her to revisit the way in which she was using her coach. This conversation created an opportunity for Ellen and Sharon to evaluate how coaching was being implemented and whether they needed to make any adjustments to align Sharon's work with their intent for the position.

Messages from the division also focused on specific expectations around instruction each school. Division leaders in Caldwell routinely emphasized the importance of reading and math instruction, and literacy was highlighted in Caldwell's annual goals that goal. At every monthly coaches meeting, the reading and math leads were invited to deliver division updates to better prepare coaches to support teachers in these content areas. Tory explained how this emphasis on reading and math informed her priorities for coaching work:

> "My first two focuses are always reading and math. How are we doing in reading and math? What are we doing in reading and math? That includes sitting down – I plan with every grade level team. It's an expectation in our division and at our school to reinforce that at our school... It's not that I never plan content, but that's not my focus of my time" (interview, 2/7/17, pp. 5-6).

Coaches occasionally supported teachers with instruction in other content areas, but those situations were typically the result of a specific teacher request.

To support literacy instruction, the division leads introduced a new writing program at the start of the school year. Participants frequently mentioned this program as a focus for ongoing professional development at their schools. When describing her weekly meetings with Tory, Laura highlighted the new curriculum as a frequent topic of discussion:

> "Writing has been a big area of focus. Writing instruction and kind of a new, some new materials that we're using for teaching writing. She and I and this AP have planned out afternoon professional development for the teachers to just make sure as we go through the year they're feeling like they have some opportunities to, you know, get more training and practice with scoring writing pieces and just what that looks like and collaborating together with their colleagues and stuff on some practices" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

For this reason, the coaches have devoted a lot of their time to supporting teachers with the new curriculum. Sharon described what this work has looked like for her:

> "We've been working a lot on writing. In one area, co-teaching with a teacher on writing is really everything from designing instruction, to assessing the instruction, to tweaking the instruction in the moment, to planning ahead over the course of like a week or two weeks span" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 5).

Sharon allowed her teachers to decide which specific coaching activities would be most helpful to them as they implemented the new writing program in their classrooms.

Although coaches felt the emphasis on reading and math could be restrictive at time, they recognized the importance of aligning their work to the work of the division. Ultimately, their role was to support teachers, who were expected to improve student achievement scores in the core content areas. Kara explained why she felt it so important to ensure her work aligned with the division goals:

> "Literacy is a big beast, and so [the teachers] don't always feel as comfortable in that area. And so a lot of my coaching work this year in particular has been on focusing on the stages of reading and what does small group instruction look like based on the stage of reading that students are at. And also writing, and how does writing play into the literacy block? And so I think that our division has certainly paired well with the coaching work that I'm doing, because the coaching work is supporting the division work. Does that make sense? I try to make sure it's a connected piece, so teachers aren't going to division professional development and feeling like it has no connection back at school. Or if they're feeling like they're not confident in that area, I want to help them so that they do have that understanding and are feeling confident" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 6).

Kara did not view the emphasis on literacy as a constraint to her work because she wanted to support teachers where they needed her most. Her goal was to ensure teachers understood what they were learning and could feel effective as they worked toward division goals.

School priorities. In addition to supporting division initiatives, principals also established their own instructional vision for their schools. Participants viewed the role of the coach as helping the principal realize that vision. Tory summarized what this meant for how she understood her role as a coach:

> "I think of the umbrella, alright? We're under the umbrella right now. Just imagine my imagery here for a minute. We're under the umbrella. Under the umbrella, my job is, and I guess you would say, is to support teachers. Okay? And to help move them along their path of learning. As instructional gurus, which we hope every teacher is, it is to help them move along that path. It's to give them a personalized sense of professional development. That's my mission. I got to be in there to see what is it that I can do to help move you

> along. Why do I want to move you along? Obviously, the end result is always for our students. It's to move you so that instruction can be better. We can do better. We can do it for our students. The biggest vision is that it's for the students, which means that it's the vision of the school, whatever the school vision looks like. In my world, if I was to make my world, I would say that coaching has to also see the whole school. What are my administrator's dreams for the school? How do I play a part in that? I guess what I'm saying is, as a coach, I feel like it's necessary to be always aware of the big vision of the school, of what's happening in your school right now. How am I supporting it? How am I leading it to be more perfected in that vision?" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 3).

For this reason, coaches made decisions about their work based on the instructional vision set forth by the principal. As with the division goals, coaches felt it important to align their work to the school goals to ensure teachers felt there was a cohesive system of professional supports and guidance for them.

Principals placed an emphasis on the importance of supporting new teachers in their schools. New teachers in Caldwell were assigned a school-based mentor who was expected to meet regularly with the new teacher to assist with planning and analysis of student data. However, because mentors were teachers themselves, they were often unable to spend time in new teachers' classrooms observing, modeling, or co-teaching lessons. For this reason, principals in Caldwell turned to the coaches to provide this service.

Coaches understood their role to include this additional support for new teachers. Tory explained why she felt new teacher support was particularly important in her school, which had a high percentage of English-language learners:

> "We always look at our new teachers. At the beginning of the year, okay, here are our new teachers. Let's make sure as a coach I'm getting into their rooms, spending a lot of time with them, making sure that they have a mentor, but their mentor's a teacher, so they can't get into the room all the time. New teachers are always a priority. New teachers and also teachers just moving into our system, because as I said before, having a population that is distinctly different say than the counties that are surrounding Caldwell, that's often, even to a seasoned teacher, can be a little bit of a 'whoa, step back. I'm not sure what to do with these particular type of students.' Anybody new, that's a priority" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 5).

Teacher needs. Although division and school goals helped shape coaches' priorities, coaches felt teachers' individual needs were also a significant driver in defining coaching work. Participants conceptualized coaching as personalized professional development, and coaches drew on teachers' self-identified needs to inform some of their priorities. Kara explained how she factored teachers' needs into her overall planning:

> "We have definite goals for our school and areas that we see are needing some extra support and coaching. But most of my work comes directly from what teachers are feeling they need at any given point... And it might change over the time. You know, originally a teacher might say, 'Hey, I really need support in this area,' and then as we work together, it often morphs into other things that they're feeling like they need support in as well" (interview, 2/7/17, pp. 3-4).

Coaches understood their work to be fluid and responsive to teachers' goals for their practice.

Although she focused her time on reading and math, Tory let teachers know she was open to working on anything they wanted to explore, even if it was not an area of expertise for her. She provided an example of a teacher in a dual language class with whom she has been working:

> "I have worked with that teacher for two years, because she really wanted to infuse her lessons with writing. Even though I don't speak Spanish, I certainly can help her on how do we do that, and what would this look like in the classroom. For two years, we've been working on it. She's actually quite an outstanding writing teacher. I don't think that came from me, but she really is. She's been a model now that I can send others too to say, 'Look at what she's doing.' Teachers will also, I always have a list of teachers who've been at our school, who are always pushing themselves forward and saying, you know, 'This is really something I really want to work on this year. Could you come in with me and do this?'" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 6).

Coaches considered requests like these when prioritizing their work and establishing their schedules. They wanted to ensure teachers maintained a sense of agency and ownership when it came to engaging in coaching work.

Balancing priorities. Balancing all of these priorities was a struggle for coaches. Time was a limiting factor in being able to meet the various demands on division leaders, school leaders, and individual teachers. D'Anna explained how she and her coach have tried to address this issues:

> "When [the coach and I] come together, we basically just talk about: How are things going so far? Do you feel like you're having time to meet with the teachers that you need to be meeting with. Then, she'll share it can be difficult for her sometimes, or there are a lot of other people that want to work with her. Just trying to figure out, basically

> brainstorm and problem solve what we can do in order to have her work with those teachers, maybe in a different capacity than that collaborative style. Maybe those teachers are ready for more of a reflective style of coaching, where she doesn't necessarily have to be there with them during the school day. Instead, sending questions or maybe it can be quick conversations that they're sharing ideas and she's asking reflective questions" (interview, 1/24/17, p. 6).

Coaches felt their principals understood the challenge of balancing so many priorities, yet they still felt overwhelmed by the reality of having to build a schedule that met everyone's needs. Bill described seeing impact of this challenge at his latest coaches meeting:

> "I think for the coaches and for all of us, I think, it's figuring out what's most important. Trying to know what is it that I should be spending the majority of my time on? Should I be spending it on the new writing initiative, or the new math, or the new science or social studies assessments that we're rolling out? That's oftentimes kind of a struggle. I said our January meeting with coaches was probably the first time in a while I got the sense from my coaches that they felt overwhelmed with the amount of stuff... It was the first time that I think I felt from them, this confident bunch of teachers, that they were feeling anxious. Again, I think it was they felt like their plate was overflowing and they weren't quite sure where to focus their time and energy" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 10).

Bill used some of the time during his monthly coaching meetings to discuss strategies for addressing these issues. He still worried, however, that coaches were feeling pressured to accomplish more than they could reasonably handle. He added that several division-level projects – the implementation of the new writing program, the introduction of new math standards, and the upcoming addition of a new elementary school – pulled division resources

away from coaches, leaving them to shoulder more of the responsibility for implementing division reforms in their schools.

Despite coaches' efforts to prioritize work with teachers, coaches' work with teachers was also disrupted when other school needs required coaches to fill other roles. Principals did not want to ask coaches to fill in, but the immediacy of these situations called for principals to find short-term solutions to providing high-quality instruction to students. Ellen provided an example of one such situation:

> "A few years ago we had a teacher that was very ineffective so we basically had to use the coach to go in and teach in that class because the teacher was so ineffective the kids weren't learning anything. We needed to use the coach to go in and make sure that the kids were at least getting solid instruction. Again, we don't like to use the coaches for that, we like to keep the coaches schedule more where she can work with any teacher, but every once in a while there is kind of extenuating circumstance where we might need to do something like that" (interview, 2/1/17, p. 4).

The coaches felt the stress of these demands as well. They recognized the importance of filling in for missing personnel, but they were disappointed by how significant an impact this could have on their coaching work. Tory described how her coaching work was limited by the loss of an instructional assistant shortly before this study took place:

> "We are missing an instructional assistant for our newcomer program. We have a newcomer program for our third and fourth and fifth graders. They have a sheltered room and they first come and enter our system. They've just come into the United States. They're in a classroom unto themselves until we can mainstream them, which our goal setting is about 12 weeks. Some would get out faster, because they have more

> background and some may be a little bit longer, but we've launched our instructional assistant in that room. They're getting one, but what needed to happen was someone needed to be out there with the newcomer teacher. We just really didn't have someone. I said, 'Okay, why don't you let me go out there? Why don't you let me see how many hours I can fill out there and be that support person?'" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 3).

Because Tory spent a significant portion of the day in that classroom, her time with other teachers was limited to meetings before and after school. Tory used this situation as an opportunity to build a coaching relationship with a teacher with whom she hadn't worked, though she is eager to return to her full-time coaching workload so that she support the rest of her staff.

Summary. Coaches had to balance a range of priorities when making decisions about their time allocation. Division leaders expected coaches to support division reform initiatives and focus their time on teachers' reading and math instruction. At the same time, principals established their own instructional vision, which coaches aimed to support with their work. Coaches also responded to the individual needs of teachers, whose goals did not always align with the division initiatives. Coaches felt overwhelmed by the task of balancing these priorities. They also found themselves taking on other responsibilities when urgent situations arose at the school, which further limited the time they had to support teachers' work.

Theme 4: Division Support Facilitated Coaching Work in Schools

Because school-based coaching was part of a division-wide model, coaches and principals in Caldwell received support for instructional coaching from the division central office. As messages were exchanged about coaching and instruction in the division, interactions

between central office administrators and school personnel served as additional opportunities for sensemaking around the coaching role.

In his role as director of elementary education, Bill provided direct support to school-based coaches. His relationship with these coaches was non-evaluative, though he explained, "I don't directly evaluate coaches but I give them support and PD [professional development]. I collaborate with the elementary principals to do some evaluating, but I don't directly evaluate coaches" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6). Bill spent much of his time at schools, meeting with coaches and their principals:

> "My goal is once a month to spend time with [the coaches] in their PLC meetings, just as a debrief, if they're struggling with anything specific, you know, a teacher, maybe that they're coaching and they're just not sure what to do next. Then I also meet with their principals and ask, 'Hey, how's it going with your coach? Is there anything you need me to be providing support for your coach on?' That's typically one-on-one in their buildings" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7).

This on-site interaction allowed him to monitor the coaching program to ensure it was being implemented in alignment with the Knight (2007) model. These visits also helped him identify opportunities for division leaders to support coaching efforts across schools.

In addition to supporting coaches, Bill provided direct support to elementary principals. "I do their evaluations," he explained. "I support them in initiatives that they have going on in their schools. I can go in and observe in classrooms. Anything that an elementary principal needs me to support with, I'm there for" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 6). During Bill's monthly site visits, he met with principals to check in on matters related to instruction and to ask how the coaching program was running. If principals had questions or needed resources, he connected them to

specialists in the division who could provide support. At the same time, Bill used these conversations to remind principals of the intent of the coaching program in Caldwell:

> "I'm sending that message to my principals, too, as part of my interaction with them, my expectation. I'm very clear on what I see the coach's role being, that it is that professional development for all teachers. It is that non-evaluative person that's going in to support all teachers. I've been pretty direct at times when a principal says, 'I really want to use my coach to be this long term substitute or to go in and fix this teacher,' and I'm like, 'No, no, no, no, no. That's your job, as the principal, to get in and do that'" (interview, 2/3/17, pp. 8-9).

Bill viewed maintaining the distinction between non-evaluative coaches and evaluative administrations as critical to supporting true coaching work. He explained why using a coach as someone to fix problems with struggling teachers would have sent the wrong message to the staff:

> "People know when a teacher's struggling. If it's falling apart in the classroom, typically other people around know it, and if they see that's the only person that the coach is going in and working with, then they're not gonna want to work with that coach because then they'll be perceived as that struggling teacher in the school, that now, 'Oh, there must be a problem in so-and-so's classroom because they're working with the coach.' I've just been pretty honest with my principals. I can't support you using your coach in that way. I need you to be in there working on that" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 10).

Bill felt it his responsibility to make sure principals offered coaching as a non-evaluative, voluntary activity for all teachers. He described how just two years prior to this study, coach were not consistently used as true coaches:

> "Some of the building administrators really did tend to use, in a couple of our buildings, the coach more as a pseudo-administrator and really just looking at data and pulling reports, basically doing all the work that I really want teachers to be a part of but generating all of that for everybody. I would say in the last year and a half, we've had that transition from, 'You know, I'm really struggling. I don't feel like my principal is supporting me to be a coach,' in the way I'm saying I want my coaches to operate, so that, I think, would be going better" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

His comments reflected Sharon's description of how her role changed alongside changes in the administration. She explained how her previous principal asked her to do administrative tasks "like complete an application for the Title 1 prestigious school award, stuff like that" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7). As a result, teachers viewed her as an extension of the administration.

In addition to on-site support, Bill also hosted monthly meetings for all coaches. The agenda typically included time to discuss what was going well for each coach, updates from division curriculum leads, discussion of a book the coaches were reading, and opportunities to solve problems. The overarching purpose of these meetings was to prepare the coaches to better support teachers in their respective schools.

Coaches viewed these meetings as important opportunities to receive division updates, such as new resources for teachers, curriculum updates, and trends in student achievement data. As Sharon explained:

> "Next year is the math crosswalk year and new implementation of standards and how do we support our teachers to not feel overwhelmed. Or this year, we have a new writing initiative and where are we at and how are we dealing with that... Our mathematics coordinator will come and our language arts coordinator and keep ourselves fresh on

> some things that they might feel like they can communicate and build us up to then bring back to our school" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

In this way, coaches served as intermediaries as they brought messages from the division back to administrators and teachers at their schools.

The meetings were a place for coaches to collaborate and solve problems. This was especially important because each coach was the only one at her school, so she was on her own to manage some of the issues that arose. Sharon described these meetings as opportunities to "problem solve different scenarios or situations we may facing with our coaching work, whether it be trying to move the bar for the work we're working on with an individual teacher or it might just be a generic concern" (interview, 2/3/17, pp. 8-9). She emphasized the importance of having dedicated time to work with other coaches:

> "I love collaboration; I love working with a team. I'm the only coach in the building, so I'm kind of on an island. That's been hard for me just personally where not having that person or someone to bounce ideas with back and forth all the time" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

Bill also intended for the monthly coaching meetings to be spaces for coaches to practice their coaching skills by asking each other "really open-ended, reflective questions, a lot like what they're probably doing with teachers in their own buildings" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7). Bill modeled this type of facilitative questioning as he lead discussions. By structuring the conversations in this way, he aimed to "get people to dig a little bit deeper into their role as coach" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 7). He also reinforced these were the types of facilitative questions he expected coaches to use with their teachers.

This year, Bill wanted his coaches to find ways to support all teachers, not only those who felt they were struggling. To explore this idea, Bill and his coaches did a book study of *Never Underestimate your Teachers* by Robyn Jackson. In her book, Jackson (2013) provided strategies for meeting all teachers where they are and supporting the growth of teachers from novices to veterans. Bill explained how he used the text to push his coaches' thinking:

> "We're reading that together and again, my questions this year have been, how are you coaching that teacher who doesn't feel like they need coaching and their performance is actually really good? My expectation or my hope is that you're still getting opportunities to coach that teacher because we can all grow. Whereas, our typical go-to is that teacher that's struggling. They may or may not be the one's reaching out but that's often where we gravitate to, so I'm kind of pushing that envelope a little bit and saying, 'Hey, I want you to be also coaching those rock star teachers because you can help them get better, and we can learn as coaches from them about the skills and strategies they're using in their classrooms so that we can apply it into other classrooms'" (interview, 2/3/17, pp. 7-8).

In discussions about the book, Bill encouraged the coaches to reconsider the notion that coaching was primarily for teachers in need of support. Instead, he wanted them to pursue coaching relationships with experienced, effective teachers. He also viewed relationships with effective teachers as learning opportunities for coaches, who themselves did not claim to be experts at everything in the field. By spending time with strong teachers, coaches could learn strategies for instruction that they could bring to their coaching work with less effective teachers.

Coaches also learned from each other at the division meetings. Some of the coaches in the division had more years of experience than others, though they all appreciated opportunities to share strategies and ideas. Kara provided an example of how her conversations with a more

experienced coach at another school made her rethink her overall approach to coaching relationships:

> "A couple of years ago, I switched my direction for coaching a little bit. I had a done a lot of, sort of one-shot coaching cycles with people. You know, for example, if they heard about a particular strategy or they said, 'Oh, I really need help teaching my kids how to summarize,' then I would go into the classroom and model that, and we would have the feedback, and then they would implement some of the things that I would suggest or that they saw. And that's where it ended, and I might not see those people for week. Or if at all! One of the other coaches had gone through some training and she had talked about doing some ongoing coaching cycles to really affect more change within her building. And I really loved the idea of that, and so I pitched it to my staff and said, 'You know, I'm offering on-going coaching. It's an extended amount of time we work together, and we commit every week to meet, and we commit to me coming into the classroom and seeing how things are going'" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 4).

Working more consistently with teachers gave Kara more time to help those teachers develop their skills and reflect on which strategies were most effective for supporting student learning. Kara reported seeing greater improvements in teachers' instruction since modifying her approach to include ongoing coaching cycles.

The coaches continued to lean on each other outside of those monthly meetings. Two of the coaches reported speaking frequently with other coaches to ask questions or follow up on ideas from the monthly meetings. As Tory explained:

> "There's always the opportunity if needed or wanted to just call a coach and say, 'Hey, I'd like to really talk about this, or I heard you say this the last time. I was just wondering.'

> We always have that. We're a small enough school system that most of us do know each other" (interview, 2/7/17, p. 8).

Sharon, on the other hand, did not feel as connected to her fellow instructional coaches and reported spending less time checking in with them:

> "I would say, just from my opinion, there are a couple of coaches that I think like they probably communicate more. They seem to be like friends, which I mean I get along with all of them, but I don't communicate like daily or bi-weekly" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

Sharon also identified scheduling and workload as factors that limited her interactions with some of the other coaches. She often found herself buried in work at the school and did not aside time for regular check-ins. Even so, despite a lack of ongoing communication, Sharon made an effort to reach out to other coaches and specialists when specific issues arose:

> "For example, Lee Anders is our math specialist/coach, and I'm working with a teacher right now, and I'm like, 'Hey, I'm kind of at my wit's end in terms of strategies for helping these special ed kids. Do you have any ideas? Can I meet with you?' We're going to meet today before the coaching meeting so I can pick her brain because I think it's important to have a support system for coaches to have and be able to seek support because by all means we're not the experts and we can't be the experts. Part of the growing of everybody" (interview, 2/3/17, p. 9).

All three coaches acknowledge they were not – and were not expected to be – experts on all aspects of instruction. They felt it important to have experience and knowledge they could share with teachers, but they also viewed themselves as learners who could access resources to help them support their teachers.

Summary. Division leaders in Caldwell provided support to principals and coaches, which facilitated coaching work. Bill, the Director of Elementary Education, provided direct support to coaches through monthly coaching meetings and on-site visits. Curriculum specialists provided resources and information to help coaches support their teachers. Bill also engaged the coaches in a book study to facilitate discussion around strategies for supporting all teachers, not only those were struggling. During on-site visits, Bill reminded principals how coaching should be used, reinforcing the idea that coaches were non-evaluative providers of professional development for teachers. Bill emphasized this point with principals because in years prior, coaches were often pulled to work as pseudo-administrators, analyzing data and generating reports for teachers.

Conclusion

In an effort to improve the quality of instruction in Caldwell, division leaders developed a coaching program based on the Jim Knight (2007) model of instructional coaching. According to this model, coaches were positioned in schools as non-evaluative individuals who would partner with teachers to provide personalized professional development. Participants considered coaching to be an important tool for moving instruction forward in the division. However, given the level of investment required to run a coaching program, principals and coaches often felt the pressure of having to justify maintaining the program. Participants sought strategies for measuring the impact of coaching work so they justify the coaching program during budget discussions. Some also viewed these strategies as potentially valuable for understanding which coaching strategies were effective in supporting teacher learning and, ultimately, improvements in student achievement.

Earning buy-in for the coaching program was a gradual process. Some teachers were initially resistant to work with the instructional coaches, which participants attributed to teachers' experiences with the more directive coaching style of Reading First coaches. The Knight (2007) model represented a significant shift toward a more facilitative, partnership approach, but it took time for coaches to build trust with teachers. While principals explicitly reinforced the purpose of the coaching program, coaches set out to listen to teachers, get to know them, and let teachers guide the content of their coaching work. Several factors influenced the degree to which teachers were willing to engage in coaching work. These factors included consistency in personnel, the voluntary nature of the coaching program, and individual characteristics of coaches.

Administrators, especially principals, were central to how coaching was conceptualized and enacted. Division leaders set parameters for how coaches were to be used, but ultimately principals had autonomy over the details of the coaching role. Principals coaches met weekly to discuss how things were going for teachers and students. They used these data to set priorities for the coaches work. Participants described this as a collaborative process between the coach and the administration, though several participants provided examples from years prior in which administrators treated their coaches as an extension of the administration. In those cases, the line between coaching and evaluation became blurred, which hindered coaching work.

Coaches had to balance many priorities when planning how to allocate their time. They were expected to support division reform initiatives and focus their time on reading and math instruction. At the same time, they need to support the instructional vision set forth by their respective principals. Coaches also responded to the individual needs of teachers, whose goals were sometimes not in line with the priorities of the division. Balancing these priorities became

overwhelming for coaches, who also found themselves taking on other responsibilities when urgent situations arose at the school. The combination of pressures limited the time coaches had to meet everyone's needs and support teachers as best they could.

Support from the division facilitated coaching work. Bill, the Director of Elementary Education, held monthly coaching meetings in which curriculum specialists provided resources and information to help coaches support their teachers. Bill also engaged coaches in a book study, which pushed them to expand their understanding of the coach role and consider the ways in which they could support all teachers. During on-site visits, Bill checked in with coaches and principals to see what resources and support he could provide. When talking to principals, he reinforced the notion that coaches were non-evaluative providers of professional development for teachers. Bill emphasized this point with principals because in years prior, the line between coaching and administration had not been so clear.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

Sensemaking around the role of the coach was an ongoing process in Caldwell. In this chapter, I will discuss this study's findings in relation to the broader literature on sensemaking and instructional coaching. Drawing on key ideas from sensemaking literature, I have organized this discussion around four themes:

- Sensemaking as a response to change
- Sensemaking as a series of processes
- The centrality of administrators in sensemaking
- Sensemaking as a situated activity

I will then discuss limitations to the current study, as well as considerations for future research. Finally, given the findings from this study, I will provide recommendations to the facilitators of the Curry Leadership Academy.

Sensemaking as a Response to Change

Planned innovations – such as changes in structures and roles – can trigger sensemaking. Even when change is anticipated, it can create uncertainty as individuals adjust to new expectations for their work and the work of others (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). This change can force individuals to reconsider their roles and how to best fulfill them. In Caldwell, the introduction of the current coaching model represented a significant structural change that prompted opportunities for sensemaking.

Before division leaders adopted the Knight (2007) coaching model, coaching in Caldwell was an embedded part of the Reading First initiative. Participants described Reading First coaches as taking a more directive, compliance-oriented approach to coaching. Their

descriptions echoed findings from Deussen et al. (2007) and Bean et al. (2010), who found that Reading First coaches were often pulled into pseudo-administrator rules, asked to work directly with students, and expected to fulfill mandates from state agencies.

When Knight's (2007) model was brought into Caldwell, it represented a significant change in how coaching was conceptualized and how coaches were expected to interact with teachers. Knight suggests formal coaching relationships should be predicated on the notion of building teachers' capacity, not directing teachers in what to do. Participants in Caldwell reported many teachers were not immediately receptive to the new coaching model, in part due to prior experiences with more directive coaches. Teachers were not certain the new coaches were not going to tell them what to do and share information with the administration. For this reason, building buy-in and trust from teachers took a long time and was still an ongoing process at the time of this study, six years after the initial introduction of the model. These findings align with sensemaking research, which has shown when one element of an organization is replaced with another, individuals may experience contradictions that trigger sensemaking about the innovation (e.g., Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Lüscher & Lewis, 2008).

Sensemaking as a series of processes

This process of building buy-in was one of several sensemaking processes in Caldwell. To develop the conceptual framework for this study, I drew on Coburn's (2001) sensemaking framework. Coburn conducted a year-long case study of an urban elementary school to investigate the processes by which teachers made sense of policy messages related to reading instruction. She put forth a model of these processes, which included constructing understandings through interpersonal interactions, gatekeeping, and negotiating technical and

practical details. Participants in Caldwell engaged in many of the same processes through the implementation of the Knight (2007) coaching model.

Constructing Understanding through Interpersonal Interactions

Interpersonal interactions were an important opportunity for sensemaking, which is an inherently social process (Weick, 1995). Through these interactions, participants in Caldwell shaped and reshaped their understanding of the coaching role. For example, principals and coaches often worked together to define the coach role and share information about coaching with teachers. Conversations Kara had with a coach in another school led her to rethink her approach to one in which she engaged regularly with coaches to provide continuous professional develop. Shifting away from one-shot coaching transformed her practice and, she felt, increased her effectiveness as a coach.

At the division level, Bill consistently reinforced the message that principals were not to use their coaches as an extension of the administration. He also challenged his coaches to expand their own understanding of their role. Rather than focusing solely on teachers in need of support, Bill pushed his coaches to explore opportunities to work with and learn from high-quality teachers. Taken together, the findings from this study support research suggesting sensemaking is a collective process (e.g., Coburn, 2001; Maitlis, 2005).

Negotiating Technical and Practical Details

Another element of sensemaking research is the way in which individuals' interpretation is put into action (Weick, 1995). Coaches in Caldwell worked with division leaders and principals to negotiate the technical and practice details of the coaching role. At monthly coaching meetings, division leaders shared information about division priorities for literacy and math instruction, as well as guidance and resources to support teacher learning. Within schools,

principals and coaches met weekly to identify target areas of professional learning opportunities. Coaches also responded to the needs and requests of individual teachers, who priorities sometimes – but not always – aligned with division and school priorities. Coaches worked to balance these priorities and allocate their time to maximize opportunities to work with teachers. Conversations about these technical and practical details of the role also created additional opportunities for sensemaking. For example, when coaches were asked to prioritize activities that aligned with division- and school-level initiatives, it reinforced the coach's role as an intermediary expected to communicate particular messages to teachers as they worked together.

Gatekeeping

Coburn (2001) described gatekeeping as a process by which individuals "engaged with an idea or approach or dismissed it" (p. 154). There was minimal evidence of gatekeeping in this study. However, a limitation of this study is that I did not conduct observations, nor did I have prolonged engagement in the field. For this reason, I did not have the opportunity to observe whether participants engaged with or dismissed coaching ideas in their actual practices.

Framing

Framing was another process that supported sensemaking for participants. Though not included in Coburn's (2001) model, framing the coaching role was an important step in establishing and re-establishing the purpose of coaching for teachers. When coaching was first introduced in Caldwell, principals explicitly discussed the role of the coach with their teachers. Because some teachers were still uncertain about working with the coach, principals routinely reminded teachers of the purpose of having an instructional coaching program.

In their discussion of framing, all participants emphasized the importance of ensuring coaching remained non-evaluative. When coaches provide feedback that is perceived as

evaluative, tensions can emerge between coaches and teachers (Bean & Carroll, 2006; Mangin & Stoelinga, 2011). If teachers expect coaches to share information about their coaching work, teachers might be less willing to reveal areas of weakness for fear it will be factored into their evaluations. To avoid this concern, participants in Caldwell made clear coaches would not be sharing information from their work with teachers with the school administration. In most cases, coaches reported this to be a policy by which they stood. One coach, however, explained she would share information with the principal if the coach was working with that teacher as part of an evaluation cycle. This exception raises questions about the ways in which a coach's relationship with his or her principal may influence teachers' perceptions of the coach and willingness to participate in coaching.

These findings echo findings from Coburn and Russell (2008), who concluded the mere presence of coaches is not enough to influence teachers' practice. In Coburn and Russell's case study of coaching in two divisions, in the division in which leaders clearly and continuously reinforced messages about coaching, participation in coaching was more frequent and consistent. Participants in Caldwell shared the belief that ongoing communication and clear framing of the coach role was essential to gaining buy-in from teachers.

The Centrality of Administrators in Sensemaking

Sensemaking research converges on the finding that leaders can trigger sensemaking by communicating messages that support or undermine planned changes (see Maitlis & Christianson, 2014 for an overview). In Caldwell, when it came to framing the coaching role for staff, participants identified administrators as key players in the process. Coaches and principals worked together to define goals and priorities, monitor progress, and develop a plan for communication with the staff. They met weekly to develop priorities and monitor progress

toward meeting school goals. Principals were also directly involved in framing the coaching role for teachers and continuously reinforcing the purpose of the coach for supporting teacher learning. This level of principal engagement and support can increase teachers' participation in coaching (Matsumura et al., 2009).

In Caldwell, several coaches – as well as principals with coaching experience – described differences in their coaching work across time, some of which they attributed to the leadership style of their administrators. When administrators allowed coaches to take an instructional leadership role, coaches were given the flexibility to devote time to teachers' professional learning. In contrast, when administrators treated coaches like another administrator, coaches were asked to do administrative tasks and pulled away from direct support for teacher learning. When coaches are perceived as another member of the administrative team, it can blur the lines between evaluative administration and non-evaluative coaching, which may influence teachers' perceptions of the instructional coach and thus their willingness to engage in coaching work (Bean et al., 2010).

Sensemaking as a Situated Activity

Sensemaking researchers have examined the ways in which sensemaking takes place within organizational contexts (e.g., Weick, 1995; Maitlis, 2005). When individuals make meaning, they interpret their environment through interactions with others. In Caldwell, there was evidence that the organizational context influenced individuals' interpretations of the coaching role. Across the division, efforts were made to combat the dilemma of loose coupling in education. Coaches were positioned to support teachers in meeting division goals and, therefore, were used as a lever for reform. Coaches were brought into monthly meetings to receive information and guidance from division leaders. These findings support research that

school leaders function as intermediaries between the division and classroom teachers (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008; Spillane et al., 2002). Both principals and coaches in Caldwell translated messages from the division – particularly messages about curriculum and instruction – to teachers through coaching work. Coaches designed professional development and tailored the goals of their coaching to align with the broader instructional vision of the division to ensure teachers understood the relevance of their learning.

Coaches also balanced division priorities with school goals and individual teacher needs. These competing demands, which were not always aligned, made it difficult for coaches to find time to work with all of their teachers, especially those who were relatively successful in their classrooms. As a result, coaches' understanding of their role was sometimes in conflict with the actual allocation of their time, a concern not unique to this coaching program (e.g., Bean et al., 2010; Duessen et al., 2007).

Limitations

Sample size was an important limitation to this study. After recruiting several participants in three school divisions, I was asked not to continue recruiting in two of those divisions because division leaders felt coaches and their colleagues were too overwhelmed with work. For this reason, I focused my research on the one division, Caldwell, in which I was able to recruit eight interview participants. In addition, I was unable to speak with any teachers in Caldwell because principals felt their teachers, too, were overextended. Because teachers work directly with coaches, their perspectives would have been helpful in understanding how the coaching role was conceptualized by all relevant stakeholders in the division.

The participants of this study represent a volunteer sample, which introduces the possibility of nonresponse bias (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Three individuals in

Caldwell declined to participate in this study. These individuals may hold different perspectives on the instructional coach role and how it is conceptualized in the division.

In addition, due to the timeline of this project, I was unable to spend significant time in the field. As a result, I can only share the perspectives of the individuals who participated in interviews. Observations would be useful for triangulation to see how individuals' perspectives aligned with their actual coaching work. In addition, the perspectives shared here only represent a short period of time. Schools change significantly throughout the year, and it would be beneficial to understand how coaching work changes throughout the year and how that may influence individuals' understanding of the role.

Implications for Future Research

With these limitations in mind, these findings suggest coaches and their colleagues engaged in a range of sensemaking processes that informed how they conceptualized the instructional coach role in Caldwell. These findings also contribute to a broader discussion about contextual factors that may influence the success of coaching programs and professional development initiatives aimed at supporting coaching work. Many questions remain, however. This study aimed to understand individuals' perspectives on the instructional coaching role. However, the Curry Leadership Academy invites a range of participants planning to coach others, such as assistant principals, teacher leaders, and central office administrators. Future studies should explore how these other participant groups understand their roles as coaches, especially when their other responsibilities include the evaluation of those they might be coaching.

The distinction between coaching and evaluation still leaves room for exploration. Participants in Caldwell did not discuss tensions that may occur when coach roles are associated

with the implementation of a particular curriculum or set of instructional practices (Stoelinga, 2010). In Caldwell, coaches were expected to support teachers in the adoption of mandatory changes, such as the new writing program. In this way, coaches could have become informal evaluators tasked with ensuring teachers' compliance with new requirements. Future investigations should consider the ways in which teachers respond to these initiatives and the influence this may have on teachers' understanding of the coaching role and willingness to participate in coaching.

Recommendation: Caldwell

Based on these findings, I present several recommendations for Caldwell:

1. Help instructional coaches understand their roles as intermediaries.
2. Provide joint training for building leaders and instructional coaches.
3. Ensure coaching remains voluntary for teachers.

Recommendation #1: Help instructional coaches understand their roles as intermediaries

These findings align with literature suggesting coaches serve as intermediaries (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008; Hubbard, Mehan, & Stein, 2006; Swinnerton, 2007). In Caldwell, coaches serve as intermediaries between the school administration and the school's teachers, as well as intermediaries between division personnel and school personnel. Division leaders should continue providing direct support to coaches to help them understand and address tensions that can arise from this role. Participants described the challenge of balancing competing priorities with division leaders, school leaders, and teachers when they have misaligned expectations for coaches' work. It became particularly difficult for Caldwell's coaches to balance competing priorities when they felt they had limited time to allocate to their various responsibilities. In addition, coaches may not recognize every area where tensions have arisen as they have worked

for teachers. For example, when coaches provide professional development on specific curricular or instructional resources – such as the new writing program in Caldwell – they are representing the expectations of the division. Teacher may vary in their willingness to adopt this new curriculum, thus creating tension between the teacher and coach. Division leaders can support coaches in thinking about ways to present information to the staff, as well as how to address conflict that may arise if teachers have concerns about changes put into place.

Division support could take the form of more consistent coach meetings with division leaders. Coaches may also benefit from having a mentor or coach of their own. Several participants in Caldwell described feeling isolated because they are the only coach in the building, and they described variation in how frequently they communicate with other coaches outside of monthly meetings. Coaches in their first few years should be given access to a mentor with coaching experience. Possible mentors include more veteran coaches in the division or a division specialist with school-based coaching experience. School-based administrators – from a different building than where the coach works – could also be considered for the mentoring role if they have coaching experience and, in their administrative role, have demonstrated they understanding the distinction between the coach's role and the administrator's role. More veteran coaches might also benefit from being paired with another coach to have someone with whom they discuss challenges and explore new ways of approaching problems.

Recommendation #2: Provide joint training for building leaders and instructional coaches

Participants emphasized the importance of working together to distinguish the role of the non-evaluative coach from that of the evaluative administrator, a critical feature of the Knight (2007) instructional coaching model. In Caldwell, this distinction has been essential for gaining teachers' trust and increasing their willingness to work with the coaches. To support these

efforts, the division should provide joint professional development for building leaders and instructional coaches. During these sessions, individuals could explore research and resources related to effective instructional coaching practices. Individuals with experience could select advanced topics for further investigation, such as coaching teams of teachers and working with veteran teachers. Significant time should be spent collaboratively planning for the school year. Planning work could include outlining the responsibilities of each member of the instructional leadership team, developing a plan for communicating that information to the staff, and establishing routines and norms for ongoing communication within the instructional leadership team and with the team and the teachers in the school.

Administrators and coaches can also use this opportunity to revisit the instructional vision of the school and ensure that all aspects of teacher professional development are well aligned. Participants in Caldwell highlighted the value of having a coaching program that supported the vision of the school and the division. This alignment helped teachers understand the relevance of the professional development they received throughout the year. Bringing division and school leaders together would ensure everyone heard the same messages from division leadership. It would also allow administrators and coaches to plan how the division's instructional vision would be communicated to the staff and aligned to the school vision and specific coaching activities.

Recommendation #3: Ensure coaching remains voluntary for teachers

In the Knight (2007) model of coaching, it is imperative that teachers have a sense of agency in the coaching process. Teachers and coaches work as peers, and although the coach brings a degree of expertise to the partnership, the teachers' strengths and interests are equally valued. For this reason, it is important that coaching remain voluntary for teachers. When

coaching is voluntary, teachers make a decision to enter into the coaching relationship. If a teacher has made that choice, the teacher may be more willing to reveal areas of weakness, and it is easier for the coach to establish trust.

When a principal identifies a struggling teacher – often through the teacher evaluation process – a seemingly logical next step might be to assign the coach to work with that teacher. However, as several participants in Caldwell noted, coaching can then be perceived as a consequence for poor performance in the classroom. The teacher might be less willing to discuss areas of weakness, which hinders professional learning and growth. It may also become more difficult to establish trust between the teacher and coach because, as one Caldwell participant noted, the coach may inclined to share information about the teacher's performance with the administration. Principals should only present coaching as one of several options so that struggling teachers maintain a sense of agency over the professional learning process. If a struggling teacher selects an alternative form of professional development and performance does not improve, the principal can again present the coach as an additional resource for professional learning. Principals and assistant principals, who often have training in coaching or mentoring, could also step in to provide instructional support as part of the teacher evaluation process. This would allow them to provide some coaching to that teacher without compromising the non-evaluative nature of the instructional coach's role within the building. A positive experience with coaching in that context might encourage the teacher to seek out the non-evaluative coach in the future.

Recommendations: Curry Leadership Academy

These findings also have implications for the training and support provided to coaches and their colleges. For this reason, I present several recommendations for the Curry Leadership Academy:

1. Increase opportunities for collaborative planning and problem solving among academy participants.
2. Offer breakout sessions differentiated by role (i.e., central office administrator, principal, instructional coach)
3. Facilitate ongoing opportunities for learning after the conclusion of the academy.
4. Conduct yearly evaluations to identify local needs and align the academy curriculum.

When developing these recommendations, I considered the Curry Leadership Academy's broad curriculum, as it is not focused solely on instructional coaching. Although these recommendations stem from the findings from this study, I anticipate they can be applied in various ways to the content and structure of the academy.

Recommendation #1: Increase Opportunities for Collaborative Planning and Problem Solving Among Academy Participants

Learning is, in itself, a social activity (Vygotsky, 1978). Opportunities to discuss information and build on the ideas of others can promote deeper understanding. Opportunities to debrief experiences with others can also facilitate deeper reflection (Athanses & Martin, 2006). Findings from this study suggest sensemaking was an ongoing, collective activity in Caldwell. Participants in all role had opportunities to interact and negotiate what the coaching role was intended to be and how it was actually enacted. Coaches also emphasized the importance of aligning their work to division- and school-level initiatives to ensure teachers viewed their professional learning as coherent and relevant. The academy facilitators might consider

increasing the amount of time given to participants to engage in in-depth planning and discussion with members of their school or school division. Additional workshop time would allow participants to define roles and responsibilities for the coming year, a task some participants took the initiative to do on their own. These conversations would also allow school personnel to examine the ways in which their upcoming reform efforts aligned to develop a coherent plan for professional learning for teachers.

Planning sessions could also provide opportunities for participants to brainstorm strategies to approach common issues, such as communicating the role of the coach to others, building relationships with teachers, and measuring coaches' effectiveness. Research also suggests building productive working relationships throughout schools can support problem solving and innovation (e.g., Joyce & Calhoun, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1997). By developing these relationships at the academy, participants would have a stronger network on which to draw when the school year started. School division personnel could expand that network by joining with representatives from other divisions for some of these planning conversations. When learners are actively engaged in learning activities, they are also better able to monitor their own understanding (National Research Council, 2000). These sessions would increase participants' opportunities to recognize where they, as a division, are ready to take on certain issues and what questions they have as they move forward with their coaching programs.

This past year, the academy facilitators made efforts to recruit participants to attend with others from the same school or school division. In marketing materials and communications to each division, it may be helpful to highlight specific opportunities teams will have to work together to strategize for the coming year. Informing potential participants about in-depth

opportunities to link the workshop content to their needs for the upcoming school year could encourage individuals to attend even if they feel their schedules are full for the summer.

Recommendation #2: Offer Breakout Sessions Differentiated by Role

Learners are more motivated when they see the relevance of what they are learning and understand how to use that learning to impact others (National Research Council, 2000). This study's findings highlight specific differences in the roles of various individuals who work with the instructional coach program. Participants should be given multiple opportunities to work with individuals in similar roles (i.e., division administrator, school administrator, coach). In-depth work sessions would allow them to identify and begin to solve problems of practice specific to their roles.

Central office personnel would benefit from opportunities to think critically about how they support coaching work in schools. Messages about coaching roles and responsibilities originate at the division level, and central office personnel need to consider what messages they are communicating and how they are reinforcing those messages with school leaders. Central office personnel must also consider what professional development they need to provide to coaches so they feel prepared to enact division reform initiatives and support teacher learning. In addition, central office personnel should plan to provide professional development to administrators to help them understand the purpose of the coach and strategies for using a coach effectively in their schools.

Given the central role administrators play in coaching work, they must develop a clear plan for fitting the coach into the administrative structure of the school. As Bill highlighted, although administrators themselves may engage in coaching activities, coaching looks different when enacted by someone in a non-evaluative role. Once roles are defined, administrators are

responsible for communicating messages about coaching to the teaching staff and must think about how they can make clear the role of each individual on the school leadership team. It may also be beneficial for administrators to discuss strategies for monitoring the effectiveness of coaching. Teacher observations, which are a common part of the evaluation process, may be a useful tool for monitoring the progress of teachers working with a coach to improve their practice. Administrators must be strategic in how they use those observations, however, to avoid blurring the lines between coaching and evaluation.

Instructional coaches face a similar challenge; they must develop a plan for building trust with teachers and making sure teachers understand the difference between the coach and the school administrators. Coaches should develop specific strategies for building and maintaining relationships with teachers and for ensuring confidentiality to preserve trust. Coaches would also benefit from opportunities to share strategies for balancing competing priorities and meeting multiple demands when time is limited. Often schools only have one coach, which can lead to feelings of isolation. Opportunities to engage with coaches within and across divisions would enable coaches to build a wider network on which they can draw during the school year.

Participants at the Curry Leadership Academy also include mentor teachers and university supervisors who will be working for the University of Virginia the following year. During these breakout sessions, the academy facilitators could draw on the clinical educator training they use during the school year to provide targeted professional development for these individuals that aligns with their upcoming work assignments.

Although the Curry Leadership Academy is not entirely focused on instructional coaching, the suggestions presented here represent only a few ways in which breakout sessions by role could be beneficial. Because coaching takes on a different form when enacted by

individuals with different roles, opportunities to collaborate with individuals in similar positions would given participants of the academy an important opportunity to identify additional problems of practice.

Recommendation #3: Facilitate Ongoing Opportunities for Learning After the Conclusion of the Academy

Many consider coaching to be a potentially effective form of professional development because it is embedded in the authentic contexts in which teachers work. It is typically sustained over time, allowing the coach's work to adapt to the changing needs of the teacher. The Curry Leadership Academy, however, represents the one-shot workshops coaching is intended to remedy. The academy facilitators could extend the academy beyond the initial three days of professional development offered in the summer. At the time of the academy, participants may not yet be aware of many issues they will face throughout the year. Creating additional learning opportunities during the school year would allow participants to apply their learning to new problems of practice that arise.

The academy facilitators could also host virtual and in-person meetings to connect individuals across school divisions. Prior to the meetings, the academy facilitators should ask participants to submit questions and concerns that have arisen as they have engaged in coaching work. The facilitators could use these questions to group the participants, develop the meeting agendas, and select relevant resources. Participants could be grouped in a variety of ways, such as by role, division coaching model, or years of implementation. These groupings could change throughout the year based on the content of each session.

These meetings should include opportunities for participants to practice coaching conversations as individuals share issues they would like to discuss. The academy facilitators

should encourage participants to follow through on these conversations and continue the dialogue outside of the meetings. Matching participants to coach one another would allow participants to take ownership of the process while reducing the personnel needed from the university.

Recommendation #4: Conduct yearly evaluations to identify local needs and align the academy curriculum

For any program, needs assessments are important to ensure the program addresses actual needs rather than perceived needs (Killion, 2008). The academy facilitators should pair the post-academy survey currently in place with a needs assessment that gives them insight into the needs of local practitioners. An annual needs assessment would help the facilitators identify issues important to potential participants, such as Caldwell's desire to learn strategies for measuring the effectiveness of coaches. Engaging participants once they have returned to schools would also provide greater insight into the degree to which the academy participants find value in the academy after several months.

Facilitators could begin by sending a survey to a range of stakeholders across various school divisions in the commonwealth. Information from this initial survey could be used to purposefully sample a few key informants who would be contacted for an in-depth phone call to discuss the identified issues. Facilitators could also tap into existing professional networks – such as the Virginia chapters of ASCD and AACTE – to build relationships with K-12 educators and solicit feedback. The facilitators of the academy have already drawn on many of these resources, and formalizing this process through an annual needs assessment would provide a systematic way to think about curricular revisions going forward.

Chapter Six

Action Communications

To: Caldwell School Division Leaders

From: Jillian Perlow McGraw, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
University of Virginia
405 Emmet S South
Charlottesville, VA 22904

Dear Caldwell School Division Leaders:

I am reporting findings and recommendations based on a follow-up investigation of the Curry Leadership Academy, which several individuals from your school division attended. After reviewing and analyzing post-academy survey responses from all academy participants, I interviewed eight individuals in Caldwell to capture their perspectives on the instructional coach role. Six of these individuals attended the academy, and two others did not. This case study was exploratory, and these findings and recommendations are meant to be used as a starting point for further investigation of coaching in K-12 schools.

The findings of the study are as follows:

1. Earning buy-in from teachers was a gradual process. Several factors – consistency in personnel, the structure of the coaching program, and individual characteristics of coaches – influenced the degree to which teachers engaged in coaching work.
2. Administrators were central to the way coaching was conceptualized and enacted in schools. Coaches and principals worked collaboratively to determine priorities, though ultimately principals set the instructional vision for the school. In years prior, several administrators in Caldwell treated their coaches as an extension of the administration, thus blurring the line between coaching and evaluation.
3. Coaches had to balance demands from division leaders, school leaders, and individual teachers. Coaches felt overwhelmed by these competing priorities and did not have enough time to meet all of their coaching goals.
4. Division support facilitated coaching work in schools. This support took the form of monthly coach meetings, on-site visits from division specialists, and resources to support the implementation of new curricula. Division leaders also reinforced messages about coaching during on-site visits with principals.

Based on these findings, I present the following recommendations to support your work.

Recommendation #1: Help instructional coaches understand their roles as intermediaries

These findings align with literature suggesting coaches serve as intermediaries (e.g., Coburn & Russell, 2008; Hubbard, Mehan, & Stein, 2006; Swinnerton, 2007). In Caldwell, coaches serve as intermediaries between the school administration and the school's teachers, as

well as intermediaries between division personnel and school personnel. Division leaders should continue providing direct support to coaches to help them understand and address tensions that can arise from this role. Participants described the challenge of balancing competing priorities with division leaders, school leaders, and teachers when they have misaligned expectations for coaches' work. It became particularly difficult for Caldwell's coaches to balance competing priorities when they felt they had limited time to allocate to their various responsibilities. In addition, coaches may not recognize every area where tensions have arisen as they have worked for teachers. For example, when coaches provide professional development on specific curricular or instructional resources – such as the new writing program in Caldwell – they are representing the expectations of the division. Teacher may vary in their willingness to adopt this new curriculum, thus creating tension between the teacher and coach. Division leaders can support coaches in thinking about ways to present information to the staff, as well as how to address conflict that may arise if teachers have concerns about changes put into place.

Division support could take the form of more consistent coach meetings with division leaders. Coaches may also benefit from having a mentor or coach of their own. Several participants in Caldwell described feeling isolated because they are the only coach in the building, and they described variation in how frequently they communicate with other coaches outside of monthly meetings. Coaches in their first few years should be given access to a mentor with coaching experience. Possible mentors include more veteran coaches in the division or a division specialist with school-based coaching experience. School-based administrators – from a different building than where the coach works – could also be considered for the mentoring role if they have coaching experience and, in their administrative role, have demonstrated they understanding the distinction between the coach's role and the administrator's role. More veteran coaches might also benefit from being paired with another coach to have someone with whom they discuss challenges and explore new ways of approaching problems.

Recommendation #2: Provide joint training for building leaders and instructional coaches

Participants emphasized the importance of working together to distinguish the role of the non-evaluative coach from that of the evaluative administrator, a critical feature of the Knight (2007) instructional coaching model. In Caldwell, this distinction has been essential for gaining teachers' trust and increasing their willingness to work with the coaches. To support these efforts, the division should provide joint professional development for building leaders and instructional coaches. During these sessions, individuals could explore research and resources related to effective instructional coaching practices. Individuals with experience could select advanced topics for further investigation, such as coaching teams of teachers and working with veteran teachers. Significant time should be spent collaboratively planning for the school year. Planning work could include outlining the responsibilities of each member of the instructional leadership team, developing a plan for communicating that information to the staff, and establishing routines and norms for ongoing communication within the instructional leadership team and with the team and the teachers in the school.

Administrators and coaches can also use this opportunity to revisit the instructional vision of the school and ensure that all aspects of teacher professional development are well aligned. Participants in Caldwell highlighted the value of having a coaching program that supported the vision of the school and the division. This alignment helped teachers understand the relevance of the professional development they received throughout the year. Bringing division and school leaders together would ensure everyone heard the same messages from division leadership. It

would also allow administrators and coaches to plan how the division's instructional vision would be communicated to the staff and aligned to the school vision and specific coaching activities.

Recommendation #3: Ensure coaching remains voluntary for teachers

In the Knight (2007) model of coaching, it is imperative that teachers have a sense of agency in the coaching process. Teachers and coaches work as peers, and although the coach brings a degree of expertise to the partnership, the teachers' strengths and interests are equally valued. For this reason, it is important that coaching remain voluntary for teachers. When coaching is voluntary, teachers make a decision to enter into the coaching relationship. If a teacher has made that choice, the teacher may be more willing to reveal areas of weakness, and it is easier for the coach to establish trust.

When a principal identifies a struggling teacher – often through the teacher evaluation process – a seemingly logical next step might be to assign the coach to work with that teacher. However, as several participants in Caldwell noted, coaching can then be perceived as a consequence for poor performance in the classroom. The teacher might be less willing to discuss areas of weakness, which hinders professional learning and growth. It may also become more difficult to establish trust between the teacher and coach because, as one Caldwell participant noted, the coach may inclined to share information about the teacher's performance with the administration. Principals should only present coaching as one of several options so that struggling teachers maintain a sense of agency over the professional learning process. If a struggling teacher selects an alternative form of professional development and performance does not improve, the principal can again present the coach as an additional resource for professional learning. Principals and assistant principals, who often have training in coaching or mentoring, could also step in to provide instructional support as part of the teacher evaluation process. This would allow them to provide some coaching to that teacher without compromising the non-evaluative nature of the instructional coach's role within the building. A positive experience with coaching in that context might encourage the teacher to seek out the non-evaluative coach in the future.

I hope these findings and recommendations will be of use as you continue to develop your instructional coaching program. If I can provide any additional information about this project, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jillian Perlow McGraw

To: Curry Leadership Academy Facilitators
Curry School of Education
405 Emmet St S
Charlottesville, VA 22903

From: Jillian Perlow McGraw, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
University of Virginia
405 Emmet S South
Charlottesville, VA 22904

Dear Curry Leadership Academy Facilitators:

I am reporting findings and recommendations based on a case study of one school division, "Caldwell," which sent several participants to the Curry Leadership Academy. After reviewing and analyzing the post-academy survey responses from all participants, I interviewed eight individuals in Caldwell to capture their perspectives on the instructional coach role. Six of these individuals attended the academy, and two others did not. This case study was exploratory, and the findings are not meant to be generalized to other school divisions who sent participants to the academy. These findings and recommendations are meant to be used as a starting point for further investigation of coaching in K-12 schools.

The findings of the study are as follows:

1. Earning buy-in from teachers was a gradual process. Several factors – consistency in personnel, the structure of the coaching program, and individual characteristics of coaches – influenced the degree to which teachers engaged in coaching work.
2. Administrators were central to the way coaching was conceptualized and enacted in schools. Coaches and principals worked collaboratively to determine priorities, though ultimately principals set the instructional vision for the school. In years prior, several administrators in Caldwell treated their coaches as an extension of the administration, thus blurring the line between coaching and evaluation.
3. Coaches had to balance demands from division leaders, school leaders, and individual teachers. Coaches felt overwhelmed by these competing priorities and did not have enough time to meet all of their coaching goals.
4. Division support facilitated coaching work in schools. This support took the form of monthly coach meetings, on-site visits from division specialists, and resources to support the implementation of new curricula. Division leaders also reinforced messages about coaching during on-site visits with principals.

Based on these findings, I present the following recommendations to support your work. When developing these recommendations, I considered the Curry Leadership Academy's broad curriculum, as it is not focused solely on instructional coaching. Although these recommendations stem from the findings from this study, I anticipate they can be applied in various ways to the content and structure of the academy.

Recommendation #1: Increase Opportunities for Collaborative Planning and Problem Solving Among Academy Participants

Learning is, in itself, a social activity (Vygotsky, 1978). Opportunities to discuss information and build on the ideas of others can promote deeper understanding. Opportunities to debrief experiences with others can also facilitate deeper reflection (Athanses & Martin, 2006). Findings from this study suggest sensemaking was an ongoing, collective activity in Caldwell. Participants in all role had opportunities to interact and negotiate what the coaching role was intended to be and how it was actually enacted. Coaches also emphasized the importance of aligning their work to division- and school-level initiatives to ensure teachers viewed their professional learning as coherent and relevant. The academy facilitators might consider increasing the amount of time given to participants to engage in in-depth planning and discussion with members of their school or school division. Additional workshop time would allow participants to define roles and responsibilities for the coming year, a task some participants took the initiative to do on their own. These conversations would also allow school personnel to examine the ways in which their upcoming reform efforts aligned to develop a coherent plan for professional learning for teachers.

Planning sessions could also provide opportunities for participants to brainstorm strategies to approach common issues, such as communicating the role of the coach to others, building relationships with teachers, and measuring coaches' effectiveness. Research also suggests building productive working relationships throughout schools can support problem solving and innovation (e.g., Joyce & Calhoun, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1997). By developing these relationships at the academy, participants would have a stronger network on which to draw when the school year started. School division personnel could expand that network by joining with representatives from other divisions for some of these planning conversations. When learners are actively engaged in learning activities, they are also better able to monitor their own understanding (National Research Council, 2000). These sessions would increase participants' opportunities to recognize where they, as a division, are ready to take on certain issues and what questions they have as they move forward with their coaching programs.

This past year, the academy facilitators made efforts to recruit participants to attend with others from the same school or school division. In marketing materials and communications to each division, it may be helpful to highlight specific opportunities teams will have to work together to strategize for the coming year. Informing potential participants about in-depth opportunities to link the workshop content to their needs for the upcoming school year could encourage individuals to attend even if they feel their schedules are full for the summer.

Recommendation #2: Offer Breakout Sessions Differentiated by Role

Learners are more motivated when they see the relevance of what they are learning and understand how to use that learning to impact others (National Research Council, 2000). This study's findings highlight specific differences in the roles of various individuals who work with the instructional coach program. Participants should be given multiple opportunities to work with individuals in similar roles (i.e., division administrator, school administrator, coach). In-depth work sessions would allow them to identify and begin to solve problems of practice specific to their roles.

Central office personnel would benefit from opportunities to think critically about how they support coaching work in schools. Messages about coaching roles and responsibilities originate at the division level, and central office personnel need to consider what messages they

are communicating and how they are reinforcing those messages with school leaders. Central office personnel must also consider what professional development they need to provide to coaches so they feel prepared to enact division reform initiatives and support teacher learning. In addition, central office personnel should plan to provide professional development to administrators to help them understand the purpose of the coach and strategies for using a coach effectively in their schools.

Given the central role administrators play in coaching work, they must develop a clear plan for fitting the coach into the administrative structure of the school. As Bill highlighted, although administrators themselves may engage in coaching activities, coaching looks different when enacted by someone in a non-evaluative role. Once roles are defined, administrators are responsible for communicating messages about coaching to the teaching staff and must think about how they can make clear the role of each individual on the school leadership team. It may also be beneficial for administrators to discuss strategies for monitoring the effectiveness of coaching. Teacher observations, which are a common part of the evaluation process, may be a useful tool for monitoring the progress of teachers working with a coach to improve their practice. Administrators must be strategic in how they use those observations, however, to avoid blurring the lines between coaching and evaluation.

Instructional coaches face a similar challenge; they must develop a plan for building trust with teachers and making sure teachers understand the difference between the coach and the school administrators. Coaches should develop specific strategies for building and maintaining relationships with teachers and for ensuring confidentiality to preserve trust. Coaches would also benefit from opportunities to share strategies for balancing competing priorities and meeting multiple demands when time is limited. Often schools only have one coach, which can lead to feelings of isolation. Opportunities to engage with coaches within and across divisions would enable coaches to build a wider network on which they can draw during the school year.

Participants at the Curry Leadership Academy also include mentor teachers and university supervisors who will be working for the University of Virginia the following year. During these breakout sessions, the academy facilitators could draw on the clinical educator training they use during the school year to provide targeted professional development for these individuals that aligns with their upcoming work assignments.

Although the Curry Leadership Academy is not entirely focused on instructional coaching, the suggestions presented here represent only a few ways in which breakout sessions by role could be beneficial. Because coaching takes on a different form when enacted by individuals with different roles, opportunities to collaborate with individuals in similar positions would given participants of the academy an important opportunity to identify additional problems of practice.

Recommendation #3: Facilitate Ongoing Opportunities for Learning After the Conclusion of the Academy

Many consider coaching to be a potentially effective form of professional development because it is embedded in the authentic contexts in which teachers work. It is typically sustained over time, allowing the coach's work to adapt to the changing needs of the teacher. The Curry Leadership Academy, however, represents the one-shot workshops coaching is intended to remedy. The academy facilitators could extend the academy beyond the initial three days of professional development offered in the summer. At the time of the academy, participants may not yet be aware of many issues they will face throughout the year. Creating additional learning

opportunities during the school year would allow participants to apply their learning to new problems of practice that arise.

The academy facilitators could also host virtual and in-person meetings to connect individuals across school divisions. Prior to the meetings, the academy facilitators should ask participants to submit questions and concerns that have arisen as they have engaged in coaching work. The facilitators could use these questions to group the participants, develop the meeting agendas, and select relevant resources. Participants could be grouped in a variety of ways, such as by role, division coaching model, or years of implementation. These groupings could change throughout the year based on the content of each session.

These meetings should include opportunities for participants to practice coaching conversations as individuals share issues they would like to discuss. The academy facilitators should encourage participants to follow through on these conversations and continue the dialogue outside of the meetings. Matching participants to coach one another would allow participants to take ownership of the process while reducing the personnel needed from the university.

Recommendation #4: Conduct yearly evaluations to identify local needs and align the academy curriculum

For any program, needs assessments are important to ensure the program addresses actual needs rather than perceived needs (Killion, 2008). The academy facilitators should pair the post-academy survey currently in place with a needs assessment that gives them insight into the needs of local practitioners. An annual needs assessment would help the facilitators identify issues important to potential participants, such as Caldwell's desire to learn strategies for measuring the effectiveness of coaches. Engaging participants once they have returned to schools would also provide greater insight into the degree to which the academy participants find value in the academy after several months.

Facilitators could begin by sending a survey to a range of stakeholders across various school divisions in the commonwealth. Information from this initial survey could be used to purposefully sample a few key informants who would be contacted for an in-depth phone call to discuss the identified issues. Facilitators could also tap into existing professional networks – such as the Virginia chapters of ASCD and AACTE – to build relationships with K-12 educators and solicit feedback. The facilitators of the academy have already drawn on many of these resources, and formalizing this process through an annual needs assessment would provide a systematic way to think about curricular revisions going forward.

I hope these findings and recommendations will be of use as you plan for the next year of the academy. If I can provide any additional information about this project, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jillian Perlow McGraw

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Appendix A

Invitation Email for Phase 1 Survey

Dear ${m://FirstName},

Thank you so much for participating in the Curry Leadership Academy. We enjoyed exploring coaching issues with you this past week. As we mentioned in our last session, we would love your feedback on this experience. Your insights and suggestions are invaluable as we make revisions for next year as well as explore ways that we can continue to support you in your work. We ask that you please take 10-15 minutes to complete the following survey. Your responses are anonymous and will not be linked to your name and other identifying information.

Follow this link to the Survey:
${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the survey}

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
${l://SurveyURL}

If you have any questions, you may contact me at jep4j@virginia.edu.

Thank you, and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Jillian McGraw

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

Appendix B

Recruitment Email for Phase 2 Interviews

Participant Recruitment Email Template – Instructional Coaches

Dear {{first name}},

Thank you again for your participation in the Curry Leadership Academy!

You may already have completed a survey to provide your initial impressions of the academy and its usefulness for your role as a coach. In this next phase of the program evaluation, we are looking for {{instructional coaches}} to participate in a follow-up interview to help us better understand how you conceptualize your role and the degree to which the academy aligned with your needs. Interviews will take place over the phone or as a video call, and they will last approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

This research study is part of my doctoral capstone project and has IRB approval (Project # 2016-0250-00). You may contact me with questions at any time:
jep4j@virginia.edu
(202) 380-6387

Thank you for your consideration! Your input will be very valuable as we plan for future years of the academy.

Sincerely,

Jillian McGraw
Ed.D. Candidate, Curriculum and Instruction
University of Virginia

Participant Recruitment Email Template – Other Key Informants

Dear {{first name}},

My name is Jillian McGraw, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Virginia. This past summer, I co-facilitated the Curry Leadership Academy, a professional development workshop for instructional leaders.

For my capstone research, I am investigating how school teams make sense of the coaching role and policies surrounding that role. Information from this investigation will help the academy facilitators understand the degree to which the Curry Leadership Academy meet local needs so that it can be improved for the coming year.

We are looking for {{role}} to participate in an to help us better understand how you conceptualize your work with instructional coaches. Interviews will take place over the phone or as a video call, and they will last approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

This research study is part of my doctoral capstone project and has IRB approval (Project # 2016-0250-00). You may contact me with questions at any time:
jep4j@virginia.edu
(202) 380-6387

Thank you for your consideration! Your input will be very valuable as we plan for future years of the academy.

Sincerely,

Jillian McGraw
Ed.D. Candidate, Curriculum and Instruction
University of Virginia

Appendix C

Original IRB Protocol and Letter of Approval

Protocol Form

Using this document:

- The purposed of this document is to provide you with a guide for providing the information that the IRB-SBS needs in order to review your protocol. Each question provides instructions as well as suggestions for completing the question. After every **Instruction** section, there is a **Response** area; please provide your answer in **Response** area.
- In addition, any blue underlined text is linked to related areas in our Researcher's Guide on our website. If you have questions about how to respond to a question, start with the Researcher's Guide and then contact our office for additional help.

Submitting a protocol:

- This document has three parts: **Section A "Investigator's Agreement**," **Section B "Protocol Information,"** and **Section C "Description of the Research Study."** To submit a protocol, complete this document and email it and any accompanying materials (i.e. consent forms, recruitment materials, instruments) to irbsbs@virginia.edu. For more information on what to submit and how, please see Submitting a Protocol.
- **Please note that we can only accept forms in Microsoft Word format and in this form only. Do not submit your responses in a separate document.** We do not accept hand-written documents (with the exception of the signature on the Investigator's Agreement). Please submit the electronic form in its entirety; do not remove the signature pages from the document even though you will submit these pages as a pdf/hard copy. Do not alter this form; simply provide your responses in the **Response** area. **Forms that are not completed correctly will be returned to you and you will be required to complete them correctly before they are accepted. No exceptions!** If you need help using our form, please contact our office. For tips and suggestions for completing the protocol, please see Protocol and Informed Consent Tips.
- **Section A "Investigator's Agreement"** must also be submitted with signatures. Signed materials can be submitted by mail, fax (434-924-1992), or email (scanned document to irbsbs@virginia.edu). Signed materials can also be submitted in person to our office.
- In order to not delay your review, make sure that you (and any researcher listed on the protocol) have completed the CITI training in human subjects research.
- You will be contacted in 3-7 business days regarding your submission (depending on the protocol queue). Please see Protocol Review Process for more information.

A. Investigator Agreement

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, THE INVESTIGATOR AGREES:

1. That **no participants will be recruited** or data accessed under the protocol **until** the Investigator has received the **final approval or exemption letter** signed by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (IRB-SBS) or designee.
2. That **no participants will be recruited** or entered under the protocol **until** all researchers for the project including the Faculty Advisor have completed their **human investigation educational requirement** (CITI training is required every 3 years for UVA researchers).
3. That any **modifications of the protocol or consent form** will not be implemented without prior **written approval** from the IRB-SBS Chair or designee except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the participants.
4. That any **deviation from the protocol and/or consent form** that are serious, unexpected and related to the study or a **death** occurring during the study **will be reported promptly to the SBS Review Board** in writing.
5. That all protocol forms for **continuations of this protocol** will be **completed** and returned **within the time limit stated** on the renewal notification letter.
6. That **all participants will be recruited and consented as stated in the protocol approved or exempted** by the IRB-SBS board. If written consent is required, all participants will be consented by signing a copy of the consent form that has a non-expired IRB approval stamp.
7. That the IRB-SBS office will be notified within **30 days** of a **change in the Principal Investigator** for the study.
8. That the IRB-SBS office will be notified when **the active study is complete**.

Jillian McGraw	**6/27/16**
Principal Investigator (print)	**Date**
Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy	
Protocol Title	**Protocol Number (SBS office only)**

Principal Investigator's Signature

FOR STUDENT AND STAFF PROPOSALS ONLY
BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, THE FACULTY ADVISOR HAS READ THE PROPOSAL FOR RESEARCH AND AGREES:

1. To **assume overall responsibility** for the conduct of this research and investigator.
2. To **work with the investigator**, and with the SBS Review Board, as needed, in **maintaining compliance with this agreement**.
3. That the **Principal Investigator is qualified to perform this study**.

Catherine Brighton	
Faculty Advisor (print)	**Date**

Faculty Advisor's Signature

The SBS Review Board reserves the right to terminate this study at any time if, in its opinion, (1) the risks of further experimentation are prohibitive, or (2) the above agreement is breached.

Protocol Form

B. Protocol Information

IRB-SBS Protocol Number (assigned by SBS office, leave blank):	
IRB-SBS Grant Approval number: (If you received a Grant Approval prior to submitting a protocol, please include the number issued by our office. If you did not submit a Grant Approval Form, please leave this line blank.)	
Submission Type (delete all those that don't apply):	**New Protocol**
Protocol Title:	**Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy**
Principal Investigator:	Jillian McGraw
Professional Title:	Doctoral student
School (Curry, Medical, Arts & Sciences, etc):	Curry
Department (CISE, Family Medicine, Psychology, etc):	CISE
Campus Box number:	n/a
Mailing Address (only if campus box number is not available):	1210 Oak Hill Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22902
Telephone:	(202) 380-6387
UVA e mail address (no aliases, please): *Your computing ID is used for tracking your IRB CITI training.*	Jep4j@virginia.edu
Preferred e-mail address for correspondence (if applicable):	
You are (delete all those that don't apply):	**Graduate Student**
This research is for (delete all those that don't apply):	**Doctoral Dissertation**

Primary contact for the protocol (if other than the principal investigator):	
Contact's Email:	
Contact's Phone:	

Faculty Advisor:

	Catherine Brighton
School (Curry, Medical, Arts & Sciences, etc):	Curry
Department (CISE, Family Medicine, Psychology, etc):	CISE
Campus Box number:	400873
Telephone:	(434) 924-1022
UVA e mail address (no aliases, please): *Your computing ID is used for tracking on-line human subjects training.*	Cmb3s@virginia.edu

Other Researchers*:

Please list all other researchers in this study that are associated with UVA.* Please provide the following information for each researcher: Name, UVA email address (no aliases, please.)	**Faculty/Staff:** Pamela Tucker (pdt8n@eservices.virginia.edu) Adria Hoffman (arh3b@eservices.virginia.edu) **Doctoral Students:** Meredith McCool (mlm3af@virginia.edu)
Please list all other researchers not associated with UVA.* Please provide the following information for each researcher: Name, Institution, Phone Number, Mailing Address, Email Address.	

Funding Source: **If research is funded, please provide the following:**

Name of the funding source (NIH, NFS, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, etc)	

Type of funding source (delete all that **don't** apply):	
Describe the funding source (optional unless you selected "sub contract" above)	
funding period (month/year):	
grant number:	

Paying Participants: If you are paying participants using State or UVa funds (including grants), you are required to complete the **UVa or State Funds Study Payment Procedures Form.** (Please describe your payment process in question 3-b in the next section.) **Please mark an "x" in the appropriate box (to the right):**	I am paying participants using State or UVa funds (including grants) and will include the UVa or State Funds Study Payment Procedures Form.		I am not paying participants or I am not using State or UVa funds (including grants).	X

Anticipated start date for collecting and analyzing data:	**July 11, 2016**
Anticipated completion date for collecting and analyzing data:	**April 30, 2017**

*** Please only list researchers that are working directly with human subjects and/or their data. All researchers listed on the protocol must complete the IRB-SBS Training or provide proof of completing IRB training at their institution. If you have any questions about whether a researcher should be listed on the protocol or if a researcher has completed training, please contact our office (irbsbshelp@virginia.edu). Proof of training can be submitted to our office via fax (434-924-1992), by mail (PO Box 800392 Charlottesville, VA 22908-0392) or by email (irbsbs@virginia.edu).**

C. Description of the Research Study

1. **Study Overview:** Give a brief overview of your project. Consider the following when framing your response:
    - What is your purpose in conducting this research? What makes the project interesting and worth doing?
    - Include information about the study's logistics (where and when it will be conducted, what instruments you will use, etc). What will you be asking participants to do, and what do you hope to learn from these activities?
    - If your study has more than one phase, please clearly map out the different phases.
    - If your study is a multi-site study, please describe.

Response 1: (enter response below this header)

Purpose: Coaching is considered a valuable tool for building capacity within school divisions and providing sustained, targeted professional development to teachers as they work to support student learning. A growing body of evidence suggests coaching may hold the potential to improve teaching practices and, ultimately, student outcomes (Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). Effective coaching must be grounded in instruction-focused learning, the use of evidence, and systematic observation of practice, and coaches must learn to differentiate their approach to meet the needs of individual teachers (Annenberg Institute for School Reform [AISR], 2004). The effectiveness of coaches may also be influenced by their own understanding of and expectations for the role (Chval et al., 2010). The Curry Leadership Academy (http://curry.virginia.edu/pages/curry-leadership-academy-coaching-for-change) is a 3-day workshop for PK-12 administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers. The academy includes content focused on understanding the types of coaching and feedback, building relationships, developing communication skills, and refining instructional observation skills.

There is a need for systematic documentation of the processes and impact of training for coaches and coaching models (AISR, 2004). The purpose of the proposed study is to conduct a program evaluation of the Curry Leadership Academy. The focus of the study is on participants' experiences during the academy, feelings of preparation to apply knowledge and skills gained during the academy, and experiences enacting coaching strategies in the months following the academy. Data are routinely collected as part of ongoing program evaluation and internal review. We propose conducting an in-depth analysis of these data. Feedback about the academy will inform programmatic decisions for implementation in the next year, as well as informing others in the field of its potential value for the training of coaches and others serving in coaching roles.

Logistics: The academy will take place at two sites: the UVA Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church and in Bavaro and Ruffner halls at the Curry School of Education. Each academy will last for three consecutive days. During the academy, participants will engage in direction instruction, small group work, partner work, and individual reflection as they develop and refine their knowledge and skills for effective coaching. Data collection will include a brief survey at the conclusion of the academy. The survey will address participants' attitudes regarding the content, processes, and context of the training (Guskey, 2000).

2. **Participants: Please describe as best you can the population(s) you plan to work with.** Please describe them in the terms that are most pertinent to your project. We need to understand how working with them will further your research objectives and what steps need to be taken in order to minimize risk to them. **Please respond to questions a-e in this section.**

a. Please fill in the following blanks below. If you are working with more than one population, please provide information for each group.

Response 2-a: (enter response below this header)

The participants will be administrators, instructional coaches, teachers, and university supervisors participating in the Curry Leadership Academy. Approximately 60 participants will participate in the Northern Virginia academy, and approximately 100 will participate in the Charlottesville academy. All participants of the three-day workshop will be eligible to participate.

Age: 18 and older
Gender: female and male
Race: all racial and ethnic backgrounds
Estimated number of participants: 160

b. Describe how participants will be identified and selected to participate in the study. Are there specific populations that you will be targeting and if so, why? Are there potential participants that you will exclude from the study and if so, why?

Response 2-b: (enter response below this header)

All participants in the Curry Leadership Academy will be eligible to participate in data collection. The academy participants include administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers from Virginia K-12 school divisions. It will be made clear that no negative consequences will occur if they decline the opportunity to participate in the data collection.

We do not plan to exclude any potential participants from this project; all individuals participating in the academy will be eligible to participate.

c. Is the population and/or individual participant "risk-sensitive"? (You will have an opportunity to discuss the risks in more detail in the "Risks" section.) Is the population and/or individual participant "vulnerable"? (This issue relates to the participant's capacity consent; you will have an opportunity to discuss your consent procedures in more detail in the "Consents" section.)

Response 2-c: (enter response below this header)

No

d. Will you deceive and/or withhold information from the participants about the study? If so, please justify why deception and/or withholding information from the participants is necessary and describe the deception. Using deception requires specific consent forms and processes; please describe this process in the **Consent section** under **Response 3-a** and **3-b**.

Response 2-d: (enter response below this header)

No

e. What special experience or knowledge do you have that will allow you to work productively and respectfully with your participants?

Response 2-e: (enter response below this header)

The PI, Jillian McGraw, is a doctoral student in Curriculum & Instruction in the Curry School. Prior to attending Curry, she taught in a Virginia public school and served as a mentor, coach, and professional development facilitator. At the Curry School, she has served as a university supervisor, coached new university supervisors, co-facilitated mentor teacher and university supervisor training, and co-authored a revised university supervisor training program with an emphasis on coaching skills.

The PI will be working under the supervision of Catherine Brighton. Dr. Brighton is the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Affairs. She has more than 15 years of research experience in fields including school reform initiatives, teacher change, gifted education, and differentiation. Dr. Brighton also has experience in program evaluation and educational consulting.

3. **Consent:** Consent is an on-going process that starts when you first inform your participant about the study through your recruitment/advertising efforts and ends when the participant's data are no longer needed. The federal regulations require a formal consent process takes place where you provide participants with specific information about the study (usually provided in the consent form, see General Consent Template) and the participants are required to sign the form. Not every study will fit this mold and there are some alternative methods for conducting the formal consent procedure. **In general, the Board needs to understand how participants will be recruited and consented to participate in the study.** Please note that if your study qualifies for exemption, you will not be required to follow the federal regulations for consent, but the Board may require that you provide information about the study to the participant. **Please respond to questions a-d in this section.**
    a. How will you approach/recruit participants to participate in your research? **Please provide all materials used to contact participants in this study. These materials could include letters, emails, flyers, advertisements, etc. If you will contact participants verbally, please provide a script that outlines what you will say to participants.**

Response 3-a: (enter response below this header)

The intervention that will be the focus of this study – the Curry Leadership Academy – represents normal educational practice, as it is professional development program for principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders.

To encourage participation, we will initially announce the forthcoming survey to participants during the academy. When collecting survey data, an invitation email, along with the survey, will be sent to all participants. To help ensure a high level of participation, two follow up emails will be sent to participants who have not yet completed the survey.

    b. What is your consent process? Who will present the consent information and how will it be presented? How will you document consent? Are your participants able to sign a form, and if not, how will you document consent? Will you use more than one form (if you use more than one version of the consent form, each form needs to have a unique title in order for our staff to keep track of the different forms)? When and where will participants receive the consent form? Who will give them the consent form? Will you pay participants?

Response 3-b: (enter response below this header)

Each academy participant will be sent an email the week after the Curry Leadership Academy inviting them to participate in the evaluation of the program. The email will explain the purpose of the research, that participation is voluntary, and that by accessing the survey link and completing the survey, they are consenting to participate.

    c. Are any of your participants unable to consent (i.e. vulnerable population)? These populations include (but are not limited to): minors (participants under the legal age of consent), prisoners, and participants with diminished mental capacity. These participants generally need a parent (or surrogate) consent form and a participant assent form (prisoners being the likely exception unless they are minors too).

Response 3-c: (enter response below this header)

No, all of our participants will be able to provide consent.

d. What is your relationship to your participants? Do you know them personally or hold any position of authority over them? Do any of the researchers (including the faculty advisor) have positions of authority over the participants, such as grading authority, professional authority, etc.? Are there any relevant financial relationships?

Response 3-d: (enter response below this header)

The PI and additional researchers are the co-facilitators of the Curry Leadership Academy. They hold no position of authority over the participants. A fee was charged for participation in the program. Most individuals were funded by their school divisions and some paid for their own fees. All data will be de-identified prior to analysis.

4. **Materials/Data collected**: For most SBS studies, the risk to participants often lies in the information that is collected from them. Thus the manner in which the data are collected, how they are stored, and how the data are reported in your research is an important part of determining the risk to participants. When you develop your procedures, consider **minimizing or eliminating the collection of identifying information** where possible and **provide justification** as to why it needs to be collected. **Please respond to questions a-d in this section.**
   a. Are any of the data already collected? (If you are only using archival data, please use the Archival Data protocol form instead of this form.) Are the data publicly available or part of a private collection? Please describe the data set(s) and provide a list of data fields you will use (when applicable). What will you do to protect the confidentiality of the pre-existing data?

Response 4-a: (enter response below this header)

No, none of the data have already been collected.

b. What will you do to protect the privacy of your participants? Describe the process for collecting data from your participants. What will you do to protect the confidentiality of your participants? Describe the kinds of information you will gather and the material forms it will take. Describe the level to which the participant's identity will be known, if that information will be collected (and why), and how the identifying information will be linked with the participant's data. If you don't intend to collect identifying information, describe your process for keeping the data anonymous.

Response 4-b: (enter response below this header)

Survey data. Participants will complete an online survey at the conclusion of the academy to assess their attitudes regarding the content, processes, and context of the training. The survey will be administered through Qualtrics and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. All participants will be assigned an ID variable, and identifying information will be removed from the survey prior to data analysis. ID variables will be stored in different files from those with any personally identifying information.

The survey will ask participants whether they would be willing to do a follow up activity in the event we need to follow up with them. We will not pursue any follow up activities without first submitting a modification to the IRB and receiving modification approval.

c. Will you use audio recordings, photographs, video recordings or other similar data recording devices? Please justify why it is necessary to use these devices, how you will use them, and what you will do with the data after they are collected.

Response 4-c: (enter response below this header)

No, we will not use any data recording devices.

d. How will your materials be stored? Discuss both how you plan to store it while you are collecting and actively analyzing it, and your long-term plan for maintaining it when the active research phase is finished. How will your data be reported in your study? Will you report the results in aggregate or will individual data be discussed?

Response 4-d: (enter response below this header)

Materials will be stored in a password protected file on a secure server. Only research staff will have access to these materials. The materials will be destroyed after they has been coded and analyzed. We will report the results in aggregate and will make every effort not to report any information that may allow for identification of a participant.

5. **Risks**: Almost any intervention into other people's lives carries with it the potential to cause them social, psychological, physical, or legal harm. However, not every interaction will put a participant at risk beyond what is considered minimal. **Please describe to the Board the potential risks and the probability of harm to the participants in your study.** In this section, consider the following when framing your response:
   - Describe the risks to the participants in your study. Does your study include "risk-sensitive" participants (as identified in the Participants section)? What is the probability that harm could occur?
   - Describe what you will do to minimize those risks. Describe what you will do if a harmful situation occurs.
   - Would a loss of confidentiality of any of your materials put participants at risk? If so, how will you prevent this from happening?

Response 5: (enter response below this header)

The survey data in this study will be confidential; thus, any risk to participants will be minimal. Our study does not include any risk-sensitive participants. We do not expect that the experience of participating in the survey will have any adverse consequences to participants. However, if harmful situation does occur, we will promptly report it to the University of Virginia SBS IRB.

6. **Benefits**: Benefits help to outweigh the risks to the participants, though not every study will have direct benefits to the participants. In this section, consider the following when framing your response:
   - Will there be any benefits to the participants in your study? If so, what are they?
   - What is the general importance of the knowledge you expect to gain?

Response 6: (enter response below this header)

There are no direct benefits to participants. This project aims to improve our understanding of how coaching "academies" can support training for coaches.

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

In reply, please refer to: Project # 2016-0250-00

July 8, 2016

Jillian McGraw and Catherine Brighton
CISE (Curriculum, Instruction & Special Ed)
1210 Oak Hill Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Jillian McGraw and Catherine Brighton:

Thank you for submitting your project entitled: "Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy" for review by the Institutional Review Board for the Social & Behavioral Sciences. The Board reviewed your Protocol on July 7, 2016.

The first action that the Board takes with a new project is to decide whether the project is exempt from a more detailed review by the Board because the project may fall into one of the categories of research described as "exempt" in the Code of Federal Regulations. Since the Board, and not individual researchers, is authorized to classify a project as exempt, we requested that you submit the materials describing your project so that we could make this initial decision.

As a result of this request, we have reviewed your project and classified it as exempt from further review by the Board for a period of four years as this study involves research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal education practices, under 45 CFR Â§46.101(b)(1). This means that you may conduct the study as planned and you are not required to submit requests for continuation until the end of the fourth year.

This project # 2016-0250-00 has been exempted for the period July 7, 2016 to July 6, 2020. If the study continues beyond the approval period, you will need to submit a continuation request to the Board. If you make changes in the study, you will need to notify the Board of the changes.

Sincerely,

Tonya R. Moon, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

One Morton Drive, Suite 500 • Charlottesville, VA 22903
P.O. Box 800392 • Charlottesville, VA 22908-0392
Phone: 434-924-5999 • Fax: 434-924-1992
www.virginia.edu/vpr/irb/sbs.html

Appendix D

IRB Modification and Approval Letter

Protocol Form

Using this document:

- The purposed of this document is to provide you with a guide for providing the information that the IRB-SBS needs in order to review your protocol. Each question provides instructions as well as suggestions for completing the question. After every **Instruction** section, there is a **Response** area; please provide your answer in **Response** area.
- In addition, any blue underlined text is linked to related areas in our Researcher's Guide on our website. If you have questions about how to respond to a question, start with the Researcher's Guide and then contact our office for additional help.

Submitting a protocol:

- This document has three parts: **Section A "Investigator's Agreement**," **Section B "Protocol Information,"** and **Section C "Description of the Research Study."** To submit a protocol, complete this document and email it and any accompanying materials (i.e. consent forms, recruitment materials, instruments) to irbsbs@virginia.edu. For more information on what to submit and how, please see Submitting a Protocol.
- **Please note that we can only accept forms in Microsoft Word format and in this form only. Do not submit your responses in a separate document.** We do not accept hand-written documents (with the exception of the signature on the Investigator's Agreement). Please submit the electronic form in its entirety; do not remove the signature pages from the document even though you will submit these pages as a pdf/hard copy. Do not alter this form; simply provide your responses in the **Response** area. **Forms that are not completed correctly will be returned to you and you will be required to complete them correctly before they are accepted. No exceptions!** If you need help using our form, please contact our office. For tips and suggestions for completing the protocol, please see Protocol and Informed Consent Tips.
- **Section A "Investigator's Agreement"** must also be submitted with signatures. Signed materials can be submitted by mail, fax (434-924-1992), or email (scanned document to irbsbs@virginia.edu). Signed materials can also be submitted in person to our office.
- In order to not delay your review, make sure that you (and any researcher listed on the protocol) have completed the CITI training in human subjects research.
- You will be contacted in 3-7 business days regarding your submission (depending on the protocol queue). Please see Protocol Review Process for more information.

A. Investigator Agreement

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, THE INVESTIGATOR AGREES:

9. That **no participants will be recruited** or data accessed under the protocol **until** the Investigator has received the **final approval or exemption letter** signed by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (IRB-SBS) or designee.
10. That **no participants will be recruited** or entered under the protocol **until** all researchers for the project including the Faculty Advisor have completed their **human investigation educational requirement** (CITI training is required every 3 years for UVA researchers).
11. That any **modifications of the protocol or consent form** will not be implemented without prior **written approval** from the IRB-SBS Chair or designee except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the participants.
12. That any **deviation from the protocol and/or consent form** that are serious, unexpected and related to the study or a **death** occurring during the study **will be reported promptly to the SBS Review Board** in writing.
13. That all protocol forms for **continuations of this protocol** will be **completed** and returned **within the time limit stated** on the renewal notification letter.
14. That **all participants will be recruited and consented as stated in the protocol approved or exempted** by the IRB-SBS board. If written consent is required, all participants will be consented by signing a copy of the consent form that has a non-expired IRB approval stamp.
15. That the IRB-SBS office will be notified within **30 days** of a **change in the Principal Investigator** for the study.
16. That the IRB-SBS office will be notified when **the active study is complete**.

Jillian McGraw

Principal Investigator (print) **Date**

Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy

Protocol Title **Protocol Number (SBS office only)**

Principal Investigator's Signature

FOR STUDENT AND STAFF PROPOSALS ONLY

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, THE FACULTY ADVISOR HAS READ THE PROPOSAL FOR RESEARCH AND AGREES:

1. To **assume overall responsibility** for the conduct of this research and investigator.
2. To **work with the investigator**, and with the SBS Review Board, as needed, in **maintaining compliance with this agreement**.
3. That the **Principal Investigator is qualified to perform this study**.

Catherine Brighton

Faculty Advisor (print) **Date**

Faculty Advisor's Signature

The SBS Review Board reserves the right to terminate this study at any time if, in its opinion, (1) the risks of further experimentation are prohibitive, or (2) the above agreement is breached.

Protocol Form

B. Protocol Information

IRB-SBS Protocol Number (assigned by SBS office, leave blank):	
IRB-SBS Grant Approval number: (If you received a Grant Approval prior to submitting a protocol, please include the number issued by our office. If you did not submit a Grant Approval Form, please leave this line blank.)	
Submission Type (delete all those that don't apply):	**Updated protocol form**
Protocol Title:	**Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy**
Principal Investigator:	Jillian McGraw
Professional Title:	Doctoral student
School (Curry, Medical, Arts & Sciences, etc):	Curry
Department (CISE, Family Medicine, Psychology, etc):	CISE
Campus Box number:	n/a
Mailing Address (only if campus box number is not available):	1210 Oak Hill Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22902
Telephone:	(202) 380-6387
UVA e mail address (no aliases, please): *Your computing ID is used for tracking your IRB CITI training.*	Jep4j@virginia.edu
Preferred e-mail address for correspondence (if applicable):	
You are (delete all those that don't apply):	**Graduate Student**
This research is for (delete all those that don't apply):	**Doctoral Dissertation**
Primary contact for the protocol (if other than the principal investigator):	
Contact's Email:	

Contact's Phone:	

Faculty Advisor:

	Catherine Brighton
School (Curry, Medical, Arts & Sciences, etc):	Curry
Department (CISE, Family Medicine, Psychology, etc):	CISE
Campus Box number:	400873
Telephone:	(434) 924-1022
UVA e mail address (no aliases, please): *Your computing ID is used for tracking on-line human subjects training.*	Cmb3s@virginia.edu

Other Researchers*:

Please list all other researchers in this study that are associated with UVA.* Please provide the following information for each researcher: Name, UVA email address (no aliases, please.)	**Faculty/Staff:** Pamela Tucker (pdt8n@eservices.virginia.edu) Adria Hoffman (arh3b@eservices.virginia.edu) **Doctoral Students:** Meredith McCool (mlm3af@virginia.edu)
Please list all other researchers not associated with UVA.* Please provide the following information for each researcher: Name, Institution, Phone Number, Mailing Address, Email Address.	

Funding Source: **If research is funded, please provide the following:**

Name of the funding source (NIH, NFS, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, etc)	
Type of funding source (delete all that **don't** apply):	
Describe the funding source (optional unless you selected "sub contract" above)	
funding period (month/year):	
grant number:	

Paying Participants: If you are paying	I am paying participants using State or UVa funds		I am not paying participants or I am not	X

participants using State or UVa funds (including grants), you are required to complete the **UVa or State Funds Study Payment Procedures Form.** (Please describe your payment process in question 3-b in the next section.) **Please mark an "x" in the appropriate box (to the right):**	(including grants) and will include the UVa or State Funds Study Payment Procedures Form.	using State or UVa funds (including grants).

Anticipated start date for collecting and analyzing data:	**July 11, 2016**
Anticipated completion date for collecting and analyzing data:	**April 30, 2017**

*** Please only list researchers that are working directly with human subjects and/or their data. All researchers listed on the protocol must complete the IRB-SBS Training or provide proof of completing IRB training at their institution. If you have any questions about whether a researcher should be listed on the protocol or if a researcher has completed training, please contact our office (irbsbshelp@virginia.edu). Proof of training can be submitted to our office via fax (434-924-1992), by mail (PO Box 800392 Charlottesville, VA 22908-0392) or by email (irbsbs@virginia.edu).**

C. Description of the Research Study

7. **Study Overview:** Give a brief overview of your project. Consider the following when framing your response:
    - What is your purpose in conducting this research? What makes the project interesting and worth doing?
    - Include information about the study's logistics (where and when it will be conducted, what instruments you will use, etc). What will you be asking participants to do, and what do you hope to learn from these activities?
    - If your study has more than one phase, please clearly map out the different phases.
    - If your study is a multi-site study, please describe.

Response 1: (enter response below this header)

Purpose: Coaching is considered a valuable tool for building capacity within school divisions and providing sustained, targeted professional development to teachers as they work to support student learning. A growing body of evidence suggests coaching may hold the potential to improve teaching practices and, ultimately, student outcomes (Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). Effective coaching must be grounded in instruction-focused learning, the use of evidence, and systematic observation of practice, and coaches must learn to differentiate their approach to meet the needs of individual teachers (Annenberg Institute for School Reform [AISR], 2004). The effectiveness of coaches may also be influenced by their own understanding of and expectations for the role (Chval et al., 2010). The Curry Leadership Academy (http://curry.virginia.edu/pages/curry-leadership-academy-coaching-for-change) is a 3-day workshop for PK-12 administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers. The academy includes content focused on understanding the types of coaching and feedback, building relationships, developing communication skills, and refining instructional observation skills.

There is a need for systematic documentation of the processes and impact of training for coaches and coaching models (AISR, 2004). The purpose of the proposed study is to conduct a program evaluation of the Curry Leadership Academy. The focus of the study is on participants' experiences during the academy, feelings of preparation to apply knowledge and skills gained during the academy, and experiences enacting coaching strategies in the months following the academy. Data are routinely collected as part of ongoing program evaluation and internal review. We propose conducting an in-depth analysis of these data. Feedback about the academy will inform programmatic decisions for implementation in the next year, as well as informing others in the field of its potential value for the training of coaches and others serving in coaching roles.

Phase 1 (included in previous version of IRB protocol): The academy took place at two sites: the UVA Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church and in Bavaro and Ruffner halls at the Curry School of Education. Each academy lasted for three consecutive days. During the academy, participants engaged in direction instruction, small group work, partner work, and individual reflection as they developed and refined their knowledge and skills for

effective coaching. Data collection included a brief survey at the conclusion of the academy. The survey addressed participants' attitudes regarding the content, processes, and context of the training (Guskey, 2000).

Phase 2 (modification): A subset of participants will be invited to participate in a follow-up interview. This interviews aim to capture participants' perspectives on their coaching role (in their local context), contextual factors influencing their enactment of that role, and the alignment of the leadership academy with their coaching practices. Principals and instructional coaches from both academy sites will be invited to participate, as these are the two participants groups selected for further investigation due to their high attendance at the academies. Participants who agree to an interview will complete one interview via phone or video chat. Interviews will last approximately 45-60 minutes.

Interview participants will be asked to share artifacts that support their coaching work. These materials will be requested at the conclusion of the interview, and participants will be given a link to a secure Dropbox where they may upload the materials. Suggested materials include planning templates, observation and conference forms, and documentation logs. Participants will be reminded to remove identifying information from documents they submit.

8. **Participants: Please describe as best you can the population(s) you plan to work with.** Please describe them in the terms that are most pertinent to your project. We need to understand how working with them will further your research objectives and what steps need to be taken in order to minimize risk to them. **Please respond to questions a-e in this section.**
    a. Please fill in the following blanks below. If you are working with more than one population, please provide information for each group.

Response 2-a: (enter response below this header)

The participants will be administrators, instructional coaches, teachers, and university supervisors participating in the Curry Leadership Academy. Approximately 60 participants will participate in the Northern Virginia academy, and approximately 100 will participate in the Charlottesville academy. All participants of the three-day workshop will be eligible to participate.

Age: 18 and older
Gender: female and male
Race: all racial and ethnic backgrounds
Estimated number of participants: 160

Modification:
The participants recruited for the second phase of the study will include principals and instructional coaches who participated in the academy. Forty instructional coaches and 30 principals attended the academy. Purposeful sampling will be used to identify 16 individuals (8 principals and 8 coaches, divided evenly across the two academy sites) to participate in the interviews.

b. Describe how participants will be identified and selected to participate in the study. Are there specific populations that you will be targeting and if so, why? Are there potential participants that you will exclude from the study and if so, why?

Response 2-b: (enter response below this header)

All participants in the Curry Leadership Academy will be eligible to participate in data collection. The academy participants include administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers from Virginia K-12 school divisions. It will be made clear that no negative consequences will occur if they decline the opportunity to participate in the data collection.

We do not plan to exclude any potential participants from this project; all individuals participating in the academy will be eligible to participate.

Modification:
For the second phase of the study, we are targeting principals and coaches. These were the largest participant groups at both academy sites. In addition, principals and coaches both engage in coaching work but do so in different way (particularly given principals' evaluative role within a school context), allowing the researchers to identify similarities and differences across groups. In addition to the parameters stated in 2-a, maximum variation sampling will be used to identify participants who represent a range of school sizes, levels, demographics, and geographic areas.

c. Is the population and/or individual participant "risk-sensitive"? (You will have an opportunity to discuss the risks in more detail in the "Risks" section.) Is the population and/or individual participant "vulnerable"? (This issue relates to the participant's capacity consent; you will have an opportunity to discuss your consent procedures in more detail in the "Consents" section.)

Response 2-c: (enter response below this header)

No

d. Will you deceive and/or withhold information from the participants about the study? If so, please justify why deception and/or withholding information from the participants is necessary and describe the deception. Using deception requires specific consent forms and processes; please describe this process in the **Consent section** under **Response 3-a** and **3-b**.

Response 2-d: (enter response below this header)

No

e. What special experience or knowledge do you have that will allow you to work productively and respectfully with your participants?

Response 2-e: (enter response below this header)

The PI, Jillian McGraw, is a doctoral student in Curriculum & Instruction in the Curry School. Prior to attending Curry, she taught in a Virginia public school and served as a mentor, coach,

and professional development facilitator. At the Curry School, she has served as a university supervisor, coached new university supervisors, co-facilitated mentor teacher and university supervisor training, and co-authored a revised university supervisor training program with an emphasis on coaching skills.

The PI will be working under the supervision of Catherine Brighton. Dr. Brighton is the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Affairs. She has more than 15 years of research experience in fields including school reform initiatives, teacher change, gifted education, and differentiation. Dr. Brighton also has experience in program evaluation and educational consulting.

9. **Consent:** Consent is an on-going process that starts when you first inform your participant about the study through your recruitment/advertising efforts and ends when the participant's data are no longer needed. The federal regulations require a formal consent process takes place where you provide participants with specific information about the study (usually provided in the consent form, see General Consent Template) and the participants are required to sign the form. Not every study will fit this mold and there are some alternative methods for conducting the formal consent procedure. **In general, the Board needs to understand how participants will be recruited and consented to participate in the study.** Please note that if your study qualifies for exemption, you will not be required to follow the federal regulations for consent, but the Board may require that you provide information about the study to the participant. **Please respond to questions a-d in this section.**
    a. How will you approach/recruit participants to participate in your research? **Please provide all materials used to contact participants in this study. These materials could include letters, emails, flyers, advertisements, etc. If you will contact participants verbally, please provide a script that outlines what you will say to participants.**

Response 3-a: (enter response below this header)

The intervention that will be the focus of this study – the Curry Leadership Academy – represents normal educational practice, as it is professional development program for principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders.

To encourage participation, we will initially announce the forthcoming survey to participants during the academy. When collecting survey data, an invitation email, along with the survey, will be sent to all participants. To help ensure a high level of participation, two follow up emails will be sent to participants who have not yet completed the survey.

Modification:
For the second phase, participants will be contacted first through email and then, if no response has been received, by phone. Included in the protocol materials is a copy of the email that will be used to recruit participants. This same text will be used as a script should a phone call be needed for recruitment.

b. What is your consent process? Who will present the consent information and how will it be presented? How will you document consent? Are your participants able to sign a form, and if not, how will you document consent? Will you use more than one form (if you use more than one version of the consent form, each form needs to have a unique title in order for our staff to keep track of the different forms)? When and where will participants receive the consent form? Who will give them the consent form? Will you pay participants?

Response 3-b: (enter response below this header)

Each academy participant will be sent an email the week after the Curry Leadership Academy inviting them to participate in the evaluation of the program. The email will explain the purpose of the research, that participation is voluntary, and that by accessing the survey link and completing the survey, they are consenting to participate.

Modification:
When participants set up an interview time, the researcher will explain the study to the participants and will answer any questions they may have about the study procedures. A consent form will be emailed to the participants, which they will sign and send back to the researcher. This consent form is included with the protocol materials.

c. Are any of your participants unable to consent (i.e. vulnerable population)? These populations include (but are not limited to): minors (participants under the legal age of consent), prisoners, and participants with diminished mental capacity. These participants generally need a parent (or surrogate) consent form and a participant assent form (prisoners being the likely exception unless they are minors too).

Response 3-c: (enter response below this header)

No, all of our participants will be able to provide consent.

d. What is your relationship to your participants? Do you know them personally or hold any position of authority over them? Do any of the researchers (including the faculty advisor) have positions of authority over the participants, such as grading authority, professional authority, etc.? Are there any relevant financial relationships?

Response 3-d: (enter response below this header)

The PI and additional researchers are the co-facilitators of the Curry Leadership Academy. They hold no position of authority over the participants. A fee was charged for participation in the program. Most individuals were funded by their school divisions and some paid for their own fees. All data will be de-identified prior to analysis.

10. **Materials/Data collected**: For most SBS studies, the risk to participants often lies in the information that is collected from them. Thus the manner in which the data are collected, how they are stored, and how the data are reported in your research is an important part of determining the risk to participants. When you develop your procedures, consider **minimizing or eliminating the collection of identifying information** where possible and **provide justification** as to why it needs to be collected.

Please respond to questions a-d in this section.

a. Are any of the data already collected? (If you are only using archival data, please use the Archival Data protocol form instead of this form.) Are the data publicly available or part of a private collection? Please describe the data set(s) and provide a list of data fields you will use (when applicable). What will you do to protect the confidentiality of the pre-existing data?

Response 4-a: (enter response below this header)

Modification:
Per the original IRB protocol, survey data were collected following the academy. Participants were assigned an ID variable, and identifying information was removed from the survey. ID variables are stored in different files from those with any personally identifying information. In the survey, participants were given the opportunity to provide their name and email if they were willing to participate in a follow-up conversation with one of the academy facilitators. These fields have been separated from the other survey responses to further ensure confidentiality.

b. What will you do to protect the privacy of your participants? Describe the process for collecting data from your participants. What will you do to protect the confidentiality of your participants? Describe the kinds of information you will gather and the material forms it will take. Describe the level to which the participant's identity will be known, if that information will be collected (and why), and how the identifying information will be linked with the participant's data. If you don't intend to collect identifying information, describe your process for keeping the data anonymous.

Response 4-b: (enter response below this header)

Survey data. Participants will complete an online survey at the conclusion of the academy to assess their attitudes regarding the content, processes, and context of the training. The survey will be administered through Qualtrics and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. All participants will be assigned an ID variable, and identifying information will be removed from the survey prior to data analysis. ID variables will be stored in different files from those with any personally identifying information.
The survey will ask participants whether they would be willing to do a follow up activity in the event we need to follow up with them. We will not pursue any follow up activities without first submitting a modification to the IRB and receiving modification approval.

Modification:
Interview data. Interviews will be conducted by phone or video call. Interviews will be audio recorded, and notes and audio files will be stored in on a password-protected storage site accessible only by the researchers. After the interviews have been transcribed, the recordings will be destroyed. Interview transcriptions will identify participants by their role (i.e., a principal may be P1, an instructional coach may be C2) but not by their name.

Document collection. Interview participants will be asked to share artifacts that support their coaching work. These materials will be requested at the conclusion of the interview, and participants will be given a link to a secure Dropbox where they may upload the materials. The

researchers will then move the materials to a secure storage site to which only the researchers will have access. Documents will be re-named with the ID variable when moved to this site. Suggested materials include planning templates, observation and conference forms, and documentation logs. Participants will be reminded to remove identifying information from documents they submit.

c. Will you use audio recordings, photographs, video recordings or other similar data recording devices? Please justify why it is necessary to use these devices, how you will use them, and what you will do with the data after they are collected.

Response 4-c: (enter response below this header)

No, we will not use any data recording devices.

Modification:
An audio recorder will be used to record the interviews. This will allow the files to be transcribed to ensure participants' perspectives are captured accurately. As noted above, interview notes and audio files will be stored in on a password-protected storage site accessible only by the researchers. After the interviews have been transcribed, the recordings will be destroyed. Interview transcriptions will identify participants by their role (i.e., a principal may be P1, an instructional coach may be C2) but not by their name.

d. How will your materials be stored? Discuss both how you plan to store it while you are collecting and actively analyzing it, and your long-term plan for maintaining it when the active research phase is finished. How will your data be reported in your study? Will you report the results in aggregate or will individual data be discussed?

Response 4-d: (enter response below this header)

Materials will be stored in a password protected file on a secure server. Only research staff will have access to these materials. The materials will be destroyed after they has been coded and analyzed. We will report the results in aggregate and will make every effort not to report any information that may allow for identification of a participant.

11. **Risks**: Almost any intervention into other people's lives carries with it the potential to cause them social, psychological, physical, or legal harm. However, not every interaction will put a participant at risk beyond what is considered minimal. **Please describe to the Board the potential risks and the probability of harm to the participants in your study.** In this section, consider the following when framing your response:
    - Describe the risks to the participants in your study. Does your study include "risk-sensitive" participants (as identified in the Participants section)? What is the probability that harm could occur?
    - Describe what you will do to minimize those risks. Describe what you will do if a harmful situation occurs.
    - Would a loss of confidentiality of any of your materials put participants at risk? If so, how will you prevent this from happening?

Response 5: (enter response below this header)

The survey data in this study will be confidential; thus, any risk to participants will be minimal. Our study does not include any risk-sensitive participants. We do not expect that the experience of participating in the survey will have any adverse consequences to participants. However, if harmful situation does occur, we will promptly report it to the University of Virginia SBS IRB.

Modification:
The risks involved with this study are minimal. Participants may feel anxious about sharing their thoughts and experiences regarding the academy and their coaching responsibilities in their local school(s). To address this, participants will be informed of steps that will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of their responses, which are noted above. In this phase, we do not expect that the experience of participating in the survey will have any adverse consequences to participants. However, if harmful situation does occur, we will promptly report it to the University of Virginia SBS IRB.

12. **Benefits**: Benefits help to outweigh the risks to the participants, though not every study will have direct benefits to the participants. In this section, consider the following when framing your response:
    - Will there be any benefits to the participants in your study? If so, what are they?
    - What is the general importance of the knowledge you expect to gain?

Response 6: (enter response below this header)

There are no direct benefits to participants. This project aims to improve our understanding of how coaching "academies" can support training for coaches.

Informed Consent Agreement

Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in the study.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this research is to conduct a program evaluation of the Curry Leadership Academy. We aim to get a better understanding of how you conceptualize your role as a "coach" and the degree to which the academy curriculum aligns with your needs to enact this role. The feedback you provide will inform our programming decisions as we revise the academy for implementation in future years.

What you will do in the study: You may already have completed a brief survey as part of the study. For this next phase of the evaluation, you will participate in an interview that aims to capture your perspectives on your coaching role, the context in which you enact that role, and your experience at the Curry Leadership Academy. You will also be asked to share documents you use to support your coaching work. Examples of these documents include planning templates, observation and conference forms, and documentation logs.

Time required: The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks in this study.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. The study may help us understand how professional development for educators working in coaching roles can support their professional growth.

Confidentiality: The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. We will audio record the interview so that we can transcribe the interview and accurately capture your perspective. After the recordings have been transcribed, the recordings will be destroyed, and your information will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this code will be kept in a locked file. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, this list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

How to withdraw from the study: If you would like to withdraw from the study, you may exit the survey without submitting. If you would like to withdraw after your materials have been submitted, please contact Jillian McGraw (jep4j@virginia.edu). There is no penalty for withdrawing.

Payment: You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

If you have questions about the study, contact:

Jillian McGraw
Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education, 312 Bavaro Hall
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903
Telephone: (202) 380-6387
Email: jep4j@virginia.edu

Catherine Brighton, Ph.D.
Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education, Ruffner 102H
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903.
Telephone: (434) 924-1022
Email: cmb3s@virginia.edu

If you have questions about your rights in the study, contact:

Tonya R. Moon, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences
One Morton Dr Suite 500
University of Virginia, P.O. Box 800392
Charlottesville, VA 22908-0392
Telephone: (434) 924-5999
Email: irbsbshelp@virginia.edu
Website: www.virginia.edu/vpr/irb/sbs

Agreement:
I agree to participate in the research study described above.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

In reply, please refer to: Project # 2016-0250-00

December 6, 2016

Jillian McGraw
Catherine Brighton
CISE (Curriculum, Instruction & Special Ed)
1210 Oak Hill Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Jillian McGraw and Catherine Brighton:

The Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences has approved your November 29, 2016 modification request to your exempted research project entitled "Program Evaluation of An Instructional Coaching Academy." You may proceed with this study. Please use the enclosed Consent Form as the master for copying forms for participants.

This project # 2016-0250-00 has been exempted for the period December 6, 2016 to July 6, 2020. If the study continues beyond this period, you will need to submit a continuation request to the Review Board. If you make changes in the study, you will need to notify the Board of the changes.

Sincerely,

Tonya R. Moon, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

One Morton Drive, Suite 500 • Charlottesville, VA 22903
P.O. Box 800392 • Charlottesville, VA 22908-0392
Phone: 434-924-5999 • Fax: 434-924-1992
www.virginia.edu/vpr/irb/sbs.html

Appendix E

Post-Academy Survey

We'd like your feedback on the Curry Leadership Academy to understand your experiences during the academy and feelings of preparedness to apply knowledge and skills gained during the academy. The feedback you provide will inform our programming decisions as we revise the academy for implementation in future years. This information will also be used for research to help us understand the experiences of instructional leaders who go through this type of training.

The survey is expected to take no longer than 15 minutes. You may skip any question that you do not want to answer. If at any point you no longer want to respond, simply close your browser; your responses will not be recorded. If you complete the survey, your response will be assigned a code, and your responses will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions about the survey, you may contact Jillian McGraw (jep4j@virginia.edu).

Content

Items A1 – A4 address the content covered during the academy. **Your opinions will help us modify the content to more effectively meet the needs of future participants.**

A1. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement regarding the content and materials of the academy by selecting the corresponding button.

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The issues explored were relevant to my leadership role.				
The issues explored were important for the work that I do.				
The material was easy to understand.				
I learned strategies that I can apply to my work.				
My understanding of topics related to leadership and coaching was enhanced by				

the workshop.				
I will refer back to the materials provided during the school year.				

A2. Please rate the usefulness of each topic by selecting the corresponding button.

	Not useful at all	**Not very Useful**	**Somewhat Useful**	**Very Useful**
Building relationships				
Coaching continuum				
Listening skills				
Trust as foundational for coaching				
CLASS Observation Tool				
Deconstructing practice				
Types of coaching questions				
Structuring the Coaching Conversation				

A3. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting the corresponding button. This academy has deepened my understanding of:

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Coaching as the construction of new knowledge				
Types of coaching and the continuum of feedback				
Role of relationships and trust as foundational for coaching				
How contextual demands influence coaching approaches				

A4. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting the corresponding button This academy has improved my ability to:

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Establish trust in my relationships				
Listen deeply				
Use effective listening strategies				
Develop a range of coaching questions				
Apply instructional observation skills to deconstruct practice				
Deliver effective feedback				
Address barriers to effective coaching				

Process

Items B1 – B2 address process aspects of the academy including the facilitators, activities, and resources.

B1. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting the corresponding button

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The facilitators were knowledgeable about the topics discussed.				
The goals and objectives were clear.				
The activities seemed carefully planned and well organized.				
The time was used effectively.				
The workbook enhanced my understanding of the topic.				

A supportive climate of professional community was created.				
Opportunities to network and learn from colleagues were supported.				
An appropriate balance between presentation and interaction was achieved.				

B2. Please rate the usefulness of each activity or set of activities by selecting the corresponding button.

	Not useful at all	**Not very Useful**	**Somewhat Useful**	**Very Useful**
Identifying our beliefs and values about coaching				
Engaging in listening activities with partners				
Practicing deconstruction of practice using videos and the CLASS language				
Discussing "problems of practice" in our own practice				
Practicing coaching conversations				

Context

Items C1 – C2 address logistical aspects of the academy, including registration and facilities.

C1. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting the corresponding button.

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The registration process was easy to complete.				
The facilities were conducive to learning.				

There were adequate refreshments.				

C2. Please provide any additional feedback you may have about the registration, the facilities, or the refreshments.

[open textbox response]

Overall Impressions

Items D1 – D5 address your overall impressions of the academy.

D1. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting the corresponding button.

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The academy met my expectations.				
The academy was useful in furthering my professional goals.				
I would recommend the academy to a colleague.				

D2. How did this workshop support your professional learning?

[open textbox response]

D3. What are the most important ideas you have gained from this experience? Please describe which activities and resources were most influential for your thinking.

[open textbox response]

D4. What skills have you developed or refined through this training? Please describe which activities and resources facilitated the development of those skills.

[open textbox response]

D5. What changes or improvements would you suggest to the facilitators?

[open textbox response]

Which session did you attend?

- Northern Virginia (July 11-13)
- Charlottesville (July 18-20)

Why did you attend the Curry Leadership Academy?

[open textbox response]

Would you be interested in attending a "part 2" of the academy next year?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what would you suggest be included in part 2?

Background

Questions E1 – E4 ask about your background.

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

What is your ethnic background?

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

Mark the choice or choices that best describe(s) your race.

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other (please specify): _____

What is your role? (check all that apply)

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Instructional Coach
- University Supervisor
- Mentor Teacher
- Other (please specify): _____

Follow-up Activities

Items F1 – F3 address your willingness to participate in follow-up activities.

F1. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up activity, such as a phone call to discuss your experience using the knowledge and skills developed in the academy?

- Yes
- No

F2. If yes, please provide your full name: _____

F3. If yes, please provide your email address: _____

Consent for Research

Do you permit your anonymous responses to be used for research related to the academy?

- Yes
- No

(If neither box is checked, this will indicate acceptance for the data to be a part of our related research.)

You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation!

Appendix F

Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for Coaches

Introduction

- Restate purpose of interview
- Make sure informed consent is signed
- Review confidentiality
- Remind that interview is audio recorded
- State that there is no "correct" answer; this is non-evaluative

Warm-up

1. Tell me about your background in education and your current role as a coach at [school].
    - How long have you been in that role?
    - Prior to your work in this role, what other leadership roles have you had?
        - If none, probe for other experiences supporting teacher learning

2. What do you think the role of a coach should be?
    - Probe for specific details and examples

Coaching Role

3. Tell me about the coaching program at your school.
    - How is the program set up?
    - Who makes decisions about how the program is set up?
    - Probe to identify district- or school-level requirements/directives

4. I'd like to talk a bit more specifically about your coaching practices. What does "coaching" look like in your role?
    - Probe for what specific practices "look like" to get at leadership practices (micro functions, not macro functions)
        - How often they meet with administrators and content of interactions
        - How often they meet with specialists / other coaches and content of interactions
        - How often they meet with teachers and content of interactions
    - Probe for specific examples of how they have worked with teachers as a coach
    - Probe for specific resources and tools they use

5. What knowledge and skills do you feel are important to your role as a coach?
   - Why are these important?

Contextual Factors

6. How would you describe the instructional vision at your school?
   - Probe to identify the emphasis (e.g., improving test scores, critical and creative thinking)
   - Who helps shape that instructional vision?
   - Is this vision consistent with your own vision of effective teaching?

7. [If not addressed earlier] Describe your relationship with your principal and other key administrators in your school or district.
   - How does this relationship influence your coaching practices?
   - What expectations does he / she set for your work?

8. [If not addressed earlier] Describe your interactions with other coaches.
   - How does these interactions influence your coaching practices?

9. Thinking about the context in which you work, what are some factors that support your ability to enact coaching practices?

10. What are some factors that constrain your ability to enact coaching practices?

Closing

Member check - review themes from the conversation

Request information for key informants

Request for coaching artifacts

Thank them for their time

Interview Protocol for Key Informants
(e.g., administrators, specialists, teachers)

Introduction

- Restate purpose of interview
- Make sure informed consent is signed
- Review confidentiality
- Remind that interview is audio recorded
- State that there is no "correct" answer; this is non-evaluative

Warm-up

1. Tell me about your background in education and your current role as a [position] at [school].
    - How long have you been in that role?
    - [If individual has instructional leadership experience] Tell me more about your role as a [position].

2. What do you think the role of a coach should be?
    - Probe for specific details and examples

Coaching Role

3. Tell me about the coaching program at your school.
    - How is the program set up?
    - Who makes decisions about how the program is set up?
    - Probe to identify district- or school-level requirements/directives

4. I'd like to talk a bit more specifically about your work with [name], the coach at your school. How would you describe the "coaching" work done by [name]?
    - Probe for what specific practices "look like" to get at leadership practices (micro functions, not macro functions)
        - How often they interact
        - Specific examples of the work they have done together
    - Probe for specific resources and tools they use

5. What knowledge and skills do you feel are important for your coach to have?
    - Why are these important?

Contextual Factors

6. How would you describe the instructional vision at your school?
   - Probe to identify the emphasis (e.g., improving test scores, critical and creative thinking)
   - Who helps shape that instructional vision?
   - Is this vision consistent with your own vision of effective teaching?

7. [If not addressed earlier] Describe the relationship between the principal and the coach.
   - How does this relationship inform the way you work with the coach?
   - What are the expectations for how you work with the coach?
     - Probe for required, expected, and voluntary activities

8. Thinking about the context in which you work, what are some factors that support your work with the coach?

9. What are some factors that constrain your ability to work with your coach?

Closing

Member check - review themes from the conversation

Request information for key informants

Request for coaching artifacts

Thank them for their time

Appendix G

Structural Codes

Structural Code	Coach Protocol	Key Informant Protocol
Background in education	1. Tell me about your background in education and your current role as a coach at [school].	1. Tell me about your background in education and your current role as [role]
Coaching program	2. What do you think the role of a coach should be? 3. Tell me about the coaching program at your school.	2. What do you think the role of a coach should be? 3. Tell me about the coaching program at your school.
Coaching work	4. What does "coaching" look like in your role? 5. What knowledge and skills do you feel are important to your role as a coach?	4. How would you describe the coaching work done by [name]? 5. What knowledge and skills do you feel are important for your coach to have?
Instructional vision	6. How would you describe the instructional vision at your school?	6. How would you describe the instructional vision at your school?
Support	7. Describe your relationship with your principal and other key administrators in your school or district. 8. Describe your interactions with other coaches.	7. Describe the relationship between the principal and the coach.
Contextual factors	9. What are some factors that support your ability to enact coaching practices? 10. What are some factors that constrain your ability to enact coaching practices?	8. What are some factors that support your work with the coach? 9. What are some factors that constrain your ability to work with your coach?
Curry Leadership Academy	not in protocol - asked if time	not in protocol - asked if time

Appendix H

Content Codes

Code	Description	Example
Purpose	References to the intended role of purpose of coaching; what coaching "should" be	One, it was challenging because just regardless of building, of where you're at, it's just stepping outside of the classroom and being able to recognize that coaching is not how I would do it in the classroom compared to what's being done. That was like my first "aha" moment, "Okay, take a step back and really reflect on what it is you're working with the teacher on compared to just your experience in the classroom."
Time Allocation	References to how coaches allocate their time	Then, before I left Stony Point, I got my master's degree in math specialist, to be a math specialist. That program had a lot of coaching embedded in the program, it was through BCU. I became a Title I Math Specialist at Waldorf Elementary School, which was a Title I school. I was a Title I focused specialist. In that role I did a lot of intervention as well as a lot of coaching. It was probably 30% coaching, probably a little bit less than that of intervention, and then I had a lot of duties because I was assigned to one school with one building. I did morning duty, I had afternoon duty, I had committees I was on.
Division-Level Factors	References to factors at the division level that may influence the work of coaches	Well, I think one of the struggles is because having a coach is not at anyone's standard of quality, that as much as we know the coaching position is beneficial to our school, the reality is, is if we ever get into a tough budget, budgetary cycle, there is the chance that we would lose the position. I think that while our district has been committed you never know down the road. ...If there's a huge budgetary short fall and they don't want to get rid of teaching positions they could look at the coaches and say, well they are not working directly with students, so it's kind of one of those gray areas. That's something that would be helpful, how do you document the impact that the coach is having? There you go, that's what I would like. ...Because we get asked that all the time by our superintendent and I tell him all the time, I don't if I could show you data per say but I could tell you anecdotally what I see. Anything that would be helpful how we document the impact that the coach is having on student performance. I think that would be a good area to clean. ...I think we definitely get a lot of support from our division, but because it something not mandated to have there's always that fear in the back of your mind that you're going to lose your coach. As the principle and the assistant principle we don't have the time to be able to provide that direct support to as many teachers as the coach does, to the extent that she does, and I think our teachers would miss that.

School-Level Factors	References to factors at the school level that influence the work of coaches	One of the things, I think not having every single grade teaching reading in the morning and part of that just had to do with having recess at lunch and there tends to be more time in the morning and we have a two and a half hour literacy block or just two hours. ...Maybe just two hours in primary and then upper does an hour and a half. I can never remember the breakdown. Part of the challenge is finding that solid block of time to commit to language arts instruction. It tends to fall in the morning. That's our biggest thing looking forward to next year. Because trying to place, to find intervention time during the literacy block and time that I could coach with the literacy block is kind of hard.
Administrators	Sub-code of "school-level factors": References to the role of administration in working with coaches	It was interesting because my role as a coach was very different in the two different buildings. One building administrator had also been a coach before. The way she utilized me was more of a true coach in the building. With the other building administrator, wanted to utilize me more as an administrator. That was kind of difficult to work with because that's not what I wanted to be. I wanted to be a coach. It was interesting because you could see when you have the support and the backing of the administrator for your coaching role, how much more effective you can be. In the school where I had the administrator who really backed and understood coaching, I was working with so many more teachers, and the program was so much more effective. Whereas, at the other school, where I don't think the principal really understood what the program was and how I should be used, there was a lot more resistance to working with me. A lot more skepticism, like, "Why are you wanting to work with me? Is something wrong with my instructional practice? The principal says I'm doing great." It was very different. That was interesting for me, to be able to see how big of an impact the administration's support of the program could be for the coach in the building.
Individual characteristics	References to specific training and experience coaches have that may influence their work	We were fortunate in that, when I came on, we had hired a coach who was a teacher from within the building, which made it really easy to build relationships. Plus, she had the credibility because we have a very diverse population. We're about 90% free and reduced, 60% LEP. With that, sometimes there's this perception from staff that if you haven't worked in a setting like this, what can you really teach me? You know what I mean? If you're coming from a school where 40% free and reduced and maybe 15 LEP students in your school, what can you really help me with, if you haven't experienced this? I think her coming in from working within the school gave her a lot of credibility, so people were more open to working with her.

Building Relationships	References to building relationships as coaching work	That's what we [coach and admin] talk about, as well. Everything is kept confidential, so I've never asked specifically, "Who are you working with and what are you working on?" It's more a discussion in just general terms, really broad. She may share a scenario and be like, "Okay. I'm having a situation. Can we brainstorm and talk about, maybe, what I can do in this situation?" That's a lot of what it is, too, is just being that support and that sounding board. Again, no names are connected because it's really important that the staff never think that she's coming to me and sharing exactly what they're working on or what people are concerned about, or what problems they're having in the classroom. That, I think, again, would have a negative impact on her ability to build relationships and work with people.
Observing Practice	References to observing practice as coaching work	I see her as somebody who is able to collaborate with the teachers on more of a peer level, so there's nothing evaluative associated with it. Teachers feel like they have a comfort level with her to be able to go and do anything, from "hey I have this idea can you help me talk through this idea?" to "I really want to look at my class room management program." So she does anything from just meeting with teachers, to coaching teaching lessons, to modeling lessons, observing, and giving again no evaluative feed back to teachers. So it's a great opportunity for our teachers to get support that the need without feeling like their job is being called into question.
Coaching Conversations	References to facilitating coaching conversations as coaching work	Listening is something that I had to develop. I've had varying experiences. You want to share your experiences but sometimes just listening to hear where that person is or where that person is coming from ... that was probably what I developed the most. I always listen to find common ground, if that makes any sense. As a starting point for the coaching conversation, or for how we're gonna get to the next level. So listening for that common ground and listening for that opportunity place if that makes any sense ... finding that opportunity where you can get an "in" so that you can then make a difference.

Appendix I

Coded Excerpt from Sharon's 2/3/17 Interview

Interviewer:	It sounds like you had a lot of great insights over your years as being a coach. Are there certain things that you feel have helped you in being able to make sense of the job and figure some of these things out?	Structural Code: -Support Content Codes: -Purpose -Time Allocation -Administrators -Building Relationships
Sharon:	Well, we've had some ... Well, this year we had a change in the administration, so my previous assistant principal is now my principal. I'll start with kind of administrative support being number one because my previous principal, I admired him, he's very wise, he's more of a managerial leader, not necessarily an instructional leader. The way he guided the two previous coaches in their roles, and initially me, was more kind of in an evaluative sense, I guess, because there would be questions asked about teacher's performance and things like that that kind of crossed those trust lines with teachers. As much as that always spoken, there were mentions of things or just the way he portrayed me to the staff, or portrayed the previous coaches, that led to that, "You're just eyes in the classroom. His eyes in the classroom." I would say trying to get over that hump and hurdle. Like my first year I was like ... I knew ... I had a couple of teachers tell me like they thought when I had a sticky note and a notepad that I'm writing down what they're doing wrong.	
Interviewer:	Oh, interesting.	
Sharon:	Again, going back to that trust building, but that came from trying ... I can't just pinpoint to that's the only place it came from. I mean, I don't know the experiences they have with previous coaches, but I would say I would have to bring it back to the administrative support and how the administration	

	communicated the coaches role to the staff. That's contributed to where I'm at now is it's just very ... My current administrator supports my work with teachers. Like just that PLC example. Your work with teachers. You don't just seize your work with teachers because we have a PLC meeting on Tuesday. You continue that work so that your follow up, if your accountability to that teacher is building that relationship with that teacher, is always a priority. That's just kind of one example of it. Another example would be there would be different tasks that my administrator would ask me to do, my previous administrator, like complete an application for the Title 1 prestigious school award, stuff like that. Hold on one second.	
Interviewer:	Sure.	
Sharon:	Okay, sorry.	
Interviewer:	No problem at all.	
Sharon:	All of those different factors kind of ... And that's assumed. I'm just speaking kind of my personal ... We also have our new assistant principal and she has a very growth-oriented, instructional background, comes groom the classroom, so she also supports the kind of coaching model that we're striving for, I guess.	
Interviewer:	I'm thinking about how you work with your admin team because it sounds like there's support there. What are some of the ways that you interact with them through meetings or collaboration? What are some of those specific ways that you guys do some of this work together?	Structural Code: -Support Content Codes:

Sharon:	We meet, I would say, definitely weekly to discuss kind of where we're going, reflect on where teams are at in terms of the PLC process, and just kind of general and types of work I'm doing. Very general, of course. Not specific. Not "eyes on the classroom" conversations. You know what I mean? There's not the same kind of conversion. That's pretty much weekly and the topic varies. It just depends. Like for example, my administrator had just met with our director of elementary instruction and she was going over her goals with him and so through that conversation, she was coming back having discussion with me on how that impacted her discussion of use of me and where we're at and what's going on here. Sometimes it's very specific to like to focus where we are instructionally or it might be something like that where's it's just an ongoing conversation, typically instructional-oriented and goal-oriented in terms of where we're at as a school.	-Purpose -Administrators -School-level Factors -Division-level Factors
Interviewer: Sharon:	Yeah. In thinking about these different- [inaudible 00:18:00].	
Interviewer: Sharon: Interviewer:	No, that's helpful. With all of these different jobs that you're doing and all of the different roles you play with teachers, are there certain skills that you feel are really important to your work as a coach? Well, I think the number one is the follow up. Yeah.	Structural Code: -Coaching Work Content Codes: -Time Allocation -Coaching Conversations

Sharon:	Follow up being as simple as "thank you" or even a "hello" or a check-in with them and I think that has been the greatest ... I mean, increased my work and increased ... Better the relationship with teachers. I think that's probably the one area that I've ... We get busy. We get busy doing things. We get distractions throughout the day or pulled aside by another teacher for something, but the key is to continue that follow up and have a log or a documentation. One is the follow up, but through that is the documentation. I haven't, in the past, always been good with that. For example, I had a notebook that I write stuff down and I try to keep some notes in my Google Drive or I kept some notes ... My calendar has bits and pieces of what I needed to do or where I've been, but it was never really in one centralized location, so that's kind of ... Now I have like documentation of kind of where I'm at with each teacher that has initiated work with me or a coaching cycle with me. Within each step of that, there's always a next step and that next step always has something to do with the follow up, whether it be a specific follow up to whatever it is we had just met or planned or it even being like ... I've had a couple of teachers that needs to have some coaching work on a very surface level value for like just sharing an idea at a team meeting and the whole team wanted to hear about it and so following up with that teacher individually, that may or may not have had me come in and model that strategy, so recording that and having that follow up be continue to build relationship, visit classroom on this day. Not just visit classroom, but you know. I think that adds to bettering it and I feel like I always need to get better at that because there's a lot of teachers and you can't be everywhere, so you have to be [inaudible 00:20:32], but being realistic with it too, I guess.	-Division-level Factors

Interviewer:	Yeah. Are there ... Actually no, I'm not going to ask you that because we already talked about that. Sorry, give me one sec. You've anticipated a lot of the questions that I was going to ask you, so that's why I'm just taking a look at this. Oh, that was what I wanted to ask you. I know that you all have the opportunity to meet with other coaches and you have so your monthly meetings with [Bill]. What are some of the things that you find most beneficial about those meetings and talking to some of the other coaches?	Structural Code: -Support Content Code: -Division-level Factors
Sharon:	I would say sometimes we problem solve different scenarios or situations we may facing with our coaching work, whether it be trying to move the bar for the work we're working on with an individual teacher or it might just be a generic concern, like where you've got a new ... Next year is the math cross walk year and new implementation of standards and how do we support our teachers to not feel overwhelmed. Or this year, we have a new writing initiative and where are we at and how are we dealing with that. The problem solving is very helpful and then we don't always get the opportunity for this, but it's beginning again to like ... Should say in our PDR [inaudible 00:22:11]. Our mathematics coordinator will come and our language arts coordinator and keep ourselves fresh on some things that they might feel like they can communicate and build us up to then bring back to our school. There's different components of that. Right now we're reading, I just finished up my chapter, for Never Underestimate your Teachers, a book by Robyn Jackson, so that's going to be part of our discussion today, which is also areas that I feel like coaches need to learn strategy, the effective practice of coaching, to always going to be able to reflect on them because I think some of that is challenging.	

	Coming from ... I love collaboration, I love working with a team. I'm the only coach in the building, so I'm kind of on an island. That's been hard for me just personally where not having that person or someone to bounce ideas with back and forth all the time.	
Interviewer:	Do you talk with coaches outside of those meetings, some of your other colleagues in other schools?	Structural Code: -Support Content Code: -Division-level Factors
Sharon:	Yeah, so we ... Last year, we had kind of a partner up thing going on and it, with the busyness of everyone schedules and work, it kind of didn't really sustain, but even so we communicate through email or text or occasionally, I would say just from my opinion, there are a couple of coaches that I think like they probably communicate more. They seem to be like friends, which I mean I get along with all of them, but I don't communicate like daily or bi-weekly. For example, [Lee Anders] is our math specialist/coach and I'm working a teacher right now and I'm like, "Hey, I'm kind of at my wits end in terms of strategies for helping these special ed kids. Do you have any ideas? Can I meet with you?" We're going to meet today before the coaching meeting so I can pick her brain because I think it's important to have a support system for coaches to have and be able to seek support because by all means we're not the experts and we can't be the experts. Part of the growing of everybody.	
Interviewer:	Yeah.	
Sharon:	That's kind of the sum of it.	
Interviewer:	Yeah, that's great. A lot of things that we've talked about are things that	Structural Code:

	support your work. Are there any factors, contextual factors, from the school or the district that you feel can constrain your work or make it difficult to do some of your coaching tasks?	-Contextual Factors Content Codes: -Purpose -Administrators
Sharon:	Well, I guess I would say the lack of administrative support could inhibit the work, but I don't feel that way at all this year. I think, again, it goes back to I think we could do a better job with communicating the role. Continuously reinforcing the role in not necessarily a formal way, but just ongoing and so I'm always seeking entry points with teachers myself, but having that administrative support and communicating that in a way. I don't know what it would look like, but continuously doing that, but not necessarily ... I mean, they're really supportive of our professional growth and professional development. We have a lot of opportunities to go learn and grow. Like I said, I'm not the expert and I always make sure that people understand that we're here to learn together, but some people have the perception, based on their own experiences, that the coach is the expert. Like I should know all the literacy assessment dates and random things based on their experiences that they may have had with like a Title 1 literacy coach or something.	

Appendix J

Individual Survey Results

Table 4

Individual Survey Results

Name	The issues explored were important for the work that I do.	My understanding of topics related to leadership and coaching was enhanced by this workshop.	I will refer back to the materials provided during the school year	Rate the usefulness of each topic: Building Relationships	Rate the usefulness of each topic: Listening Skills	Rate the usefulness of each topic: Trust as Foundational for Coaching
Bill	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Very useful	Very useful	Very useful
Laura**	–	–	–	–	–	–
Tory*	–	–	–	–	–	–
D'Anna	Agree	Agree	Agree	Very useful	Very useful	Very useful
Cally	Agree	Agree	Agree	Very useful	Very useful	Very useful
Kara*	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ellen	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Somewhat useful	Somewhat useful	Somewhat useful
Sharon**	–	–	–	–	–	–

*Participant did not attend the Curry Leadership Academy.

**Participant attended the Curry Leadership Academy but did not complete the survey.

Note. Table 4 continues on page 202.

Name	This academy has deepened my understanding of: How contextual demands influence coaching approaches	This academy has improved my ability to establish trust in my relationships	This academy has improved my ability to listen deeply	This academy has improved my ability to address barriers to effective coaching	Opportunities to network and learn from colleagues were supported.	Rate the usefulness of each activity: Discussing "problems of practice" in our own practice
Bill	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree
Laura**	–	–	–	–	–	–
Tory*	–	–	–	–	–	–
D'Anna	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Cally	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Kara*	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ellen	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Sharon**	–	–	–	–	–	–